

# THE IDEA OF A NATION

Winthrop Pickard Bell (1915 or 1916)

Edited, with an Introduction, by Ian Angus (Simon Fraser University)

In memory of José Huertas-Jourda (1931–2007)  
Philosopher/Teacher/Friend

*Winthrop Pickard Bell (1884–1965), a Canadian who studied with Husserl in Göttingen from 1911 to 1914, was arrested after the outbreak of World War I and interred at Ruhleben Prison Camp for the duration of the war. In 1915 or 1916 he presented a lecture titled “Canadian Problems and Possibilities” to other internees at the prison camp. This is the first time Bell’s lecture has appeared in print. Even though the lecture was given to a general audience and thus makes no explicit reference to Husserl or phenomenology, it is a systematic phenomenological analysis of the national form of group belonging and, as such, makes a substantial contribution to phenomenological sociology and political science, grounding that contribution in phenomenological philosophy. Bell describes the essence of the nation as an organic spiritual unity that grows or develops, and is thus not a product of will, and which becomes a unity by surmounting its parts. This unity is instantiated in a given nation by tradition. The particular character of a nation’s tradition gives it a tendency to act in one way rather than another.*

## Editor’s Introduction

### 1. Winthrop Pickard Bell: A Biographical Sketch

Winthrop Pickard Bell (1884–1965) was the only Canadian student of Edmund Husserl.<sup>1</sup> Born in Halifax, he completed a BA (Mathematics, 1904) at the University of Mount Allison College, which is today known

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<sup>1</sup> An outline of W. P. Bell’s life and writings, as well as the archival holdings, are available in the section of the Mount Allison University Archives website devoted to Bell, which can be found at [<http://www.mta.ca/wpbell/>].

as Mount Allison University, and received an MA (Philosophy, 1909) from Harvard University, where he studied under Josiah Royce. A gift from his mother's inheritance allowed Bell to continue his education, so that in the fall of 1909 he attended lectures at Emmanuel College, Cambridge University, and, after an operation for pleurisy, the next year studied at the University of Leipzig under Professors Richter, Volkelt, Brahn, Wundt, Eulenberg and Barth. It was in Leipzig that he heard about Husserl's work and in 1911 he went to Göttingen University to pursue doctoral studies with Husserl himself. With the outbreak of the First World War in 1914, the condition of a Canadian foreign student in Germany changed dramatically.<sup>2</sup> Bell was placed under house arrest and, on 12 January 1915, was transferred to Ruhleben Prison Camp, from which he was released after the end of the war in late 1918.<sup>3</sup> Bell had completed all the requirements for his PhD, including his dissertation on Josiah Royce (a topic which Husserl insisted upon), prior to his arrest. Since Bell was denied permission to leave the camp for his dissertation defence, Husserl took the examining committee into the camp to conduct it.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> The archival holding claims that it was following a report by another student that Bell had criticised the Kaiser that he was interned, whereas L. D. McCann, in his introduction to the Centre for Canadian Studies at Mount Allison University reprint edition of *The "Foreign Protestants" and the Settlement of Nova Scotia* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1961, reprint 1990) states that "Bell's movements in Germany, particularly his photography outings, had created suspicions that led to his wartime internment as a British spy." (viii) In her autobiography, Edith Stein supports the first account, though suggesting that it was based on an exaggerated report of a remark made by Bell from the window of his apartment concerning the advantage the declaration of war by Japan would mean "for us." Edith Stein, *Life in a Jewish Family*, (ed.) Dr. L. Gelber and Romaeus Leuven, (tr.) Josephine Koeppel (Washington: ICS Publications, 1986), 301.

<sup>3</sup> Ruhleben was a civilian prison camp located 10 kilometres west of Berlin. It contained between 4,000 and 5,500 mostly British prisoners. The Geneva Convention was observed and the internal affairs of the camp—such as arts, music, sports and academic lectures—were organised by prisoners. See the website *The Ruhleben Story* at [<http://ruhleben.tripod.com/index.html>], which gives a list of prisoners that includes Winthrop Pickard Bell's name.

<sup>4</sup> Both the archival account and that of Dorion Cairns concur that Bell's dissertation defence was undertaken in Ruhleben prison camp. See Dorion Cairns, "My Own Life," in *Phenomenology: Continuation and Criticism, Essays in Memory of Dorion Cairns*, (ed.) F. Kersten and R. Zaner (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1973), 5. However, Edith Stein presents another version. She recounts that Bell was in "protective custody" in his own home at the time and that his teachers gave him the examination there. She reports that the nationalist faculty at the university declared both the examination and the previously accepted thesis invalid. She notes that Bell was moved to a temporary lock-up in the Auditorium of the Uni-

In the period immediately after the war, Bell stayed in Germany on a Canadian government information-gathering mission, during which time he also filed reports for Reuters press agency. Later, he taught philosophy at the University of Toronto (1921–22)<sup>5</sup> and, after the reinstatement of his 1914 PhD degree in 1921<sup>6</sup>, at Harvard University (1922–27). While at Harvard, Bell concentrated on teaching Husserl's phenomenology and working on the philosophy of value.<sup>7</sup> The phenomenology of value was Bell's main philosophical interest, about which he wrote two unpublished manuscripts, and which ties his work to the preoccupations of phenomenology in the Göttingen period.<sup>8</sup> Bell

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versity of Göttingen afterward and then transferred to Ruhleben at a later date. Given that Stein knew Bell well during this period, and that she visited him at the Auditorium, it seems likely that this first-hand account is more accurate in its chronology than later reconstructions. However this may be, taking the university committee either into a prison or to a prisoner under house arrest was in either case a remarkable act of university independence from the state, even though it would probably have been more possible on or near university grounds than in Ruhleben. Stein also notes that the conservative newspaper *Schlesischen Zeitung* had previously published an article referring to an "anti-German Englishman" (Bell) and the "unpatriotic attitude" of some professors (Husserl). See Edith Stein, *Life in a Jewish Family*, 301–03. I was told at some time during the 1980s by my teacher in phenomenology, José Huertas-Jourda, that Husserl accompanied this remarkable act of university autonomy with the statement that "the world of science knows no national boundaries," but I have not been able to confirm this claim.

<sup>5</sup> Bell is not mentioned in "Appendix B – Faculty in Philosophy" of John G. Slater's comprehensive *Minerva's Aviary: Philosophy at Toronto, 1843–2003* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005). However, in an email correspondence to me (12 November 2010), Dr. Slater suggested that "Bell may have taught in one of the unaffiliated colleges, such as Wycliff (low Anglican) or Knox (Presbyterian)." Or he might have taught at McMaster University, which "was founded by the Baptists in Toronto and later moved to Hamilton."

<sup>6</sup> I have not been able to find out when Bell's PhD was revoked, or indeed, whether it was actually conferred after the successful defence, but he formally applied for its reinstatement while he was teaching at the University of Toronto.

<sup>7</sup> Bell taught a graduate course on "Philosophy of Values" in 1924–25 and a graduate course on "Husserl and the 'Phenomenological' Movement" in 1926–27. No data is available from this source for other years. See Harvard Presidents' Reports, available at: [<http://hul.harvard.edu/huarc/refshelf/AnnualReportsCites.htm#tarHarvardPresidents>]. Dorion Cairns was introduced to Husserl's work in Bell's Harvard course on the Philosophy of Value in 1923–24 and later provided with a letter of introduction to Husserl for his own studies in Freiberg (Cairns, "My Own Life," 5–6).

<sup>8</sup> I am referring here to two works available in the Mount Allison University Library Bell archives. (1) 6501/11/2 – File 26. Harvard University. "An Essay in the Philosophy of Values." It consists of about 292 pages written in minute script, including additions, emendations, repetitions, and redraftings. (2) 6501/9/2.

remained in regular correspondence with Husserl, sent him books on the British Idealists (Whitehead and Alexander) and was asked to translate the lectures that Husserl gave in England in 1922.<sup>9</sup> Bell declined Husserl's invitation to have his dissertation printed in volume VI of the *Jahrbuch für Philosophie und Phänomenologische Forschung*.<sup>10</sup>

In 1927, Bell returned to Canada to work in the family business and reside in Chester Basin, Nova Scotia. During this latter period, Bell conducted historical research and in 1951 was elected as President of the Nova Scotia Historical Society. His most extensive and best-known historical work is *The "Foreign Protestants" and the Settlement of Nova Scotia: The History of a Piece of Arrested British Colonial Policy in the Eighteenth Century* (University of Toronto Press, 1961). Bell's historical research on Atlantic Canada was the inspiration behind the 1967 creation of the Winthrop Pickard Bell Collection of Acadiana at Mount Allison University, which includes his personal library, and the 1977 establishment of The Winthrop Pickard Bell Chair in Maritime Studies at the same university. In Atlantic Canada, Bell is primarily known as a historian and a benefactor of Mount Allison University. He died at his home "Drumnaha" in Chester, Nova Scotia, on 4 April 1965.

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Ruhleben notebooks: Notebooks 27, 28 and 29, which were the basis for a series of lectures, can be referred to as the "Ruhleben Notebooks on the Philosophy of Value." These notebooks contain approximately 300 pages of small handwritten text, including revisions, additions and corrections. These are the two most extensive philosophical manuscripts in the archive, indicating that this topic was Bell's main philosophical interest. As late as 1950, he reviewed a book on the philosophy of values for *The Dalhousie Review*, vol. 29, no. 1, 104–05.

<sup>9</sup> The Mount Allison University Archives Winthrop Pickard Bell Fonds contains a large correspondence, mainly on postcards, from Husserl between 1918 and 1925. These are stored in the Series T – Postcards section of the Fonds under reference to Professor Edmund Husserl, number 6501/1/20. The books are mentioned in a postcard from Prof. Edmund Husserl to Dr. Winthrop Bell, May 10<sup>th</sup>, 1922. Possible translation of Husserl's lectures is mentioned in two postcards dated May 10<sup>th</sup>, 1922 and September 30<sup>th</sup>, 1922. It is not certain that Bell did indeed translate these lectures but it seems likely. Karl Schumann's *Husserl-Chronik: Denk- und Lebensweg Edmund Husserls* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1977), 259, refers to an American friend as translator with a query as to whether this refers to Bell. Bell was variously referred to at the time as English or American as well as Canadian, especially by people who knew him less well.

<sup>10</sup> The invitation to publish in the *Yearbook* is in a postcard in Series T – Postcards, number 6501/1/20 of the fonds and is dated May 14<sup>th</sup>, 1922. Karl Schuhmann, in "Husserl's Yearbook," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, vol. 50, supplement, Autumn 1990, 14, also mentions this invitation, citing a letter from Husserl to Bell of 15 May 1922 in section R 1 of the Husserl archives in Louvain.

## 2. W. P. Bell's Ruhleben Lecture on Canada

The W. P. Bell collection in the Mount Allison University archives contains a considerable amount of material of philosophical interest. While in Ruhleben prison camp, Bell gave a lecture, "Canadian Problems and Possibilities," to other internees at the camp. It cannot be dated exactly but, given its placing in his Ruhleben notebooks, it was likely given in 1915 or 1916. The lecture was given to a general audience and thus makes no explicit reference to Husserl or phenomenology. The present publication of this lecture is the first time it has appeared before the public since its oral delivery.<sup>11</sup> It is the purpose of this editor's introduction to show that the lecture makes a significant contribution to a phenomenological definition of the spiritual essence of the nation, with specific reference to whether Canada was at that time a nation or was capable of becoming one.

As Carl Berger has shown, the period of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries in Canadian intellectual life consisted of an opposition between the camps of imperialism and nationalism.<sup>12</sup> Advocates of imperialism thought that Canada's future lay with the British Empire and in attaining influence within it. Nationalists thought that the Empire belonged to Canada's past and that the future lay in the development of a distinct and unique nation. The question then becomes, of course, "Does Canada have what it takes to make a nation?" and, for those more philosophically inclined, "What is a nation?" Bell's exposition clearly takes the latter route: he begins by castigating British misunderstandings of Canada, stating baldly at one point that "the Canadian is surely and irrevocably a different man from the Englishman," attends to the difficulties which were then holding Canada back from becoming a nation, and ends by posing the question of what constitutes a nation as such.

The nature of Bell's intervention depended upon his study of Husserlian phenomenology and thus represents a significant, indeed

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<sup>11</sup> The lecture is available in the Winthrop Pickard Bell collection of the Mount Allison University Archives, Series J - Ruhleben Prison Camp, number 6501/9/2, Ruhleben notebooks, No. 11. I would like to express my thanks to Rhianna Edwards, Mount Allison University Archivist, for her generous aid in locating and copying this manuscript and to Viviana Elsztein Angus for her transcription of the photocopies into electronic format.

<sup>12</sup> Carl Berger, *The Sense of Power: Studies in the Ideas of Canadian Imperialism 1867-1914* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970) and Carl Berger, ed., *Imperialism and Nationalism, 1884-1914: A Conflict in Canadian Thought* (Toronto: Copp Clark, 1969).

unique, contribution to Canadian intellectual life.<sup>13</sup> The nature of Bell's contribution can be clarified with reference to Leslie Armour and Elizabeth Trott's general characterisation of English-Canadian philosophy: "Canadian philosophers ... have tended both to reject technological and formal reason as incomplete, misleading, and inadequate and to make use of reason in quite other guises."<sup>14</sup> They refer to Husserlian phenomenology as an exception to the European revolt against reason that makes it kin to Canadian philosophy in this regard. Bell's contribution is thus an exemplary case of the application of phenomenological material reason to Canadian issues that deserves finally to find its place within these two traditions.

The notion of the "spiritual world," in German philosophical terminology, refers not to "spirits" in the mystical sense, but to the way in which the human world is invested with meaning that is not merely material but an expression of persons. Thus, Husserl says, "[w]e are all human beings, similar to each other, capable as such of entering into commerce with each other and establishing human relations. All this is accomplished in the spiritual attitude, without any 'naturalizing.'"<sup>15</sup> Phenomenological investigations of this sort are oriented toward what is specifically human about the human world in distinction from material nature. The human world has the fundamental characteristic that it is based on "*practical formations* in relation to valuations and settings of goals" that inform human motivation.<sup>16</sup> Bell received from

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<sup>13</sup> Leslie Armour and Elizabeth Trott, *The Faces of Reason: An Essay on Philosophy and Culture in English Canada 1850-1950* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1981). This extensive historical study of English Canadian philosophy discovers no influence of Husserlian phenomenology in Canada during its period of study. Herbert Spiegelberg, in his similarly extensive historical study of phenomenological philosophy, does not mention Canada in his survey of countries and regions where it has gained an influence, though he does devote two sentences to Canada in the section on Great Britain, and Bell, though identified as a Canadian, is mentioned in the U.S. section. See H. Spiegelberg, *The Phenomenological Movement: A Historical Introduction, 2 volumes* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1971), 626, 627. The evidence of these two comprehensive histories is conclusive in establishing that no major Canadian philosopher or school derived from Husserl prior to 1950. As far as current evidence suggests, Bell's philosophical work represents a unique instance of Canadian phenomenological philosophy prior to 1950.

<sup>14</sup> Armour and Trott, *The Faces of Reason*, 516.

<sup>15</sup> Edmund Husserl, *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy, Second Book: Studies in the Phenomenology of Constitution*, (tr.) Richard Rojcewicz and André Schuwer, in *Collected Works, Vol. III* (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1989), 254.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 230. On the notion that the natural world is without such values, see pages 3-4.

Husserl a philosophical method for inquiring into human valuation in practical contexts and used it, in his lecture on Canada, to investigate the foundations of Canadian practical life from the viewpoint of whether it could constitute a nation.

Bell's preliminary remarks on the short-sighted and materialistic character of education should be seen in this context. He was convinced that a nation does not exist in order to create wealth, but rather the reverse. It may be called an Aristotelian ideal: material wealth is a necessary foundation, but it exists in order create the good society, which constitutes the highest self-understanding and self-development of its citizens. If the higher purpose is not conveyed by education, then the nation loses its sense of purpose. The practical index of this issue is pursued through the issue of agricultural credits. Through credits for wealth in agricultural land, a society of farmers could acquire a good education, a sense of higher purpose, which would allow it to crystallise into a nation in the proper sense.

Bell's comments on immigration are bound to be the most controversial. There are two issues here. The first is largely, though not completely, terminological, though the second goes to the heart not only of social policy but of the idea of a nation. Bell discusses both immigrant and established groups through the concept of "race." It should first be noted that race was used at the time as a term for different groups in a manner that did not necessarily imply any overt racism, roughly in the same manner that we would now use the term "ethnic group," on the understanding that differences between such groups are historical-cultural and not natural. Bell did think, however, that different ethnic groups did have different characteristics. Many people today find such an assumption abhorrent since they believe that it leads to stereotyping and discrimination. However, to deny that there are *any* perceptible differences between groups would lead to an undifferentiated individualism in which society is seen as a simple aggregate of atoms. Surely there *are* perceptible differences between groups and, if it is understood that they are historical-cultural, then there is no *necessary* discriminatory implication.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> A more complete discussion could analyse the usage of the concept of race in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries as a *topos* of debate and interpretation. Some writers seem to have held on to a biologicistic account of race that would qualify as racism, whereas in others "this idea of cultural hierarchy took the place of a belief in biological or racial hierarchy." S. E. D. Shortt, *The Search for an Ideal: Six Canadian Intellectuals and their Convictions in an Age of Transition* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976), 73. Notice also that cultural *difference* does not mean, or necessarily imply, a cultural *hierarchy*, even though in this historical period it tended to take on that meaning. All of these issues deserve much more treatment

However, it is not so simple to keep such a discourse from sliding in such a direction, because it cannot be distanced from questions of value. A common argument of the time was that the Anglo-Saxon race had the characteristic of civilised behaviour and democratic governance, which clearly casts a shadow over those who come from different backgrounds. The terminology of race in Canada in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century was heavily laden with the idea of a “northern” climate and a character built on that climate, which grounded a belief in the superiority of the “Anglo-Saxon race” and led to a certain accommodation of French Canadians, as well as to an advocacy of northern European immigration, though it necessarily implied that southern and eastern European immigration was less desirable.<sup>18</sup> Bell’s remarks on immigration should be read in this context. If it is true that a “peculiar capacity of Anglo-Saxons for absorbing heterogeneous elements has had its advantages,” then “if it [i.e., Southern and Eastern European immigration] increases, as seems likely, we are faced with the problem of whether we *shall* be able to assimilate it without risk of materially altering the type of our race.” Several comments can be made about this argument.

First, one should notice that there is no mention of native people at all, or of the fact that Canada is a settler society based upon the dispossession of prior peoples. The problematic relation to native people inside and outside Canada had not yet become an issue, for Bell no less than for other writers of the time. Second, though the language of race is objectionable, flirting as it does with the naturalisation of human culture, Bell’s conception is cultural. This becomes clear at the point where he inserts “don’t misunderstand me” (where I have appended a footnote) and his conception is succinctly expressed in his concluding remark to this section that it is the songs of a people that are most relevant. Third, Bell’s analysis assumes without discussion that it is the government’s right and duty to oversee the mixture that will become the Canadian people, which implies that some foreknowledge of which cultural groups will mix, and what the mixture will be, is possible. This assumption should be held up to scrutiny. Assuming that groups have characteristics based on their history and culture, it is still a leap to suppose that those characteristics also define the limits

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that can be devoted to them in this context. Regarding Bell, it seems clear that his concept is one of cultural difference, which takes on tones of better or worse, though not a full-blown cultural hierarchy, in the specific context of an ability to mix with other cultures, that is to say, to contribute to Canada becoming a nation.

<sup>18</sup> For an excellent overview of this whole matter, see Berger, *The Sense of Power*, ch. 5.

of their capacity to mix without taking into account what is new about their situation in Canada. Correlatively, such assumed foreknowledge suggests that the essential characteristics of the mixture are already evident, which is to deny the newer groups the possibility of really mixing by confusing mixture with assimilation (to a prior, already-formed identity). Finally, and most basically, Bell assumes that for Canada to be a nation it must be a people and that to be a people is to be a certain kind of *unity*. Since Canadians were not originally a people, such a people can only be created by a *mixture*, and a mixture implies a homogeneity and thus a rejection of all that cannot, or will not, mix.

This issue attains greater clarity when Bell comes to define the essence of a nation, which is the main contribution of the lecture. Bell's reflections on the idea of a nation are imbedded within a discussion of whether Canada is a nation and, following his judgement that it is not yet a nation but may be growing into one, what its relations with the British Empire and the U.S.A. will likely become after the First World War. He argues that the divergence of Canada from Britain is already an accomplished fact and suggests, in conclusion, that it is possible that Canada will become one of many nations within the Empire based upon common traditions and spiritual life. Otherwise, if Canada does not become a nation, it is likely to be absorbed into the U.S.A. as Canada is very much like the U.S.A. in seeking to become a new nation through a mixture from diverse sources, a goal that the United States has achieved and that remains a question for Canada. These astute judgements are underpinned by his theoretical analysis of what constitutes a nation such that he can describe Canada as a process-information whose future is as yet unknown. There is thus a double focus in the lecture on the question of whether Canada is a nation and on defining the essence of a nation. Canada is taken as an example upon which essential variations are performed in order to decide both whether Canada is a nation and what defines a nation as such. To be sure, the latter, more purely formal concern sometimes seems buried under the more pungent comments about the former. In the realm of the spiritual-historical sciences, such examples are the essential route through which the formal issue can be approached. However, Bell's task is complicated by the fact that he takes not an incontrovertible example of a nation as his starting point for variations, but an example that may or may not fit the essence that he seeks.

### 3. W. P. Bell's Phenomenological Studies as Contributions to the Phenomenology of Value

The essence of a nation is in its surmounting of differences to constitute a spiritual, organic unity formed through a tradition. As Husserl claims, a key aspect of the domain of spiritual-cultural unities is that objects in the surrounding world appear not only as objects but also as objects of value. "There is built, upon the substratum of mere intuitive representing, an evaluating which, if we presuppose it, plays, in the immediacy of its lively motivation, the role of value-'perception' (in our terms, a value-reception) in which the value character itself is given in immediate intuition."<sup>19</sup> The nation is thus a value-laden unity that confers value on objects in the surrounding world and lays the groundwork for "abstractions such as honor, fidelity, and fame which have been able to fire men to the noblest heroisms and the greatest sacrifices."<sup>20</sup> Bell's lecture on Canada does not follow up the question of value beyond mentioning its relevance. However, in a contemporaneous lecture titled "The Work of Philosophy" (1915), also given at Ruhleben prison camp, he points out that such a phenomenological "pure apriori *material* science of values" whose "rules of what ought to be presuppose some characterisation of that-which-ought-to-be as such" is denied by both sensualistic and rational-formal (Kantian) theories of value. Laws of "the positive being" of value grounded in essential intuition yield insight into the being of value. Such insight grounds a hierarchy of values.<sup>21</sup>

Quite independent of the question whether there is any possibility of noble things or pleasant things in the world, and prior to the question of what definite deeds or things *are* noble or pleasant, it is an absolute law in the realm of these value-qualities themselves that the *noble* is a higher quality than the *pleasant*, that *rationally* (with the rationality, as we say, not of the theoretical but the practical reason) the noble is to be *preferred* to the pleasant. Whatever is intrinsically noble is already therein *higher* than the pleasant. This may serve as a rough type of the fundamental set of laws of this kind. Then there are definite relations between value-qualities

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<sup>19</sup> Husserl, *Ideas II*, 196.

<sup>20</sup> W. P. Bell, "Canadian Problems and Possibilities," p. 56 below.

<sup>21</sup> For general overviews of Husserl's work on value, see J. N. Mohanty, *The Philosophy of Edmund Husserl* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), ch. 15, and Janet Donohoe, *Husserl on Ethics and Intersubjectivity* (Amherst: Humanity Books, 2004), ch. 4.

and the *objects to which* they may belong. The *pleasant* is essentially a value in the realm of sense-qualities, the *good* in that of actions of rational beings. Such a value as usefulness or success is necessarily relative or consecutive to some prior value-quality which gives its sense. Again, *enjoyment* is specifically a *function* of that which is pleasant and not, let us say, of that which is just, or holy.<sup>22</sup>

The philosophical elaboration of a hierarchy of values can guide practical ethical judgements, but that is not to say that it makes practical judgements straightforward or uncomplicated. As he clarifies in the *Ruhleben Notebooks on the Philosophy of Value*:

Objects have for us in direct intuition values according to their specific natures.... Now, the concrete natures of our objects are by no means always fully grasped by us adequately enough for the evident performance of clear value intuitions. The *a priori* laws and conditions of the “forms” and “modes” of being of any kind will condition essential distinctions in possible or intrinsic values of being of that kind. For each general sphere of valuation then there are many relevant questions which are not directly questions of values at all but questions of essential conditions for the realization of kinds of values on types of objects.<sup>23</sup>

In the same place, he makes the connection between the nation—cultural unities as involving value-characters—and the problem of history.

For one thing history is concerned with processes of development in entities which are in part value-constituted. The apprehension of these entities involves evaluation in the sense in which we have always used the word so far. The apprehension of such an object as a culture—or as a man or nation of any *kind*—anything more than a mere “X,” involves such apprehension of value-characters of these

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<sup>22</sup> All of these quotations from Bell on the phenomenology of value come from the *Ruhleben* lecture “The Work of Philosophy,” Mount Allison University Library Bell archives, 6501/9/2 - No. 28. Specifically, the quotations are from the long paragraph on pages 24–25, in which Bell sketches “two other of the most important and most *practically* interesting regions of philosophical work.” The previous bulk of the manuscript is an introduction to the Husserlian theory of essential insight and law. It seems likely that in this lecture Bell was concerned to show the relation of his own anticipated contribution to phenomenology to its grounding in the key theses of Husserl as elaborated in the Göttingen period.

<sup>23</sup> Winthrop Pickard Bell, *Ruhleben Notebooks on the Philosophy of Value*. Mount Allison University Library Archives, 6501/9/2. Notebook 29 at Lecture IX, page 4.

objects. And it is only in so far as you *have* something more than such “X’s” that your history, i.e. history as ordered knowledge of historical reality, is anything beyond a table of names and dates, is in fact *history* at all.<sup>24</sup>

It is this still underdeveloped focus on history through the phenomenology of value, based in the spiritual-cultural analyses of the Göttingen period of phenomenology, which justifies the attempt to restore Bell’s role in the history of phenomenology by bringing the archival manuscripts, beginning with this lecture, before the public.<sup>25</sup>

#### **4. Note on the Preparation of the Manuscript for Publication**

The original manuscript of Bell’s Ruhleben lecture “Canadian Problems and Possibilities” that now resides in the Mount Allison University archives consists of 35 pages of written text that was intended as the basis for an oral address. It is thus not in polished written form. The manuscript is made up largely of continuous text, including some point-form notes, phrasings and lists apparently intended to jog the speaker’s mind, with numerous marginal additions of differing length and interest. Since paragraph breaks are rare, I have at times introduced such breaks into the text for clarity.

A note on changes made to the original manuscript: Short elision of phrases whose meaning was not discernible, small changes or elisions in punctuation, spelling and phrasing in order to correct minor errors, to conform to present usage (e.g., to-day has been changed to today), or for readability of a manuscript prepared as notes for oral presentation, have not been marked in the present text. Marginal comments have been integrated into the text where possible; their locations were clearly marked by Bell. Where this was not possible, I have occasional-

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<sup>24</sup> Winthrop Pickard Bell, Ruhleben Notebooks on the Philosophy of Value. Mount Allison University Library Archives, 6501/9/2. Notebook 29 at Lecture X, page 1.

<sup>25</sup> As one example of how this might add to the history of phenomenology, note that Dorion Cairns attended Bell’s course on phenomenology at Harvard in 1923–24. Bell’s manuscript “An Essay in the Philosophy of Values” was written while he was teaching at Harvard and his interest in the problem of value may be presumed to have influenced the version of phenomenology that he taught there. Dorion Cairns regularly taught a course on “The General Theory of Value” at the New School for Social Research in the 1950s and ’60s (Cairns, “My Own Life,” 13). Cairns’ later course suggests that the influence of Bell’s introduction to Husserl at Harvard was retained in Cairns’ mature interpretation of Husserl’s phenomenology.

ly used footnotes. The original underlining for emphasis has been retained in italic form. Interpolations for the purpose of elision or clarification by the editor have been marked by square brackets. All footnotes have been added by the editor.

While there are no section breaks in the original, the manuscript does fall into three easily recognisable parts: A first introductory part (pages 1–6), which reads in nearly final form and is marked by its ending with almost a full blank page, deals with the general situation of Canada and common views of Canada in Great Britain. This part has been included in its entirety as section I of the present edited version. The next part (pages 7–30) is the largest and most interesting section of the manuscript. Part three (pages 31–35) consists of notes taken after the lecture regarding clarifications, additions, etc., and has not been included in this edited version.

Editorial preparation has thus centred on the identifiable middle part of the manuscript. The first part of this section (pages 7–8) consists of fragmentary notes, probably intended to jog the speaker's mind during oral delivery, that have not been included here. The second part (pages 8–18, with extensive marginal additions) deals in summary, overlapping and sometimes fragmentary form with various topics, such as education in a materialistic society, immigration, banking and investment, natural resources, railways and transportation. Selections from this part have been used as section II and given a generic title with a list of the topics selected to give an overview of the sorts of issues that Bell considered important at the time of writing. The third part (pages 18–30) focusses on the issue of whether Canada is a nation and includes theoretical reflections on what defines a nation as such. This is the most valuable part of the manuscript and what justifies bringing it before a contemporary readership. It is included here in as complete a form as possible as section III. I have thus used the topic of this section as the title of this entire journal presentation (including the introduction, the note on the preparation of the manuscript for publication, and Bell's edited manuscript) for scholarly reference, even though I have retained the original title immediately below for Bell's lecture itself.

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