

SLAVONIC STUDIES AT OXFORD: A BRIEF HISTORY

Prehistory: Latin versus vernacular

In the Middle Ages the language in which Englishmen conversed and corresponded with the Slavs of western Christendom, on the rare occasions when they came into contact with them, was Latin. The existence of an international language was of great convenience to both sides, obviating the necessity to learn or take any interest in vernacular languages. An example of how it was possible to live in a Slavonic environment using only Latin is provided by the Wycliffite Peter Payne, Principal of St Edmund Hall, Oxford, who in 1413 left England and settled in Bohemia. There he was able, speaking and writing in Latin, to assume an influential position in the world of learning and religion. His English pronunciation, it is true, did not go unnoticed, but this did not prevent him participating to great effect in public debate and swaying his audiences. Even after thirty years residence in the Czech lands he still contrived to remain ignorant of the vernacular, to judge from the accusation made against his opponent at a Prague synod in 1444 of having deliberately spoken Czech so that Payne could not understand him (Šmahel 2004).

In Early Modern times too the study of the Slavonic languages (no less than that of other modern European vernaculars) was inhibited by the status and convenience of Latin, but the situation changed suddenly and drastically, when in 1553 England established contact with Slavs of the Eastern Rite following the unexpected arrival of Richard Chancellor's ship the *Edward Bonaventure* at the port of St Nicholas on the White Sea. Finding themselves outside the world where Latin was common currency, the English, beginning with Chancellor's crew, immediately set about learning Russian, and within a few years they had competent interpreters. There is also evidence, well before the end of the sixteenth century, of a burgeoning philological interest in the language among English travellers to Russia (Pennington 1967), and only a few years later philological field work of a remarkable kind was being carried out in northern Russia by the first Oxford Slavist.

Richard James (1591-1638)

Baptized at Newport, on the Isle of Wight, on 21 September 1591, Richard James never forgot his origins and often wrote *Vectensis* after his name. He was educated at Newport Grammar School and, at the age of sixteen, matriculated at Exeter College, Oxford, as a commoner on 6 May 1608. Four months later he migrated to Corpus Christi College on gaining a scholarship there. He graduated BA in 1611 and MA in 1615, following which he was elected probationary fellow of Corpus (James 2004).

On 3 June 1618, at the age of twenty-six, James sailed from Gravesend as chaplain to an embassy from King James I to Tsar Mikhail, the first Romanov, led by Sir Dudley Digges. Their ship, the *Diana*, sailed into Archangel on 16 July and the embassy proceeded to Kholmogory. For reasons which remain obscure, however, Sir Dudley Digges now hastily returned to Archangel and on 2 September set sail for England. In Kholmogory he had left seventeen members of his following (including Richard James) with instructions to proceed to Moscow, where they arrived on 19 January 1619. The Russians were surprised to receive an embassy without an ambassador and it was consequently two months before the Tsar was prepared to receive the party. The embassy was now a fiasco. In the absence of the ambassador no negotiations could take place. The Englishmen stayed in Moscow for seven months, however, and after a farewell audience with the Tsar on 15 July left for

Archangel on 20 August. On arrival there they discovered that their ship had sailed. The leaders of what remained of the embassy set out for England overland, leaving a rump, including James, to wait for the next ship, which brought them home the following summer (Kononov 1950:76-90). In the intervening months they waited in Kholmogory, and while there James, from the Russian he heard spoken round him, recorded 2,176 words with their meanings. Many of them are accompanied by detailed explanations of a factual, religious, historical, or anthropological kind. They are in the main not items of everyday vocabulary (which he presumably knew anyway) but relatively unusual words, such as terms relating to weapons, money, animals, playing cards, and chess. He sometimes provides the earliest known evidence of a word's existence, as in the case of his *maimanto* 'mammoth' (Heaney, 1976). James's interest in Russian linguistic culture was not exclusively lexicological. He also brought back to Oxford a record of six songs, constituting the earliest known examples of Russian poetry (Simoni 1907). After his return to England (he was back in Oxford by 1623) James did not pursue his Russian studies, but his manuscripts, including those written in Russia, were eventually deposited in the Bodleian Library (Larin 1959:311-13; Unbegaun 1962).

Quimethi vripafshi id. mait clean, swiffe
 slone. an elephant.
 Maimanto - as they say, a sea elephant
 which is never seene, but according to
 some, he workes himselfe under ground
 and so they finde his teeth or hornes
 bones in pechore and Nova Zemla or
 wh they make table men in Russia
 odnazbka, garliffe w brought close by
 up on ground smelt wh they use to
 some speciall mechanism.
 Chirrap. the steward of a poe. a shill
 bought Astraxan of Vntmoy biting a
 yett of Dutra there will take them.
 T8 man. ad Volgam: Gbla. 28 mist of
 the rivtr. ad Dwind et more to
 Boroum

Plate 1. Richard James's note of the mammoth (reproduced from Larin 1959:410). Preceded by *slone, an elephant*, the entry reads: *maimanto*, as they say, a sea elephant, which is never seene, but according to the Samites he workes himselfe under grownde and so they finde his teeth or hornes or bones in Pechore and Nova Zemla, of which they make table men in Russia

Cyrillic printing — Edward Bernard (1638-97)

James's Russian words are written not in Cyrillic script but in a writing system which he devised himself, using mainly Latin characters with a few additions from Greek. However, to judge from pages 22-23 of his notebook, where he wrote out the letters of the Cyrillic alphabet with their numerical equivalents, he was capable of using Cyrillic. His reason for not doing so was probably so that he could convey certain phonetic subtleties. Dialectal features of the northern littoral are clearly perceptible. Other early English scholars, naturally, wrote Russian in Cyrillic and later in the seventeenth century the question of Cyrillic printing was to arise. None of the participants in the philological revival in Oxford in the second half of the century was primarily concerned with the Slavonic languages, but there were a few orientalists for whom they were of ancillary interest, including Edward Bernard (1638-97) and Thomas Hyde (1636-1703) (Simmons 1950).

As early as 1677 Hyde, collecting material for his *De ludiis orientalibus* (Oxford, 1694), wrote to Thomas Smith (1638-1710), Fellow of Magdalen and a prominent orientalist, asking him to find out the names of chessmen and playing-cards in Russian. This he did, but the Russian words could only be printed by having a special wood-block cut. Bernard's *Etymologicon*, printed as an appendix to George Hickes's *Institutiones Grammaticae* (Oxford, 1689) consists of some 800 English words with allegedly corresponding forms in Armenian, Russian, Slavonic, and Persian. The book called for Armenian and Cyrillic types, but these the Oxford University Press could not supply and the Russian words were printed in Greek characters. The same year (1689) the Press published Bernard's *Orbis Eruditi*, which contains an engraved comparative table of 29 alphabets meant to demonstrate the origin of writing. It includes a *skoropis'* Cyrillic alphabet, which is the first representation of Cyrillic script to appear in print in England (Simmons 1950:108).

However, neither Oxford University Press nor any other printer in England at that time possessed Cyrillic founts. The Press already had a reputation for the remarkable range of types it held, but Bernard was determined that it should improve its stock still further. He was a mathematician and Savilian Professor of Astronomy, but philology outweighed his other interests. He managed to arrange things so that in the course of one year (1691) he was presented to the substantial living of Brightwell in Berkshire, resigned his chair, and was appointed to the Delegacy of the Press. In October 1694 with the support of another Delegate Arthur Charlett, Master of University College, he persuaded the Delegacy to agree to have Armenian and Cyrillic type cut for the Press.

H. W. Ludolf (1655-1712)

Bernard had long been in contact with Hiob Ludolf, a German orientalist of international repute, and also with his nephew Heinrich Wilhelm Ludolf (1655-1712), a gifted linguist, who had spent several years in London in the 1680s. In a letter of 20 October 1694 Bernard wrote to the younger Ludolf (who was then in Amsterdam, having recently returned from more than a year's stay in Russia) telling him of the Delegates' decision to obtain Armenian and Cyrillic type. In his reply Ludolf told Bernard that he knew a type-cutter in Amsterdam who would do the job well and at a reasonable price. He also mentioned that he had prepared a Russian grammar and was looking for a publisher. Bernard accepted the offer of assistance and ordered the type on Ludolf's recommendation. A decision to publish Ludolf's grammar at Oxford using the new type appears to have been part of the bargain. In September 1695 Ludolf arrived in England. He stayed in London recuperating from an illness until the end of the year, but early in 1696 he arrived in Oxford to supervise the printing of his grammar. By mid May the printing had been completed.

HENRICI WILHELMI LUDOLFI
GRAMMATICA RUSSICA

QUÆ CONTINET

Non tantum præcipua fundamenta

RUSSICÆ LINGUÆ,

Verum etiam

Manuductionem quandam

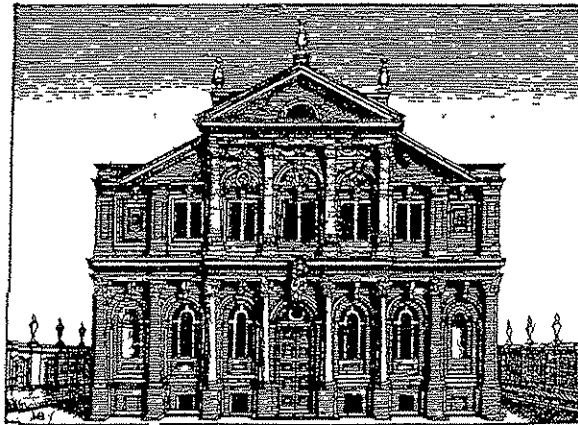
AD

GRAMMATICAM SLAVONICAM.

*Additi sunt in forma dialogorum modi loquendi communio-
res, Germanice æque ac Latine explicati, in gratiam
eorum qui linguam Latinam ignorant.*

Una cum

BREVI VOCABULARIO RERUM NATURALIUM.]



O X O N I I,

E THEATRO SHELDONIANO, A. D. MDCXCVI.

Plate 2. Title-page of Heinrich Wilhelm Ludolf's *Grammatica Russica*, printed at Oxford in 1696, showing the front elevation of the Sheldonian Theatre, where the printing was carried out (reproduced from Unbegaun 1959).

Soon afterwards Ludolf set off for London taking a number of copies of his book with him and towards the end of September he left England. He kept in touch with Oxford though, in his correspondence with Charlett, and by December 1700 he was back in London, where he spent the rest of his life apart from a short break in 1701 and a longer one from 1703 to 1705. He died in London on 25 January 1712.

The importance of Ludolf's *Grammatica Russica* extends beyond the bounds of Slavonic studies at Oxford. It is a milestone in the history of the Russian language. It is not only the first printed grammar of Russian but also the first source of any kind to distinguish systematically between the Church Slavonic and vernacular elements, even providing lists of vernacular forms accompanied by their Church Slavonic equivalents. That the Russians themselves were conscious of the distinction is attested by Ludolf's subsequently renowned observation: *Adeoque apud illos dicitur, loquendum est Russice & scribendum Slavonice* 'And so it is said among them that it is proper to speak in Russian and to write in Slavonic'.

It is significant that Ludolf's grammar was written in Latin. This meant that it could be used anywhere in western Christendom. In a memorandum to the Vice-Chancellor and Delegates of the Press Bernard had observed that it would be 'a useful booke to our Russian merchants' as well as 'an inlet into that language which is the mother of most of the dialects of Europe', but there is scant evidence of its use in England and most of the copies appear to have gone abroad. In Germany, on the other hand, it was influential and at Halle it was used as a university textbook (Zeil 1994:34). Its emphasis on spoken Russian, however, did not please everyone. The philosopher Leibniz, who learned Russian from it, said that it did less than justice to 'une certaine langue slavonne ... la langue des sçavants en Moscovie' (Simmons 1950:128).

In Germany there was a good deal of activity in the Slavonic field throughout the eighteenth century. There were as yet no Slavonic chairs, but Slavonic languages were taught at German universities and there were publications in the field of Slavonic philology. All this culminated, as the eighteenth century gave way to the nineteenth, in the discovery of the Old Church Slavonic texts and their significance for Comparative Slavonic Philology. The leaders of this activity were Jacob Grimm (1785-1863), Josef Dobrovský (1753-1829), and Bartholomäus (Jernej) Kopitar (1780-1844). Key publications were Dobrovský's *Geschichte der böhmischen Sprache* (Prague, 1791) and Kopitar's *Grammatik der slavischen Sprache in Krain, Karnten und Steyermark* (1808). If there was any interest in Slavonic languages among Oxford philologists (or any other English philologists) at this time, it has yet to be discovered. There was, however, one small incident early in the nineteenth century which suggests there may have been a tenuous link with developments in the Slavonic world and that there was some interest at Oxford in the Slavonic languages.

Kopitar's visit (1815)

In April 1814 Napoleon abdicated. In July that year the young Jernej Kopitar, a junior librarian at the Imperial Library in Vienna, was entrusted with the delicate diplomatic task of travelling to Paris and recovering the books and manuscripts which had been removed from the Library by Napoleon's forces in 1809. His mission was successful, though he had to remain in Paris much longer than he had originally expected. At the end of his stay there, just after Christmas 1814, he crossed the English Channel and spent a fortnight in England, including a visit to Oxford. The details to be found in his letters relating to the visit are extremely laconic. On 19 January 1815, five days after his return to Vienna, he wrote to Dobrovský: 'The French and the English are asking you to produce your grammar soon. I was in England too for a fortnight.' On 5 August that year he again alludes to 'your Slavonic grammar, which I promised the English' and three years later (21 May

1818) he tells Dobrovský: ‘Solarić has sent all the works of Dobrovský to Oxford and there they are learning Slavonic after North’s example, but they regret the lack of a grammar, nor is that Oxford Russian grammar enough (the author eludes me). Ludolph?’

In 1822 Dobrovský’s *Institutiones linguae slavicae dialecti veteris* was published in Vienna. This must be the book that Kopitar had promised the English in 1818, but he waited until 1825 before sending the Bodleian a copy. When he did so, however, he added a dedication recalling his visit in 1815: *Bibliothecae Bodlejanae qua est Oxonii — grati animi ergo D.[at] D.[icat] D.[edicat] illius a.[nno] 1815 hospes Barth. Kopitar. Vindobonâ 27. Sept. 1825.* But who at Oxford in 1818 was learning Slavonic remains a mystery (Stone 1996b).

Attempts to found a Slavonic Chair (1840s)

The 1840s saw the first attempts to establish a Slavonic chair at Oxford. They arose in connection with the broader question of introducing modern European languages generally to the curriculum. There were already language teachers in the University, provided for under George I’s endowment instituting the Regius Chair of Modern History. They operated under the direction of the Regius Professor, were extremely badly paid, and generally held in low regard. Proposals to establish the teaching of modern languages on a proper academic basis resulted from the legacy of Sir Robert Taylor, who left to the University a residuary interest in his estate ‘for establishing a foundation for the teaching and improving the European languages’. Taylor had died in 1789, but, owing to the life-interest of his son, it was not until 1836 that the residue, amounting to £65,000, was received by the University. Construction of the building that was to house both the modern languages institution and a University art gallery began in 1841 and was completed in 1844, though regulations for the operation of the new establishment had yet to be agreed (Firth 1929:30-33). Draft regulations were published on 6 May 1844, but they were rejected by Convocation, and it was only in 1847 at the third attempt that the Taylor Statute was passed.

The difficulties arose more from theological than philological considerations and were the result of the conflict between partisans of the Oxford Movement (Tractarians) and their opponents, the party of University reform. The Hebdomadal Board drafted regulations which they hoped would satisfy both parties, but in the event they satisfied neither. Meanwhile, in the midst of the controversy, there was speculation both in and outside Oxford as to the likely constitution of the new school. Following a leader in *The Times* in May 1844 criticizing the Board, a letter to the paper in June from ‘A Master of Arts’ (probably G. W. Dasent, an authority on Scandinavian philology) suggested there should be three professors, one each for the Teutonic, Slavonic, and Romance languages (Simmons 1980:7).

Walerian Krasieński

The possibility of a Slavonic chair was also being considered by several other influential individuals, who even had in mind an occupant for the chair. In August 1844 William Thomas Horner Fox Strangways, the English minister in Frankfurt-on-Main, wrote to his friend Lord Dudley Stuart: ‘I heard lately from Krasieński. I wish we could get him a professorship in the new Institution for Modern languages, history and literature — if I can help him, pray let me know.’ The object of this proposed patronage was Count Walerian Krasieński, author of a two-volume *Historical Sketch of the Rise, Progress, and Decline of the Reformation in Poland* (London, 1838-40) and a number of long articles on Poland and

the Slavonic languages and literatures in the *Penny Encyclopedia* of Brougham's Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge. He had come to England in 1831 as part of the Great Emigration following the November Rising. He had influential friends in England, including Lord Dudley Coutts Stuart, Lord Ashley, Henry Hallam, William Fox Strangways, and the Chevalier Bunsen (the Prussian Minister in London). The initiative appears to have been taken by Krasin'ski in writing to Fox Strangways, but the matter was then taken over by Lord Ashley, who arranged for two pamphlets to be printed, advocating the creation of a Slavonic chair, and sent to persons of influence in the University (Simmons 1952:138).

As the first English plea in favour of Slavonic studies, the pamphlets are of some historical significance. They were intended to be complementary. The first is *Letters Addressed to Lord Ashley [...] on the Importance of a Slavonic Chair at Oxford*, consisting of open letters from Henry Hallam and the Chevalier Bunsen. The second, *Reflections on the Importance of the Slavonic Languages and Literature in the Present Time. With Remarks on the Establishment of a Professor's Chair at Oxford*, is anonymous but was almost certainly the work of Krasin'ski. Nowhere is his name mentioned, but in the *Letters* Bunsen mentions that 'a very interesting and important work, published in this country, had shewn the momentous weight of the Slavonic element in the past, as well as future development of the Protestant Church,' thereby preparing the ground. This can only refer to Krasin'ski's *Historical Sketch* (Simmons 1980:8).

It was the *Historical Sketch* moreover that had first brought Krasin'ski to Bunsen's notice. Krasin'ski had been able to be of service to him and, through his intervention, had in 1843 received a gold medal from Friedrich Wilhelm III of Prussia together with a suggestion that he apply for the new Slavonic chair at the University of Berlin. The Berlin chair, however, was linked to political moves in the part of Poland under Prussian occupation, and Krasin'ski decided not to apply. An Oxford chair, on the other hand, would be untainted in this way. Krasin'ski was a Protestant, which was undoubtedly an advantage, but whether it would have been enough to secure his election is uncertain. When the second set of draft regulations were put before Convocation in April 1845, they were rejected, it was said, because a majority was unwilling 'to sanction a scheme which might lead to the nomination of some foreign Protestant, or perhaps a rationalist' (Simmons 1952:141).

Francis Henry Trithen

Among those taking an interest in the draft statute were H. G. Liddell, of Christ Church, who was not convinced of the desirability of a separate Slavonic chair, and Travers Twiss of University College, who was. Twiss, moreover, had a 'Russian-German' friend, whom he was hoping to see appointed. This friend, it eventually turned out, was Francis Trithen, a former languages master at Rugby, but now a Supernumerary Assistant in the Manuscript Department of the British Museum. Among his publications was an *Introductory Lecture on Comparative Philology*, which he had delivered as an inaugural lecture at Rugby on 27 February 1843.

By March 1846, although there was still no chair to apply for, there was at least one other contender waiting in the wings. This was G. W. Dasent, the putative author of the letter to *The Times* two years earlier, who had now equipped himself with testimonials from Jakob Grimm and Bunsen in readiness for the day. Certainly, the situation had already changed significantly since the second rejection in March 1845, for in October that year the Tractarians' leader John Henry Newman had been received into the Church of Rome and within a short time they were no longer the force they had once been. The Statute was accepted by Convocation on 4 March. On 22 October candidates for the Chair were asked to submit testimonials by the beginning of December, but no election was made. In March

1848 applications were again invited and this time Francis Trithen was chosen. Who the other candidates were (if any) is not known.

Trithen had given up his job at the British Museum in October 1845 and by December had left England to take up an official appointment in St Petersburg. By June 1848, however, he was back in England, having just assumed a post as Assistant Secretary to the Royal Geographical Society, but his stay there was brief, for on 8 December 1848 he was nominated Professor of Modern European Languages at Oxford, and five days later his appointment was approved by Convocation. Probably thanks to the support of his friend Travers Twiss, of University College, Trithen was matriculated from that college, and as a member of it received an honorary M.A. on 22 February 1849. He gave his inaugural lecture in the Taylor building on 19 May 1849. Although we know that it was well attended, neither its title nor subject were recorded (Simmons 1980:11).

THE Professor of Modern European Languages on Sir Robert Taylor's Foundation proposes to begin a Course of Lectures on the Language and Literature of Russia, in the Taylor Institution, on Friday the 2nd of November, at Two o'Clock.

These Lectures are open to all Members of the University; and those who desire to attend them are requested to leave their names at the Lecture Room in the Taylor Institution on Thursday November 1.

TAYLOR INSTITUTION,
Oct. 16, 1849.

The first course of professorial lectures given in the Taylorian whose title has survived is 'The language and literature of Russia', which Trithen began on 2 November 1849. This may be said to be the beginning of Slavonic studies at Oxford in the modern sense. Trithen was also active in the field of Slavonic philology. In 1843 he had presented to the Philological Society a paper on the structure of the Russian verb, thereby breaking completely new ground so far as Great Britain was concerned (Trithen 1844; Simmons 1980:11). The prospects seemed good. He is said to have been a likable man of great personal charm. Max Muller, his successor in the chair, said: 'He was the very type of a fascinating Russian, full of kindness and courtesy, sparkling in conversation, always ready to help others and most careless about himself' (Max Muller 1898:130). He was an excellent musician.

However, only a few months after his appointment Trithen mentioned to his successor at the Royal Geographical Society that illness had been causing him anxiety and a little later George Butler, a friend who thought him one of the most highly gifted men he had ever met, noted that after playing in a trio he became rather excited (Simmons 1980:12). At some point in 1850 Trithen went out of his mind and had to be confined in an asylum. From here he wrote reasonable letters to Max Muller, but when Muller went to see him he found him unapproachable. Trithen was sent home to Odessa into the care of his family and died there on 27 April 1854. The respect in which he was held in Russia is revealed in several substantial obituaries published there (Simmons 1980:12). Trithen's collapse came as a great shock, but Max Muller affected to have foreseen it: '... there always was an expression in his coruscating eyes which spoke of danger, and foreboded the tragedy which finished his young and promising life' (Max Muller 1898:130). It was fortunate for the University that Max Muller was at hand. He was appointed Deputy Professor in place of the incapacitated Trithen and in 1854 on Trithen's death succeeded to the full professorship. It was unfortunate for Slavonic Studies, however, that they barely attracted Max Muller's attention, and it was eleven years before the question of their being taught was again raised.

Libri polonici

A happier event in the unhappy year of Trithen's collapse (1850) was the acquisition by the Bodleian Library from the Berlin bookseller Ascher for £366 of a large collection of early Polish books, which came from the library of Józef Andrzej Łukaszewicz (1799-1873), a noted bibliographer, historian of the Reformation in Poland, and the first director the Biblioteka Razyńskich in Poznań. Labelled *Libri polonici*, it contains some 1,660 items (representing about two per cent of all Polish printing up to 1800) and includes much rare and some unique material. There is, for example, a unique copy of the first Polish newspaper *Nowiny* (1557) and a the only known perfect specimen of Szymon Zimorowicz's *Roksolanki* (1654) (Stone 1986). The collection is especially rich in the polemical literature of the sixteenth century. A number of interesting items relate to the Polish Arian movement. Three of its unique sixteenth-century Reformation pamphlets came to the notice of Professor Stanisław Kot (recipient of an Oxford D. Litt.) and were re-published by him in *Oxford Slavonic Papers* (Kot 1953). The long-projected publication of a catalogue of the *Libri polonici* remained unrealised, but they are now included in the more comprehensive *Polonica from the Bodleian's pre-1920 Catalogue* (Oxford, 1993).

The Earl of Ilchester (1795-1865)

The interest of William Thomas Horner Fox Strangways in Slavonic studies at Oxford has already been noted. His wish in 1844 to see Walerian Krasinski in a Slavonic chair was never fulfilled. In 1858 he became fourth Earl of Ilchester and on 10 January 1865 he died, leaving to the University by the terms of his will made on 1 June 1860 the sum of £1,000 for the purpose 'of founding and establishing [...] an Exhibition, Lecturership, or Scholarship, or Periodical Prize, for the encouragement of the study of the Polish and other Slavonic Languages, Literature, and History, with the view of promoting the knowledge of European Politics in general, and more especially of benefiting the diplomatic service of this Country.' It is likely that Lord Ilchester himself had some knowledge of Slavonic languages. He spent four years in Russia at the St Petersburg Embassy and was a friend of the Polish statesman Adam Czartoryski, whose guest he had been at Puławy in 1826. He was a frequent visitor to the Hotel Lambert in Paris, when Czartoryski was in exile there. He corresponded, as we have seen, with Lord Dudley Coutts Stuart (1803-1854), the leading champion in Britain, of Polish interests, and a leading member of the Council of the Literary Association of the Friends of Poland (Simmons 1980:14).

As the terms of his legacy make clear, Lord Ilchester's wish to encourage the study of the Slavonic languages included a special preference for Polish. The Hebdomadal Council considered the bequest on 27 March 1865 and referred the matter to a committee. For over a year nothing happened until on in April 1866 a letter from Viscount Strangford, a respected polyglot and amateur philologist, appeared in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, welcoming the bequest and stressing the importance of the Russian language, whose study would give 'access to the real thoughts and words of 70 millions of men' (Simmons 1980:14).

Viscount Strangford (1825-69)

Percy Ellen Algernon Frederick William Smythe, eighth Viscount Strangford, was born in St Petersburg in 1825. He is said to have had an 'intimate and thorough knowledge of the Slavonian tongues, nearly all of which he had mastered in their most minute details' (Strangford 1878:xvi). His letter to the *Pall Mall Gazette*, however, is inaccurate in detail, which may mean that he was not yet in possession of all the facts. On 17 May 1866 Convocation accepted the benefaction. A week later Strangford, now better informed, congratulated the University on accepting the benefaction 'at length' and 'without opposition, but in a thin house', but expressed 'some curiosity, not to say anxiety' to know whether it was intended to adhere strictly and literally to the arrangement whereby Lord Ilchester assigned 'priority to the Polish in preference to any other Slavonic language'. He went on to argue against Polish, asserting that it was 'full of [...] birdlike trills and twitterings'. He believed that 'the basis of all instruction should be the Old Church Slavonic' (Strangford 1878:242-4).

Following Convocations's acceptance there is a three-year gap in the narrative, and it was only on 11 December 1869 that the Curators of the Taylorian resolved to undertake the administration of Lord Ilchester's bequest. The introductory paragraph of the form of Statute that was eventually approved by Convocation on 8 June 1870 still included the word 'Polish': 'Whereas it is expedient to provide for the application of the proceeds of the Fund arising from the bequest of the Right Honourable William Thomas Horner, Earl of Ilchester for the encouragement of the study the Polish and other Slavonic Languages, Literature, and History, the University enacts as follows.

Of the Ilchester Endowment for the Encouragement of the Study of the Slavonic Languages, Literature, and History ...'

But that was the last time Polish was mentioned. The form of Statute went on to charge the Curators of the Taylor Institution with the task of applying the fund to the purpose of commissioning lectures on 'subjects connected with the Slavonic Languages or Literature, or to the History of the Slavonic Nations' and of bestowing Prizes or Exhibitions for Encouraging the study of those subjects.' When in 1870 the Statute was printed for the first time, it began: 'Of the Ilchester Endowment for the Encouragement of the Study of the Slavonic Languages, Literatures, and History ...'.

Lord Strangford had died on 9 January 1869, but his objections to Lord Ilchester's preference for Polish appear to have carried weight. As an Oxford man (matriculated Merton 1843) and an ostensible expert, he may well have influenced the deliberations at Oxford. Although he died before the promulgation of the Statute omitting the word 'Polish', there remains a suspicion that he had a part in it. Clearly Lord Ilchester's intention was to give Polish a special prominence. As things turned out, Polish was not even treated on an equal footing with Russian, but was conspicuously neglected. Over half a century was to pass before the fund was applied to any purpose connected to Polish. Meanwhile, Russian quickly gained a dominant position, which was to remain unassailable (Stone 1985:379).

The Ilchester lectures

The Curators lost no time in proceeding to discharge their authority to commission courses of lectures and had no difficulty in doing so, for they had had an offer of a course of Slavonic lectures since 13 May 1870, before the Statute had come into force, from William Richard Morfill of Oriel. And so in Michaelmas Term 1870 Morfill, who was destined in due course to be Professor of Russian and the other Slavonic languages, gave the first Ilchester lectures, consisting of a short course on 'Ethnology, early history, and popular traditions of the Slavonic nations', for which he was paid £40. The following year William R. S. Ralston of the British Museum lectured on 'The songs and stories of the Russian people'. He was followed in 1873 by Morfill again, whose subject this time was 'The best mode of beginning the study of the Slavonic languages'. In 1874 Ralston returned to lecture on 'Early Russian History'. The first four courses were thus shared between two men — a situation that has never occurred since. Ralston's 1874 lectures were published in Oxford the same year as *Early Russian History four lectures delivered at Oxford*

Ilchester lectures were commissioned most years throughout the rest of the nineteenth century with only an occasional gap of two or three years between courses. Their significance and status can be measured from the fact that they were the only modern-language lectures of scholarly standing being given in the University at that time. The Taylorian Teachers in French, German, Italian, and Spanish held their classes, and French and German had been admitted into the examination system in 1872, but they were only group subjects in the humble Pass School (Simmons 1980:17). The Chair of Modern European Languages, which Max Muller had inherited from Trithen in 1854 had been abolished in 1868, as a consequence of Max Muller's interests having outgrown the Chair's subject. Henceforth he held the Chair of Comparative Philology which the University had created for him.

William Richard Morfill (1834-1909)

The first Ilchester lecturer, William Richard Morfill, was born on 17 November 1834 at Maidstone, Kent, the second of the three children of William Morfill (1807-c.1870), a professional musician, and his wife Elizabeth, née Couchman. He was baptized into the

Church of England, together with his sister and younger brother, at All Saints' Church, Maidstone, on 26 October 1838. The Morfills are thought to be of Huguenot origin. He was educated at Maidstone Grammar School and (from 1848) at Tonbridge School. With a scholarship from his school, on 28 May 1853 he entered Corpus Christi College, Oxford, as a commoner, but migrated on 5 December that year to Oriel College on election to an open classical scholarship there. In Michaelmas Term 1855 he was placed in the First Class in Classical Moderations, but during Finals (Literae Humaniores) in 1857 he was taken seriously ill, had to retire from the examination, and was awarded only a Pass degree. Although this appeared to have put paid to any later aspirations to an academic career, he stayed in Oxford, supporting himself by giving private tuition from his rooms in Oriel Street.

On 6 September 1860 in the Parish Church of St Martin, Welton, Northamptonshire, he was married to Charlotte Maria Lee, and by 1863 he was living with his wife at 4 Clarendon Villas, Park Town, (later 42 Park Town), Oxford. From 1865 to 1869 he was a lecturer in philosophy and modern history at Charsley's Hall (one of the Oxford private halls). A precocious interest in exotic languages and the gift of a Russian grammar from one of his teachers at Tonbridge had led Morfill to apply himself seriously to the study of Russian. His first published translations from that language date from 1860 and in 1870 he made the first of many visits to Russia. He also learned other Slavonic languages and travelled to the countries where they were spoken. His first visit to Prague took place in 1871. He soon acquired a reputation as an expert in Slavonic languages, a subject which until 1870 was not represented at any British university. On 8 June that year he was appointed by the University of Oxford to give the first series of lectures in accordance with the provisions of the newly endowed Ilchester Foundation. He still had no permanent appointment, but he was engaged to give further Ilchester lectures in 1873 and 1883. The substance of some of these lectures was published in his *The dawn of European literature: Slavonic literature* (1883) (Firth 1929:58).

The Morfills had no children and the early death of his wife in 1881 was a blow from which Morfill never fully recovered. He sought solace in his work. About this time regular gatherings of his friends began to take place on Sunday afternoons at his house in Clarendon Villas for learned and literary conversation. Morfill's command of languages extended beyond the Slavonic field. The 1880s saw the appearance of his grammars of Polish (1884), Serbian (1887), and Russian (1889), but he now also turned his attention to Georgian and, following a visit to Georgia in 1888, he wrote a well-informed article on Georgian literature for *The Academy* (21 July 1888).

Official acknowledgement of his scholarship came to Morfill late in life. It was not until December 1889 that the University appointed him Reader in Russian and the other Slavonic languages, and it was only in 1900, when he was sixty-six years old, that he was promoted Professor. He had meanwhile added to his publications a history of Russia (1890), a history of Poland (1893), and grammars of Bulgarian (1897) and Czech (1899). He was a corresponding member, from 1890, of the Královská česká společnost nauk (Royal Czech Society of Sciences) and, from 1905, of the Česká akademie císaře Františka Josefa pro vědy, slovesnost a umění (Francis Joseph Czech Academy for Sciences, Literature, and Arts). He was elected fellow of the British Academy in 1903 and in July 1908 he was awarded an honorary doctorate of the Charles University, Prague.

Among the interesting visitors to Oxford who lectured in Morfill's time in accordance with the provisions of the Ilchester Foundation was the Russian poet Konstantin Dmitrievich Bal'mont (1876-1942), who on 4, 7, 9, and 11 June 1897 in the Taylorian lectured in French on 'Contemporary Russian Poetry'. The collection *Tishina*, published in 1898, contained a cycle of poems entitled 'Iz Anglii' and one of them, 'Vecher', dated 'Spring 1897, Oxford', was dedicated to Morfill. Another was entitled 'V Oksforde' (Cross 1979).



Plate 4. W. R. Morfill at an Oriel Senior Common Room reunion in 1906 (Oriel College Archives)

Believing that the account of the Slavs fed to the British public was tainted by German prejudice, Morfill saw himself as an enlightener. He believed that his own work was without bias, but in fact he had a distinctly Russian view of Slavonic brotherhood (Stone 1990). In 1904 Russian became a full degree subject at Oxford. Official recognition of the languages he had cultivated while they lay outside the curriculum is Morfill's most enduring achievement. He had a genial personality and was renowned for the charm of his

conversation. Even while he was an undergraduate, 'the epigrammatic vigour of his sentences' (Murray 1909-10:369) was noted. He was good-looking, but had a squint, which he endeavoured to hide, when drawn or photographed, by appearing in profile. Before he reached his sixtieth birthday he was bald on top and had grown a full beard to replace the whiskers he had worn as a young man. He died of old age and a weak heart at home at 4 Clarendon Villas on 9 November 1909. The funeral was held at the Church of St Philip and St James, Oxford, and he was buried in the same grave as his wife in St Sepulchre's Cemetery, Walton Street, Oxford, on 13 November 1909 (Stone 2004c). The headstone, shaded by a fine beech, stood intact until the twenty-first century, but by mid 2005 it was shattered and overgrown by brambles.

Nevill Forbes (1883-1929)

The names of a few of Morfill's pupils are known. Among them are John Oliver Wardrop (1864-1948), later famous for his services to Georgian studies, Raymond Béazley, who became Professor of History at the University of Birmingham, and Nevill Forbes (1883-1929), who eventually succeeded Morfill. Forbes was born on 19 February 1883 at 'Forbes's' (later 'Ashbee's'), Godden Green, near Sevenoaks, Kent, the younger child of Francis Augustine Forbes (1844-1911), stockbroker, and his wife Jessie Mary, née Carrick (1842-1925). Both his parents were of Scottish descent, but his mother's family was resident in Cronstadt, Russia. Nevill was educated at home by a governess until he was about nine, when he was sent as a weekly boarder to a local preparatory school. In January 1897 he entered Marlborough College, but left prematurely owing to tuberculosis. His mother's brother George was a specialist on the koumiss remedy for this disease and had a sanatorium near Orenburg, in southern Russia, so it was decided to send him there for treatment. After two separate summer visits to the sanatorium in 1900 and 1901, during which he studied Russian, he travelled with his mother to the Caucasus and the Crimea (autumn 1901 to spring 1902). He made a full recovery and his tuberculosis never recurred (Ashbee 1976).

In October 1903 he entered Balliol College, Oxford, as a commoner, and in his first term won the Taylorian Scholarship in Russian. Taught by Morfill, he graduated B.A. (First Class) in the new school of Modern Languages in 1906, being the first candidate to offer Russian. Morfill intended him to continue his studies under Vatroslav Jagić in Vienna, but his other teacher, Joseph Wright, insisted on the University of Leipzig, where Wright himself had studied nearly twenty years earlier. Considering Wright the more influential of his two patrons, Forbes registered at Leipzig in autumn 1908, where his research was supervised by [Johann Heinrich] August Leskien. In 1910 with a dissertation entitled *Der Gebrauch der Relativpronomina im Altrussischen* he gained the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. When Morfill died in November 1909, Forbes was appointed to succeed him from 1910 as Reader. From November 1921 he was Professor of and Reader in Russian and the Other Slavonic Languages. Additionally (from 1920) he was a Lecturer in Russian at the Queen's College.

During the First World War Forbes, though unfit for active service, became a lieutenant in the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve, working in the Intelligence Department of the Admiralty. In 1918 he was serving in Salonica. From early in his career he concentrated on meeting the demand for introductory grammars and text-books. His *Russian Grammar* (1914) remained in print throughout most of the twentieth century, the third edition (revised and enlarged by John Dumbreck) being last reissued in 1990. Forbes also edited several elementary Russian readers and collaborated with Dragutin Subotić in publishing a *Serbian Grammar* (1915) and an English grammar (*Engleska gramatika*, 1920) for Serbs. His interest in the south Slavs was further reflected in the chapters on Bulgaria and Serbia he

contributed to *The Balkans* (1915) and in his pamphlet entitled *The Southern Slavs* (1915). Though a poor lecturer, he was an excellent tutor and not short of pupils. During the 1920s the annual number of undergraduates taking Finals in Russian averaged slightly less than two

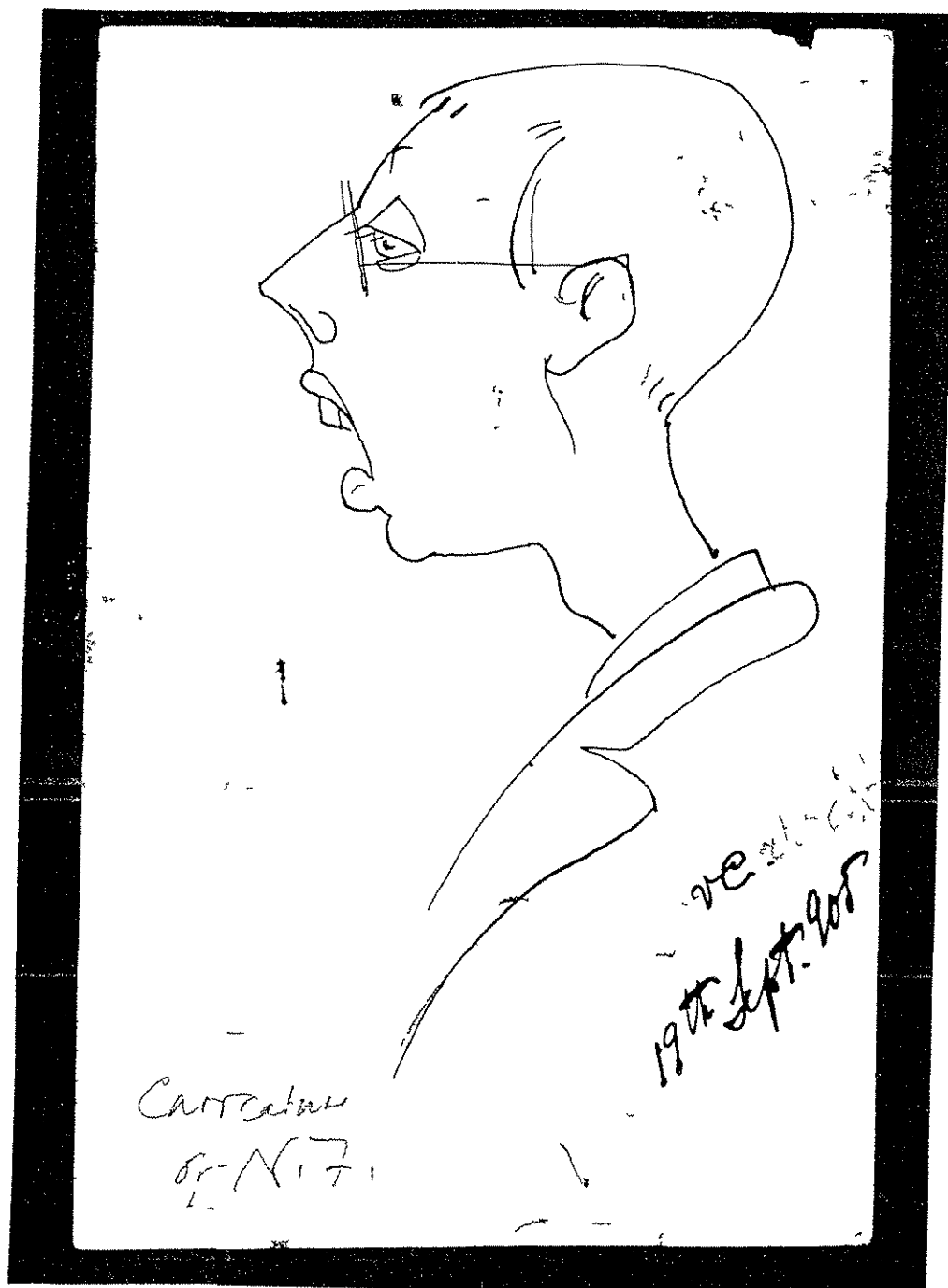


Plate 5. Nevill Forbes, caricature drawn in 1905 by Valery Carrick (property of Felicity Ashbee)

Forbes was a homosexual and never married. He was fond of children and translated a series of Russian children's stories which were published, with illustrations by his Russian cousin Valery Carrick, as *Picture Tales from the Russian* (1913), *More Russian Picture Tales* (1914), and *Still More Russian Picture Tales* (1915). The caricature of Forbes reproduced on p. 15 is by Carrick. He had a gentle disposition, was thin and delicate in appearance and, being shortsighted, wore glasses. He had a tendency to hypochondria and this was revealed in his habit of enquiring, before kissing his nieces, whether they had colds. A skilled amateur pianist with a large repertoire known by heart, he was loved music and was a keen concert-goer. His artistic temperament was also revealed in a love of the theatre and, above all, of bright colours. From 1919 until his death he resided in a house overlooking the River Thames at 17, Botley Road, Oxford, known as Bridge House (now the River Hotel), where he found pleasure in cultivating his garden. His sister, visiting Oxford in the spring of 1926, saw him 'happy in his lot and content' and noted 'it is evident that wherever he goes he is liked and welcomed' (Ashbee 1976, 90).

Early in 1929 Forbes became concerned about the condition of his teeth. His dentist sent him to a bacteriologist, whose report worried him. Fears about his health preyed on his mind and on 9 February 1929 he was found in his bath, semi-conscious and bleeding from self-inflicted wounds. His doctor was called and attempts were made to save his life, but he died the same day. A member of the Church of England, he was buried in the churchyard of the Parish Church of St Peter and St Paul, Seal, near Sevenoaks, in the Forbes family grave (Stone 2004b).

Undergraduate numbers

The Class List issued by the Examiners 'in Literis Modernis' in 1906 and published later in the *University Calendar* shows that of the four men and five women who passed that year Forbes was the only one offering Russian. The examiners were Morfill and Mr. A. P. Goudy from Cambridge. The next Russian candidate was Forbes's pupil E. A. Bigsby of Lincoln College, who in 1914 was placed in the Second Class and credited with special proficiency in the colloquial use of the language. In Forbes's time there was an intermittent trickle of Russian Finalists, some of whom had taken a shortened, unclassified course. From 1921 to 1928 there was never a year without at least one Russian Finalist, and in 1922 there were five taking the full examination and one the shortened version. The candidate taking the shortened version was William Alexander Gerhardt (1895-1977), who, while an undergraduate at Worcester College, had written his first novel *Futility: A Novel on Russian Themes* (1922) and *Anton Chehov* (1923), the first English book on Chekhov.

Goudy continued to act as the second examiner in Russian until 1927, when he was replaced by Sir Bernard Pares from the University of London. There was in those days no rule stipulating the role of an external examiner, but Forbes would have been hard put to it to find a co-examiner in Oxford. In 1929 (the year of Forbes's death) and 1930 there were no Russian Finalists.

Sergey Kononov (1899-1982)

The year after Forbes's death the University appointed Sergey Aleksandrovich Kononov to a University Lecturership in Slavonic Studies for two years. He continued to hold this post on short-term contracts until 1945, when he was elected to a Chair of Russian, newly created by a statute of 1944. Kononov was born in Moscow on 31 October 1899. His father, a businessman who was also prominent in public life, served in the Provisional Government as Minister of Trade and Industry, and for two days in 1917 acted as Prime

Minister following Alexander Kerensky's departure. Sergey Konovalov arrived in England just after the end of the First World War and studied at Oxford for the Diploma in Economics and Political Science, which he took in 1921. In 1927, having written a thesis on monetary reconstruction in Czechoslovakia, he received the degree of B. Litt. and in 1929, though unqualified in the Slavonic field, he was elected to a part-time Chair of Russian at the University of Birmingham. After his appointment as Lecturer at Oxford he held both posts simultaneously until his election to the Oxford chair (Foote 1982:2). At Oxford throughout the 1930s and the Second World War he tutored a trickle of Oxford students reading Russian. The average number was slightly less than one a year.

Konovalov's election to the Oxford Chair was the beginning of a new era. In 1947 the Interdepartmental Commission of Enquiry on Oriental, Slavonic, East European, and African studies, chaired by the Earl of Scarborough, reported to Ernest Bevin, the Foreign Secretary. Set up in December 1944 by Anthony Eden, Bevin's predecessor, it was cognisant of the precedence of the Foreign Office Committee on Russian studies, set up in August 1944 under the chairmanship of Sir Orme Sargent, with which it had collaborated. Konovalov had been a member of the liaison sub-committee of this Committee, liaising with the Scarborough Commission. The recommendations of the Scarborough Commission on Russian were largely based on the report of the Sargent Committee. In fact, the signatories of the Russian section of the Scarborough Report are the members of the Sargent Committee's liaison sub-committee (including Konovalov) (*Report* 1947:78 and 129).

As a result of the Commission's recommendations for the expansion of Slavonic Studies the University Grants Committee began to channel substantial government funds to a small number of universities, including Oxford, to assist in this objective. Konovalov was thus able to expand the subject at Oxford in a number of ways: by developing publications, building up libraries, and establishing an unprecedented number of new posts. He had made a name for himself at Birmingham as an editor and bibliographer. He had founded the *Birmingham Russian Memoranda on Soviet Economics* and co-edited the *Polish Monograph Series*. Now, at Oxford, he had scope to develop this editorial activity further by founding two series of books for teaching Russian literature, *Oxford Russian Readers* and *Blackwell's Russian Texts*, which began to appear at a time when there was a notable dearth of suitable texts for teaching Russian literature.

With a subsidy from Scarborough funds an arrangement was agreed with the Clarendon Press in 1949 to make possible the publication of an annual volume of studies in the Slavonic field. This was the beginning of *Oxford Slavonic Papers*. As its founding editor Konovalov succeeded in gaining a number of outstanding contributors. They were mainly from Oxford. In the first volume (1950) the only outsider was B. O. Unbegaun, then Professor of Slavonic Philology at Strasbourg. Gradually the proportion of outside contributions increased, but local produce was always abundant. A tradition evolved of publishing documents and drawing on the manuscript resources of Oxford libraries. Thirteen volumes of the first series appeared between 1950 and 1967. In volume 2 (1951) Isaiah Berlin published an essay on Tolstoy's historical scepticism which was to be widely acclaimed a few years later when a revised and expanded version of it appeared as *The Hedgehog and the Fox*.

Although Konovalov was instrumental in making possible the publication of countless pieces of valuable research carried out by others, his own output was of modest proportions. It was nonetheless of high quality and, in addition to his editorial role, he regularly contributed to *Oxford Slavonic Papers* as an author, publishing a series of articles and documents mostly concerned with Anglo-Russian relations in the seventeenth century, a subject on which he was an authority. As editor, he attracted contributions from many eminent scholars, including Sir Maurice Bowra, B. H. Sumner, Lord David Cecil, Pierre Pascal, N. K. Gudzi, Nicholas Bakhtin, P. N. Berkov, Roman Jakobson, D. S. Likhachev,

and Max Vasmer. The journal's centre of gravity was always Russian, but there were several articles of Polish interest by Stanisław Kot, Claude Backvis, Julian Krzyżanowski, Andrzej Walicki, H. Świdorska, and John Sparrow. The last named of these published an investigation of the Polish Neo-Latin poet Casimir Sarbowski in volume 8 (1962), which caused a stir among experts in the field, resulting in a rejoinder from Sparrow in volume 12 (1965).

Konovalov was a skilful administrator. Taking advantage of the improved climate for Slavonic Studies he managed not only to create new posts but also to fill them with scholars of outstanding ability. He thus brought to Oxford Dimitri Obolensky in 1948, John Simmons in 1949, and Boris Unbegaun in 1953. His organizational methods were effective but unobtrusive, so unobtrusive in fact that he acquired a reputation for being somewhat less than dynamic (he was perceived by some undergraduates as a reincarnation of Oblomov), but this was deceptive. He had formidable diplomatic skills which usually enabled him to achieve his goal (Foote 1982:3). He held the Chair for twenty-two years until 1967, when he retired and was succeeded by John Fennell. He died on 12 February 1982.

'Large and looming benign' is how one of Konovalov's pupils recalls him. He was of imposing appearance, discreetly elegant in manners and dress. Dignity, courtesy, and great personal charm are among the qualities attributed to him (Foote 1982:3). He was very tall and powerfully built. His lecturing skills were limited and tended to discourage attendance beyond the third week of term, but he had a fine voice and splendid diction. A man of natural caution and reserve, he sometimes gave the impression of being aloof, but this was probably due to shyness and a natural reserve. He regularly invited all students in their second year to tea, and thanks to his gift for putting his guests at their ease 'even the most gauche of undergraduates forgot their nervousness' (Fennell 1982).

During his tenure of the Chair Konovalov saw an unprecedented expansion in the number of undergraduates reading Russian. Throughout the 1930s he had seen the number of Russian Finalists fluctuate between zero and three (1930:0, 1931:1, 1932:1, 1933:0, 1934:3, 1935:0, 1936:2, 1937:0, 1938:1, 1939:1, 1940:1, 1941:0, 1942:2, 1943:4 [of whom 3 took a shortened course], 1944:1, 1945:2 [of whom one took a shortened course], 1946:1). In 1947 there were signs of growth: five candidates took Finals in Russian, of whom three (R. F. Hingley, F. M. Borrás, and H. T. Willetts) were soon to make their mark on the subject. A leap occurred in 1948, when there were thirteen Russian Finalists, including two completing the shortened course, and in 1950 a record number of twenty was reached (one having taken the shortened course). Throughout the 1950s and 1960s the figures were remarkably volatile. The greatest single jump was from 14 Russian Finalists in 1955 to 39 in 1956. The highest number ever was 46 in 1961, followed by a drop in 1962 to 26. From then until 1970 the numbers fluctuated between 18 and 27. The bulge between 1956 and 1962 reflects the supply of candidates who had learned Russian at the Joint Services School of Languages during National Service (which ended in 1962).

Apart from the optional paper in Comparative Slavonic Philology there was as yet no provision at the first-degree level for any Slavonic language other than Russian. However, although his own expertise was in the Russian field, Konovalov never lost sight of his subject's broader Slavonic context. On his initiative in 1950 the University instituted a postgraduate Diploma in Slavonic Studies, providing a course framework for the study of the languages, literature, and history of some of the other Slavonic countries. He also laid long-term plans for the appointment of a lecturer whose responsibilities would include the Diploma, and these eventually matured in 1972 with the creation of a post specifically in non-Russian Slavonic languages. The Diploma was eventually superseded by the one-year M. St. course and the two-year M.Phil.

The Rawnsley Studentship

The study of the other Slavonic languages at graduate level was given further support in 1953 as the result of a benefaction. Hilda Mary Virtue-Tebbs, who died that year, left the residue of her estate to the University for the purpose of founding a studentship for the furtherance of the study of Czech and Polish language and literature tenable at St Hugh's College. In accordance with Miss Virtue-Tebbs's wish it was named the Rawnsley Studentship, in memory of her nephew Flight Lieutenant Derek Rawnsley, R. A. F., who died in February 1942. As neither Czech nor Polish appeared in the undergraduate syllabus at that time, the College decided that holders of the Studentship might be working either for the Diploma in Slavonic Studies or for a research degree in Czech or Polish, but did not exclude the possibility of its being held by an undergraduate, 'should the Board of the Faculty of Modern Languages at any time add [...] either Czech or Polish to the list of languages which can be offered in the Final School' (S. Hugh's 1954:359). The first holder was Bohuslava Bradbrook, who wrote a thesis on 'Karel Čapek and the Western world', which was approved from the D. Phil. in 1959.

Nadejda Gorodetzky (1901-85)

The lectureship in Russian left vacant in 1945 by Konovalov's election to the new Chair was filled immediately by Nadejda Danilovna Gorodetzky. Born on 28 July 1901 in Moscow, she was educated at schools in Gatchina and Poltava. After the October Revolution she left Russia and continued her education first at the University of Zagreb, Yugoslavia, then at the Sorbonne in Paris, where she followed the seminars of Professor Nicholas Berdyaev. In 1934-5 she was a student at the College of the Ascension, Selly Oak, Birmingham. She matriculated at Oxford from the Society of Home Students (later St. Anne's College) in 1935 and in 1938 with a thesis entitled 'The humiliated Christ in modern Russian thought' was awarded the degree of B. Litt. This work appeared as book with the title unchanged in London in 1938. In 1941 she was in Oxford teaching British officers on intensive Russian courses, and in 1942-3 she held a Yates Lecturership from St Hugh's College. The course of lectures she gave then on the History of Russian Religious Thought made her the first woman to lecture in the Oxford Honour School of Theology. She was awarded the D. Phil in 1944 on the basis of a dissertation on 'St. Tikhon of Voronezh', which formed the basis of her book *Saint Tikhon Zadonsky: Inspirer of Dostoevsky* (London, 1951).

Gorodetzky's career as a university lecturer coincided with a dramatic expansion in undergraduate numbers and she was an industrious tutor, although she never held a college fellowship or lectureship. She had a flat at 68 Banbury Road, part of the Park Town development, and there in the late 1940s and 1950s she used to receive her pupils 'in the Catherine the Great fashion, stretched out on a *chaise longue*', as one of them later recalled. There was a need for new teaching materials and this motivated her (in collaboration with Natalie Duddington) to publish *Lev Tolstoy: Selections* (Oxford, 1959). This was followed by her editions of *Six Stories by A. P. Chekhov* (London, 1963) and (with Jessie Coulson) of *Russian Short Stories: XXth Century* (Oxford 1965). She is best remembered, however, for her work on the biography of Princess Zinaida Volkonskaya, which was never published, apart from an important article in *Oxford Slavonic Papers* in 1954. In 1956 she left Oxford for Liverpool on being elected to the Bowes Chair of Russian there. In retirement she returned to live in Oxford and, being invited to fill a temporary vacancy, lectured to Oxford undergraduates for the last time in 1972. She died on 24 May 1985.

Dimutri Obolensky (1918-2001)

Seeing that the Scarborough Commission only reported in 1947 and the resultant funds from the University Grants Committee cannot have arrived instantaneously, Konovalov's alacrity in setting up a Readership in Russian and Balkan Medieval History and successfully inviting Dimitri Dimitrievich Obolensky to occupy it by January 1949 is impressive. Obolensky was born on 1 April 1918 in Petrograd. Both his parents were of distinguished lineage. The Obolenskys could trace their ancestry back to Rurik, the first known head of the princely dynasty of Rus'. When only a few months old Obolensky was taken by his mother and grandmother from Petrograd to the Crimea and then, early in 1919, they were evacuated on a British warship. From 1923 they lived in Nice and from 1929 in Paris. From here he was sent to an English preparatory school, but he received his secondary education in Paris, principally at the Lycée Pasteur. He won a scholarship to Trinity College, Cambridge, and went up in Michaelmas Term 1937. In addition to gaining Firsts in both Russian and French in 1940, he was a tennis Blue.

When war broke out in 1939 Obolensky, being stateless, was unable to volunteer for military service. He embarked on research into the history of the Bogumils and, on the strength of his dissertation, which he completed with extraordinary speed, was elected to a Prize Fellowship at Trinity in 1942. From 1946 he was Lecturer in Slavonic Studies at Cambridge, but in late 1948 he moved to Oxford and in January 1949 took up the newly created post of Reader in Russian and Balkan Medieval History at Oxford. Christ Church, Trinity's sister college, elected him to a Studentship in 1950. His seminal book *The Bogumils: A Study in Balkan Neo-Manichaeism* had been published in 1948. He now set out future lines of research in a wide-ranging study 'Russia's Byzantine Heritage', which was published in the first issue of Konovalov's newly-founded *Oxford Slavonic Papers*. Over the years it retained its force and by the end of the century had been reprinted four times. Obolensky taught not only Russian literature but also the history of Russia and the Balkans. His lectures on early Russian literature, especially on the *Slovo o polku Igoreve*, left a lasting impression on those that heard them, and he is remembered as an exemplary tutor.

A product of his early years at Oxford was *The Penguin Book of Russian Verse*, first published in 1962. His introduction and prose translations, linked to a series of readings on BBC radio, brought Russian poetry to readers far beyond the academic sphere. His masterpiece was *The Byzantine Commonwealth. Eastern Europe, 500-1453* (London, 1971). This was followed by *Six Byzantine Portraits* (Oxford, 1988). Obolensky was elected a Fellow of the British Academy in 1974 and was knighted in 1984. He retired in 1985 and died in The Cotswold Home, near Burford, on 23 December 2001 (Shepard 2004).

In his efforts to develop Slavonic Studies at Oxford Konovalov was not alone. He had powerful allies in Maurice Bowra, Warden of Wadham College 1938-70, and Isaiah Berlin, Fellow of New College and All Souls and, from 1957, Chichele Professor of Social and Political History. One of the trio's first priorities was to build up the Slavonic holdings in Oxford libraries. Although the Scarborough Report had specified the need for library expansion and funds were available through the Scarborough grant, bibliographic expertise was in short supply; but Konovalov already knew a suitable applicant for this job.

J.S. G. Simmons (1915-2005)

John Simon Gabriel Simmons was born on 8 July 1915 in Birmingham, where he was also educated at West House and at King Edward's School. In 1932 he matriculated at University of Birmingham and began to work towards the pass B. A., being employed

simultaneously part-time in the University Library. In 1934, with a student group, he made his first visit to the Soviet Union, and from that year Konovalov was his tutor for Russian. On graduating B.A. in 1937 Simmons became a research student, supervised by Konovalov and acting simultaneously as his assistant and amanuensis. On the outbreak of war in 1939 Simmons, who was already in the Officers Training Corps, was immediately called up and sent for infantry training at Colchester. He passed out third in an intake of over a hundred. In 1940 he was in France with the Warwickshire Regiment as part of the British Expeditionary Force, but his unit was withdrawn from France shortly before the Dunkirk evacuation. In 1944 he was back in France on the staff of Field Marshall Montgomery. After the cessation of hostilities he received orders to take charge of the archive of the German High Command at Gotha and prepare it for shipping to America. At the last minute before shipping he received a signal instructing him to retrieve from the archive (which was by now packed in over a hundred chests) the files relating to operation 'Seelowe', the planned invasion of Britain in 1940. His ability to carry out the retrieval successfully he attributed to his librarian's training.

Following demobilization in December 1945 Simmons returned to Birmingham as an assistant librarian and resumed the research for a doctorate on the history of printing in Russia. Owing to the inaccessibility of essential sources in the Soviet Union, however, this project was never completed. Konovalov, now Professor of Russian at Oxford and supported by Bowra and Berlin, managed to create the unprecedented post of librarian-lecturer in charge of Slavonic books. The holder would be responsible (with access to Scarborough funds) for Slavonic library accessions and answerable solely to Konovalov and the Faculty of Modern Languages.

Simmons assumed this post in 1949 and began to acquire Slavonic (mainly Russian) books, but at this time it was still virtually impossible to buy books from the Soviet Union. His main sources were in Finland and among Russian emigrés. But in 1953 very soon after the death of Stalin the situation improved. Richard Freeborn, who had graduated at Oxford in Russian in 1950 (and was later to be an Oxford lecturer and eventually Professor of Russian at the School of Slavonic Studies in the University of London), was now at the British Embassy in Moscow, and at his invitation Simmons visited Moscow in August 1953. He appeared one day unannounced at the Lenin Library, where he established good relations with the head of acquisitions at the Lenin Library, Boris Kanevsky. Simmons gave him a copy of the Oxford University Press catalogue and a list of Oxford's Russian desiderata. An book-exchange scheme quickly fell into place.

Konovalov had a reputation as an editor, particularly as founder-editor of *Oxford Slavonic Papers*, the first ten volumes of which appeared under his exclusive editorship. From volume 11 to volume 13 (the last in the first series), however, they were shown as being edited by S. Konovalov and J.S.G. Simmons. This was a late acknowledgement of what had already long been the case. Although Konovalov, who had come to England at the age of nineteen, spoke and wrote English well, he lacked the verbal polish needed for academic writing. This had been supplied by Simmons since the 1930s in Birmingham and continued to be supplied at Oxford from the inception of *Oxford Slavonic Papers*. It is worth noting, for example, Isaiah Berlin's acknowledgement in *The Hedgehog and the Fox* [vi] to Simmons 'for his care in seeing the earlier version through the press', even though this earlier version (*OSP*, vol. 2) bore no sign of Simmons's involvement.

With the appearance of volume 13 in 1967 and Konovalov's retirement that year the original series of *Oxford Slavonic Papers* came to an end, but it was immediately revived by a triumvirate consisting of Simmons, Robert Auty, and John Fennell. The first volume of the new hard-backed series was published in 1968. Simmons, as General Editor, took on the main editorial burden. The influence of his typographical interests was manifested in the English and Russian titles of the journal on the title-page and wrapper, which were printed in

types cast from the original seventeenth-century Fell and Ludolf matrices preserved at the University Press. This feature, which was maintained until volume 5 of the new series (1972), was also an echo of the research underlying his definitive account of the production of Ludolf's grammar 'H. W. Ludolf and the Printing of his *Grammatica Russica* at Oxford in 1696', *Oxford Slavonic Papers*, i (1950), 104-30.

Simmons remained librarian-lecturer until 1969, when he was made Reader in Russian and Slavonic Bibliography. In 1965 All Souls elected him to a fellowship, and in 1970 he became librarian of the College, in charge of the Codrington Library. From 1972 he was replaced as General Editor of *Oxford Slavonic Papers* by I. P. Foote. Among his bibliographical achievements a prominent place is held by his classified and indexed lists of theses in Slavonic studies approved for higher degrees by British universities, of which he published four in *Oxford Slavonic Papers* before handing the task over to Gregory Walker. The first list contained 313 entries for the sixty years following the first British degree in the field, which was awarded in 1907. After retirement in 1982 he held the office of deputy archivist of All Souls until 1989, continuing his work cataloguing the college's records (Anon. 2005; Bell 2005). In 1987 he received the honorary degree of Doctor of Letters from the University of Birmingham. His substantially revised and updated translation of N. P. Lixačev's guide to Russian watermarks appeared in Amsterdam in 1994 as *Likhachev's Watermarks*. He died at Oxford on 22 September 2005.

In 1949 Konovalov and Gorodetzky had been joined not only by Obolensky and Simmons, but also by W. N. Vickery and H. M. Hayward, who were appointed to lecturerships in Russian for four years. It was a year of unprecedented growth.

Boris Unbegaun (1898-1973)

It was again thanks to the administrative skill of Konovalov that the University in 1953 created a new Chair of Comparative Slavonic Philology. The first holder (from 1953 to 1965) was Boris Ottokar Unbegaun. Even before his election, however, Unbegaun had been in contact with Oxford, as may be seen from his edition of Pushkin's *Povesti Belkina*, published in Blackwell's Russian Texts in 1947, and from 1948 he regularly travelled from Strasbourg, where he was then Professor of Slavonic Philology, to lecture at Oxford. Unbegaun was born in Moscow on 23 August 1898 (OS) into a family of Baltic German ancestry. He fought in the White Army during the Civil War and was twice wounded. Forced to emigrate, he found refuge in the new Yugoslavia, where he settled in Ljubljana and studied Slavonic philology under the two great Slovene Slavists, Fran Ramovš and Rajko Nahtigal. It was in Ljubljana that he met his future wife Elena Maksouroff.

In 1925 Unbegaun moved to Paris, where he worked as Librarian of the Institut d'Études slaves and in 1929 published the *Catalogue des périodiques slaves et relatifs aux études slaves des bibliothèques de Paris*. He gained his D. ès L. in 1935 with two classic works: *Les Débuts de la langue littéraire chez les Serbes* and *La Langue russe au XVI^e siècle*, both of which were published that year. He became famous for a series of bibliographies chronicling Slavonic linguistic research, published in the *Revue des études slaves* and *Rocznik slawistyczny*, but simultaneously he was producing learned articles of enduring value. His first academic appointment came in 1937, when he was appointed *maître de conférences* at the University of Strasbourg. With the defeat of France in 1940 the university's staff were evacuated to Montpellier in the unoccupied zone, but in 1942 this area too was occupied by the Germans and Unbegaun was deported to Buchenwald concentration camp. His linguistic observations made in Buchenwald were reported in his article of 1947 'Les argots slaves des camps de concentration' (reprinted in Unbegaun 1969:92-110).

Not long after his arrival in Oxford Unbegaun became acquainted with two new sources for the study of the language of Muscovy and on them he based several of his later articles. These were the manuscript Russian vocabularies compiled by two English travellers to Russia, Mark Ridley and Richard James, both of which are in the Bodleian Library. It was intended that a full edition of the vocabularies of Richard James and Mark Ridley would appear in a volume to be published by the Clarendon Press, edited by Unbegaun and Simmons. As by-products of this editorial work Unbegaun published a series of lexicological studies (Stone 1996a:38-9). Meanwhile in Leningrad Professor B. A. Larin, unaware of the work of Unbegaun and Simmons and unbeknown to them, was preparing his own edition of the James notebook, using photographs supplied to him in 1935. As we now know, Russian interest in James went back to the visit of J. Hamel to the Bodleian in 1814 in the train of the Emperor Alexander (Hamel 1968:398-402).

Larin's edition appeared in late 1959 and before long a copy arrived in Oxford. Unbegaun responded with an article in *Oxford Slavonic Papers*, welcoming Larin's edition and complementing it with corrections and additions (*OSP*, x, 1962:46-59, reprinted in Unbegaun 1969: 237-54). Especially towards the end of his life Unbegaun was a persistent protagonist in the debate on the origins (vernacular or Church Slavonic) of the Russian literary language (Auty 1974:6-8). At the same time his interest in the study of personal names, beginning at least as early as 1950, culminated in his *Russian Surnames*, published by OUP in 1972. He retired in 1965 and to celebrate his seventieth birthday in 1968 a selection of his papers on Slavonic philology were assembled by Robert Auty and Anne Pennington and reprinted by the Clarendon Press (Unbegaun 1969). Unbegaun was also the General Editor of the *Oxford Russian-English Dictionary* (first edition 1972). On retirement from the Oxford chair he accepted the chair of Slavic Languages at New York University, but continued to visit Oxford every summer. He died in New York on 4 March 1973 (Auty 1973; Drage/Pennington 1973).

Unbegaun was elected to the Oxford Chair in 1953. A year later R. H. Freeborn and I. P. Foote were appointed to lecturerships in Russian, and in 1955 they were joined by R. F. Hingley.

Robert Auty (1914-1978)

Robert Auty, who succeeded Unbegaun in the Chair of Comparative Slavonic Philology, was born on 10 October 1914 at 31 Tooker Road, Rotherham, Yorkshire, the second son and youngest of the four children of George Auty, headmaster of an elementary school, and his wife, Martha Louise, née Richards. Educated at Rotherham grammar school, he gained a major scholarship in modern languages at Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, matriculating there at Michaelmas 1932. In both parts of the modern and medieval languages tripos (German and French) he was placed in the first class and graduated B.A. in 1935. On being awarded the Tiarks German scholarship, he enrolled at the University of Munster, where in the remarkably short period of two years (1935-7) he completed his doctoral dissertation on the *Minnesang*, supervised by Gunther Muller. A visit to Prague in April 1937 with a British youth delegation impressed him deeply. He returned to Cambridge in October 1937 as a faculty assistant lecturer in German, but his growing interest in the Slavonic field was persistent. Norman Brooke Jopson (1890-1969), whose Old Church Slavonic classes he attended in 1938-9, was a significant influence.

Auty was quick to recognize the evil nature of Nazism and became unique among his Cambridge colleagues in the practical aid he gave to its victims. He visited Germany several times in 1938, running great risks in securing the release of Jews from concentration camps and ensuring their escape to Britain. One of the hundreds he saved dubbed him the 'light-

blue Pimpernel. Auty had formed a friendship in Prague with Hana Škobisová, a half-Jewish twenty-year-old student of English; on 15 March 1939, following the German occupation of the rump of Czechoslovakia, he telephoned her from Cambridge and proposed marriage, but she refused him. The following day he went to Prague to see her, but on 8 April he was expelled by the Gestapo into Poland. He last saw her in July at a point on the new frontier between the Reich and the protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, which was as near as he could get to where she then lived. She died in Theresienstadt concentration camp.



Plate 6. Robert Auty (c. 1968)

From 1939 Auty worked in London for the Czech government in exile as a translator. In 1944 he became a temporary official with the Foreign Office. On 24 June 1944 in London he was married to Kathleen Marjorie Milnes-Smith, a private secretary at the War Office, London. They had a son and an adopted daughter. In 1945 he returned to Cambridge and became a university lecturer in German, but his post was redefined in 1948 as lecturer in German and Czech and in 1957 as lecturer in Slavonic studies. In 1950 he was elected to a fellowship at Selwyn College, Cambridge. He held several college and university administrative offices.

In 1962 Auty was appointed to the Chair of Comparative Philology of the Slavonic Languages at the School of Slavonic and East European Studies in the University of London, and from here in 1965 he moved to Oxford as Professor of Comparative Slavonic Philology with a professorial fellowship at Brasenose College. As a resident fellow, he entered into college life enthusiastically. His marriage was dissolved in about 1966. An Anglican, he attended chapel regularly. He had now become the doyen of British Slavists and was discharging many functions on international academic bodies. He travelled widely.

The core of Auty's scholarly work is in some twenty-five articles published between 1953 and 1978 analysing aspects of the language revivals of the Czechs, Slovaks, Slovenes, Croats, and Serbs, which he saw as manifestations of a single movement. His *Handbook of Old Church Slavonic, Part II: Texts and Glossary* (1960) is his only book. His contribution to Slavonic studies was unusual in the British context in that it was not Russian-centred, especially as he was working at a time when Russian studies were expanding. He was a corresponding member of the Osterreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften (1975) and a Fellow of the British Academy (1976). He had an extraordinary practical command of many languages, including German, French, Czech, Hungarian, Slovak, Polish, Serbo-Croat, and Russian.

Auty was of medium height. His face, which was long and narrow with a long chin, was unexpressive, except when he laughed. His hair, once light brown, was grey before he was thirty and white before he was forty. He walked with long, determined strides. His dress was conventional. Though not athletic (he had no interest in sport), his health seemed robust until a few days before his death, when he told a friend that he had learned with surprise that he was suffering from asthma and expressed dissatisfaction with the medication he had been given. On the morning of 18 August 1978 his scout found him lying in bed with the light on and a book open in front of him. He had died earlier that day of acute left ventricular failure, hypertension, and bronchial asthma. The funeral service was held in Brasenose College chapel and he was buried in Wolvercote cemetery, Oxford, on 23 August 1978.

Anne Pennington (1934-81)

Auty's death was totally unexpected and there was a pause of two years before the vacant Chair of Comparative Slavonic Philology was filled. His successor was Anne Elizabeth Pennington, who had until then been a C.U.F. Lecturer and Fellow and Tutor in Slavonic Languages of Lady Margaret Hall. She was born at Herne Bay, Kent, on 31 March 1934 and was brought up there. From the Simon Langton Girls' Grammar School, Canterbury, she entered Lady Margaret Hall as a scholar in 1952 to read French and Russian. She graduated in 1955, being placed in the First Class, and the following year she was awarded the Diploma in Slavonic Studies with Distinction. Her research, supervised by Boris Unbegaun, on the language of Grigory Karpovich Khotoshikhin's description of Muscovy in the reign of Tsar Aleksey Mikhaylovich brought her the D.Phil. in 1964. Her knowledge of the Slavonic languages was by now remarkably wide. She had spent the year

1958-9 in Göttingen and Berlin, learning German and attending classes in Serbo-Croat, Czech, Sorbian, and Bulgarian. She was a fully rounded Slavonic philologist. In 1959 she was appointed Fellow and Tutor of Lady Margaret Hall and in the course of the next twenty years she made her college a well-known centre for Russian undergraduate study. In 1980 she was elected to the Chair of Comparative Slavonic Philology and became a Fellow of St. Hilda's College. She died of cancer at Oxford on 27 May 1981.

It was in her work on the history of the Russian language that Anne Pennington made her weightiest contribution to Slavonic philology. The originality of her thought became plain in an early article on the evolution of the verb in seventeenth-century Russian, based on the evidence of Russian translations of Starowolski's *Dwór cesarza tureckiego*. Her Russian work, which was centred in the seventeenth century and complements the work of Unbegaun on the previous century, had its culmination in her monumental edition of Khotoshikhin's manuscript, published in 1980. She also had a special interest in the South Slavonic languages Serbo-Croat, Macedonian, and Bulgarian, and published translations from them. She introduced the Serbian poet Vasko Popa to the English-speaking world.

Second only in importance to her Russian work was her research on the music of the Orthodox Church, particularly in Moldavia, which is embodied in a series of articles, later collected and republished in Bucharest in 1985. She was the prime mover of a project to compile a union list of Cyrillic manuscripts in the United Kingdom, in which she involved Ralph Cleminson as a research assistant. Though still incomplete at the time of her death, the project was subsequently brought to a successful conclusion by Cleminson and the catalogue was named after her as *The Anne Pennington Catalogue. A Union Catalogue of Cyrillic Manuscripts in British and Irish Collections* (London, 1988).

Anne Pennington had planned, in collaboration with Professor Dean Worth of the University of California at Los Angeles, to hold a conference in Oxford as a memorial to her predecessor Robert Auty. She intended the proceedings to reflect as many of his scholarly interests as possible. Following her own death in May 1981, when plans for the conference were almost complete, it was decided that the conference should be held in memory of both Auty and Pennington. With the title 'The Formation of the Slavonic Literary Languages' and with the participation of scholars from Central Europe as well as from Britain and America, the conference, including an exhibition of some of the Bodleian's Slavonic treasures, took place at Brasenose College from 6 to 11 July 1981 (Stone and Worth 1985).

The end of expansion

In 1979 Konovalov reached his eightieth birthday. A celebratory luncheon was held in New College, at which the editors of *Oxford Slavonic Papers* presented him with the latest volume, dedicated to him, of the journal he had founded and edited for seventeen years. But the expansion of his subject, in which he had played the leading role at Oxford, was coming to an end. The Report on Russian and Russian Studies in British Universities, produced by the UGC Arts Sub-Committee, chaired by Professor R. J. C. Atkinson (1980) recommended the closure of Russian in five universities and its phasing out in thirteen more. There was to be some strengthening of the subject at Bristol and Essex. Oxford was not mentioned specifically, but the new criterion of supply and demand appeared to apply to everyone. The subject had suffered a loss of prestige and, in a time of general stringency, the University abolished the Chair of Comparative Slavonic Philology, which had fallen vacant with Anne Pennington's death. Her lectureship and fellowship at Lady Margaret Hall also remained unfilled until, in 1984, Dr. C. M. MacRobert was appointed with the newly created title of Lecturer in Russian Philology and Comparative Slavonic Philology.

John Fennell (1918-92)

Kononov's successor, John Lister Illingworth Fennell was born at Warrington, Lancashire, on 30 May 1918. His father was a psychiatrist. The family moved to London, when John was a boy. He was educated at Radley College and Trinity College, Cambridge, where, on the outbreak of war in 1939, he was reading French and German. His immediate call-up into the army interrupted his studies and he was given a War Degree. While at Cambridge he had also studied Russian under Professor Elizabeth Hill and held the Cambridge Certificate of Competent Knowledge in Russian. He later recalled having been examined by Kononov at Cambridge before the War. In 1945 he was a liaison officer with the Soviet forces in Austria. From October 1945 to October 1947 he was an instructor on the Joint Services Russian Course at Cambridge, and in 1947 was appointed Assistant Lecturer in the Department of Slavonic Studies there. His Ph.D. on 'The History of the Conflict between the "Possessors" and the "Non-Possessors" and its Reflection in the Literature of the Period — the End of the Fifteenth and the First Half of the Sixteenth Century' was approved in 1951 and the following year, he moved to the University of Nottingham as Reader and Head of the Department of Slavonic Studies. In 1956 he was appointed to a Lecturership in Russian at Oxford and in 1964 was elected a fellow of University College. Apart from writing his books and giving lectures and tutorials, he sang in the choir of the Russian church in Canterbury Road. According to one observer, 'he seemed to epitomize the intellectually filtered spirit of Russian Orthodoxy'. He succeeded Kononov in the Chair of Russian in 1967 and moved to New College as a professorial fellow. He retired in 1985, but remained active until his death in Oxford on 9 August 1992 (Anon. 1992).

Fennell's *Penguin Russian Course*, published in 1961, appeared at a time when Russian teaching materials were scarce. It enjoyed great popularity, was translated into other languages, and went through several editions. Even after he had attained academic eminence Fennell retained a keen interest in language teaching and took a special pleasure in giving prose classes. His main contribution to scholarship, however, was in the field of Russian medieval history. His most important books are *Ivan the Great of Moscow* (London, 1961), *The Emergence of Moscow, 1304-1359* (London, 1968), *The Crisis of Medieval Russia 1200-1304* (London-New York, 1983), of which a Russian translation was published in Moscow in 1989, and *A History of the Russian Church to 1448*, which appeared posthumously in London in 1995.

Fennell's election to a fellowship at University College in 1964 came at a time of change in the system of tenure of lecturerships and fellowships. Hitherto most of the lecturers in Russian had not held fellowships and were expected to hold their tutorials at home. There are undergraduate memories of Fennell's tutorials held in his basement study at 8, Canterbury Road, with a view of the garden. In about 1963 the University began to make rooms available for tutorials in Wellington Square, but the problem soon ceased to be acute as more lecturers were elected to fellowships with rooms in college. By 1965 more than half the lecturers in Russian were also fellows of colleges, and before long they all held joint appointments.

Antony Derek Stokes

Fennell had held his fellowship at University College for only three years, when he was elected to the chair and moved to New College. The vacant lecturership and fellowship were filled immediately by Antony Derek Stokes, who had graduated B.A. in Russian from

Pembroke College, Cambridge, in 1950. He had gained his Ph.D. in 1959 at the University of London with a thesis on 'Russo-Bulgarian relations in the tenth century'. He then held an academic post in Russian at the University of Liverpool before moving to the School of Slavonic Studies in the University of London, where he was appointed Lecturer in Russian Language and Literature. His main field of research, early Russian literature and history, was close to Fennell's and he had published several significant articles in that area before his move to Oxford in 1967.

University College elected Stokes to its vacant fellowship and praelectorship in Russian, and he also became a lecturer in Russian at Brasenose College and New College. These three tutorial appointments brought with them a heavy teaching and pastoral commitment, especially as Stokes, like his predecessor, specialized not only in early literature, but also in the classic writers of the nineteenth century. Nevertheless, during his twenty years in office the three colleges he served achieved a prominent position on the Russian scene. An exceptionally conscientious tutor, he still managed to continue his research on early Russian literature, collaborating with Fennell in the production of *Early Russian Literature* (London, 1974) and publishing the definitive article 'What is a "Voinskaia povest"?' in *Canadian-American Slavic Studies*, 13 (1979):32-51. For many years he was working on a projected companion to Russian literature, which remained unfinished. A keen squash-player, Stokes was a picture of health, but in 1987 he suffered a stroke and was forced into early retirement. He died in Oxford on 27 September 2001.

Timothy John Binyon (1936-2004)

Timothy John Binyon, a distant relative of the poet Laurence Binyon, was born on 18 February 1936 in Leeds, where his father was a university lecturer. He was educated at Ermysted's Grammar School, Shipton, where in 1953 he won an open exhibition in Modern Languages at Exeter College, Oxford. During National Service he spent eighteen months at the Joint Services School of Linguists at Bodmin and qualified as a Russian interpreter. He took up his exhibition at Exeter in 1956 and in 1959 in the Final Honour School (Russian and German) he was placed in the First Class. As a graduate student, he spent the academic year 1960-1 at Moscow University and from October 1962 he held an assistant lecturership in Russian at the University of Leeds. That year he published, in collaboration with Ronald Hingley, *Russian. A Beginner's Course* (London 1962). This was soon followed by *A Soviet Verse Reader* (London, 1964), edited by Binyon and published at a time when the Oxford syllabus paid little attention to the literature of the Soviet period.

In 1965 Binyon returned to Oxford, having been appointed to a university lecturership in Russian, and in 1968 he was elected by Wadham College to a Senior Research Fellowship. His thesis 'Valery Bryusov (1873-1924): life, literary theory, poetry' was approved for the degree of D.Phil. in 1969. For several years he was Dean of Wadham. Although there was now for some time little published evidence of his Russian research, he regularly wrote reviews of crime novels for the *Times Literary Supplement* and published two crime novels himself: *Swan Song* (1982) and *Greeks Gifts* (1988). He also wrote a history of the detective in fiction 'Murder will out' *The Detective in Fiction* (Oxford, 1990). His expertise in modern Russian literature, especially the twentieth century, was by now legendary, yet from the point of view of the Research Assessment Exercise he was inactive. He was said to be writing a life of Pushkin, but no one was sure. Eventually, in 2002, the year before his retirement, he surprised everyone by publishing his magisterial biography *Pushkin*, which in 2003 won the Samuel Johnson Prize for non-fiction. In retirement he was working on a life of Lermontov, but on 7 October 2004 at home in Witney he died of heart failure.

Libraries

Before Konovalov's election to the Chair of Russian in 1945 the Slavonic holdings of the Taylorian were largely the result of donations and bequests. Morfill had left his library to the Queen's College, and the Slavonic books from it (approximately 4,000 in number) were deposited in the Taylorian in 1936. The Taylorian was also the recipient of Forbes's Slavonic books, numbering about 2,000 volumes. A consistent accessions policy, including retrospective acquisition, only began with arrival of John Simmons in 1949. But although funds were available, it was almost impossible then to buy books from the Soviet union. For a time Simmons's main sources for Russian books were in Finland or among Russian emigres. After 1953, however, his exchange scheme with the Lenin Library resulted in a steady flow of Russian accessions, amounting to about 1,000 volumes a year. In addition to Scarborough money, Simmons set about raising funds himself from other sources, including the Astor Foundation. In 1960, with an Astor grant to cover travel and book acquisition, he went to America, visiting libraries and buying books for Oxford.

The Bodleian, unsystematically and in the course of centuries, had acquired many Slavonic treasures, both books and manuscripts. The manuscripts occasionally attracted the interest of scholars, such as J. Hamel, who in 1814 discovered Richard James's notebook, P. A. Syrku, who visited the Bodleian in Morfill's time and produced a useful catalogue (1902 and 1907), S. Kot, who worked there in 1934 on his list of sources for the history of Anglo-Polish relations (1935), and J. D. A. Barnicot (1938). In the eighteenth century some publications of the Russian Academy of Sciences reached the Bodleian, and in the nineteenth several important collections were acquired. Regular receipt of some scholarly series and journals from Slavonic countries began in the late nineteenth century. Coverage expanded considerably after the arrival of Simmons in 1949, although his main responsibility was to the Taylorian.

Until the 1960s the Taylorian's Slavonic holdings were housed in the main Taylor Library in St. Giles'. In 1970, when Simmons moved to All Souls and the Codrington Library, his place as librarian responsible for Slavonic books at the Taylorian was taken over by David Howells. By the early 1970s, owing to the recent expansion of the Slavonic collections, they had been moved to a building acquired by the University at 66-67, St. Giles', to the north of and next-door to the 1932 Taylorian extension. In addition to the Slavonic Library, this building also contained rooms for teaching and meetings.

In 1980 the Slavonic Section of the Taylor Library moved again, this time to new premises at 47, Wellington Square, formerly occupied by the Faculty of Social Studies. Owing to further growth, the move was now a daunting operation, but Howells was guided by Simmons, who to good effect passed on the experience he had gained in 1945 when moving the archive of the German High Command. The new premises at 47, Wellington Square were found to be congenial and the discovery that the poet and novelist Philip Larkin had had lodgings there in the 1940s was thought to be a good omen. The existing acquisition policy, operating mainly by means of exchange, was continued and developed. The new library created a hospitable environment, where ideas could be exchanged. Here, despite Oxford's centrifugal tendencies, something like a centre of Slavonic studies grew up and, in due course, in the upper reading room, between the shelves holding Slavonic serials and journals, the walls were furnished with portraits of Morfill, Forbes, Konovalov, and their successors, serving as a reminder to the generation that in 2006 celebrates the centenary of the first appearance of Russian in the Class Lists.

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