CHAPTER II

1914–1918

i/Whitehead’s appointment to the Imperial College.

ii/The Whiteheads’ reactions to England’s going to war.

iii/Gertrude Stein’s extended visit. Harry Phelan Gibb.

iv/Whitehead’s work in the war. North Whitehead’s military service. Jessie and Evelyn Whitehead in the war years.

v/Death of Eric Whitehead. His character.

At the age of fifty-three, Whitehead finally secured a professorship. It was in applied mathematics at the Imperial College of Science and Technology, in South Kensington, London. It paid £800.

His old friend Andrew Forsyth traveled for quite a while after leaving Cambridge in 1910. Early in 1913 he gained a chair that was newly created at the Imperial College—Chief Professor of Mathematics. The Imperial College had come into existence in 1907 as an amalgam of three quite different colleges: the Royal College of Science, the City and Guilds Engineering College, and the Royal School of Mines. There were departments of mathematics at the first two, but it was not a principal subject in either one. Forsyth’s appointment was a step in the gradual change of the amalgam of the three colleges, each jealous of the others, into a union; he was placed in charge of mathematics for the Imperial College as a whole. Although his creative work was over, he was the first eminent mathematician to be appointed there, and he had had much administrative experience; his job was to modernize the teaching, and expand the program, in mathematics. Among the recommendations that he submitted to the Governors in February 1914 was the request that a second mathematical professor be appointed; this had been considered when Forsyth was appointed, but held in abeyance pending his recommendations. He now asked for a man of recognized scientific eminence who, under him, would take applied mathematics as his domain. (Forsyth was primarily a pure mathematician.)

Forsyth is likely to have had Whitehead in mind for this post. But the special committee that the Governors of Imperial College set up to choose the incumbent did not proceed in the quick, improper way of the Board of Advisors at University College in 1912, by which Whitehead lost his chance of a professorship there.

The Imperial College committee advertised the post in the Times, in Nature, and in the Cambridge University Reporter. Whitehead read the advertisement in Nature, asked for particulars of the post, and applied for it in a letter dated June 16, 1914. In the letter he mentioned his
practical experience in lecturing, chiefly in Applied Mathematics and Geometry," and his "theoretical researches into the ultimate nature of Mathematical and Physical ideas." In listing his books, Whitehead called attention to the wide sale of his *Introduction to Mathematics*; he avowed that he could "interest a body of students, diverse both in their ability and in the courses of Physical Science which are occupying their attention." (London was not like Cambridge!) To the recital of his administrative positions Whitehead could now add that of being a member of the Council of the Royal Society.

There were eleven candidates for this professorship; Whitehead and four others were seriously considered. He was interviewed on July 1. The diverging interests of the three colleges gave the special committee much trouble on all the candidates. It was pointed out that Whitehead had never taught engineering mathematics. Nevertheless, on July 10 the committee recommended to the Governing Body that he be appointed Professor of Applied Mathematics under the direction of the Chief Professor of Mathematics as of September 1, 1914. This was immediately approved, and on July 15 University College, London, allowed Whitehead to resign his position as Reader in Geometry.

Whitehead’s pleasure in his election to a professorship at the Imperial College was followed, in the second half of July, by worry about what the nations of the Continent were doing. He had no idea that when he was to assume his duties, England would be four weeks into a war against Germany, and his son North would be in Flanders with the British Expeditionary Force.

Whitehead eventually came round to the view that the Great Powers blundered into the First World War. But at the time, he believed that England, at least, had no choice but to take part. Bertrand Russell, still his closest friend, emphatically disagreed. On August 28 Whitehead wrote from Lockeridge:

*Dear Bertie,*

... I am miserable at differing from you on so great a question. I cannot see what other course was open to us than the one which we actually took. I have read the White Paper carefully and have formed the conclusions (1) that Grey and our Government did everything in their power to preserve the peace of Europe, (2) that, if the German Government meant to
make an unprovoked attack on France and Russia at a favourable moment, they could not have acted in any other way than that in which they actually did act.

Also, granting such an unprovoked attack, it seems to me that it would have been national suicide for us to stand out.

You must remember that the Germany which would emerge victorious is not the Germany of Goethe and Helmholtz, but the Germany of the Kaiser, Bernhardi, and Treitschke. . . .

Our immediate task is to save Western Freedom, as exemplified in England and France. . . .

Of course we were not legally bound to Belgium. If you like, it was a "pretext". I should prefer to say "a test case". Germany showed thereby that, given the occasion and the power, she would not consider herself bound to respect either treaties or weaker nations. This governed the whole situation.

It appears that Whitehead took the Government's White Paper at face value.

I do not know whether Evelyn read the White Paper. She did not need to do so in order to declare to Bertie, "the bully must be stopped," for she had been anti-German since childhood. Many liberals, Russell among them, were distressed that England was on Russia's side; Whitehead was not happy about it. On August 4, before England's midnight declaration of war, Evelyn wrote to Bertie, "Germany is a greater menace to Europe, and we cannot sit still and see France smashed."

North Whitehead was spending the summer working at the large British Thomson Houston Electrical Works in Rugby. On the day after England's declaration he went to the recruiting sergeant there and tried to enlist. He was told that if he wanted to be a soldier, he should have thought of that before: "There is a war on now; we haven't time for raw recruits like you." North went to London, then to the War Office in Whitehall, accompanied by his father and mother and by his Uncle Henry, who, as a Bishop in the Established Church, introduced them to War Office officials. A commission as second lieutenant was secured. North was assigned to mechanical transport in the Second Division of the B.E.F. On August 21 his parents saw him off.

None of the Whiteheads felt the exultation which masses of unthinking Britons displayed as they sent their sons away to fight. Years later Evelyn expressed contempt for a Belgian scholar who boasted of having kept his son out of the war by hiding him under the hay in a cart going across the border. To her, there was glory in being a soldier in a righteous war. But she felt no happiness in the necessary participation
of North and a host of other young men. To Alfred, there was no glory, only necessity. He began the letter to Russell, from which I quoted, with the exclamation, “What a nightmare!” His feeling was the exact opposite of that expressed by Rupert Brooke in the lines,

Now God be thanked Who has matched us with His hour
And caught our youth, and wakened us from sleeping.

North once told me that his father “hated war so.” Whitehead knew from his wide reading in the history of Europe that the progress of civilization is punctuated with sharp setbacks, but he had not anticipated a ghastly setback in his lifetime. The guns of August shattered his world.

iii

When the Whiteheads left Cambridge in 1910, they sold the lease on their house at 11 Cranmer Road to William Julius Mirrlees. He was a Scot with an inventive turn of mind, interested in almost everything. He had done well in South Africa, and wanted to live in Cambridge because his daughter Hope (later a distinguished scholar) was at Newnham. His wife was one of the women Whitehead had in mind when he wrote, “uneducated clever women, who have seen much of the world, are in middle life so much the most cultured part of the community.” She and her husband soon became, and remained, devoted friends of the Whiteheads.

The Mirrleeses frequently entertained the intellectual aristocracy of Cambridge. In July 1914 they were hosts for a few days to two interesting Americans that Hope knew: Gertrude Stein and Alice Toklas. (Gertrude Stein had come to London to see her publisher, John Lane.) At dinner they met the Whiteheads.

Whitehead and Gertrude Stein, both great readers of history, talked easily. Evelyn at first looked down her nose at Gertrude and her companion. Then she discovered that Gertrude personally knew various painters in Paris. Thereafter the four were on excellent terms with each other. Soon the Whiteheads had Stein and Toklas to dinner in Carlyle Square. From there, on July 29, Whitehead wrote, “Dear Miss Stein, We are immensely looking forward to seeing you and Miss Toklas on Friday afternoon [July 31] at our Wiltshire Cottage.” He told her what train to take, then said, “Please excuse my wife for not herself writing; we are in the agony of changing our London houses.”

In The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas Stein wrote that when they
arrived they found several other houseguests, and that there was not much concern about imminent war. On the next day, Germany was at war with Russia and France was mobilizing. It was impossible for Stein and Toklas to return to Paris. Evelyn urged them, and they agreed, to stay in the Lockeridge house instead of a London hotel. Thus what was meant to be a weekend visit lasted six weeks.

Whitehead and Gertrude Stein took many country walks together; they talked about the meaning of the war, and philosophically about the course of Western civilization. From their first meeting, she thought he was a genius. She has Alice Toklas say that although Toklas at one time or another met several great people, she knew only “three first-class geniuses”; she saw their quality at once, before it was generally recognized. The other two, naturally, were Picasso and Gertrude Stein. Whitehead thought that Stein was a lively woman with new ideas about literary expression. On the question of how well he understood her writing, I have no evidence, and shall make no conjecture.

Soon after England became fully involved in the war, Stein and Toklas made a trip to London to get money and their trunks. Evelyn went with them, to find out what she could do to help Belgian refugees. In mid-October, when the visitors went back to Paris, Evelyn again went with them, this time because North had left his overcoat at home. She was determined that he should have it, and got papers from the War Office that enabled her to deliver it to British authorities in Paris. In an undated letter to Whitehead from 27 Rue de Fleurus, Gertrude Stein told him that Evelyn was staying with them and was very well.

After the war was over Jessie Whitehead, working in Paris, used to lunch with Gertrude Stein almost weekly. When Stein, become quite famous, made a lecture tour of the United States in 1934, she did not visit the Whiteheads, then in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Alfred was ill much of that year. There may have been another reason for the non-visit. *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas* had been published the year before. It contained a false statement that made Evelyn indignant: “Mrs. Whitehead was terribly worried lest he [North] should rashly enlist.” Of course Evelyn was proud of North for trying to enlist at Rugby on August 5, 1914; and, unlike her husband, she did not readily forgive.

Gertrude Stein was enthusiastic about the work of an unappreciated Irish painter who had come to Paris, Harry Phelan Gibb. He gave a fairly successful show in Dublin in 1913, when he was forty; he was not doing well in Paris. Shortly after the war began he came to London, where he entered into the Whiteheads’ lives as Gertrude Stein’s legacy
to them. At Christmastide he was in their Lockeridge house.

Gibb had run through a fortune and taken to drinking heavily. Evelyn had a habit of helping people who were down and out. She let him live in the Whiteheads’ Chelsea house. He was never sober, but he did not make passes at the maids or otherwise cause trouble. Although Whitehead abhorred drunkenness, he accepted Gibb’s presence; the man was in trouble, art was art, and Whitehead, always in his study or at the Imperial College, would tolerate anything if Evelyn wanted it. After three years of this, Gibb married a woman who straightened him out. He and his paintings became less interesting. His letters to Gertrude Stein from 1917 to 1925 lament the continued failure of the art critics to recognize him. He was still unrecognized when he died in 1946. In the early 1920s Evelyn acquired a Gibb painting that I have seen; it reminds one of Augustus John.

In 1914 more than a hundred thousand Belgians, fleeing from the German troops, came to Britain. The generosity with which they were received is one of the bright spots in British history. The Whiteheads’ Wiltshire house in Lockeridge was made available for a time.

Although the number of students enrolled at the Imperial College was much reduced after the war started, the courses required for a diploma had still to be taught; as some of Whitehead’s colleagues were in military service, he had a somewhat heavier teaching load than was normal. Nevertheless, he undertook to write the important book he called *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Natural Knowledge*, which I shall discuss in Chapter VI.

Letters from North made Whitehead aware that calculating the path of a shell fired at a high angle took too much time. On November 20, 1917, the Royal Society received his paper, “Graphical Solution for High-Angle Fire.” Except for two papers in 1889 on the motion of viscous fluids, this was the only paper in applied mathematics that he ever published. In it he worked out the equations of motion from which, he thought, a skilled draftsman, using the Army’s gunnery tables and a few well-known empirical formulas, could construct graphs that would be applicable to all projectiles and all paths. I do not know whether Whitehead’s idea was practicable enough to be used by the British Army.

As the war went on, more and more young men from Cambridge University and University College, London, went into the trenches.
The casualty list tore Whitehead’s heart, for he had taken a personal interest in all his pupils.

Whitehead was very much a family man. To know what his experience of the 1914–18 war was like, we must know what his children and his wife did and underwent in those years.

North was more fortunate than most Cambridge men. In the summer of 1915 he was invalided back to England, suffering from shell shock at the very least. In the autumn he was judged fit for “light home duties,” and sent to a large camp in Salisbury Plain. The chief duties were participation in frequent parades. He begged to be put on the active list, and volunteered for anything that turned up. This turned out to be combat in East Africa, where the contiguous British and German colonies would be bargaining pawns if the war ended in a stalemate. Before the war, the idea of life in a colony like British East Africa had fascinated North. Like many Cantabrigians, he thought of the colonies as the places where things happened. On graduating from Cambridge in 1913 he obtained an appointment as Assistant Commissioner in British East Africa. It was because he was a year younger than a man was required to be to assume this position that, on his father’s advice, he spent the academic year 1913–14 at University College, London, where he studied mechanical engineering.

The unpredictability of crucial events is a frequent theme in Whitehead’s philosophy of life. I may illustrate it by the fact that his soldier son, before reaching East Africa, had as close a brush with death as any he experienced in the field. The troop ship, a captured German liner, ran into a storm in the Bay of Biscay. In his unpublished autobiography North wrote that the ship had some sort of stabilizing water tanks to damp down rolling. Either there was something wrong, or our people did not understand them. . . . The Captain afterwards told me that the inclinometer on the bridge had once registered a forty-five degree roll. He thought the ship had gone. 

But she took the troops around the Cape to Mombasa, the chief port of what is now Kenya.

In East Africa the fighting was very different from what it had been in Belgium and France. The war here was a war of movement, with no set front. It was a clean war, with good feeling between the British and German commanders (General Smuts and General von Letow-Vorbeck), and between their men. The British force was a mixed lot. Besides the English (many of them, like North, invalided from Flan-
ders), there were Indians, Canadians, South Africans, and black Africans. North was a good officer. He never lost a man to an ambush. The chief cause of casualties was tropical disease. North suffered three attacks of malaria and more than one of dysentery. He spent much of 1917 in hospitals.

I believe that only two of the many wartime letters between North and his parents are extant. The one he wrote to his father on October 23, 1916, begins with a unique sidelight on the war in East Africa:

My darling Daddy

I was stopped in the open velde yesterday by a S. African trooper who asked me whether I was Lt Whitehead, I told him that I was & he handed me a packet of about 30 letters from you all! . . . My C. O. happened to see this trooper & finding that he was travelling in my direction gave him my mail. We were over 100 miles apart & the trooper had travelled for 6 days.

After a final hospital stay in Capetown, North was sent home in the spring of 1918. He was pronounced unfit for further service overseas, and given the duty of inspecting electrical and mechanical machinery, first in Birmingham and then in London, where he lived with his parents.

Jessie Whitehead had entered Newnham College, Cambridge, in the autumn of 1913. When the war broke out she joined her mother in doing various things to help Belgian refugees. In the autumn she did not go back to Newnham, but got a job as a clerk in the Secretariat of the Foreign Office, where she worked on matters concerned with England’s blockade of Germany. Her feeling about the war was the same as her mother’s.

Evelyn, like other ladies of her class, took some part, though not as much as ladies of “society,” in arranging benefit performances for war victims. When North was on active service, she frequently sent him packages of the very best non-perishable foods. Evelyn’s social life was only a little curtailed; Mrs. Beeton’s diary continued to record trips to the theater with her. From North I learned that at one time, when there was a shortage of shells, his mother made the heroic gesture of going to work in a munitions factory. She was so ill fitted for steady work of this kind that it lasted only a few weeks.
V

The war’s heaviest blow to the Whiteheads fell in March 1918. Here is the dedication of the *Enquiry*, which Cambridge published in 1919:

To Eric Alfred Whitehead / Royal Flying Corps / November 27, 1898 to March 13, 1918 / Killed in action over the Forêt de Gobain / giving himself that the city of his vision may not perish / The music of his life was without discord, / perfect in its beauty.

Eric had been admitted to Westminster School in the spring of 1914; he left it three years later, and was admitted to Balliol College, Oxford, for 1917. Instead of planning to go there, in May he took a commission in the Royal Flying Corps. After he gained his pilot’s wings, he was employed as an instructor in England. In February 1918 he was sent to France at his own request. On March 13 he was flying on patrol in a single-seater, and was last seen diving at a German two-seater; then his wings were seen to break.\(^\text{10}\) North told me that his father’s response on receiving the news that Eric had been shot down was “a sickly smile.” Writing to Bertrand Russell on April 1, Evelyn said, “I cannot tell you about Alfred, he looks much older.”

Eric was quite unlike North and Jessie in character. They were both strong individuals; he was not one. They had good Whitehead brains, though Jessie often refused to use hers in the ways that other people wanted her to use them; Eric was not brainy. Nor a particularly good student; his record at Westminster School was mediocre. But he was a dear and lovely person. North told me that he himself would sometimes “go off the rails.” Jessie early fell into the habit of going off the rails. Eric, by contrast, was almost always on them. His behavior was impeccable; he did what, and only what, was expected of a young gentleman. A brother officer wrote to his father of Eric’s “cheerfulness, devotion to duty, and the unusual cleanliness of his thoughts and ways.”\(^\text{11}\)

Eric was his mother’s favorite. North sometimes, and Jessie often, ignored her wishes or tried to thwart them; he never did. Whitehead’s grief over his son’s death was more than doubled by his empathy with Evelyn’s sorrow.

vi

For almost fifteen years before the war, Bertrand Russell had been like one of the family. He was Whitehead’s most brilliant pupil, then his collaborator for more than ten years. He was very fond of Evelyn, and
she of him. And he was fond of all three Whitehead children. He had been especially close to the oldest, North. For example, early in 1907 he had taken North on a walking tour in the Lake Country. Early in the summer vacation of 1911 North was Russell's companion on a walking tour of the Malvern hills; in the evenings Bertie read him some chapters from the manuscript of The Problems of Philosophy, which he had begun to write.* In July 1913 Russell took North and Eric around Cornwall.

Russell's passionate denunciation of the war cooled his friendship with the Whiteheads, but did not break it. On January 30, 1915, North wrote to him, "I am begging for a letter from you." On February 15 North thanked Bertie for his letter, and sent him a cheery one in return. Writing to him on March 17, North described life at the front; he had just taken off his boots for the first time in a week.

In 1915 Russell began to work with the most active of the anti-war organizations, the No-Conscription Fellowship. Conscription was new to Britain, the freest of the civilized nations. Northcliffe had plumped for it from the start of this war; on December 28, 1915, the cabinet agreed to it in principle; on February 9 it became law. When Russell asserted his opposition to it in a letter to Whitehead,† Whitehead replied on April 16:

Dear Bertie, I had meant to avoid discussion with you—where feeling is acute, and divergence deep, discussion among intimates is often a mistake. Your letter necessitates an explanation . . .

I hold that the State has the right to compulsion both in taxes and in personal service. Here I agree with all the great liberal statesmen, e. g., Cromwell, the French Revolutionary Statesmen, Lincoln, J. S. Mill, etc. You used to admire these men; I never suspected your fundamental divergence.

Similarly as to the use of force by the State against enemies, external and internal. Compulsion involves punishment for non-compliance. The forcing of conscience is always an evil. I would therefore exempt men who by a previous course of conduct had made evident their adherence to some code of thought which involves burdens as well as exemptions. For this reason Quakers can be exempted. I would not exempt men who produce their conscientious objections ad hoc. It is a grave evil, but it is impossible to discriminate.

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*In August Russell sent North's father the typescript of this book. See Chapter I, Section v, for Whitehead's critical comments on it.
†Not extant. Whitehead did not keep letters.
This evil, though grave, is not comparable to the awful evil involved in the breakup of a state—in particular, not comparable to the horrors through which the world is now passing. . . .

I am not greatly impressed by men who ask me to be shocked that they are going to prison, while ten thousand men are daily being carried to field hospitals, . . . Frankly, the outcry is contemptible. Of course where I can testify to good cause for exemption, on first hand knowledge, I am glad to do so. It mitigates the necessary evil of the times. I have already done so for Norton.* But on the whole, men who refuse military service are avoiding a plain, though painful moral duty.

Russell’s attacks on the Government were unremitting—in countless speeches, pamphlets, and articles.† His sharp, cool analyses of its actions, his passionate opposition to warfare, and his growing reputation as a philosopher combined to make him a formidable opponent. In May 1916 the Government reluctantly decided to prosecute him under the Defence of the Realm Act, in connection with the Everett case.

One Edward Everett was exempted from combat service as a conscientious objector, but refused to report for non-combat service, and was sentenced to two years at hard labor. Russell wrote a leaflet that called for vigorous defense of those who were fighting for liberty of conscience. Six members of the No-Conscription Fellowship who had distributed the leaflet were sentenced to a month in jail. Russell thereupon wrote a letter to the *Times* (printed May 17) to say that he was its author and that if anyone were prosecuted, he should be.

Russell did not want to be acquitted. He was enjoying his campaign against the war-waging Government enormously, and only lacked the glory of martyrdom. Pleading his own case in the Court of the Lord Mayor of London, he made a superb speech, cutting and passionate in defense of freedom from governmental coercion. Evelyn, who was present, admired it. But the Mayor found him guilty, and fined him £100 or 61 days imprisonment. His friends, by buying his library and some other possessions, met the fine.

I sympathize with both Russell and Whitehead. Russell had been right in opposing Britain’s entry into the war and the Government’s

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*H. T. J. Norton, a Fellow of Trinity College and one of Russell’s Cambridge pupils.†Early in 1916 he gave voice to both his repugnance and his idealism in a series of lectures, “Principles of Social Reconstruction,” which were considered mischievous. (They were published with that title in England, but in America as *Why Men Fight*.)
persistent refusal to seek an end to the carnage except by outright victory; Whitehead was wrong on both counts, though it is much easier for us to see this than it was in 1914–16. Russell was wrong about the adoption of conscription, because there was plainly no way to keep on fighting the war without it. And he was wrong about a state’s right to draft men who were not genuine conscientious objectors, for the reason Whitehead gave in his letter of April 16.

When Whitehead was seventy he recalled that, although he had generally voted in the reforming minority of Englishmen, the causes he supported were sooner or later adopted. “I have never, never been at final variance with the bulk of my countrymen.” At public school he had acted with his fellow students, and for them as Head Boy. He was within the English socio-political world. Russell was outside it, always passionately condemning the beliefs and actions of his countrymen with the fervor of a modern-day Hebrew prophet; he was the philosopher who possessed a higher standard of morality than theirs and a rationality they could not begin to emulate. Compromise, a virtue to Whitehead, was almost always a sin to him. How impossible, in retrospect, was his grandmother Russell’s vision of him as a future prime minister! What was he, then? Simply Bertrand Russell—intellectual, writer, and adored or hated public storm center. Because Russell was so fanatically devoted to his pacifist cause, he could only condemn the Whiteheads’ attitude toward the war as savage. He was not easily tolerant of people whose convictions opposed his. When he wanted to be indignant, he put away his sense of objectivity into some other compartment of his mind. Whitehead seldom did that.

Russell appealed his conviction, but lost. Thereupon the Council of Trinity College, which had the power to dismiss from the College anyone convicted of any crime, dismissed Russell from his lectureship there.* The vote, on July 11, 1916, was unanimous, but did not truly reflect the opinion of the Fellows of Trinity. The younger Fellows, some of whom had been in the war, were less pro-war than the older ones who made up the Council. F. M. Cornford, with help from James Ward, collected twenty-two signatures to an unemphatic protest that was sent to the Council in January:

The undersigned, Fellows of the College, while not proposing to take any action in the matter during the war, desire to place it on

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*This was a five-year renewal of the five-year lectureship to which he had been elected on Whitehead’s urging in 1910.
.record that they are not satisfied with the action of the College in depriving Mr Russell of his Lectureship.

The signatories included two members of the Council who had not been in Cambridge on July 11, many young Fellows who later achieved high reputation (e.g., G. H. Hardy, J. E. Littlewood, A. S. Eddington, C. D. Broad, and a future Master of Trinity, E. D. Adrian)—and Whitehead. In a friendly letter to Russell on September 14, Whitehead mentioned a pamphlet on him which he wrote to the Fellows of Trinity in July.\textsuperscript{14}

Everyone knew that Russell had set aside his philosophical research to devote himself to his pacifist cause; but he had been giving his scheduled lectures at Trinity. Council’s action against an eminent philosopher was deplored by quite a few scholars elsewhere. Gilbert Murray, the philosopher Samuel Alexander, and many professors in America as well as in Britain, felt that Russell’s ouster, however legal, was contrary not only to the best interests of Trinity College but to the ideal of completely free criticism of anything and everything, which ought to be maintained in the British academic world. (The German government had tried to get a pacifist critic removed from the faculty at the University of Munich, but Munich stood its ground.)

Late in 1917 Russell began to think his pacifist propaganda ineffective, and wanted to take up philosophy again. Among the pupils who studied logic with him at Cambridge before the war, one, Ludwig Wittgenstein, had become intellectually more intimate with him than Whitehead or anyone else. Russell, wanting to revise his philosophy of logic in the light of Wittgenstein’s ideas, announced a series of eight lectures with the title, “The Philosophy of Logical Atomism.” He gave them in London, early in 1918.

Before Russell finished these lectures, Lloyd George’s government began action against him. All through 1917 he had been editing, and every week writing an article for, the weekly newspaper, the \textit{Tribunal}, put out by the No-Conscription Fellowship. His successor being ill, Russell hastily wrote an article for the issue of January 3, 1918. Because one sentence cast an aspersion on the American Army (“capable of intimidating strikers”), Russell was charged with having made in print statements “likely to prejudice His Majesty’s relations with the United States of America.” He was found guilty and sentenced to six months’ imprisonment in the Second Division, that is, with ordinary convicts. Thanks to the intervention of Gilbert Murray and other friends, along
with Arthur Balfour, the Home Office changed his sentence to the First Division. This meant special privileges, such as receiving more visitors and—most important to Russell—being allowed to read and write as much as he liked, provided he did no pacifist propaganda. The writing of his *Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy* was only the first item in the quantity of philosophical work Russell did under these circumstances.

He was in Brixton Prison by May 6, 1918, and, being given credit for good conduct, was freed on September 11. In this period his brother Frank (second Earl Russell) arranged for his visitors, conveyed messages to friends, and in many ways made his life easy. Evelyn Whitehead drew up a list of French Revolutionary memoirs; they were got from the London Library for Bertie’s reading. Whitehead was among his early visitors; writing to Frank on May 16, Russell said, “It was maddening having so little time to talk shop with Whitehead.” I suppose that this shoptalk was about points in the *Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy*. To Frank on July 1 Russell wrote:

I find seeing Whitehead an immense stimulus, please tell him. I have been thinking a great deal about matters he and I discussed, and there seems to me a lot of interesting work to be done on Facts, Judgment, and propositions.

I doubt that Whitehead got much stimulus for his own thinking from these brief discussions in Brixton. He was writing his *Enquiry*, containing his philosophy of physics; in later writings and in his lectures at Harvard (begun in 1924) he never praised either the philosophy of logical atomism or *The Analysis of Mind* (which Russell was sketching at this time).

Russell’s opposition to the war did not affect the Whiteheads’ convictions about it in the least. On January 8, 1917, Whitehead sent Russell a clipping from the *Times* of January 7 which reported a protest in Paris against the deportation of Belgians and French to Germany, and asked, “What are you going to do to help these people?”

But the Whiteheads felt that Bertie had a right to express his honest convictions, and were grieved by the Government’s prosecutions of their old friend. On May 17, 1916, Evelyn wrote him:

We have just seen your letter in the Times, do write or come if you do not feel it too painful, we are thinking of you a great deal and missing you.

I cannot see why a difference of point of view must create a
breach, friends even intimate ones cannot agree on all essentials. Surely the test of friendship comes in one’s capacity for leaving contentious points out, if we cannot bear to mention them.

On June 4 Whitehead wrote,

Let me know if and how I can help or show any office of friendship—you know well enough that the mere fact that I think your views of state policy and of private duty in relation to it are mistaken, does not diminish affection.

Three months later, when the Government excluded Russell from certain parts of the country, Whitehead wrote him, “what asses the authorities are making of themselves in worrying you in the way they are. . . . I am awfully sick at their action.”

On April 2, 1918, North sent Russell a letter: “I am writing to tell you how sorry I am that you are in trouble, and to tell you what a warm feeling of friendship I feel for you.”

Evelyn wrote many affectionate letters to Russell in 1916 to 1918. She often urged him to visit them, but he seldom did so. He preferred to work at the office of the No-Conscription Fellowship; and to relax at Garsington Manor, where his former mistress, the brilliant Lady Ottonline Morrell, made people with pacifist sympathies feel at home. On January 10, 1917, Evelyn sent Russell a letter complaining of his neglect of her, even when she was ill; the letter is full of self-pity, which is not obscured by her saying that her husband resented this neglect (which he probably did).

On February 9, 1918, Evelyn wrote a good letter to Russell. He was lecturing on the philosophy of logical atomism, and had been sentenced to prison. After urging him to devote himself to philosophy, she said:

If at any time we can do anything to mitigate, or to make the present more endurable, let us know it at once. However passionately we may disagree with your present views to us, you are you, the friend we value, whose affection we count on, the friend whom our boys love, & in many ways still our Infant Prodigy.

The fact that Russell’s friendship with the Whiteheads was not broken should be credited primarily to them.