LUDWIG WITTGENSTEIN
The Man and His Thought
The FIRST and the FOURTH

“Most Important Philosophy Books of the 20th Century”

Late in 1999, North American philosophers were asked to choose “the five most important philosophy books published in the 20th century”!

The first book on that compiled list was Wittgenstein’s 1953 *Philosophical Investigations*

and the fourth was his 1922 *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*

These were the only two philosophy books that Ludwig Wittgenstein ever prepared for publication and, even more amazing, they offer two radically different ways of “doing philosophy”

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1 See Douglas Lachey, “What Are the Modern Classics?” in *The Philosophical Forum*, December, 1999, pp. 329-346. [*NOTE: Heidegger’s Sein und Zeit (1927) was #2, Rawls’ A Theory of Justice (1971) was #3 and Russell’s and Whitehead’s Principia Mathematica (1910-13) came in at #5.*]
But these two books are hardly the most amazing things about this exceptionally complex and fascinating man.

Ludwig Wittgenstein was born on April 26, 1889. He was the youngest of eight children in a very talented, deeply cultured and extremely wealthy Viennese family. His father was the “Andrew Carnegie of Austria”. Despite his family’s historic Jewish origins, Ludwig was raised as a Roman Catholic.

Unfortunately, their wealth and sophistication failed to ward off the disasters that soon engulfed the family as three of his four brothers committed suicide in 1902, 1904 and 1918. Ludwig himself was prone to fears of his immanent death and serious thoughts of suicide plagued him throughout much of his life.

[1908-1911]

LUDWIG THE ENGINEERING STUDENT

In 1908, Wittgenstein travelled to England and enrolled as a research student in the Engineering Department of Manchester University with every intention of pursuing a career in aeronautic engineering. (This, it must be remembered, was just five years after the Wright brothers had made their first successful flight at Kitty Hawk.)

The program at Manchester was loosely organized (in the extreme) and included no requirement for formal classwork. Instead, students were expected to pursue independent lines of research in the University’s laboratory facilities with professorial oversight offered as needed or requested.

Wittgenstein’s first original project was to build a model of his radical new design for an airplane engine. He believed that a combustion chamber could be designed to produce high speed gases which would then drive the propeller. (Think of how a rotating lawn sprinkler works.) He commissioned a combustion chamber to be built so he could test these theories, experimenting with a wide variety of designs for the discharge nozzles. However, the entire concept was fatally flawed and Wittgenstein could never get it to work.

Jim Bamber, his research assistant on this project, later recalled that “his nervous temperament made him the last person to tackle such research” and noted that “when things went wrong, which often occurred, he would throw his arms about, stamp around and swear volubly in German.”

After a year of repeated failures with that project, Ludwig abandoned his efforts to drive the propeller from a remote source and instead conceived the clever idea of having the combustion occur at the very tips of the propeller itself. He was successful enough with this project that he filed for and received a patent for this improved propeller design two years later. But in the world of wooden propellers, his idea never gained any positive traction.

NOTE: Wittgenstein’s inventive idea was, however, successfully used three decades later in the development of blade-tip jets driving the rotors of hybrid helicopters.

1. [1911] Wittgenstein, the Patented Inventor

Improvements in Propellers applicable for Aerial Machines

[WITTGENSTEIN] PROVISIONAL SPECIFICATION, Improvements in Propellers applicable for Aerial Machines, Redhill, Love & Malcolmson for His Majesty Stationery Office, 1911. 3 pp. [1, blank] + one lithographic plate. Large Octavo. First Edition. $ 25,000

This very rare propeller patent is Wittgenstein's first publication.

Showing the brilliant “outside the box” thinking that would characterize his years of philosophical thought, Wittgenstein's propeller was not driven by a spinning axis connected to the engine, Instead, the fuel was pumped directly through the propeller to small ignition points at the end of each blade.

This was a clever solution for a couple of reasons. The force from the propeller’s rotation compressed the fuel, leading to a hotter burn and stronger propulsion. And, because the force was coming from the end of the propeller rather than a central spinning axis, such a propeller generated little to no torque.
This was, of course, a very early period in the development of aviation—especially in England—and although the proposed propeller was interesting, it was not very practical—most especially in a world of universal wooden propellers.

However, 30 years after Wittgenstein’s patent, the idea was reinvented, by Friedrich Doblhoff, this time leading to a completely new concept for a helicopter, which was successfully tested for the first time in 1943. Wittgenstein’s patent also had within it the seeds of the centrifugal-flow gas turbine engine, later to be developed by Frank Whittle, the father of jet-propulsion and the inventor of the turbojet engine.

Well preserved; previously stitched into a volume, now disbound; from the Patents Department of Manchester Free Library, with stamp in upper margin of the first page, accession date 9 September 1911.

[1909] THE PHILOSOPHICAL TURN

Ludwig was never completely comfortable with the engineering course his father had suggested, but his immersion in the mathematics necessary to be successful as an engineer soon opened an unexpected door for him.

At Manchester, the mathematician Horace Lamb offered research students a seminar and encouraged them to bring him any problems they were having trouble with. The poor man had no idea who he was dealing with! Lamb was stymied by the problems that Wittgenstein brought to him. As Ludwig told his sister, Hermine: “[Lamb] will try to solve the equations that I came up with and which I showed him. He said he didn’t know for certain whether they are altogether solvable with today’s methods and so I am eagerly awaiting the outcome of his attempts.”

The mathematical challenges that he encountered led him—step by step—back to an investigation of the very foundations of mathematics. He attended lectures on the theory of mathematical analysis with J. E. Littlewood and met regularly with two other students interested in the topic. One of these fellow students introduced him to Bertrand Russell’s 1903 book, The Principles of Mathematics.
According to Monk: “Reading Russell’s book was to prove a decisive event in Wittgenstein’s life. Though he continued for another two years with research in aeronautics, he became increasingly obsessed with the problems discussed by Russell, and his engineering work was pursued with an ever-growing disenchantment.”

Russell was attacking Immanuel Kant’s popular view that mathematics was a discipline separate and distinct from logic. Instead, Kant claimed that mathematics was founded on the ‘structure of appearance’ and on our basic experiences of time and space. Russell contradicted this understanding of the foundations of mathematics insisting that the entire realm of pure mathematics could be found in just a few fundamental, logical, principles. In short, mathematics wasn’t simply just a subjective construct of the human mind. Because of its purely logical foundations, mathematics should be understood as a body of certain, objective, knowledge.

The end of Russell’s book famously challenged the mathematical theories put forward ten years earlier by Gottlieib Frege and thereby introduced a striking and seemingly insoluble problem into the entire enterprise of basing mathematics on logic. Wittgenstein read Russell’s book avidly and took up the challenge to solve this problem, devising his first solution in April of 1909. Likely because he was somewhat intimidated by Russell, he sent his solution off to Russell’s friend, the mathematician Philip Jourdain. Both Jourdain and Russell (to whom he showed it) dismissed Ludwig’s ‘solution’ as unconvincing. Wittgenstein was crushed and he temporarily returned to aeronautical engineering – all the while ruminating on the problem, hoping to devise a better solution.

2.

[Wittgenstein in Manchester]


Mays – a professor at the University of Manchester – notes that up until now very little has been known about Wittgenstein’s period in Manchester. I recently had the good fortune to make the acquaintance of one of Wittgenstein’s oldest friends, Mr. W. Eccles, who kindly placed at my disposal documents relating to this period. I was also able to obtain further information from some of Wittgenstein’s other Manchester friends.

Mays’ article goes on to briefly recap Wittgenstein’s friendship with Eccles and then offers his description of six items of interest (letters, drawings and photographs) noting their current locations and stating that copies of all these items have been deposited in the Manchester University Library.

Eccles was the first friend Wittgenstein made in England. According to Monk’s Wittgenstein: The Duty of Genius:

On his arrival at the Grouse Inn, Eccles walked into the common living room to find Wittgenstein surrounded with books and papers which lay scattered over the table and floor. As it was impossible to move without disturbing them, he immediately set to and tidied them up – much to Wittgenstein's amusement and appreciation. The two quickly became close friends, and remained so, with interruptions, until the Second World War.

NOTE: Along with “Two Corrections” on page 264 by G. E. Moore amending his third article on “Wittgenstein’s Lectures in 1930-33” which was published the previous January [you will find those three issues of MIND – item #24 – offered below], this issue also contains Quine’s important article “On Frege’s Way Out” (i.e. out of “Russell’s Paradox”) on pages 145-59.

Publisher’s original printed wraps with just a bit of wear along the edges of the front and rear wraps. With the publisher’s folded advertisement for their recently released The Value Judgement by W.E. Lamont laid-in. Overall, a lovely copy of this fragile piece.
MEETING WITH FREGE...

Those two years of philosophical study and thought in Manchester culminated in this brilliant (but very overconfident) 22-year-old’s determination to write his own book on the philosophy of mathematics. Aware of the connection and ongoing conversations between Russell and the great logician/mathematician, Gottlob Frege, Wittgenstein visited Frege in Jena during his 1911 summer vacation, soliciting his opinion on his projected book. This was less than a happy encounter. Years later, Wittgenstein candidly admitted that Frege had “wiped the floor” with him – permanently putting an end to that particular project. Frege was, however, sufficiently impressed with the young man’s intellect and ideas to recommend he go to Cambridge where he should study with Russell.

AND THEN RUSSELL

In fact, Russell himself had “wiped the floor” with Frege when he discovered an elementary error in his 1893 attempt to provide the first real logical foundation for mathematics in his Grundgesetze der Arithmetik (The Foundational Laws of Mathematics) – an error so fundamental that it invalidated Frege’s entire proposal. (Frege’s groundbreaking work on logic has led many to call him “the father of analytic philosophy”.) Russell had pointed out that error in personal correspondence with Frege and also in an appendix to his 1903 The Principles of Mathematics which he entitled “The Logical and Arithmetical Doctrines of Frege”.

These two pioneers were deep into the most esoteric realms of this “new” logic which can make Frege’s ‘error’ difficult for laymen to understand, let alone appreciate. Monk explains it this way in his Wittgenstein: The Duty of Genius:

To provide a logical definition of number, Frege had made use of the notion of a class, which he defined as the extension of a concept... Russell discovered that, by a certain chain of reasoning, this led to a contradiction. For on this assumption there will be some classes that belong to themselves, and some that do not: the class of all classes is itself a class, and therefore belongs to itself; the class of men is not itself a man, and therefore does not. On this basis we form ‘the class of all classes which do not belong to themselves’. Now we ask: is this class a member of itself or not? The answer either that it is or that it is not leads to a contradiction. And, clearly, if a contradiction can be derived from Frege's axioms, his system of logic is an inadequate foundation upon which to build the whole of mathematics.

That error – now famous as “Russell’s Paradox” (see the NOTE in item #2 above for Quine’s “solution” to this problem) – at first seemed to be minor, but soon proved to be so troublesome that it completely invalidated the very foundations of Frege’s revolutionary proposals. Russell labelled his own attempt at solving this nagging problem “The Theory of Types” and presented it in a second appendix to his Principles of Mathematics.

That was the situation when Wittgenstein, acting on Frege’s advice, showed up unannounced in Russell’s Trinity College rooms on October 19, 1911. Having introduced himself, he immediately imposed on Russell by attending (and completely dominating) his regular lectures on mathematical logic – insisting that they argue for hours after each of those classes. Russell was at first annoyed, but he soon realized he was in presence of genius; someone who – despite his youth and their 17-year age difference – repeatedly pointed out the errors in his own work, most especially in his “Theory of Types”.

Over the next two years, the two men argued – sometimes violently – as Wittgenstein worked on his own solution to the profound questions that Russell had raised about the logical foundations of mathematics. Ludwig did make some futile attempts to write down his thoughts on paper but – as he noted with some regularity – he loathed to put anything in writing unless it was absolutely perfect. Hence, none of these earliest thoughts have survived. Russell was, however, completely mesmerized by Wittgenstein and – despite the fact that he was a 23-year-old undergraduate studying for a BA degree – the student soon became the teacher.

The first record of Wittgenstein’s developing theories appear in a paper he read to the Moral Science Club in Cambridge on November 29, 1912. Unfortunately, that short paper has been lost and we have only the handwritten minutes of the meeting to rely upon:

Mr. Wittgenstein read a paper entitled “What is Philosophy?” The paper lasted only about 4 minutes, thus cutting the previous record by Mr. Tye by nearly two minutes. Philosophy was defined as all those primitive propositions which are assumed as true without proof by the various sciences. This defn. was much
discussed, but there was no general disposition to adopt it. The discussion kept very well to the point, and the Chairman did not find it necessary to intervene much.

This notion of “primitive propositions” is one that Wittgenstein would explore more fully in the near future.

3. Wittgenstein’s First Public Presentation – November 29, 1912


German language text with a wealth of photographic reproduction depicting – among many other things – the handwritten minutes of the meeting (text transcribed above and photo below) in which Ludwig Wittgenstein gave his first public presentation of his philosophical thoughts (p, 89).

The 15-page “Introduction” by Brian McGuinness offers a framework for viewing the mass of material assembled in this volume which dwells primarily on Wittgenstein’s family background and his intellectual evolution.

The remaining almost 400 pages of the book present a pictorial reconstruction of the important phases of Wittgenstein’s life – divided into 16 chapters moving from infancy to death. The illustrations (photographs, drawings, reproductions of letters and documents, etc.) are accompanied by brief texts (almost all in German) drawn from Wittgenstein’s correspondence or manuscripts designed to explain or comment more or less directly on the illustrations.

Publisher’s original dust jacket with a photo of Wittgenstein on the front panel over dark brown boards with lettering on the front board and the spine. A near fine dust jacket and book in the original publisher’s protective cardboard slip case.

The earliest published writing we have from Ludwig Wittgenstein expressing his philosophic opinions is found in the only book review he ever wrote. There, he offers his devastating appraisal of The Science of Logic: an inquiry into the principles of accurate thought and scientific method written by P. Coffey. That review appeared on p. 351 of The Cambridge Review XXXIV and was dated March 6, 1913. The original 1913 printing is all but unobtainable, but Wittgenstein’s review was reprinted in The Cambridge Mind – a compilation of articles selected to celebrate the Review’s 90th anniversary – in 1970.
4. Ludwig’s Scathing Review of Coffey’s *The Science of Logic*


$65

Wittgenstein could not be more disdainful of the “logic” that the author Coffey offers to both schoolmen and the public in this book:

In no branch of learning can an author disregard the results of honest research with so much impunity as he can in Philosophy and Logic.

...The author’s Logic is that of the scholastic philosophers, and he makes all their mistakes – of course with the usual references to Aristotle. (Aristotle, whose name is taken so much in vain by our logicians, would turn in his grave if he knew that so many Logicians know no more about Logic to-day than he did 2,000 years ago). The author has not taken the slightest notice of the great work of the modern mathematical logicians – work which has brought about an advance in Logic comparable only to that which made Astronomy out of Astrology, and Chemistry out of Alchemy.

Mr. Coffey, like many logicians, draws great advantage from an unclear way of expressing himself; for if you cannot tell whether he means to say “Yes” or “No”, it is difficult to argue against him. However, even through his foggy expression, many grave mistakes can be recognized clearly enough...

Wittgenstein then goes on to elaborate six of Coffey’s “most striking” mistakes – generally, the traditional weaknesses of Aristotelian logic that are most regularly challenged by proponents of the new mathematical logic offered by Bertrand Russell – and concludes by saying that: “This list of mistakes could be extended a good deal. The worst of such books is that they prejudice sensible people against the study of Logic.”

Original publisher’s unclipped dust jacket (with the most minimal of wear) over light grey boards with gilt lettering. Overall, a very pretty copy of this 1970 reprinting of Wittgenstein’s first public foray into the philosophical arena.

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**LUDWIG AND DAVID**

Ludwig met David Pinsent – a second year mathematics student – at one of Bertrand Russell’s “squashes” (social evenings) in April, 1912 and they soon became fast friends. This was a singular relationship for Wittgenstein who was typically “disgusted” with anyone who could not hold up their end of a conversation with him. Besides their abiding interest in mathematics and logic, the two men shared a common passion for music and even revered the same composers. (David would play piano accompaniment while Ludwig whistled Schubert melodies.) This along with Pinsent’s forgiving nature – an absolute necessity for anyone in a close relationship with the incredibly prickly and difficult Wittgenstein – quickly grew into a fast friendship.

The two men took a three-week vacation together – all expenses paid by Wittgenstein – to Iceland in September of 1912 and then a month-long extended trip to Norway in September of 1913. When they parted on October 8, 1913, both men presumed they would see each other again the following summer, but the outbreak of World War I prevented this. They never met again.

David Pinsent died when a military plane he was test-piloting crashed in May of 1918. Ludwig was literally suicidal over this, but, following a chance encounter with his uncle Paul, he was talked off that particular ledge.

The *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* is dedicated to David Pinsent.

Throughout their time together, Pinsent kept a diary in which he lovingly (and sometimes complainingly) records their activities, their conversations and Wittgenstein’s evolving thoughts during the two years of this friendship.
David Pinsent’s Diaries

[1912-1914] David Pinsent’s Diaries

David’s diary provides an amazing firsthand glimpse into the life of these two extraordinary young men and provides an intimate portrait of the fussy young Wittgenstein – well aware of his own genius and, as he told Russell at the time, absolutely “driven mad by logic”.

During the Iceland trip of 1912, Ludwig instructed David in mathematical logic which Pinsent found to be “excessively interesting” noting that “I am learning a lot from him. He is really remarkably clever… [and] I have never yet been able to find the smallest fault in his reasoning: and yet he has made me reconstruct entirely my ideas on several subjects.”

That trip had more than its fair share of emotional up and down days – many of which Pinsent records in detail – but in the end he claimed that it had been “the most glorious holiday I have ever spent!”

Back in Cambridge, Pinsent provides some wonderful details on Wittgenstein’s thinking as he continued to spar with Russell on an almost daily basis. In late October of 1912, Ludwig told David that he had experienced a great breakthrough in logic:

His latest is quite different and covers more ground, and if sound, should revolutionize lots of Symbolic Logic: Russell, he says, thinks it is sound, but says nobody will understand it: I think I comprehend it myself, however (!). If Wittgenstein’s solution works, he will be the first to solve a problem which has puzzled Russell and Frege for some years: it is the most masterly and convincing solution, too.

The following August, Wittgenstein was again telling Pinsent about his “latest discoveries” which David believed to “have solved all the problems on which he has been working unsatisfactorily for the last year.”

(See [August 1913] below for more details on these “latest discoveries”.)

On a more personal note, David tells of the emotional problems that occurred on both of these trips as well as during the Cambridge year in between. Commenting on an incident which happened just as they were leaving for Norway, Pinsent wrote:

I am afraid he is in an even more sensitive neurotic state just now than usual, and it will be very hard to avoid friction altogether. We can always avoid it at Cambridge, when we don’t see so much of each other: but he will never understand that it becomes infinitely harder when we are together so much as now: and it puzzles him frightfully.

Another passage from their time in Norway amply justifies the promise of the “Portrait” in the book’s title:

During all the morning and most of the afternoon Ludwig was very gloomy and unapproachable – worked at Logic all the time… I somehow succeeded in cheering him up – back to his normal frame of mind – and after tea we went for a stroll together (as it was a fine sunny day). We got talking and it appeared that it had been some very serious difficulty with the ‘Theory of Types’ that had depressed him all today. He is morbidly afraid he might die before he has put the Theory of Types to rights,… He is always saying he is certain he will die within four years – but today it was two months.

In addition to these revealing diary entries, the book includes fourteen letters Pinsent wrote to Wittgenstein between July, 1914 and September, 1916 – letters which Ludwig mentions in his Notebooks 1914- 1916 [see items #6, 7, 8 & 9 below] – along with five letters between Pinsent’s mother, Ellen, and Wittgenstein following David’s death in May, 1918.

Original slate blue dust jacket in near perfect condition with a photo of Wittgenstein on the front cover and black lettering to all sides. Over publisher’s original black cloth binding with silver lettering on the spine. An excellent copy.
WITTGENSTEIN IN NORWAY

Wittgenstein never lacked for anything materially, but on January 20, 1913 his father died leaving him and each of his siblings substantial inheritances.

[See #65 Briefe an Ludwig von Ficker in the “Letters” section of this catalog for significant insights into Ludwig’s pre-War efforts to deal with this windfall.]

His Norwegian holiday with Pinsent appealed to him so much that he decided to abandon Cambridge and return to Norway the following month, resolving to live alone there for the next two years. He had decided that complete isolation was absolutely necessary for him if he was going to make any progress with the immense philosophical problems he was wrestling with.

[August 1913]

Back in Cambridge, as he prepared for his extended stay in Norway, Wittgenstein tried to explain his current ideas on logic to Russell verbally – refusing to write anything down – but Russell was having significant trouble trying to make any sense out of his explanations.

Ludwig finally agreed that someone with shorthand skills could take notes as he spoke. These were then typed up and corrected by hand. This resulted in the very first written record we have of Wittgenstein’s thought – traditionally called his Notes on Logic.

These Notes first appeared in the Journal of Philosophy (Vol. LIV, No. 9, April, 25, 1957, pp. 230-244) but they reached a much wider audience when they appeared as Appendix I in Notebooks 1914-1916 published in 1961

[NOTE 1: There are two versions of these Notes – one appearing in the 1961 first edition of Wittgenstein’s Notebooks [see #6 & 7 offered below] and the other printed in the 1979 second edition of Notebooks [#8 & 9 below]. In his Wittgenstein’s Notes on Logic (Oxford, 2009), Michael Potter offers his detailed and rich analysis of the contents of these very first records of Wittgenstein’s thought.

[NOTE 2: A photo of one page of these Notes can be seen on page 105 of Ludwig Wittgenstein: Sein Leben in Bildern und Texten – item #3 offered above.]

Claiming that Russell’s Theory of Types “must be rendered superfluous by a proper theory of symbolism”, Wittgenstein offers an embryonic version of his Theory of Symbolism along with his categorical statement of what amounts to his lifelong ideas on the scope and the limits of philosophy:

In philosophy there are no deductions; it is purely descriptive. The word “philosophy” ought always to designate something over or under, but not beside, the natural sciences. Philosophy gives no picture of reality, and can neither confirm nor confute scientific investigations. It consists of logic and metaphysics, the former its basis. Epistemology is the philosophy of psychology. Distrust of grammar is the first requisite of philosophical philosophizing.

In Norway, Ludwig took rooms above the local postmaster in a village called Skjolden and devoted himself completely to his struggles with the mathematical foundations of logic. Russell had been, however, severely challenged by several key points in the Notes and he constantly pestered Wittgenstein for clarification. At first, Ludwig found this merely annoying, but Russell’s constant requests for further explanations gradually escalated Wittgenstein’s frustration into something close to a rage – culminating in the devastating letter he wrote to Russell in early 1914 ending their relationship: “I shall not write you again and you shall not see me again.” Russell did what he could to patch up this quarrel and by early March, Wittgenstein was once again writing to him – although their relationship beyond this point was more professional than based on the deep personal friendship they had enjoyed up to that point.

[April 1914]

Having so dramatically broken (and then tentatively reconnected) with Russell, Wittgenstein turned to G. E. Moore – the other most prominent philosophical intellect at Cambridge – for solace, inviting him to come visit him in Norway. Moore was extremely reluctant to do this – offering one excuse after another. Despite his own towering reputation, Moore was more than a little intimidated by Wittgenstein and his genius, but his reluctance was also based on several practical considerations. Arriving in Norway, he had to take a train and then a steamer
before making the final leg of the journey on skis followed by a motor-boat ride. He did, however, finally accept Ludwig’s invitation, arriving in Skjolden in late March where he stayed with Wittgenstein for two weeks.

On April 1, 1914, Wittgenstein began to dictate a series of notes on logic to Moore. These were meant to supplement the Notes recorded the previous August, but with further elaborations. He wrote to Russell telling him:

I explained in detail to Moore when he was with me and he made various notes. So you can best find it all out from him. Many things in it are new. – The best way to understand it all would be if you read Moore’s notes for yourself. It will probably be some time before I produce anything further.

Perhaps most important among these many “new” things was the emerging central importance of tautologies (statements which say the same thing in two different ways and therefore add nothing to the discourse) in the development of Wittgenstein’s thinking.

Those Notes Dictated to G. E. Moore in Norway appear as Appendix II (pp. 107-118) in Notebooks 1914-1916 published in 1961 [see #6 & 7 below] and a photo of the cover and one page of these Notes can be seen on pages 110-111 of Ludwig Wittgenstein: Sein Leben in Bildern und Texten – item #3 offered above.]

Wittgenstein later asked Moore to submit these Notes in fulfillment of his BA degree thesis. But, back in Cambridge, Moore was told that these Notes would not be accepted for that purpose because they did not conform to the proper formatting requirements (a preface, citational notes and explicit claims of original work among other things).

Wittgenstein was outraged! How could “the next big advance in philosophy” not qualify for a degree? He wrote one of the most ill-advised and intemperate letters of his life, excoriating Moore and claiming that:

If I am not worth your making an exception for me even in some STUPID details then I may as well go to HELL directly; and if I am worth it and you don’t do it then – by God – you might go there.

This was patently unfair since Moore was simply reporting on the University’s stringent requirements which had been relayed to him by the proper authorities. Unfortunately, this letter poisoned his relationship with Moore who never replied and very pointedly cut off any further correspondence and contact with Wittgenstein. The two men did not reconcile until fifteen years later when Ludwig returned to Cambridge in 1929 and they happened to meet on the train.

[Mid-1914]

Following Moore’s visit, Wittgenstein was exhausted by logic and so diverted his attention into the building of a small cabin. Often referred to as his “hut,” it had no electricity or running water and consisted of a small living room, a kitchen and bedroom with a balconied attic space. It was sited on the side of a hill overlooking a small lake at the end of a fjord.

Construction began in mid-1914, but was not completed until February, 1915 – and by then Wittgenstein was serving on the Eastern Front with the Austrian army. He finally returned to Norway in the summer of 1921 and continued to do so with some regularity over the next three decades – taking up extended residencies in 1931, 1936 (when he wrote the opening sections of Philosophical Investigations) and 1937. His final long visit to this remote retreat came in the last three months of 1950, shortly before his death in April of 1951.
THE PHILOSOPHER AT WAR

The economic and militaristic frenzy that gripped Europe for more than four decades resulted in a complex set of interlocking alliances which – following the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand of Austria in late June 1914 – led to the outbreak of World War I.

While Bertrand Russell became a vocal advocate for conscientious objectors – serving 6-months in prison near the end of the war for his “subversive anti-war campaigning” – Ludwig Wittgenstein voluntarily enlisted in the Austrian army as a private on August 7, 1914 – the day after his native Austria declared war on Russia.

Given the prominence of his family, his personal wealth and the fact that he had a pre-existent (double hernia) deferment, joining the army as a private is hard to explain. The reasons for this sudden, low-ranked enlistment were, at least in part, driven by some patriotic zeal, but even more so by his desire for personal spiritual growth. It was a constant driving theme throughout his youth that he needed to “turn into a different person” and he was convinced that subjecting himself to the possibility of sudden death would surely be a positive, life-changing experience for him.

Wittgenstein regularly recorded his ongoing thoughts in notebooks, but ordered most of these destroyed in 1950. However, three notebooks from his war years – inadvertently left in the house of his youngest sister, Margaret – have survived.

They do not, unfortunately, cover the whole of his wartime service. The first two record his thoughts and actions from August 9, 1914 to June 22, 1915 and the third covers from March 28, 1916 to January 1, 1917. Still missing are three or four other notebooks which would have completed the picture of his military service.

All of the philosophical musing – i.e. his thoughts as he laboriously moved towards his 1922 masterwork, Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus – that are recorded in these three notebooks have been extracted and edited by two of Wittgenstein’s three literary executors: Elizabeth Anscombe and G.H. von Wright.

These were published in 1961 with Anscombe’s English translations on the page facing Wittgenstein’s original German – providing an intimate glimpse into Wittgenstein’s wartime fears, his suicidal tendencies and his fevered mind as he struggled to solve the huge philosophical problems he had set for himself.

6.

Philosophical Thoughts from His Wartime Diaries

with Two Important Appendices: Notes on Logic [1913] & Moore’s Notes [1914]


With a small erratum slip bound in at page 99 correcting “sum” to “product” in line 33 of that page.

As noted by Anscombe in the “Editor’s Preface”:

We publish this material as an aid to students of the Tractatus. Most of it is no easier than the Tractatus itself; it naturally shews development; thus when it appears to present views different from those of the Tractatus, there is no need to reconcile the two. It should not be used without more ado as evidence for particular interpretations of the Tractatus. It does shew clearly, however, what problems formed the context of Wittgenstein's remarks in the Tractatus; in this way it will serve to cut short some argument where wholly irrelevant contexts are supposed by an interpretation.

The editors have generously marked the paragraphs which are practically identical to what later appeared in the Tractatus with a corresponding reference to that book. Those identical with just a part of a Tractatus paragraph are helpfully marked with See and the corresponding numbered entry. Those comments which show some similarities, but also exhibit significant differences are noted by the word Compare and the appropriate reference.

Although the editors have deleted all of the personal entries found in these diaries [see the listing for Private Notebooks – #10 below – for all of those more personal and even intimate entries made by Wittgenstein in the Notebooks], they could not resist reproducing the final entry which was made on January 10, 1917 presenting some of Wittgenstein’s ongoing thoughts of suicide – thoughts that Ludwig entertained in much more detail throughout the personal sections of these diaries:
If suicide is allowed then everything is allowed.
If anything is not allowed then suicide is not allowed.
This throws light on the nature of ethics, for suicide is, so to speak, the elementary sin.
And when one investigates it it is like investigating mercury vapour in order to comprehend the nature of vapours.
Or is even suicide in itself neither good nor evil?

The editors obviously did consider this to be a sufficiently dramatic coda to the Notebooks – similar to the famous closing line of the Tractatus: “Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent.”

Appendices I & II contain the important Notes given to Russell in 1913 and to G.E. Moore in 1914 (as mentioned above).

Appendix III presents extracts from 19 letters that Wittgenstein wrote to Russell between 1912 and 1920 commenting (and attempting to clarify) his thoughts during this important gestation period for the Tractatus.

7.

The Simultaneously Published American Edition of the Notebooks


$150

Published simultaneously from British sheets indicating a second issue status, this copy shows the “sum” typo on page 99, but is without the inserted “Erratum” found in the Blackwell copy above.

Publisher’s original unclipped tan dust jacket with dark blue lettering front, back and to the spine. The dust jacket is worn on the spine with minor tears and tiny chips. This over the original black cloth binding with gilt lettering to the spine. Otherwise, a lovely copy.
8. The Important Corrected Second Edition of the Notebooks with a Different Version of the 1913 Notes on Logic


In her “Preface”, Anscombe notes that they have corrected a few errors in the text – most of which were “very small.”

Most important in this new edition is the change to the *Notes on Logic* of 1913 which “appear here in a different arrangement from that of the first edition” which had reproduced H. T. Costello’s text from his *Journal of Philosophy* article (Vol. LIV, No. 9, April 25, 1957, pp. 230-244). It had since been discovered that this version was much revised and rearranged by Bertrand Russell using headers of his own creation. This second edition of *Notebooks* prints the earlier, pre-Russell-rearrangement which is much closer to Wittgenstein’s original dictation and is therefore significantly different from what had appeared in the first edition printing.

The new Appendix IV presents facsimiles of “passages of symbolism” which were omitted from the first edition because “nothing could be made of them.” Seen here as they appeared in Wittgenstein’s Notebooks, the reader is free to devise their own suggestions, suppositions and interpretations of their meaning. Finally, the inclusion of a detailed *Index* to the book provides students of Wittgenstein with the ability to more easily identify and locate particular ideas or passages they might be looking for.

Publisher’s original illustrated stiff wraps. The spine is a bit sunned to green rather than olive as the covers show. The upper right corner (2.5” x 2.5” x 3”) of the front free endpaper has been clipped. A very good copy with no markings whatsoever.

9. The Corrected and Augmented Second Edition of the Notebooks Published in the US


Published simultaneously from British sheets indicating this is a second issue copy.

Publisher’s original illustrated and unclipped dust jacket (showing the colored “patches” unmentioned in the first edition – see the “Preface”) over the original black cloth binding with gilt lettering to the spine. Fine in a fine dust jacket.
Aside from his evolving philosophical thoughts as published in 1961 and 1979 [see items #6, 7, 8 & 9 above], the original Notebooks also contained a wealth of intimate details of Wittgenstein’s life and thoughts during the war.

While the philosophical remarks appeared on the right-hand (recto) side of the page, the left-hand (verso) side contained diary entries written in a simple code (z = a, y = b, etc.) that he and his siblings had used throughout their childhood. These were private ruminations and, being coded, were thus protected from any prying eyes that might stumble upon his notebooks during the war.

Curators at the Wittgenstein Archive cracked this code, transcribed the private diaries into German and made them available to scholars. They were, for instance, extensively discussed by both Brian McGuiness (1988) and Ray Monk (1990) in their respective biographies of Wittgenstein.

Still unpublished in German pending the resolution of a copyright lawsuit, the “private notebooks” were edited and translated into English in 2022 by Stanford University Professor Emerita of Humanities, Marjorie Perloff.

These coded entries comment regularly on Ludwig’s progress (or lack of progress) with “the work” (his philosophical struggles), his military activities, his terrible relationships with the rank and file soldiers, his readings (particularly of Tolstoy’s version of the Gospels and Dostoyevsky’s *The Brothers Karamazov*), his religious and moral sentiments, his brooding over his possible death and potential cowardice, his almost constant thoughts of suicide, and his sexual behaviors.

Elizabeth Anscombe, the chief translator and executor of Wittgenstein’s literary estate, was categorically opposed to the publication of the kind of revealing personal information found in his notebooks claiming that “if by pressing a button it could have been secured that people would not concern themselves with his personal life, I should have pressed the button.”

Nietzsche – whose *Antichrist* Wittgenstein was reading with sympathetic interests during the war – would counter by saying that knowledge of a philosopher’s “personal life” is essential to any understanding of his philosophy:

> It has gradually become clear to me what every great philosophy up till now has consisted of – namely, the confession of its originator, and a species of involuntary and unconscious autobiography; and moreover that the moral (or immoral) purpose in every philosophy has constituted the true vital germ out of which the entire plant has always grown. Indeed, to understand how the most abstruse metaphysical assertions of a philosopher have been arrived at, it is always well (and wise) to first ask oneself: "What morality do they (or does he) aim at?"

[Beyond Good and Evil, Aphorism 6]

Surely the *Meditations* of Marcus Aurelius are the best proof of this. How can we possibly appreciate the depth and breadth of this brilliant man’s thoughts without knowing that he was the absolute ruler of Western Eurasia when he wrote them? I would suggest that Nietzsche’s observation is even more true of Wittgenstein’s because of his struggles with religious, spiritual, moral and sexual issues that he so candidly chronicles throughout these private wartime entries. The nakedness, the self-confessional tenor of these entries provides a painful and a profound glimpse into the very tortured soul of this singular genius, Ludwig Wittgenstein.

As new.
Following that burst of activity, Wittgenstein wrote to Russell on October 22, 1915 telling him that he was in the process of compiling the results of his wartime “work” up to that point into a treatise: “If I don’t survive, get my people to send you all my manuscripts: among them you’ll find the final summary written in pencil on loose sheets of paper.” Unfortunately, those “loose sheets of paper” with his first version of the *Tractatus* have not survived. Regarding this earliest of all possible versions, Monk notes that if Wittgenstein had followed Russell’s rather round-about suggestions for forwarding those manuscripts to him (which did not happen):

…the work that would have been published in 1916 would have been, in many ways, similar to the work we now know as the *Tractatus*. It would, that is, have contained the Picture Theory of meaning, the metaphysics of ‘logical atomism’, the analysis of logic in terms of the twin notions of tautology and contradiction, and the distinction between saying and showing (invoked to make the Theory of Types superfluous), and the method of Truth-Tables (used to show a logical proposition to be either a tautology or a contradiction). In other words, it would have contained almost everything the *Tractatus* now contains—except the remarks at the end of the book on ethics, aesthetics, the soul, and the meaning of life.

In a way, therefore, it would have been a completely different work.

After twenty months of serving behind the lines, Wittgenstein’s longstanding request for front line duty was finally granted and, in April, 1916, he was posted to an artillery unit fighting directly on the Russian Front. Once there, he asked to be assigned to the observation post, the most dangerous position possible because it received constant bombardment from the enemy. At first, the fighting was light, but in June the Russians launched a major offensive with some of the heaviest fighting of the entire war on the Eastern Front and Wittgenstein’s regiment bore the brunt of this attack – suffering enormous casualties.

This up-close (and ongoing) experience with his possible death added a completely new direction to the “work”. On June 11, 1916, Ludwig Wittgenstein put logic aside for the moment and asked himself: “What do I know about God and the purpose of life?” The answers to that question grew in prominence over the next three years – resulting in the sections of the *Tractatus* devoted to “ethics, aesthetics, the soul and the meaning of life” which had previous been missing from that earlier, purely logical version.

What Russell later called a decidedly “mystical” element had been added to the work.

It is impossible to overemphasize the transformation that this shift caused in Wittgenstein. He had long been obsessed with the idea that his war experiences could transform him into the kind of spiritual being that he so desperately wanted to become – and, as he repeatedly noted, that he was so consistently failing to become.

Fortunately for Wittgenstein, he met the architect Paul Engelmann while on leave in October of 1916. Paul was the first real friend he made since leaving England and he was destined to become Ludwig’s philosophical, psychological and spiritual sparring partner for the next several years. Both men had a decidedly ‘mystical’ bent along with a penchant for lacerating self-criticism. In addition, they shared a worldview firmly grounded in the belief that the only kind of meaningful transformation in this life was individual rather than social or political.

Typical of their relationship, Wittgenstein wrote to Engelmann in April of 1917:

*We are asleep… Our* life is like a dream. But in our better hours we wake up just enough to realize that we are dreaming. Most of the time, though, we are fast asleep. I cannot awaken myself! I am trying hard, my dream body moves, but my real one *does not stir*. This, alas, is how it is!

By January of 1918, the two men were open enough with each other that Engelmann felt free to explicitly point out Wittgenstein’s “lack of faith” to him – to which Ludwig replied:

*It is true there is a difference between myself as I am now and as I was when we met in Olmütz, And, as far as I know, the difference is that I am now slightly more decent. By this I mean that I am slightly clearer in my own mind about my lack of decency. If you tell me now that I have no faith, you are perfectly right, only I did not have it before either… But what am I to do? I am clear about one thing: I am far too bad to able to theorize about myself; in fact I shall either remain a swine or else I shall improve, and that’s that! Only let’s cut out the transcendental twaddle when the whole thing is as plain as a sock in the jaw… I am sure you are right in what you say.*
Engelman claimed that their friendship and ongoing relationship grew out of their similar spiritual predicaments which “enabled me to understand, from within as it were, his utterances that mystified everyone else. And it was this understanding on my part that made me indispensable to him at that time.” Wittgenstein was no less clear on Engelmann’s importance to him throughout the last years of the war and the decade that followed: “If I can’t manage to bring forth a proposition,” he said, “along comes Engelmann with his forceps to pull it out of me.”

Engelmann’s singular importance to Wittgenstein is no better demonstrated than by the fact that once the first complete manuscript of the Tractatus was available, it was successively shared with only three people: Bertrand Russell, Gottlob Frege and Paul Engelmann.

The ever-escalating spiritual agonies that Wittgenstein suffered (and shared with Engelmann) during the last half of the war would culminate in the radical new direction that his life would take once he returned to civilian life in August of 1919.

With the success of the Bolshevik Revolution and the subsequent collapse of the Russian front, Wittgenstein’s unit was transferred to the Italian front in March, 1918. A new Austrian offensive began there in June – during which Ludwig won his second commendation for bravery under fire – but the attacks were unsuccessful, ending in failure and retreat.

Following this, Wittgenstein was granted a long leave which extended from July to September 1918 and it was most likely during this time that he wrote out the Prototractatus [see item #11 below] based on the notes he had developed and carried around in his knapsack throughout the war.

There has been much speculation over the exact “stages” of Wittgenstein’s composition of the Tractatus. In one plausible account this is broken down into the Ur-Tractatus (the first 12 pages), the Core-Tractatus (the first 28 pages), the Proto-Prototractatus (the first 70 pages) and, finally, the Prototractatus (the first 103 pages). Each of these “stages” is based on the available evidence found in the surviving Notebooks, contemporary letters and in the handwritten manuscript discovered by G.H. von Wright in 1965 – which he named the Prototractatus.

11.

Wittgenstein’s Hand-Written Manuscript for the Tractatus


G.H. von Wright provides a historical “Introduction” followed by 60 leaves of facsimile reproduction of Wittgenstein’s handwritten manuscript and then Pears’ and McGuiness’ preface and translation of that text. The book concludes with three tables showing the Correspondence and Non-Correspondence between the Tractatus of 1922 and this Prototractatus.

The handwritten manuscript contains the entire material of the Tractatus (except for the thirteen propositions Wittgenstein added later), but with different numeration and in an order which follows some different criteria. It ends with the “Preface” which is identical to the final work except for the final phrase.

Perhaps the most interesting (if not the most important) thing found in this handwritten document is that we are introduced for the first time to Wittgenstein’s unique numbering of the propositions which he introduces here. This is reminiscent of Spinoza’s Ethica – but Wittgenstein famously prided himself on have never read any of the “classical” philosophers – so this numbering was most likely suggested by the somewhat similar formatting of Russell’s and Whitehead’s Principia Mathematica.

As he himself noted here in a short comment preceding the text of the Prototractatus:

All the good propositions of my other manuscripts are fitted in among the propositions in this book. The numbers indicate the order of the propositions and their importance. Thus 5.04101 follows 5.041 and is followed by 5.0411, which is a more important proposition that 5.04101.

Publisher’s original tan dust jacket with black lettering front, back and on the spine (lightly sunned) over publisher’s black boards with gilt lettering on the spine. A very pretty copy of this reproduction of this amazing historical artifact.
PUBLISHING THE TRACTATUS I

The war raged on as Wittgenstein spent his long leave from July to September, 1918 compiling the notes that he had carried around in his rucksack throughout the war into a finished manuscript for the Tractatus. This he submitted to the Viennese firm, Jahoda & Siegel, for publication. Jahoda delayed several weeks before declining to publish it on October 25, 1918.

This would not be the last disappointment Wittgenstein would receive trying to get his masterwork published.

Back on active duty, he was caught up in the Austrian surrender of November 3, 1918 when he (along with about 300,000 other soldiers) was taken prisoner. He was to remain a prisoner-of-war for the next nine months.

Taken prisoner at Como, Ludwig finally arrived at the prisoner-of-war camp at Cassino in January of 1919 where he would remain a captive until late August.

On March 13, 1919 – while still a prisoner – Wittgenstein wrote to Russell:

I’ve written a book called ‘Logisch-philosophische Abhandlung’ containing all my work of the last six years. I believe I’ve solved our problems finally. This may sound arrogant but I can’t help believing it. I finished the book in August 1918 and two months after was made [a prisoner]. I’ve got the manuscript here with me. I wish I could copy it out for you; but it’s pretty long and I would have no safe way of sending it to you. In fact you would not understand it without a previous explanation as it’s written in quite short remarks. (This of course means that nobody will understand it; although I believe, it’s all as clear as crystal. But it upsets all our theory of truth, of classes, of numbers and all the rest.) I will publish it as soon as I get home.

The next Cassino letter to Russell is dated June 19, 1919 in which he claims that
Some days ago I sent you my manuscript through [John Maynard] Keynes’s intermediacy… It is the only correct copy that I possess and is my life’s work. Now more than ever I’m burning to see it in print. It’s galling to have to lug the completed work round in captivity and to see how nonsense has a clear field outside! And it’s equally galling to think that no one will understand it even if it does get printed!

On August 20, 1919 – immediately after his release from captivity – Wittgenstein told Russell that he had sent the Tractatus to another potential publisher, Willhelm Braumüller in Vienna, who was asking for a professional opinion on the worthiness of the book. Wittgenstein asked Russell – who was having considerable difficulty making sense of the book – to “please write him a few words, as much as your conscience will allow you to.” Even with this prompting, Braumüller would only agree to publish the book if Wittgenstein paid for the paper and the printing – something he was not willing or able to do.

Several more rejections loomed on the near horizon.

Frege (whom he told Russell “doesn’t understand a single word of my work”) was encouraged to try to get the Tractatus published in Beiträgen zur Philosophie des Deutschen Idealismus – a journal in which Frege had recently published an article. This came to naught. Next, he approached his friend von Ficker and wondered if his literary journal, Der Brenner, might be interested in publishing the book. After much back and forth – “I am pinning my hopes on you” he wrote to von Ficker – this offer too was rejected. Von Ficker did approach his friend, the poet Rainer Marie Rilke, wondering if he could find a publisher for the work, but if he ever approached his own publisher, Insel-Verlag, nothing ever came of that either.

Wittgenstein was devastated, writing to Russell in late November of 1919: “Do you remember how you were always pressing me to publish something? And now when I should like to, it can’t be managed. The devil take it!”

Russell and Wittgenstein managed to meet in the Netherlands in mid-December of 1919 after which Ludwig wrote to Paul Engelmann: “Russell wants to print my treatise, possibly in both German and English (he will translate it himself and write an introduction, which suits me.)” The most important thing to come out of this meeting was the plan for Russell to write an “Introduction” to the book.

With the assurance of a long, explanatory “Introduction” by the world-famous Russell, the publication of the Tractatus seemed assured. Armed with this sweetener, Wittgenstein approached Reclam of Leipzig in mid-January, 1919, who expressed an interest in publishing it. There were, however, delays – first in getting a copy of the manuscript from Engelmann and the long delay in receiving Russell’s “Introduction” which did not arrive until April. Wittgenstein was unhappy with this “Introduction” (“There’s so much in it I’m not quite in agreement with…”), but it made no difference. Reclam had by then lost their enthusiasm for the project and rejected the book in late May.

By July of 1920, Wittgenstein had admitted defeat, writing to Russell: “I won’t take any further steps to have it published.”

In the autumn of 1920, Russell, who was leaving for a year in China, entrusted the manuscript of the Tractatus to Dorothy Wrinch and asked her to try get it published. She first approached Cambridge University Press, but they declined the offer in mid-January, 1921. Undefeated, she next offered the manuscript to three German journals. Two of them demurred, but Wilhelm Ostwald was so impressed with Russell’s involvement in the project (and with his “Introduction”) that he agreed to publish the book in an issue of his Annalen der Naturphilosophie.

12. The Original Journal Publication of the Tractatus


$75,000 SOLD
This is the first appearance of Wittgenstein’s *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* – published here using his original title for the work: *Logisch-Philosophische Abhandlung*. The text was printed exclusively in German, without the facing-page English translation that would appear the following year in the book published by Kegan Paul.

Hearing of this coming publication and exceedingly suspicious of the publisher Ostwald’s reliability (Wittgenstein actually refers to him as an “utter charlatan” in a letter), he begged Russell to very carefully read the proofs before publication to ensure that “he prints it exactly as I have it.” Unfortunately, Russell did not receive the proofs in time to correct them and the text was printed with a wealth of typos and a number of other serious problems. According to Monk:

[The publisher] – without, apparently any interest or concern for the meaning of the work he was publishing – simply had it printed exactly as it was in the typescript. Thus one finds, for example – besides many more ordinary misprints – typewriter symbols where one would expect to find symbols of Russellian logic; “!” for the Sheffer stroke; “?” for the negation sign (and occasionally also for the Sheffer stroke); and the capital letter C for material implication.

Wittgenstein had used the symbols available on a normal typewriter in place of those employed in Russellian logic, and the publisher had simply set them in type in exactly that way, rather than substituting the correct symbolic logic symbols.

Ostwald did not send the author any copies of the work when it was published, and when Wittgenstein heard from Russell that the issue of the journal was in print he had to ask a friend to search the bookshops of Vienna for a copy. That search was unsuccessful, and Wittgenstein did not see a copy until C.K. Ogden sent him one in April, 1922.

His earlier fears about Ostwald’s capacity for folly were fully justified and he was infuriated by the crassness of the errors introduced by Ostwald, exclaiming in a letter to Paul Engelmann that “I consider this a pirated edition. It is full of errors.”

Despite all these problems, this is the true first publication of this incredibly important work of 20th century philosophy.

Original printed orange wraps. An untrimmed copy. There is just a bit of soiling to the outer edge of the front cover. The spine has a very small chip at the top. Comes in a modern, folding black cloth case. Other than the noted faults, this is an absolutely fine copy.

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**[1922]**

When Russell returned from China in August of 1921, he approached C. K. Ogden, the founder and editor of Kegan Paul’s series called “The International Library of Psychology, Philosophy and Scientific Method”, about publishing Wittgenstein’s book. By November of 1921, Ogden had obtained a copy of the *Annalen* and agreed to publishing the book in German with – at Russell’s suggestion – an English translation on the facing page.

This unique arrangement was explained by Ogden in his opening Note to the book:

In rendering Mr. Wittgenstein’s *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* available for English readers, the somewhat unusual course has been adopted of printing the original side by side with the translation. Such a method of presentation seemed desirable both on account of the obvious difficulties raised by the vocabulary and in view of the peculiar literary character of the whole. As a result, a certain latitude has been possible in passages to which objection might otherwise be taken as over-literal.

The translation into English was done by Ogden and Frank Ramsey, a brilliant eighteen-year-old undergraduate who had already impressed Ogden with his talents as a translator. Contrary to the lack of oversight in the *Annalen*
publication, Wittgenstein collaborated on correcting the German mistakes that had been made there while also making corrections to the English; in some cases simply smoothing out the too literal translation of his German and in other cases actually editing the text so that it more accurately conveyed the meaning of his frequently unclear text.

The title the book proved to be a problem. The original suggestion was *Philosophical Logic*, but no one – least of all Wittgenstein – liked this. G. E. Moore proposed *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* and although Wittgenstein didn’t consider it “ideal”, it was much better than *Philosophical Logic* which he deemed absolutely “wrong”.

In June of 1922, Wittgenstein signed away the publication rights to Kegan Paul. Projecting very minimal sales for the book, the publisher offered neither a signing bonus nor any royalties on any copies that might be sold. He was, however, granted a few author’s copies of the book in mid-November, 1922 which he gave away to friends. The first public notice of the book appeared in a review published in the *Time Literary Supplement* on December 21, 1922 (Fr/McG: #3, p. 55).

13. Finally, the *Tractatus* is Accurately Printed and Translated into English

*Philosophy is not a body of doctrine but an activity*


$12,500

Published in an edition of 1,500 copies, the book was not expected to sell quickly so copies were bound as the current supply of on-hand copies waned. The *Tractatus* lived up to this reputation with copies being bound at various times between 1922 and 1933 when the second, definitive edition (of 1,000 copies) was printed. With each of these later bindings, a dated catalog of other books already published in the International Library of Psychology was bound in the rear. The catalog in this copy is dated 1927.

Charles Dickens may hold the honor of writing the most famous opening and closing lines to be found in a novel (“It was the best of times, it was the worst of times… and “It is a far, far better thing I do than I have ever done…”), but Ludwig Wittgenstein is surely the uncontested winner in the philosophical realm opening the *Tractatus* with the “The world is everything that is the case” and ends it with the decisive “Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent.”

Wittgenstein tried to briefly explain his book to Russell in August of 1919: “The main point is the theory of what can be expressed by propositions – i.e. by language – (and, which comes to the same, what can be thought) and what cannot be expressed by propositions, but only shown; which I believe is the cardinal problem of philosophy.” In short, he was claiming to present a comprehensive account of the natures of language, logic and reality and thereby solve all of the major problems then confounding professional philosophers.

Organized with an ever-fragmenting numbering system that runs from 1 to 7, the 525 short remarks are presented without arguments. Each proposition is put forward, as Bertrand Russell once said, “as if it were a Czar’s ukase.”

Russell supplied the uncomprehending seventeen-page “Introduction” which Wittgenstein was clearly disappointed with: "There's so much of it that I'm not quite in agreement with – both where you're critical of me and also where you're simply trying to elucidate my point of view." Elaborating on that point, Wittgenstein claims in his “Preface” that:

> This book will perhaps only be understood by those who have themselves already thought the thoughts which are expressed in it… The book deals with the problems of philosophy and shows, as I believe, that the method of formulating these problems rests on the misunderstanding of the logic of the language. Its whole meaning could be summed up somewhat as follows: What can be said at all can be said clearly; and whereof one cannot speak thereof one must be silent… the truth of the thoughts communicated here seems to me unassailable and definitive. I am, therefore, of the opinion that the problems [of philosophy] have in essentials been finally solved.

This final solution to the “problems of philosophy” – articulating the relationship between language and reality and thus defining the limits of science – are to be found in the sum total of those short declarative, numbered statements which make up the book. They present (among other things) Wittgenstein’s Picture Theory of Language (highlighting especially what language can *say* as opposed to what it can *show*), his Truth-Table showing the true nature of propositions (and thus delimiting the scope of science) and what was later termed his Theory of Logical Atomism (defining not so much the nature of objects, but rather the absolute foundational basis of logical analysis).
In relation to the more mystical elements (which are mostly concentrated in the final few pages of the book), Ludwig wrote to a friend: “My work consists of two parts: the one presented here plus all that I have not written. And it is precisely this second part that is the important one. My book draws limits to the sphere of the ethical from the inside as it were, and I am convinced that this is the ONLY rigorous way of drawing those limits. In short, I believe that where many others today are just gassing, I have managed in my book to put everything firmly into place by being silent about it.”

This is then both a philosophical and a literary work; one which ultimately claims that “there are indeed things that cannot be put into words. They make themselves manifest. They are what is mystical” [TLP, 6.522] and it is exactly these “things that cannot be put into words” that finally must turn us away from philosophy as we embrace Wittgenstein’s final conclusion that “Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent.”

This seemingly contradictory dual content continues to generate a cottage industry of commentary within the philosophical community. As Anthony Kenny, noted in his book on Wittgenstein: “The twenty thousand words of the Tractatus can be read in an afternoon, but few would claim to understand them thoroughly even after years of study.” Despite this degree of difficulty – or, perhaps, in spite of it – the book has become a touchstone for both the logical positivist and the analytic schools of philosophy.

Publisher’s original green cloth binding with gilt lettering to the spine with just the smallest of lightly discolored “chips” to the rear edge of the spine. With an original solicitation post card from the publisher laid in. A lovely copy.

14.
The First American Issue of the Tractatus
“Philosophy does not result in philosophical propositions but rather in the clarification of propositions”


Published simultaneously by Harcourt Brace in the US from British sheets.

Original publisher’s dark green boards with the publisher’s device embossed on the front cover and fading gilt lettering to the spine.
15. The Scarce Second /Definitive/ Edition of the Tractatus with Wittgenstein’s Final Corrections to the Text


$ 4,500

This second edition is the definitive text of the Tractatus, and the one most commonly used by scholars today. Published in an edition of just 1,000 copies, this 1933 edition of the Tractatus is the most notoriously difficult to find. Note that this edition also did not sell well… as evidenced by the inclusion of 20 pages of publisher’s advertising dated 1935 (two years after the book was published).

The corrections were made by Wittgenstein himself, changing the wording of a sentence or a phrase to make it clearer or more precise, clarifying the text and removing any ambiguities. One typical example would be:

5.152: “Von einander unabhängige Sätze (z. B. irgend zwei Elementarsätze) geben einander die Wahrscheinlichkeit ½.” (Independent sentences (e.g., any two elementary sentences) give each other the probability ½.) was changed to "Zwei Elementarsätze geben einander die Wahrscheinlichkeit ½." (Two elementary sentences give each other the probability ½.)

Publisher’s original dark green boards with bright gilt lettering to the spine. There is a London bookseller’s (H. K. Lewis & Co.) ticket to the lower inside corner of the front cover. As fine a copy as one could ever hope to find – as if the original buyer bought it and wrapped it in tissue paper, never to touch it again.

16. The 1961 Pears-McGuinness Translation of the Tractatus


$ 400

The first printing of the Tractus did not sell well and a second edition of Ramsey’s translation (with revisions by Wittgenstein) was not called for until 1933.

However, by 1961, it was felt that a new translation was needed and Wittgenstein scholars D. F. Pears and Brian McGuinness produced this updated translation which they pointedly insisted was “not a revision” of the text.

The book also includes a completely new 14-page Index to help readers more easily locate particular ideas or passages of interest.

A second edition of this translation was issued in 1971.

The famous first line now reads “The world is all that is the case” and the concluding entry is “What we cannot speak about we must consign to silence.”

Original publisher’s light tan dust jacket with dark green printing throughout over the original red cloth boards with gilt lettering to the spine. There are two closed tears to the front edge of the spine – one an inch from the top down and the other a half inch up from the bottom. Otherwise, a tight clean copy of this new translation of the Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus.
Like so many combat veterans – before and since – Ludwig Wittgenstein returned to civilian life a profoundly changed man. He had wanted the war to transform him and that had certainly been the case. Released from the prisoner-of-war camp, he immediately began a campaign to reorganize both his inner and outer life on a radically new basis.

The first thing he did was to take a practical vow of poverty, divesting himself of all the wealth he had inherited when his father died on January 20, 1913. Ludwig was, at this point, one of the richest men in Europe, but within just weeks of returning to Vienna, he had committed what his appalled legal advisors called “financial suicide” by irrevocably giving away all his assets to his brother, Paul, and to his sisters, Helene and Hermine. (It was felt that his sister, Margarete – who was married to the very rich American, Jerome Stonborough – had more money than she would ever need.)

Freed from his wealth, he struggled to decide between becoming either a Roman Catholic priest or a grade school teacher. The latter choice finally won out. One month after his release, he enrolled in the Teachers’ Training College, graduating ten months later on July 5, 1920. Suddenly confronted with a summer vacation, he was reluctant to return to his family in Vienna, so he spent the summer as a temporary assistant gardener at the Klosterneuburg Monastery.

None of these things, however, were very successful in “putting his inner life in order.” Just weeks before graduating from Teachers’ College, he wrote with his typical confessional openness to Engelmann: “I have had the most miserable time lately. Of course only as a result of my own baseness and rottenness. I have continually thought of taking my own life, and the idea still haunts me sometime. I have sunk to the lowest point.”

Three months later, Ludwig was teaching in a small village school in Trattenbach, Austria and, at first, this seemed to be exactly what his troubled soul was seeking. The rural population was poor and uneducated and this fit in perfectly with Tolstoy’s ideal of a spiritual man’s proper mission in life – an ideal that he had adopted for himself. He taught his students mathematics, the German classics and read the Bible to them. He now wrote to Engelmann: “I am happy in my work at school, and I do need it badly, or else all the devils in Hell break loose inside me.”

But this time of ease was short lived. He soon found the students to be incorrigibly stupid and the parents of his few promising pupils to be completely unsupportive of his best efforts to teach them. He was massively depressed and, despite all their best efforts, refused the help his family was so desperately trying to offer him. As his sister Hermine noted in a December, 1920 letter to a mutual friend: “It is not easy having a saint for a brother… I would (often) rather have a happy person for a brother than an unhappy saint.”

As soon as the school year was over, Wittgenstein escaped to Norway for the summer.
In September of 1922, he left Trattenbach and began teaching at a secondary school in Hassbach, a small town nearby. But this, he quickly realized, was a mistake (the people – including his fellow teachers – he said they “are not human at all but loathsome worms”) and he lasted little more than a week before quitting that job. That November he returned to elementary school teaching in a village in the Schneeberg mountains called Puchberg where he taught for two years. In September 1924, he left Puchberg to begin his final stint of elementary school teaching in Otterthal, a village back in the general vicinity of where he started in Trattenbach.

17. [1919-1926]  
**A Deep and Varied Collection of Documents Devoted to Wittgenstein’s Teaching Career in Austria**


$85

An assembly of documents, including testimony from former pupils and letters illuminating Wittgenstein’s life in the Teachers’ Training College and in the Austrian villages where he taught. This is accompanied by a running commentary by Konrad Wünsche which lays an emphasis on the struggle and self-abnegation involved in Wittgenstein’s renunciation of wealth and privilege and on the moral and religious aims of his teaching career.

The final section of the book – from pages 295 to 341 – reproduces letters from Wittgenstein to his friend and educational advisor, Ludwig Hänsel and to his sister, Hermine along with several letters from Hänsel to Wittgenstein.

Publisher’s original red wraps with black lettering to the both covers and the spine. Mildly foxed along the text block. Otherwise this a lovely copy of this delicate book.

[1926]  
**LUDWIG Publishes His Second Book**

It was during his time in Otterthal that Ludwig produced his second book – a much needed inexpensive spelling dictionary for use in elementary schools. At the time, there were only two other dictionaries available – one being large and expensive and the other small and very poorly organized. Writing to a friend at this time, he said that “I never thought the dictionaries would be so frightfully expensive. I think, if I live long enough, I will produce a small dictionary for elementary schools. It appears to me to be an urgent need.”

In November of 1924, he made a formal proposal to write such a book and – unlike the long-drawn-out confusions surrounding the *Tractatus* – the project was readily approved and he started writing. His manuscript required the approval of the district school inspector which he received once he had made several corrections that the inspector has insisted be made to the text. With those changes made (largely the addition of words the inspector felt were missing and necessary and the deletion of Wittgenstein’s “Preface”) and the book was finally published in early 1926 – shortly after which Ludwig announced his decision to leave teaching.

First edition copies of his “Dictionary” are virtually unobtainable, but a facsimile copy with additional complimentary information was published in 1977.

18. [1926]  
**Wittgenstein’s Elementary School Dictionary including the First Printing of His Rejected “Preface” for the Book**


$450
Unlike his unprofitable arrangement with Kegan Paul for the *Tractatus*, the publisher of the *Wörterbuch* agreed to pay Wittgenstein 10% of the wholesale price for each copy sold and gave him 10 free copies of the little book.

This facsimile edition includes an excellent historical account of the book’s genesis, creation and publication along with the original “Preface” written by Wittgenstein (which was rejected and not printed in the original *Dictionary*).

Original publisher’s brown wraps with black lettering and a red decorative border. The front edge of the spine has been rubbed to white and the lower right corner is also worn. Otherwise, a tight and clean copy of this unusual item from Wittgenstein’s years of teaching.

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**[April 1926] HIS GRAMMAR SCHOOL TEACHING CAREER COMES TO AN END**

Wittgenstein’s teaching career came to abrupt end in April of 1926 in what became locally famous as “The Haidbauer Case.” Corporal punishment (i.e. boxing student’s ears and violently pulling their hair) had been a regular part of his classroom discipline and it had raised parental concerns on several occasions.

Josef Haidbauer was an 11-year-old pupil who was typically slow to give answers and, one day, the frustrated Wittgenstein hit him on the head two or three times. The boy collapsed and Ludwig panicked. He dismissed the class and carried the boy to the headmaster office where they awaited the arrival of the doctor. This incident so unnerved him that he handed in his formal resignation from teaching on April 28, 1926. While the official hearing later cleared him of misconduct, he was devastated by his need to lie about the extent of his use of corporal punishment in the classroom – a moral failing that would haunt him for over a decade.

**[1926-1928] WITTGENSTEIN THE ARCHITECT**

Having left his teaching career behind, Wittgenstein once again considered the religious life and he visited a monastery to explore the possibility of becoming a monk. He was, however, dissuaded by the Father Superior of the order who questioned both his motives and his goals. Instead, he once again became a gardener for a religious order of monks just outside of Vienna – where he lived in the garden’s tool shed for the next three months.

On June 3, 1926, his mother died and once again Wittgenstein disowned his inheritance, only increasing the concern that his family so genuinely felt for him. His sister, Margarete, had commissioned his friend, Paul
Engelmann, to design and build a new house for her in Vienna. Paul had already done some work for other family members and he had been active on this new project since the end of 1925.

Ludwig had been intrigued by the project as he constantly consulted with his sister and his friend during his last year of teaching. He had extremely strong ideas about the proper architectural aesthetics and Engelmann had come to realize that they had reached a point where Ludwig had a better grasp of Margarete’s wishes for the house than he did. With the sister’s prodding, he offered that Wittgenstein should give up being a gardener and, instead, become a partner in his architectural firm.

The final plans are dated November 13, 1926 and Engelmann later commented that “he and not I was the architect, although the ground plans were ready before he joined the project, I consider the result to be his and not my achievement.” This is because Wittgenstein was concerned chiefly with the design of all the detailing inside the house including the windows, doors and radiators. It was these elements that lent this rather plain (some would say ugly) house its unique beauty.

It is possible that Wittgenstein took this career change with a seriousness that went far beyond his sister’s house. He was for years afterwards listed in the Vienna City Directory as a professional architect and his letters at this time were all written on notes with the preprinted header: “Paul Engelmann & Ludwig Wittgenstein Architects”.

Here as in everything else, Wittgenstein was a stern taskmaster, demanding perfection in every aspect of the construction project. He would berate vendors over any deviation from the plans he had drawn up. His sister, Hermine, told the story of him being so exacting that he insisted on the ceiling of a very large room in the house being raised 3 centimeters before he would allow Margarete to move in - which she finally did at the end of 1928.

19.

[1926-1928] A Magnificent Record of Ludwig Wittgenstein the Architect


$300

The book contains explanatory text along with a wonderfully wide variety of photos, floor plans and facsimile writings - including two large ‘fold out’ pages.

Although he had no formal training as an architect, Wittgenstein did have a strong engineering background and even stronger artistic ideal. He exhibited this early in his career. When he first moved to Cambridge in 1911, he could not find anything simple enough to furnish his rooms, so he oversaw the design and construction of a complete set of furniture which met his standards. This same aesthetic rigor came strongly to the fore with this project for Margarete.

The house itself was breathtakingly simple in its stark outlines and Wittgenstein complimented this on the inside with his strong aversion to any kind of superfluous ornamentation, As noted by Monk:

The house was designed with little regard to the comforts of ordinary mortals. The qualities of clarity, rigour and precision which characterize it are indeed those one looks for in a system of logic rather that in a dwelling place. In designing the interior Wittgenstein made extraordinary few concessions to domestic comfort. Carpets, chandeliers and curtains were strictly rejected. The floors were of dark polished stone, the walls and ceilings painted a light ochre, the metal of the windows, the door handles and the radiators was left unpainted, and the rooms were lit with naked light-bulbs.

Publisher’s original stiff orange wraps with black lettering to the front cover and the spine which is lightly sunned. Overall, a lovely copy of this amazing addition to our understanding of Ludwig Wittgenstein.
[1926-1933]

**LUDWIG IN LOVE**

While working on his sister’s house, the homosexual Wittgenstein fell in love with a 22-year-old Swiss woman named Marguerite Respinger. She had been invited to Vienna by Margarete’s son, Thomas, when he returned from Cambridge to continue study for his Ph. D at the University of Vienna in 1926.

Marguerite, who came from a wealthy family herself, has been described as lively and artistic but with absolutely no interest in philosophy or any of the “serious” questions of life – typical prerequisites for any kind of friendship with Ludwig. Still, for months on end they spent time together every day. Despite being 15 years her senior, Wittgenstein believed the relationship had a serious future – writing to her regularly and frequently after he returned to Cambridge. Their friendship lasted until 1933, but Marguerite began to distance herself from Ludwig in 1931 when he made it clear he was looking for a Platonic marriage.

The most substantial evidence we have of this singular female relationship for Ludwig Wittgenstein is a sculpture he made likely using Marguerite as his model. His “Bust of a Woman” was not meant to be an exact portrait, but rather an attempt to capture the expression and the attitude of her face. It is Wittgenstein’s only known sculpture.

[In 1982, Margarete wrote a memoir for her grandchildren called *Granny et son temps*. Printed in an edition of just 200 copies, it is extremely rare today. That book along with a late-in-life in-depth interview can be found in *Wittgenstein-Jahrbuch 2000* in the “Memories” section of this catalog - #72 & 73 below]

[1919-1929]

**THE PRELUDE TO CAMBRIDGE**

Throughout all the tumult of his grammar school teaching years and extending through his time as an architect, Wittgenstein was not completely disconnected from the intellectual community back in England.

He met with Bertrand Russell in the Netherlands in December of 1919 and again in Switzerland in February of 1922. That meeting did not go well for either man and it was the last time they met or corresponded over the next seven years. Meanwhile, Ludwig’s closest contact at Cambridge became Frank Ramsey. They corresponded
voluminously in 1922 regarding his translation of the *Tractatus* and he visited Wittgenstein in Austria during the summers of 1923 and 1924 where they went over that challenging book line by line.

Prompted by Ramsey, John Maynard Keynes regularly tried to convince Wittgenstein that he should come back to Cambridge, but, as Ludwig told Keynes in a July 1924 letter: “I have no longer any stirring inner drive towards that sort of activity. Everything that I really had to say, I have said, and so the spring has run dry.”

Receiving an unexpected invitation from his old Manchester friend, William Eccles, Wittgenstein visited England over his 1925 summer vacation staying first with Keynes, then with Eccles and then visiting Cambridge where he had such a violent argument with Ramsey that they did not write to each other again for over two years.

Meanwhile, the *Tractatus* was gathering substantial attention from what would later be called The Vienna Circle. Moritz Schlick, an early enthusiastic reader of the book, began writing to Wittgenstein in the summer of 1924 and finally met him in February of 1927 at a dinner organized for that purpose by Ludwig’s sister, Gretl. That summer found Ludwig attending Schlick’s Monday night meetings that were regularly attended by Friedrich Waismann, Rudolf Carnap and Herbert Feigl – although the group was often perplexed by the moments of “divine inspiration” rather than “sober rational comment or analysis” that they heard so frequently from Wittgenstein.

Having returned to Vienna from the mountain villages, Ludwig was once again exposed to people of a serious intellectual bent and, frequently against his better judgement, he found himself in contentious discussions that once more turned on the foundational questions of mathematics and philosophy. These discussions – particularly with the members of the Vienna Circle – made him realize that perhaps his *Tractatus*, was not the final word on the subject and that more work might need to be done on the foundations of philosophy.

[For more details on these interesting interactions and conversations see items #74 & 75, Ludwig Wittgenstein and the Vienna Circle, in the “Memories” section of this catalog]

**[1929]**

**THE PHILOSOPHER RETURNS**

Having experienced Wittgenstein’s extreme sensitivity to any probing questions about his own book, the Vienna Circle had focused instead on one of Frank Ramsey’s recent papers: “The Foundations of Mathematics”. This, coupled with the other stimuli he was exposed to during his reintegration into Viennese society, finally culminated in his decision to return to Cambridge so that he could work more closely with Ramsey.

Wittgenstein arrived back in Cambridge on January 18, 1929; an event which John Maynard Keynes noted rather caustically in a letter he wrote to his wife that same day: “Well, God has arrived. I met him on the 5:15 train.” The two men had tea after which Keynes reported that “I can see that the fatigue is going to be crushing. But I must not let him talk to me for more than two or three hours a day.”

Interestingly, G. E. Moore was on the same train and miraculously their friendship, which had been so completely broken since Ludwig’s scathing letter of fifteen years earlier, was immediately resumed.

Upon arrival, Ludwig moved in with Ramsey and his wife, Lettice where he lived for two weeks before securing his own accommodations. The two men quickly developed an intense working relationship in which he later credited Ramsey (in his “Preface” to *Philosophical Investigations*) with having helped him realize the mistakes he had made in the *Tractatus* “to a degree which I am hardly able to estimate.”

Fueling these 1929 discussions would have been the still lingering questions and criticisms raised by Ramsey in his review of the *Tractatus* which appeared in the October 1923 issue of MIND. There, he criticized Russell for his misleading “Introduction” and attempted first to clarify and then to argue with some of the most important points raised in Wittgenstein’s book.

[For a reprint of that review (Fr/McG: #8), see pages 9-23 in #21 & 22 Essays on Wittgenstein’s *Tractatus* which are offered below]

Another important and influential Cambridge friend was the Italian economist, Piero Sraffa, whose comments and critiques had been the “stimulus for the most consequential ideas” in the *Philosophical Investigations*. His friendship with this non-philosopher may seem a bit strange, but it was exactly Sraffa’s ability to stand outside
the normal philosophical framework that so impressed Wittgenstein. Rather than Ramsey’s point-by-point critiques, Sraffa challenged Wittgenstein to adopt a whole new perspective to his philosophical problems.

This led to what Ludwig later called his “anthropological” perspective on philosophical problems. This is hugely important for any understanding of Wittgenstein’s evolving thought. According to Monk: “whereas the *Tractatus* deals with language in isolation from the circumstances in which it is used, the *Investigations* repeatedly emphasizes the importance of the ‘stream of life’ which gives linguistic utterances their meaning: a ‘language-game’ cannot be described without mentioning their activities and the way of life of the ‘tribe’ that plays it.”

During Wittgenstein’s first two terms back at Cambridge, he was enrolled as an “Advanced Student” working on his Ph.D. with Ramsey as his supervisor. On June 18, 1929, he was hurriedly awarded a Ph.D. for his thesis, the *Tractatus*. Moore and the slightly reluctant Russell (they had not met or communicated for seven years) moderated Wittgenstein’s defense of his book. Moore asked a few simple questions and Russell offered some objections but the meeting ended rather quickly with Ludwig clapping them on the shoulder and noting: “Don’t worry, I know you’ll never understand it.” He was awarded the degree.

Shortly after this, Wittgenstein agreed to deliver a paper on July 13, 1929 to the joint meeting of The Aristotelian Society and The Mind Association which he originally titled “Some Remarks on Logical Form.” This paper, printed in *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, (Supplemental Volume)*, 1929, has the singular distinction of being the only example of his philosophical writings – other than the *Tractatus* – to be published during his lifetime.

But as soon as he had sent the text off to the printer, he changed his mind and disowned the paper completely. Monk claims the fact that he so quickly “disowned it as worthless” was “a mark of how quickly his thought was developing at this time.” When the day of the lecture arrived, Ramsey chaired the meeting as Wittgenstein read instead a short treatise on “Infinity” in mathematics – a paper which has subsequently been lost.

20. [1929]

A Brief Mention of Wittgenstein’s Substitution of “Infinity” for “Some Remarks on Logical Form”


This is NOT the printed text of Wittgenstein’s aborted paper “Some Remarks on Logical Form” which was scheduled to be read at the July meeting of The Aristotelian Society and The Mind Association in 1929.

Instead this book contains the collected papers read at The Aristotelian Society during the years 1928 to 1929.

However, at the very end of this book – on pages 390-391 – are the brief minutes reporting on who was in attendance and what was presented at the joint session of The Aristotelian Society and The Mind Association at University College, Northampton between July 12th and 15th. Those minutes provide the following details on the Third Session held on July 13th, at 2 p.m.:

Mr. F. P. Ramsay [sic] in the Chair. Symposium: Address by Mr. F. [sic] Wittgenstein on “Infinity” (in substitution for the published address on “Logical Form”). Discussion: Mr. Mead, Prof. L. A. Reid, Mr. Hooper, Prof. Lutoslawski.

The minutes also note that Wittgenstein participated in the discussion following the Fourth Session presentation:

July 13th, at 8 p.m. – Prof. Frank Granger in the Chair. Symposium: “Realism and Modern Physics.” Prof. J. Laird, Mr. C. E. M. Joad, Miss L. S. Stebbing. Discussion: Prof. Reid, Mr. Hooper, Mr. Joseph, Mr. Hannay, Prof. Lutoslawski, Mr. Wittgenstein.

Publisher’s original blue cloth binding with gilt lettering on the spine which is sun darkened. Otherwise, a tight, bright copy.

21.

[1929]  
“Some Remarks on Logical Form”  
Including Ramsey’s Important Review of the Tractatus


$65

Printed from American sheets which note “First Printing” on the verso of the title page. There is no established priority for this US printing over the UK issue offered below, although the fact that the two editors are American collegiates might suggest this is a first edition, first issue.

The ever-protective Elizabeth Anscombe insisted on including a long footnote here making it crystal clear that Wittgenstein had completely disowned this essay. As his literary executor, she had “consented to the reprint of the essay because I suppose that it will certainly be reprinted some time, and if that is to happen there had better be a statement indicating how little value can be set upon it as information about Wittgenstein’s ideas.”

There is, however, some value to the essay included in this book for any serious student to Wittgenstein’s evolving thought. If nothing else, this 6-page essay is evidence of the dynamic variability of his philosophical thinking at this time as he struggled to resolve his growing dissatisfaction with several key elements in the Tractatus that Frank Ramsey had so severely criticized.

In the Tractatus, there is a small section where Wittgenstein discusses color, stating that it is logically impossible for something to be blue while simultaneously being red. Ramsey, however, criticizes the proof offered for this statement, which did not stem from a logical formula but rather from physics. If red and blue are measured by the velocity of particles, one particle cannot be going two different speeds. But to use physics as evidence, Wittgenstein would have to prove space, time, matter, and particles as logically necessary. Or, he could rethink the color problem altogether.

However, he found his attempts to do this in “Some Remarks on Logical Form” so completely unacceptable that he disowned it shortly after it was written and refused to even deliver this paper.

Original publisher’s brown cloth binding with gilt lettering on the front cover and the spine. (NOTE: we believe this book was issued without a dust jacket.) With the name of its former owner (“M. Foster”) to the top of the front fly leaf. An absolutely lovely clean and bright copy.

22.

The UK Edition of “Some Remarks on Logical Form”  
Including Ramsey’s Important Review of the Tractatus


$55
Printed from British sheets and noting “First published in 1966” on the verso of the title page. There is no established priority over the US issue although the fact that the two editors are American collegiates might suggest the priority of the US copy offered above.

Aside from its slightly larger size and the lack of the blank sheets found in the front and back of the American issue, these two books are identical.

Original publisher’s dust jacket which is lightly worn on the spine edges and mildly chipped top and bottom along with one very noticeably abrasion to the front cover (see photo) over publisher’s green cloth binding with gilt lettering on the spine. Other than the noted problems with the dust jacket, this is a clean, tight and bright copy.

[1929] WITTGENSTEIN’S ONLY “POPULAR” LECTURE

His talk on “Infinity” was not Wittgenstein’s only public pronouncement during the second half of 1929.

In November, his Tractatus publisher, C. K. Ogden, invited him to address “The Heretics” (a society similar to the Apostles, but much less elitist) on a topic of his choice.

Having completely mystified his listeners (including Frank Ramsey) with his talk on “Infinity”, Wittgenstein took this occasion to deliver what has been characterized as the only “popular” lecture he ever gave in his life: “A Lecture on Ethics”.

[1929] The Text of the Only “Popular” Lecture Wittgenstein Ever Delivered


$75

In an earnest attempt to be understood by “laypeople” – in this case, a group of highly esteemed scholars and scientists — Wittgenstein attempted to address a common problem in more common language. Rather than disappearing completely into the world of the incomprehensible (his usual habitat), Wittgenstein delivered his only public statement on ethics:

Ethics, so far as it springs from the desire to say something about the meaning of life, the absolute good, the absolute valuable, can be no science. What it says does not add to our knowledge in any sense. But it is a document of a tendency in the human mind which I personally cannot help respecting deeply and I would not for my life ridicule it.

This lecture is one of the few occasions where Wittgenstein offers his audience a glimpse of his often-hidden compassion. For Ludwig, the ethical dilemma doesn’t operate within a moral framework of justice, but rather within a linguistic framework of truth. Language’s failure to be a medium of the truth means that language can only really be used in the service of dishonesty; thus, ethics remains beholden to the unsayable, unable to be meaningfully captured by language.

When it comes to being a “decent person” – one of his lifelong goals – what counts is not what you say. What counts is what you do.

In other words, as he wrote in his notebooks: “What is good is also divine. Queer as it sounds, that sums up my ethics.”

Original publisher’s wraps printed on the front and the spine. Lightly sun discolored around the outer edges and along the spine with a 3” diameter uneven circular stain on the rear cover. Otherwise, a clean, tight and bright copy of this fragile wraps copy.
Ramsey had convinced Wittgenstein to return to Cambridge in January of 1929 where he provided him with support for the many questions being raised about the *Tractatus*. Frank was deeply impressed with Ludwig, calling him “a philosophic genius of a different order from anyone else I know.” Still, the two men were not always the most congenial sparring partners. Ramsey once complained to Wittgenstein that “I don’t like your method of arguing” while Ludwig accused him of being a shallow thinker who refused to engage in any real philosophical reflections – the kind of reflections that “seized the matter by its roots.”

In his diaries and correspondence, Wittgenstein repeatedly wrote of his fear of dying before completing his current project. That fate did not befall him, but it did strike down Frank Ramsey on January 19, 1930 when he was just 26 years old. Ludwig claimed he was “hardly able to estimate” how much Ramsey’s criticism contributed to his later philosophy, but their Cambridge dialogues lasted for just twelve months. Ramsey died just one year and one day after Wittgenstein arrived back in England. Ludwig had, unfortunately, lost the one towering intellect who could honestly challenge him about his most radical ideas.

The day after Frank Ramsey died, Ludwig Wittgenstein taught his first class at Cambridge. On January 31st, just a few days after he began teaching, “Dr. L. Wittgenstein spoke shortly on ‘Evidence for the existence of other Minds’” at the Moral Science Club. Moore was the chair, and a discussion by the thirty-five members in attendance followed his talk. Unfortunately, any information on this lecture has been lost.

Asked to provide a title for the course he would be offering, he replied that “the subject of the lectures would be philosophy. What else can be the title of the lectures but Philosophy.” Throughout the rest of his years at Cambridge, whatever course he was teaching, it was always simply titled “Philosophy”.

Many students have described how Ludwig always lectured without notes and in such a way that he frequently seemed to be simply standing there – thinking out loud – with the occasional outburst of “Just a minute, let me think!” or cursing his own stupidity exclaiming “What a damn fool I am!”

Before the war, Wittgenstein had attended G. E. Moore’s lectures and Moore was immensely impressed with him. Russell reported to Lady Ottoline Morrell that Moore thought “enormously highly of Wittgenstein’s brains [and] says he always feels Wittgenstein must be right when they disagree. He says during his lectures Wittgenstein always looks frightfully puzzled, but nobody else does.”

Wittgenstein was, of course, famously caustic in his assessment of other people’s intellectual capacities and Moore was no exception in being the object of his abuse: “Moore?” he once said. “He shows you how far a man can go who has absolutely no intelligence whatsoever.”

Still, Moore was impressed enough (and intelligent enough) to make sure that he attended all of Wittgenstein’s 1930 to 1933 hour-long lectures and the two-hour discussions which were held later that same week. Moore’s “very full notes” of these sessions comprise six volumes that now reside in the Cambridge University Library.

But, a few years after Wittgenstein’s death, Moore published some biographical details on him as a teacher and compiled his own edited version of these notes, which were published spread over three issues of MIND magazine. (See #24 below.)
A WORD ABOUT THE MANY WITTGENSTEIN “BOOKS” OFFERED BELOW

During his long career at Cambridge (1929-1947), Wittgenstein refused to publish any of his thoughts or works. Other than the early *Tractatus* (1922) and the posthumously published *Philosophical Investigations* (1953), he prepared nothing for publication during in his lifetime.

There have been, of course, a large number of Wittgenstein “books” published after his death by his colleagues, his students and his literary executors. However reluctant Ludwig may have been to publish (and then to explain and defend) his ideas during his lifetime, his many admirers felt little hesitation in publishing a host of Wittgenstein books after his death in 1951. These all fall into three general categories.

The first is the publication of notes taken by people who attended his classes. These include the notes made by G.E. Moore mentioned above and offered in the three copies of *Mind* listed in #24 below along with several other books recording the substance and, at times, the exact words of Wittgenstein’s lectures that were compiled and edited by several of the students who attended his classes.

The second group includes notes that Wittgenstein himself prepared for people attending his lectures. Three of these are offered below in a variety of formats and languages: *The Blue and Brown Books* and *The Yellow Book*.

The final – and by far the largest group – are the books prepared for publication by Wittgenstein’s literary executors (Elizabeth Anscombe, Rush Rhees and G.H. von Wright). These works were compiled and translated from the voluminous notes and manuscripts that Ludwig entrusted to them after his death. These books include the *Prototractatus* (#11 offered above) and a host of others (starting with the *Philosophical Remarks* – #25 & 26 below) which we have tried to present below as closely as possible to the chronological order of their composition.
Wittgenstein’s writings and lectures during the first half of the 1930s play a crucial role in any interpretation of the relationship between the *Tractatus* and the *Philosophical Investigations*. The manuscripts from 1930 onward record his first steps away from the *Tractatus* concluding with an early version of the *Philosophical Investigations* which he had completed by the end of 1936.

The first four pages of the first article offered here contain some wonderful biographical information on Wittgenstein and his relationship with Moore, and, in even more detail, his friendship with Frank Ramsey. Moore follows this with his edited version of the comprehensive notes he took during those lectures. His original archived notes comprise almost 80,000 words and cover the full range of everything that Moore heard during these early lectures.

In these articles, Moore does an extraordinary job of organizing and systematizing Wittgenstein’s sprawling discussions. But, he cautions that:

I will try to give some account of the chief things he said under all these heads; but I cannot possibly mention nearly everything, and it is possible that some of the things I omit were really more important than those I mention. Also, though I tried to get down in my notes the actual words he used, it is possible that I may sometime have substituted words of my own which misrepresent his meaning: I certainly did not understand a good many of the things he said. Moreover, I cannot possibly do justice to the extreme richness of illustration and comparison which he used: he was really succeeding in giving what he called a ‘synoptic’ view of things which we all know. Nor can I do justice to the intensity of conviction with which he said everything which he did say, nor to the extreme interest which he excited in his hearers.

Beyond his attempts to present Wittgenstein’s views in an organized fashion, Moore often offers his own views on what Wittgenstein said. Sometimes he points out inconsistencies or peculiarities in Wittgenstein’s claims, or points out where he thinks that Wittgenstein was incorrect. Sometimes he expresses doubt as to whether he understood what Wittgenstein was trying to say, and sometimes he even tries to make seemingly implausible claims of Wittgenstein’s more plausible by offering possible interpretations of what Wittgenstein may have meant.

The articles give a palpable sense of Moore puzzling through Wittgenstein’s developing thought. It is a charming and insightful look into the thought processes of two of the most complex and original thinkers of the 20th century.

NOTE: the first, January 1954, issue offered also includes a 30-page “critical notice” of Wittgenstein’s *Philosophical Investigations* written by P. F. Strawson.

Russell vouches for the value of Wittgenstein’s work

The previous June, when the *Tractatus* was accepted as his Ph. D. thesis, Wittgenstein was granted 100£ to support his research over the summer and for teaching the following term. However, as the Lent Term (January to March, 1930) came to an end, the money was about to run out and the Council of Trinity College – the body in charge of issuing these grants – requested some formal reassurance that Wittgenstein was doing work that justified them renewing his grant.

Moore appealed to Bertrand Russell claiming that the Council wanted “favorable reports from experts in the subject” and that Russell was really the only person qualified enough to credibly evaluate the value of Wittgenstein’s work. Russell was in the midst of a storm of personal difficulties – he and his two children were sick, his wife was seven months pregnant with another man’s child, his marriage was falling apart, and he was consumed with a host of writing projects in his efforts to support the failing educational experiment he had started at Beacon Hill School – and he tried to dodge the responsibility of making a report. But Moore was insistent and Russell finally agreed to meet with Wittgenstein.
In preparation for those meetings, Wittgenstein selected from the notes he had made between January 1929 and May 1930 and dictated them to a typist. He used that typescript to explain to Russell the current status of his thought. Russell was, as usual, somewhat befuddled, although Wittgenstein told Moore that Russell did seem “to understand a little bit of it.” For his own part, Russell told Moore that “his theories are certainly important and certainly very original. Whether they are true, I do not know; I devoutly hope not, as they make mathematics and logic almost incredibly difficult.”

In his report to the Council, Russell claims that “the theories contained in this new work are novel, very original and indubitably important. Whether they are true, I do not know. As a logician who likes simplicity, I should like to think that they are not, but from what I have read of them I am quite sure that he ought to have an opportunity to work them out, since, when completed, they may easily prove to constitute a whole new philosophy.”

Whatever his personal reservations, Russell’s Council report was sufficiently positive for them to extend another 100£ grant so that Ludwig to continue his research and his teaching.

25.

The Beginnings of Wittgenstein’s “Transitional Phase” between the Tractatus and Philosophical Investigations


$150

This is the original German text of the typescript that Wittgenstein had prepared – but most certainly did not plan to publish – in the summer of 1930, in which he presents his attempt to consolidate the materials he had written since his return to Cambridge in January 1929 and the beginning of May 1930. As noted above, the typescript was prepared so that Russell could evaluate his most recent work to justify a grant from the Cambridge Council. Most of these materials reflect directly on his discussions with Frank Ramsey in the year before his death and the ongoing interest and questions being constantly generated by his admirers in the Vienna Circle.

As transitional materials, these notes show Wittgenstein moving significantly away from the Tractatus although he has not yet arrived at the fundamentals of the Philosophical Investigations. But they do show why he had been forced to give up several of his basic ideas from the Tractatus and the steps he takes in doing this often point towards the methods of the Investigations (although many radical changes would still be needed before those methods would be completely formulated).

As Monk notes, this typescript:

represents a very transitory phase in Wittgenstein’s philosophical development, a phase in which he sought to replace the Theory of Meaning in the Tractatus with the pseudo-Kantian project of ‘phenomenological analysis’ outlined in his discussions with Schlick and Waismann. This project was soon abandoned and with it the insistence on the Verification Principle as the criterion of meaningfulness. As it stands, Philosophical Remarks is the most verificationist, and at the same time the most phenomenological, of all his writings. It uses the tools adopted by the Vienna Circle for a task diametrically opposed to their own.

Publisher’s original light tan dust jacket with red and black lettering to the front and back covers and black lettering to the spine. There is a tiny closed tear at the bottom of the spine of the dust jacket (see photo). Over the publisher’s original black cloth binding with gilt lettering to the spine. The former owner’s name (“D. L. Fowler”) contained within a triangle stamped to the center of the front free endpaper. Otherwise, this is a truly gorgeous copy of this seminal work by Wittgenstein.
26.
The English Translation of Wittgenstein’s Important “Transitional Phase”


The text of the original German found in the book above translated into English by Raymond Hargreaves and Roger White.

Here Wittgenstein’s amazing *Foreword* (dated Nov 1930) is available to his English-speaking readers:

This book is written for such men as are in sympathy with its spirit. This spirit is different from the one which informs the vast stream of European and American civilization in which all of us stand. That spirit expresses itself in an onwards movement, in building ever larger and more complicated structures; the other in striving after clarity and perspicuity in no matter what structure. The first tries to grasp the world by way of its periphery – in its variety; the second at its centre—in its essence. And so the first adds one construction to another, moving on and up, as it were, from one stage to the next, while the other remains where it is and what it tries to grasp is always the same.

I would like to say ‘This book is written to the glory of God’, but nowadays that would be chicanery, that is, it would not be rightly understood. It means the book is written in good will, and in so far as it is not so written, but out of vanity, etc., the author would wish to see it condemned. He cannot free it of these impurities further than he himself is free of them.

Publisher’s original red and white dust jacket with white lettering on the front cover and the spine and white lettering on the back cover. Over publisher’s original burnt orange cloth binding with gilt lettering to the spine. The former owner’s name (“D. L. Fowler”) contained within a triangle stamped to the center of the front free endpaper. Otherwise, a truly beautiful copy of this seminal work by Wittgenstein.

[1930]

**CORRECT METHOD… NOT CORRECT THEORIES**

Over the summer, Ludwig was in Vienna where he helped Waismann prepare a lecture he was to give in September called “The Nature of Mathematics: Wittgenstein’s Standpoint”. In an attempt to answer Waismann’s questions and to clarify his own thoughts on the Verification Principle, Ludwig dictated a list of theses to Waismann. But no sooner was this done than he realized just how dissatisfied he was with this entire approach of formulating and propounding theses and he disowned the process completely.

He was beginning to believe that rather than offering weighty theories, philosophy should be about bringing clarity to the problems that have forestalled any substantive progress in the past. New doctrines weren’t needed. Instead, a new method, a new technique was needed to bring some much needed clarity to those age old problems.

With this developing new perspective and mindset, Ludwig went back to Cambridge that autumn to resume teaching with an emphasis on the fact that he was not offering any kind of new philosophical theory. Instead, he was offering a radical new method which precluded the need for any such theory.

Despite the fact that Wittgenstein’s did not deliver his lecture “Some Remarks on Logical Form” in July of 1929, it was published in the supplemental volume of *The Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*. Other than the *Tractatus*, this is the ONLY piece of Ludwig’s writings to be published during his lifetime. Two years after his death in 1951, *Philosophical Investigations* – a book which he had prepared and approved for posthumous publication – was published by his literary executors.
However, today we do have extensive records of Wittgenstein’s evolving thoughts from class notes taken by students – or from professors like Moore [see #24 offered above] – and from the later publication by his executors of selected notes from the treasure trove of materials that he left behind after his death.

Throughout Wittgenstein’s classes in 1930 and 1931, John King and Desmond Lee took copious notes (supplemented by briefer notes taken by R.D. Townsend and John Inman). The notes from the 1932 classes were done exclusively by King, but edited by Lee for a book which provides an intimate glimpse into the earliest phases of Wittgenstein’s evolving thoughts.

[1930]  
TRINITY AWARDS HIM A FIVE-YEAR FELLOWSHIP  
In December, Ludwig was awarded a five-year fellowship by Trinity College which – at least for the moment – removed the financial worries that had plagued him since his return to Cambridge. The typescript he had prepared for his talks with Russell in mid-1929 was accepted as his fellowship dissertation after the examination by Bertrand Russell and the mathematician G. H. Hardy.

[1930-1932]  
First Edition of His Student’s 1930-1932 Notes  

Stated to be “Printed in the United States of America”.

For his first ever “Philosophy” course, Wittgenstein started by stating categorically the landscape of what lies ahead:

Philosophy is an attempt to be rid of a particular kind of puzzlement. This “philosophic” puzzlement is one of the intellect and not of instinct. Philosophic puzzles are irrelevant to our every-day life. They are puzzles of language. Instinctively we use language rightly; but to the intellect this is a puzzle.

While anticipating the mathematical emphasis that would be seen in his 1932-1935 lectures, this series is something of an “awkward phase” as Wittgenstein experimented with new ideas, but was not entirely willing to let go of his old style. That said, it offers useful and novel formulations regarding his philosophy of language, blending the future precision of the Philosophical Investigations with some familiar content from the Tractatus.

Regarding the accuracy of these important and revealing notes, John King claimed – with Desmond Lee commenting – that:

To the best of my ability I concentrated on taking down whatever W. said verbatim. I never made any attempt to find my own terms, comparisons or examples, nor to alter his words or their order. The effort of note-taking made such changes impossible, even if I had felt capable of making them. W. never dictated notes but treated his lectures and discussions as if he were doing so. Of course not everything could be got down, but I got down all I could. The difficulty lay in following what was often a difficult argument, with frequent digressions, harking back and repetition, and… if he would often hesitate and pause before speaking it was in J.E.K.’s words from “his intense desire to pick just the right word or phrase for his purpose, or to choose the most telling illustration or example to convey his meaning. He must have the exact word or phrase; nothing else would do.”

Publisher’s original photo dust jacket with green lettering to the front and the spine. The rear panel has a black and white listing of other Wittgenstein books “also in this series”. Over the publisher’s original green cloth boards with gilt lettering on the spine. With former owner’s (Robert F Thimmesh) bookplate to the inside front cover and his signature to the top of the title page. Otherwise, an immaculate copy of the important and popular book of Wittgenstein’s earliest lectures.
28.  
First UK Edition of His Student’s 1930-1932 Notes


This copy is identical in every way to the US edition – excepting only for the title page.

Publisher’s original photo dust jacket with green lettering to the front and the spine. There is a small serrated 1½” circular gold label to the lower left corner of the front cover noting “Publisher’s Special Book Sale - £1.95”. The rear panel has a black and white listing of all the other Wittgenstein books published by Blackwell. Over the publisher’s original green cloth boards with gilt lettering on the spine. There is a 3” x 4” loose sheet noting “With Compliments” from Blackwell inserted just inside the front cover. A really lovely copy of the uncommon British issue of this book.

29.  
[1931]  
Wittgenstein Attacks Frazer’s Iconic Golden Bough  
His Only Foray into Anthropological Theory  
“What narrowness of life we find in Frazer!”


Over the years, Wittgenstein formed close relationships with several of his students. In the early 1930s, one that he particularly relied upon on for insightful conversations was Maurice Drury.
Born to working class Irish parents, Drury arrived at Cambridge intending to become an Anglican priest. Wittgenstein quickly disabused him of this plan saying, “I can’t approve. No, I can’t approve. I would be afraid that one day that collar would choke you.”

Known for always encouraging his students to work in any field other than academic philosophy, Wittgenstein persuaded Drury to work with “ordinary people” and become a doctor – advice that Drury accepted and acted on.

[See Ludwig Wittgenstein: Personal Recollections – #78 in the “Memories” section below for almost 100 pages of Drury’s memories of Wittgenstein.]

Their shared animosity toward academic elitism inspired their criticism of James Frazer’s pioneering work in social anthropology, The Golden Bough. This short commentary was fueled by their shared outrage at the premises and conclusions of the book. Unfortunately, they barely made it through the first half of the first volume (there were twelve volumes in all) because the book so constantly enraged Wittgenstein, who could hardly make it through a sentence without some sort of angry outburst.

Perhaps his reaction was warranted: Frazer’s work would come to be known in the mid-20th century for having espoused entrenched notions of Eurocentric superiority in what should have been objective anthropological approaches. In this short work, Wittgenstein condemns the self-serving superiority assumed by Frazer, anticipating the criticism that would become mainstream decades after Wittgenstein’s first stated them here.

That said, the work is not merely a social critique. Instead, Wittgenstein forcefully demonstrates how this kind of racist, aristocratic, and Christian-centric superiority is the necessary consequence of an anthropological or sociological thinker who insists on using their intellectual work to explain rather than describe.

These explanations and grand theories, Wittgenstein argues, presumes a certain “standard” against which other beliefs are measured. By using European Christianity as his “standard” against which he could explain the causes of cultural difference, Frazer effectively placed his native culture over and above other cultures he encountered. Wittgenstein, by contrast, insists that description of practices would render impossible the emergence of any meaningful hierarchy of practices. No religion, belief, or practice can be meaningfully said to be higher or lower than any other: in terms of culture and sociality, there is only difference within a realm of equality.

For Wittgenstein, anthropological work immediately and necessarily becomes nefarious when it falls into the service of some grand theory of behavior. The product of anthropology is only useful or meaningful when it is done in the service of fruitfully describing, or “translating”, one network of socio-cultural values and practices to another.

LUDWIG COLLABORATES ON AN ABORTED BOOK PROJECT

Wittgenstein was under constant pressure to publish both from his friends in Cambridge and from the members of the Vienna Circle. Friedrich Waismann had convinced Wittgenstein to collaborate with him on a book to be called Logik, Sprache, Philosophie (Logic, Speech, Philosophy) which would present an introduction to the ideas of the Tractatus. Ludwig agreed to this project and worked with Waismann and Moritz Schlick on the text for months and by mid-1931 the book was finally nearing completion.

Unfortunately, by then the whole project had become outdated. Wittgenstein had moved on and was no longer interested in providing further arguments to buttress the positions he had taken in the Tractatus. Instead, he had already begun to formulate a completely different way of doing philosophy.

Wittgenstein’s new perspective on both the real problems of philosophy and his novel approach to their possible solution rendered Logik, Sprache, Philosophie completely irrelevant and useless.
Compounding this problem, Ludwig was infuriated because he was convinced that some of the more esoteric ideas he had shared with Waismann had since been “leaked” to Rudolph Carnap and that Carnap had then directly plagiarized them in an essay he had written on “physicalism.” However vehemently Waismann and Carnap tried to deny this, Wittgenstein was incensed and he severed all ties with both men abruptly, ending any collaboration on his part.

Despite this disconnect, Waismann would later go on to try to publish the text under his own name in 1939 – but it only reached the galley stage at that time before being withdrawn. It was published in English in 1965 under the title, *The Principles of Linguistic Philosophy* and finally in German as *Logik, Sprache, Philosophie* in 1976.

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30. **His First Attempt to Write a Second Philosophy Book**


This first publication of “The Big Typescript” is – other than the bilingual “Contents” and “Introduction” – completely in German.

Among the many texts preserved in Wittgenstein's estate, “The Big Typescript” is the one that – after the *Logisch-Philosophische Abhandlung* (the *Tractatus*) of 1918 – appears to be the most “finished”, i.e. with a table of contents and the text structured into chapters and sections.

Frustrated by the failure of his project with Waismann, Wittgenstein had begun clipping texts from the notebooks where he had jotted down his thoughts since his arrival at Cambridge in 1929. He reordered these and then had them typed up in the hopes that he would be able to publish the results in a book. It was Wittgenstein’s first major attempt to write a second philosophy book which would present his thoughts since his return to Cambridge and his hope of correcting what he now considered to be the “serious errors” of his earlier work in the *Tractatus*.

Despite being an unfinished manuscript, the "Big Typescript" does exhibit a clear structure and organization, showcasing Wittgenstein's meticulous approach to philosophical inquiry. This structure guides the reader through the complex web of his intertwined ideas, providing a valuable framework for understanding his later works.

But, in the end, “The Big Typescript” is only a very large fragment presenting his early 1930s thinking, without either a title, a motto or any kind of substantial conclusion. This typescript does, however, provide concrete, substantial and important evidence of Wittgenstein’s evolving transition from his earlier logic-focused philosophy to his later language-based approach.

Regarding “The Big Typescript”, Wittgenstein noted that he felt it was important “that the thoughts in [this book] should progress from one subject to another in well-ordered consecutiveness”. This noble intention was, however, seriously challenged by the rapid changes in his thought at this time. But, despite its obvious limitations, it is precisely this ultimately rejected structure of the "Big Typescript" that makes it such a valuable document in understanding the ongoing evolution of Ludwig’s thinking at this time.

The text reflects Wittgenstein's engagement with contemporary philosophical debates and figures, including Frege, Russell, and most especially, Schlick, Carnap and Waismann of the Vienna Circle. It provides a unique perspective on the intellectual climate of the time and the arguments and insights he was wrestling with as he tried to present his extensive reflections on the nature and limitations of philosophy itself.

Overall, Wittgenstein argues that traditional philosophy has often misunderstood its role and been misled by its own methods. He proposes a more humble and therapeutic approach to philosophy, focusing on clarifying our understanding of language and the ways in which it shapes our thinking.

Though never published in its entirety during Wittgenstein's lifetime, “The Big Typescript” has become an essential source for scholars and students of his philosophy, offering a significant glimpse into the working mind of this brilliant philosopher revealing the struggles and revisions that shaped his final views.

In 1969, the myriad ideas and pronouncements found in “The Big Typescript” were culled, organized and published by Blackwell in *Philosophische Grammatik* with the English translation, *Philosophical Grammar*, following in 1974.

[See those two items offered below as #32 and 33].

Original publisher’s white dustjacket with black lettering to the front panel and the spine over dark blue boards with a small spine label (LW / 11). Preserved in the publisher’s original cardboard sleeve. A fine copy.
31.

The English Translation of His First Attempt to Write a Second Philosophy Book


$275

This behemoth of a book – numbering 1,040 ‘traditional’ pages – offers the original German text along with the first publication of a facing-page English translation of “The Big Typescript” and included extensive footnotes in both languages.

Wittgenstein felt it was important “that the thoughts in [this book] should progress from one subject to another in well-ordered consecutiveness” and he tried to manage this goal by organizing the material under nineteen different chapter headings:
An understanding of insight and understanding that this book provides into the mind of Ludwig Wittgenstein during this early phase of his transition from the logic-focused philosophy of the Tractatus to his later language-based approach is immense.

Because of this abundant and very clear presentation of his 1933 thinking, The Big Typescript has been acknowledged by scholars as one of the most important publications from Wittgenstein’s Nachlass to date.

Publisher’s original dustjacket with white and light brown lettering over a photo of Wittgenstein on the front panel and similarly on the spine and the rear panel. Over the publisher’s original black boards with gilt lettering to the spine. A fine copy.

32.

1933 The Executors Cull The Big Typescript to Produce Philosophische Grammatik


Despite infuriating everyone who worked so tirelessly to bring it to press, the ashes of Logik, Sprache, Philosophie did finally result in one of the great masterpieces of 20th century philosophy: his Philosophical Grammar.

Ludwig’s personal – and philosophical – idiosyncrasies carried over to his bizarre, meticulous writing style. He would begin by writing remarks into small notebooks. Later some of these would be selected for inclusion in a larger manuscript volume and from those he would select what should be dictated to a typist. This amalgamation of various fragments resulted in what Wittgenstein scholars call the “Big Typescript” – the document from which the Philosophical Grammar was extracted.

Wittgenstein was engrossed not just with his new ideas but also with the problem of how to best present them and he experimented with several different styles including numbered remarks, numbered paragraphs and an annotated table of contents. His research even led him to delve lightly – for the first time in his life – into the style and thought patterns of some of the great philosophical minds such as Descartes and Hegel. Several of these thinkers were rejected outright, but some, he felt, did have something of value to suggest.

However, all of them, he concluded, had exhibited a flagrant disregard for the underlying problem: they all made unforgivable grammatical mistakes. Asking philosophy’s typical foundational questions – questions such as “What is time?” and “What is number?” – is to commit a basic grammatical error. Such questions are actually nonsensical and a grievous misuse of language. They manifest our unexamined belief that these “things” are substantive; leading us to look for something substantive that corresponds to them. But, in fact, number is not a substantive thing, nor is time, nor is space. Engaging and perpetuating such a fundamental error will never lead to a successful philosophical resolution.

Philosophical Grammar is all about an exploration of these grammatical errors: specifically analyzing the structural rules that underlay language, rules that allow or prohibit the emergence of meaning, coherence, explanation, and understanding. The book exhibits much less focus on the interpersonal nature of language that informs so much of the Blue and Brown Books (yet to come), focusing instead exclusively on the rules embedded in speech, asking why they are so, and, consequently, what can be meaningfully said in light of those rules. Philosophical Grammar attempts to offer a framework describing the philosophical questions that can be meaningfully asked, and, more importantly, meaningfully answered.

This collection of insights marks a pivotal shift from the Tractatus (with its emphasis on the world described) to the Philosophical Investigations (with its emphasis on the method of description).

Publisher’s original light tan dust jacket with red and black lettering to the front and back covers and black lettering to the spine. Over the publisher’s original black cloth binding with gilt lettering to the spine. The former owner’s name (“D. L. Fowler”) contained within a triangle stamped to the center of the front free endpaper. Otherwise, this is a truly gorgeous copy of this important work by Wittgenstein.
First Edition of the English Translation of *Philosophical Grammar*

“All that philosophy can do is to destroy idols”


This English translation by Anthony Kenny was released five years after the first publication of the German text.

Publisher’s original red dust jacket with white lettering to the front cover and the spine. Over the publisher’s original black cloth binding with gilt lettering to the spine. The former owner’s name (“D. L. Fowler”) contained within a triangle stamped to the center of the front free endpaper. Otherwise, this is a truly gorgeous copy of this important work by Wittgenstein.

$150

[1930-1932 / 1936-1937]  

**ANOTHER PERSONAL DIARY SURFACES**

Following Ramsey’s death, Wittgenstein returned to his wartime habit of making sporadic entries in a diary.

The single hardbound notebook containing his writings from 1930 to 1932 and 1936/1937 was in the possession of Ludwig’s sister, Margarete Stonborough, when he died in 1951. At that time, she gifted the diary as a personal memento to his friend, Rudolf Koder (1902-1977). Wittgenstein had met and befriended Koder when they were both school teachers in rural Austria during the 1920s. The two men originally bonded over their love of music and they continued to write each other over the years about their musical interests.

[See #70 below for *Wittgenstein und die Musik* in the “Letters” section of this catalog for correspondence with their ongoing discussions about music.]

The book was unknown to scholars until several years after Koder’s death, but it was then transcribed and published in German in 1997 by Wittgenstein scholar, Ilse Somavilla. The text was translated into English (with expanded footnotes) by James Klagge and Alfred Nordmann and published in 2003.
Ludwig’s Private Diaries from the Early to Mid-1930s

“The movement of thought in my philosophizing should be discernible also in the history of my mind.”


$150

Editor Ilse Somavilla has broken this publication into two different volumes. The first is the “normalized” version of the text of Wittgenstein’s diaries – i.e. printed for easier reading – while the second shows all of the original spacing, cross outs, inserts, etc.

These diaries have been aptly described as a first-person spiritual epic.

Wittgenstein agonizes over his relationship with Marguerite Respinger and tries to come to terms with its failure. He relates and interprets several of his dreams. He comments on his philosophical colleagues Frank Ramsey and G.E. Moore; on musicians such as Beethoven, Bruckner and Brahms; and on authors such as Kraus, Mann, Nietzsche, Dostoevsky, and Kierkegaard. He struggles to make confessions to friends and family. He relates in painful detail his spiritual crisis in Norway in the late winter of 1937.

From a man who once recommended silence about spiritual matters, we find here an honest and searing articulation of his attempts to believe and live what he finds in the Bible. Here are the raw materials for what could have been one of the great spiritual autobiographies of the twentieth century.

Publisher’s original slate grey wraps with black and white lettering to both covers and the spine. Near fine copies of these amazingly intimate entries by Wittgenstein during those five turbulent years of his life.
35.  
The English Translation the Personal Diaries – 1930-1937  
PLUS... Hänsel’s Letters – 1929-1940  
PLUS... Details for ALL of Wittgenstein’s Lectures & Public Pronouncements


$275

This is an important book bringing together a wealth of well-researched facts and newly translated materials.

In _Private Occasions_, co-editor Alfred Nordmann presents Wittgenstein's diaries from the 1930s [see item #34 above] with the original German opposite the English translation on the facing page – making these very personal diaries accessible to the average English speaker for the first time. These are important for, as Wittgenstein himself says: “The movement of thought in my philosophizing should be discernible also in the history of my mind.”

Nordmann follows this with the original German and an English translation of some of the letters exchanged by Wittgenstein and his friend Ludwig Hänsel from 1929 to 1940. These first appeared in the original German in _Ludwig Hänsel – Ludwig Wittgenstein: Eine Freundschaft_ published in 1994.  

[See #69 in the “Letters” section of this catalog for a fine copy of that book.]

In _Public Occasions_, co-editor James Klagge provides well-referenced information on all of Wittgenstein’s public pronouncements – from his classroom lectures to his presentations at the Cambridge philosophical associations as well as records of discussions he had with several different friends and students.

Publisher’s original light grey binding with gilt lettering on a black field to the front cover and gilt lettering to the spine. A fine copy.

36.  
[1930-32 / 1936-37] An English Translation of  
Wittgenstein’s Personal Diaries – 1930-1937


$125

In his online comments regarding this edition, James Klagge notes that the original book [see item #35 above] was very expensive and the authors presumed that Rowman and Littlefield would soon produce a paperback edition… [and now] this has now finally happened! This is the same translation… but with some updated footnotes and a new “Introduction” by Ray Monk

The addition of Monk’s “Introduction” is valuable as he effectively places the diary within the larger arc of Wittgenstein's life.

While Klagge’s claims that this hardback edition contains “the same translation” of the diaries, the English translation of those diaries is the only part of the 2003 book to appear here. The German text of those diaries is not included nor is the German/English correspondence between Wittgenstein and Hänsel. And Klagge’s outstanding second section devoted to Ludwig’s _Public Occasions_ – with all of his wonderfully detailed information on Wittgenstein’s lectures, presentation and conversations – is likewise missing from this book.

Still, the diaries alone are a revealing and informative read for anyone interested in Wittgenstein’s life and, as such, easily stand alone as a valuable contribution to our knowledge of Wittgenstein the man.

Publisher’s original pale green binding with black lettering and graphics to the front and rear covers and black lettering to the spine. As new.
Ludwig invited Marguerite to join him in Norway for two weeks at the beginning of the 1931 summer holiday where they maintained separate residences. His plan was for them to prepare for their life together, but after two weeks – having had little real contact with Wittgenstein – she left for Rome to attend her sister’s wedding. Later that summer they were back in Vienna and constantly in each other’s company for three weeks. However, the Norway interlude had convinced Marguerite that there was no real future for them as a married couple.

During their 1933 Christmas vacations in Vienna, Marguerite announced her engagement to Talle Sjögren – a lifelong friend of the Wittgensteins whom she had fallen in love with. They were married that New Year’s Eve.

In 1982, Margarete wrote a memoir for her grandchildren called *Granny et son temps*. Printed in an edition of just 200 copies, it is extremely rare today. That book along with a late-in-life in-depth interview can be found in *Wittgenstein-Jahrbuch 2000* in the “Memoir” section of this catalog – items #72 & 73.

In the meantime, Ludwig had begun one of the most important relationships of his life with the promising young mathematician named Francis Skinner.

As Marguerite distanced herself, he became interested and then deeply involved with Skinner. A year after they met, the two men were rarely seen apart as they walked, talked and studied together. In Cambridge, what little social life they had was chiefly devoted to the cinema where they indulged Wittgenstein’s strange addiction to American westerns and Hollywood musicals.

Their relationship had progressed to such a point of intimacy that in 1932 – as Ludwig was getting close to finishing (but never actually finishing!) a work he suggested might be called *Philosophical Remarks* – he noted that “in the event of my death… this book” should carry the dedication: “To Francis Skinner”… just as he had dedicated the *Tractatus* to David Pinsent.

During the 1933-1934 school year, Wittgenstein repeated a class he had offered the previous year: “Philosophy for Mathematicians”. This proved to be immensely popular with almost 40 eager students crowding into what was a fairly small seminar room.

Considering this number too unwieldy, Wittgenstein selected five of his favorite students (Francis Skinner, Louis Goldstein, H.M.S. Coexeter, Margaret Masterman, and Alice Ambrose) and announced that he would be dictating his lectures to these few chosen ones and that they would then circulate those transcripts to the other students.

Printed and bound in blue paper covers these notes have ever since been known as “The Blue Book”.

“The Brown Book” was, on the other hand, written by Wittgenstein himself and dictated to Skinner and Ambrose. Reading like a textbook, it was a sincere attempt to complete something that could be transformed into a book.

That said, once done, there is no evidence that Wittgenstein even considered publishing “The Brown Book”.

Both are generally thought to be an interlude between the *Tractatus* and *Philosophical Investigations*. True as this may be, the *Blue and Brown Books* are worthwhile in their own right as the origin of some of Wittgenstein’s more well-known ideas: the “language-game”, for example, makes its first appearance in “The Blue Book”.
37.

An Original Typescript of *The Blue Book*

*Wittgenstein Dictations (The Blue Book).* Titled on the front cover *Wittgenstein Dictations* and on the first page *Wittgenstein Dictations* below which *(The "Blue Book") has been added in blue ink.. TP + 1-69. An 8” x 10” original typescript to which a two-word ink correction (“in the”) with the appropriately place inked carat on page 69.

The title page contains a 14-line typed explanation of the book’s origin and purpose:

Dealing largely with meaning and the “grammatical” tangles that are responsible for philosophical confusions, these remarks were dictated by Wittgenstein to four or five select pupils, in 1934. The students met with Wittgenstein twice a week – sometimes more often – for two to three hours of discussion. The first part of the meeting was devoted to questions asked by the students. Wittgenstein would then dictate to them, keeping close to the subject matter of the preceding questions as possible, and endeavoring, as far as possible, to connect each dictation with the previous one. Some of the students then typewrote the dictations, and submitted them to Wittgenstein for correction. The dictations were mimeographed, for a limited circulation.

This particular typescript comes with an interesting provenance. The author of the note that accompanies the typescript was written by Professor Daniel O’Connor (1914-2012) who was head of the Philosophy Department at Exeter University from 1957. A student of A.J. Ayer and Karl Popper, he acquired the typescript from a pupil of Elizabeth Anscombe (1919-2001) who was one of Wittgenstein’s three literary executors. O’Connor gave this copy to his colleague Brian Carr, who wrote O’Connor’s obituary for the *Guardian* in 2012.

The typed and handwritten note which accompanied this gift is paperclipped to the front cover reading:

BRIAN

IS THIS OF ANY INTEREST? IT IS ONE OF THE COPIES OF THE ORIGINAL ‘BLUE BOOK’ SHORTHAND VERSIONS – ON WHICH, I AM TOLD, A CURSE RESTS.

P.S. I got it from a pupil of Anscombe’s D

[The verso of this is a preprinted note: “WITH THE COMPLIMENTS OF PROFESSOR D.J. O’CONNOR”]

At first circulated only in a very few original typescripts, the text was eventually published in book form by Blackwell in 1958 *(see item #38 below)*.

Prior to this, a small number of duplicated copies were produced, of which the present example is the only one we know to have appeared on the market in recent years.

With its challenging opening sentence (“What is the meaning of a word?”) Wittgenstein launches into his dissection of language to discover what can and what cannot be fruitfully said about long-standing philosophical issues. But first he makes a general critique of philosophy’s fundamental modern error – the belief that that the ‘scientific method’ offers the best way out of the centuries-old morass which traditional philosophical methods have produced:

Philosophers constantly see the method of science before their eyes, and are irresistibly tempted to ask and answer questions in the way science does. This tendency is the real source of metaphysics, and leads the philosopher into complete darkness.
The phrase “language-game” – one of the most central ideas in Wittgenstein’s evolving philosophical method – makes its first appearance here in *The Blue Book*. For Ludwig, it is the logical extension of the ideas already described in his *Philosophical Grammar*; the necessary element needed to clarify which questions philosophy was actually capable of asking and answering.

The “language-game” is the simplest, most rudimentary use of language. When attempting to answer a philosophical question, rather than resorting to the complex and obscure language so often found in philosophical works, Wittgenstein argues for using the most elementary terms possible – reducing both the question and the answer to their clearest grammatical form.

The study of language-games is the study of primitive forms of language or primitive languages. If we want to study the problem of truth and falsehood, of the agreement and disagreement of propositions with reality, of the nature of assertion, assumption, and question, we shall with great advantage look at primitive forms of language in which these forms of thinking appear without the confusing background of highly complicated processes of thought. When we look at such simple forms of language the mental mist which seems to enshroud our ordinary language disappears. We see activities, reactions, which are clear-cut and transparent.

Wittgenstein’s point here is that we must *not* confuse simplicity with generality. When philosophers ask questions like “What is time?”, “What is meaning?”, “What is knowledge?”, they usually answer with the Socratic method found in Plato’s *Dialogues*, namely searching for examples of a concept, then figuring out what these examples all have in common, and finally using that commonality as an answer to the question.

Wittgenstein argues that this kind of approach generates two fundamental mistakes. *First*, the way the question is formulated implies that time, meaning and knowledge are actual things – that they are something substantive. *Second*, the Socratic method presumes that the concept is also a substantive thing which can be understood and ‘captured’ by finding the substantive things that exemplify that concept. This naturally leads to the notion that there is an essence, or a general commonality, shared among these things, and that once discovered, this essence is the desired distilled answer to “What is time?”, “What is meaning?”, et cetera.

Wittgenstein argues that this kind of approach is completely wrong. (He actually once said that his own method could be summed up as being exactly the opposite of Socrates’ method.) Though a general concept might have corresponding specific examples, what links the specific to the general is not some underlying essence. Rather, these things are linked by a set of likenesses.

Here, Wittgenstein introduces another major theme of his later work: that of “family resemblances.” If the idea of a “language-game” addresses the complications emerging from asking a question like “What is time?”, the idea of “family resemblances” addresses the complications of expecting a corresponding answer that says “Time is…”.

Because philosophy traditionally aims at interrogating general principles, it tends to depreciate the specifics. The method of “family resemblance” acknowledges and recognizes certain likenesses, or resemblances, among a group, or family, but denies the idea that these likenesses determine what this group is. What this does in essence is to bracket commonalities, put them aside, and create space for the analysis of what makes each part special.

Wittgenstein’s “language-game” offers a linguistic diagnosis and remedy of philosophy’s tendency to overcomplicate and overgeneralize, one that he works out in the realm of “family resemblances” using a methodology that privileges specifics and differences.

Green wrappers with metal studs (“The Grip Binder”) with the typed title in capital letters and two lines of ‘dashes’ below this. (We have no further information on the Cambridge “Curse” noted in the gift inscription, but it is included here at no extra cost.)
The book opens with a 10-page “Preface” by Rush Rhees explaining the origin and the differences between these two books.

Details about the Blue Book can be found in #37 – the listing above.

While the Blue Book was a straightforward transcription of his lectures, the Brown Book was Wittgenstein’s attempt to fully present the state of his thinking as it had progressed up to the school year of 1934-1935. This “book” – which he purposely dictated to Francis Skinner and Alice Ambrose – reads more like a textbook than the much looser Blue Book.

Part I of the Brown Book presents 73 numbered “exercises” while Part II opens with 10 basic propositions followed by 56 pages of further explanation.

Three typed copies bound in brown wrappers were produced.

Here he elaborates on the language-game theme of the Blue Book. He begins by asking the reader to imagine a tribe whose language composed of four nouns: “cube,” “brick,” “slab,” and “column.” The point, here, is to demonstrate what the most simple of language-games might look like. This one is composed of just four words and various intonations that alter their meaning. Wittgenstein then adds numbers, one through ten. Then “this” and “there.” Then questions and answers. Then color words.

Two major points are emphasized here. First, even in this simplest of forms, language is complex. And second, this language-game can be played with or without the existence of mental representations of the object spoken of. This second point intends to emphasize that mental ideas are not essential to language; language can correspond to an object without the object being imagined.

Wittgenstein then continues with another series of language-games. This time, he begins with the idea that there is a tribe whose number system is split into two ways of counting: a closed way and an open way. The closed way has 159 as the final number; the open way is infinite. His point here is to examine the coincidence of numerical structure and its linguistic effects — elucidating the ‘nature’ of each. He continues his examination of this language-game, going on to think about ‘possibility’ and ‘ability’ — the verbs “can” and “to be able to” being the “open” counterpart to our more familiar use of the “closed” verb “is”.

“Imagine,” he writes, “a people in whose language there is no such form of the sentence as ‘the book is in the drawer,’ or ‘water is in the glass,’ but wherever we should use these forms they say, ‘the book can be taken out of the drawer,’ or ‘the water can be taken out of the glass’.”

All of this surely sounds a bit obscure. But Wittgenstein, by trying to play in the simplest terrain possible, breaks open what might be ignored by virtue of being so familiar in our speech. The difference between “can” and “is,” for example, drags into question the way we implicitly talk about past, present, and future, introducing a level of complexity to what seems like a simple statement.

Here, Wittgenstein is attempting to ensure that philosophical abstractions are not unintentionally misleading, as they so often can be. Though his mentions of philosophy are spartan, the book demonstrates the quagmire of using a language that articulates phenomena in terms of things and verbs — even when what it attempts to describe is very much not a thing; and when the verb used offers a misleading sense of time.

Though the point might be missed by the bizarre and complex scenarios that Wittgenstein invites the reader to imagine, the Brown Book ultimately reveals itself to be a guidebook in the use of language simplicity.

Publisher’s original dust jacket over dark blue boards with gilt lettering on the spine. The front free endpaper is lightly darkened by the dust jacket flaps. Otherwise, a clean, tight and bright copy of this extremely important book in a well-preserved dust jacket.
39.  
The First US Issue of *The Blue and The Brown Books*


Printed from UK sheets, this should be considered the second issue of the book described above.

Publisher’s original blue cloth with silver lettering to the spine. A tight, bright and clean copy.

40.  

[1936]  
Wittgenstein Makes Significant Revisions to *The Brown Book*  
(which were eventually included in Philosophical Investigations)  
in this First German Language Edition of *The Blue and The Brown Books*


*Schriften 5* presents *The Blue Book* and *The Brown Books* along with *Zettel* in their native language for the first time.

Most important, the long first part of *The Brown Book* – comprising 120 pages here (pp. 117-237) – was extensively revised by Wittgenstein as he edited and transcribed it into German in his hope of producing a publishable work. His rewrite did not go well and he finally gave up claiming that “this whole attempt at a revision, from the start right up to this point, is worthless.”

(*NOTE:* The reworked first part of *The Brown Book* eventually did find its way into the first part of *Philosophical Investigations.*)
The text of *The Blue Book* here was rendered into German by Petra von Morstein (a respected Wittgenstein scholar at the University of Calgary) who also translated the final 45 pages (pp. 237-282) of *The Brown Book* which Wittgenstein left untouched after quitting his efforts at an extensive revision.

Morstein’s German translation of *The Blue Book* retains its original character. However, *Eine Philosophische Betrachtung* (“A Philosophical Reflection” – the title for the revised Brown Book chosen by Rush Rhees) underwent quite a bit of expansion and revision by Wittgenstein. Most especially, Part I now has 137 (rather than 73) exercises and Part II has 12 rather than 10 numbered sections.

The foreword to these German translations of *The Blue Book* and the much revised *The Brown Book* was written by Rush Rhees while Elizabeth Anscombe and G. H. von Wright supply the foreword for *Zettel*.

Publisher’s original brick-colored binding with a white label with black lettering to the spine. A clean, tight and bright copy.

### 41.

[1933-1934] A Typescript of the COMPLETE & UNPUBLISHED *Yellow Book*  
“Better Stated” Notes Made During the Dictation of The Blue Book  
(including a Book with Excerpts that Ambrose Published in 1979)

*Wittgenstein’s Dictation [The Yellow Book]*. A 168-page typescript; Typed on November 12, 1951 duplicating an original owned by Alice Ambrose. 1 blank leaf + [1]-2 = Contents + half title for Section I + [1]-125 + 125a + 126-164. 8.5” x 11”.

*An A Typed Transcription of Alice Ambrose’s Original Typed Notes.*  

$18,000

This is a typed duplicate copy made from Ambrose's original in 1951 by American philosophy professor James K. Feibleman with a label affixed to the inside cover attesting that this is “Wittgenstein's Yellow Book copied November 12, 1951, from original of Prof. Alice Ambrose Lazerowitz. Property of James K. Feibleman”. [NOTE: This is an original typescript. It is NOT a Xerox copy. The first Xerox copier did not appear until eight years later in 1959.]
In a December 11, 1933 letter to W. H. Watson, Wittgenstein explained that “I am lecturing a good deal and have adopted a method which I think is the right one for me. I explain things to my pupils and then dictate to them short formulations of what we've been discussing and of the results. These are then typed and duplicated so that each man can get a clean copy.”

This was the famous Blue Book which he dictated to five members of his Cambridge class (Louis Goldstein, H.M.S. Coexeter, Francis Skinner, Margaret Masterman & Alice Ambrose) during the session 1933-34, which was then mimeographed for circulation the rest of the students in his class.

Offered here is a complete typescript copy of The Yellow Book, comprising additional notes transcribed by three of those students (Alice Ambrose, Margaret Masterman & Francis Skinner) who recorded Wittgenstein's comments and observations made during the informal discussions they had BEFORE in the formal dictation of The Blue Book.

In her “Preface” to the 1979 partial publication of The Yellow Book (just 33 pages) in Wittgenstein's Lectures: Cambridge 1932-1935 (see #42 below) Ambrose notes that:

As might be expected, problems treated in The Yellow Book are for the most part those treated in The Blue Book. Their main value lies in their sometimes being better stated than in The Blue Book dictation, though certain things which I have included and which I think are important are not to be found elsewhere [emphasis added]. In addition to taking notes of lectures from 1933-34, Ms. Masterman and I took notes of his informal discussion in the intervals between dictation when, as he thought, and sometimes regretted, no record had been made of what he said. Subsequently, explicit permission was given us to continue with note-taking of his informal discussion.

She later recalled that she and Masterman took down discussion that he wasn't including in The Blue Book and we called this The Yellow Book. He once flew at [Masterman] for doing so, but as he was also distressed when something he thought good was not taken down because he wasn't dictating – and she pointed this out to him at the time – this practice on our part was allowed to continue. I believe I continued with it after she left.

Those additional ‘captures’ of Wittgenstein’s comments included several things which he referred to as “hints” or “pointers” – i.e. “remarks that may set you on the right track in solving a problem.”

This typescript copy has a label affixed to the inside cover attesting to the fact that it is “Wittgenstein's Yellow Book copied November 12, 1951, from original of Prof. Alice Ambrose Lazerowitz. Property of James K. Feibleman”.

Born in New Orleans, James Kern Feibleman (1904-1987) was first a professor of English and then of Philosophy at Tulane University, retiring in 1977. He published prolifically, predominantly on popular, aesthetic, and political philosophy. A contemporary of his said that “Professor Feibleman is the chief representative in the present generation of the classical realist point of view. Although his writing has been extensive, his work has been unduly neglected... [He] might well wake up one morning to find himself America's leading philosopher.”

Feibleman wrote a number of commentaries on Wittgenstein's work, of which the best known is Inside the Great Mirror: A Critical Examination of the Philosophy of Russell, Wittgenstein, and their Followers (1958). Both Ambrose and Feibleman are listed as
members of the Association for Symbolic Logic in the Journal of Symbolic Logic for December 1948: Feibleman at the same address as on the typescript’s label and Ambrose, under her married name Lazerowitz, at 69 Lyman Road, Northampton, MA, where she was an assistant professor at Smith College.

Ambrose selected excerpts from The Yellow Book that were printed in Part II (pp. 41-73) of Wittgenstein’s Lectures: Cambridge 1932-1935 – a copy of which is included in this custom-made box preserving a complete package of The Yellow Book.

In the “Preface” to that book, she notes that these were carefully chosen so that they draw only on “my own notes, not those of Ms. Masterman. Notes taken on the same material by Francis Skinner, now deceased, were included in The Yellow Book but formed only a small part of the total. It seemed to me better on the whole to use notes for which I only was responsible.”

The Yellow Book: Bound in a contemporary brown Accopress pressboard binder, the corners of which are lightly creased and rubbed. With the typed label on the inside cover reading “Wittgenstein's Yellow Book copied / November 12, 1951, from original / of Prof. Alice Ambrose Lazerowitz // Property of JAMES K. FEIBLEMAN / 1424 National Bank of Commerce Bldg / New Orleans 12, Louisiana”. With Feibleman’s engraved bookplate below this. With pencil and ink handwritten diagrams, symbols, and equations throughout the text. There is also additional marginalia and underlining in several colors of pen (symbols of close reading, round and square brackets, a few instances of corrected spelling). Overall, an amazingly well-preserved copy of this Wittgenstein rarity.

Wittgenstein’s Lectures: Cambridge 1932-1935: Publisher’s original photo dust jacket with blue lettering to the front and the spine. The rear panel has a black and white listing of other Wittgenstein books published by Blackwell. Over the publisher’s original blue cloth boards with gilt lettering on the spine. An immaculate copy of the important and popular book of Wittgenstein’s early lectures.

Both The Yellow Book and Wittgenstein’s Lectures are housed in a large, tan quarter Morocco solander box by the Chelsea Bindery.

42.

[1932-1935]

The First Edition of Student Notes
Taken During Wittgenstein’s 1932-1935 Lectures

Wittgenstein’s Lectures: Cambridge 1932-1935. From the notes of Alice Ambrose and Margaret Macdonald.


Published from sheets printed in the US, so this should be considered the “first issue” of this important book.

Unlike Desmond Lee & John King’s notes from 1930-1932, Ambrose’s collection introduces a Wittgenstein who has decisively turned away from the Tractatus, and is now firmly committed to working out his “New Philosophy”.

Ambrose and Wittgenstein had a serious falling out following the 1935 publication of her article “Finitism in Mathematics”, which presented what she understood to be his opinion on the subject. Wittgenstein was incensed and tried desperately to persuade her not to publish the piece, but she and Moore published it regardless. He didn’t blame Ambrose completely, however, as much as he faulted nosy academics who pressured her to reveal what Wittgenstein’s “New Philosophy” was all about.

This book contains five sections. It begins with an introduction by Ambrose acknowledging the difficulty of publishing an honest recapitulation of Wittgenstein’s lectures from this period. Much of the difficulty, she says, comes from the fact that her notes are the sole survivor of the period — other students had died, or were difficult to track down.

Those who know his style of learning will remember that a topic often recurred, if only in a recapitulation, in a subsequent lecture, and that even within a lecture, comments on some matter whose relevance was not clear to his class would be noted, dropped and sometimes taken up later again. In some cases I have brought together widely separated remarks not integral to the discussion at the time, for example, on existence proofs and formalism.

With this in mind, the content of the first chapter — Part I. Philosophy. Lectures 1932-1933 — becomes more lucid. It ranges from oft-returned-to topics such as the translatability of colors and toothaches to intelligible and meaningful speech, to more unconventional topics like the relationship of the body to the ego.

In her second chapter — Part II. The Yellow Book (Selected Parts) — Ambrose presents selections from a mysterious supplement to the Blue Book. The Yellow Book never underwent official publication and, even still, remains something of an object of Wittgensteinian lore [see item #41 above]. Published as a supplement to the Blue Book, the Yellow Book was intended to be a further elaboration and explanation of the ideas published there. The selection presented in Part II incorporates Ambrose’s notes with those of her peers — Margaret Masterman and Francis Skinner — to provide a still-yet unpublished, but nonetheless important, work of the Wittgenstein canon.
Part III is a composite of Ambrose’s notes on Wittgenstein’s lectures, 1934-35. The lectures begin with a short deliberation on the idea of “negation” in a language-game and the obscurities of facts that are facts but, indeed, that do not exist — an example of which being, “the chair is not green.” From this point, these lectures orbit around the principle of negation and negativity, with additional considerations of mathematical propositions that deal with negation.

Part IV offers notes on Wittgenstein’s 1932-33 lectures on the “Philosophy of Mathematics”. This was the first of two iterations of this course, the second being the basis of the Blue Book. Ambrose was one of the five notetakers selected by Wittgenstein in the second iteration of the course, and would go on to be instrumental in publishing the Blue Book. Here, Ambrose presents a framework that anticipates the ideas of the Blue Book, some of which were published there, some of which were not.

Publisher’s original photo dust jacket with blue lettering to the front and the spine. The rear panel has a black and white listing of other Wittgenstein books “also in this series”. Over the publisher’s original blue cloth boards with gilt lettering on the spine. With the bookplate of a former owner (Robert F. Thimmesh) to the inside front cover along with his name hand-written in blue ink to the upper right corner of the title page. Otherwise, an immaculate copy of this important and popular book of Wittgenstein’s early lectures.

43.

The First UK Edition of Student Notes
Taken at Wittgenstein’s Lectures – 1932-1935
“Language-games are a clue to the understanding of logic”


Published from sheets printed in the US, making this the “second issue” of this important book.

Publisher’s original photo dust jacket with blue lettering to the front and the spine. The rear panel has a black and white listing of other Wittgenstein books published by Blackwell. Over the publisher’s original blue cloth boards with gilt lettering on the spine. An immaculate copy of the important and popular book of Wittgenstein’s early lectures.
Throughout his career, Wittgenstein constantly discouraged his students from becoming academics. Instead, he suggested that their lives would be much better spent if they pursued more productive, plebian career paths. With his closest friends, he could be very specific. For instance, when Maurice Drury first told him of his plans to become an Anglican priest, Wittgenstein pointedly replied: “Don’t think I ridicule this for one minute, but I can’t approve; no, I can’t approve. I would be afraid that one day that collar would choke you.” Instead, he encouraged Drury to become a doctor; a career where he could do some real good and that was, in fact, exactly what Drury did with the rest of his life.

In the summer of 1935, Ludwig was anxious to take his own advice. He and Francis Skinner were planning to go to Russia where they hoped to secure jobs as common laborers, most likely on a collective farm. Wittgenstein was hoping to fulfill his lifelong dream of adopting the kind of simple peasant life that Tolstoy had so gloriously extolled in his writings and, most especially, in his version of the Gospels that Ludwig was so devoted to.

But this proved to be more than just a little problematic. Russia had an overabundance of unskilled laborers and this was coupled with their profound distrust of Western intellectuals. Wittgenstein once again appealed to John Maynard Keynes for help. Keynes used his vast influence to set Ludwig up with an interview with the Russian Ambassador in London, but even this weighty connection could not get Wittgenstein the official approvals he needed for the kind of job he wanted.

Despite this and a number of other failed attempts to secure a menial Russian job while still in England, Wittgenstein sailed for Russia on September 7th – unfortunately without Francis Skinner who was too ill to make the trip at that time. He spent two fruitless weeks in Russia where he learned there was no chance he would ever be granted permission to work as a common laborer. Instead, the Russian authorities offered him teaching jobs in both Leningrad and Moscow and even suggested that he take the chair of philosophy at the University of Kazan. Wittgenstein turned down all of these offers. If he was to be forced to continue teaching, he preferred to do so at Cambridge.

Returning to England, Ludwig began what he thought would be his last year of teaching at Cambridge. It was the final year of the fellowship he had been granted in 1930 as well as the last year of Francis Skinner’s three-year postgraduate scholarship. The two men planned to spend time during their final university year preparing The Brown Book for publication. But, beyond this, they had no definite plans for what they might be doing once that final school year ended.

44.

Wittgenstein’s Rough Notes for his 1935-1936 Lectures on "Private Experience" and "Sense Data"

In his introductory remarks, Rush Rhees mentions that – contrary to Wittgenstein’s usual practice – these notes are written almost entirely in English with only the occasional insertion of some German words.

The questions discussed here are of primary importance to Wittgenstein, namely whether there is some “sense data” functioning as the foundational content of our personal experience and, if so, what does it mean when we say we are sharing this “private experience” with another human being.

He begins by asking, “What does one call ‘describing a feeling to someone?’” and follows this with an exploration of the (usually unacknowledged) difficulties raised by this question and then investigates some potential solutions during the balance of the lecture.

Wittgenstein breaks this simple issue of attempting to describe a personal feeling to another person down into three major components. First, there is the question of whether or not (and how) the name of the feeling comes to be commensurate with the feeling itself. Second, there is the question of whether the name of the feeling – when communicated – refers to the same feeling shared between two people. Given those preliminary inquiries, the third question becomes even more complex.
Regarding the first two points, the name of a feeling successfully refers directly to the feeling itself if and only if multiple people agree that the feeling does, in fact, exist. But, even given that agreement, how can we know that all of these people are feeling the same thing? If, for example, Ludwig tells someone he has a toothache, how does that person know what Ludwig is talking about? Does he just assume that their feelings are the same? Any such assumption necessarily presumes a large degree of trust and confidence.

Is our communication of private experience, he asks, entirely dependent on the existence of trust in the fact that, first of all, a name actually describes some particular experience and, second, that the experience is the same among different people and, third, that the experience is the same during the different stages of the same person’s life?

Wittgenstein’s ‘investigation’ here literally explodes what might seem to be the fairly simple and common experience of telling a friend that you have a toothache. And it is really this questioning of people’s ordinary perception of the world – as opposed to the philosophers questioning of the underlying reality of those perceptions – that Wittgenstein finds most intriguing and the subject best suited for fruitful discussion if philosophy is to ever begin to move forward.

These arguments may well sound familiar to readers of Philosophical Investigations where the “Private Language Argument” is an important theme. But here, Wittgenstein is laying the foundation for what makes this argument meaningful. Instead of describing language’s basic necessity of mutual intelligibility, Wittgenstein is trying to describe the simple relationship between a word, residing in the sphere of public intelligibility, and a feeling, residing in the sphere of “private experience.”

A “private experience” is the immediate apprehension of a piece of “sense data” that we might experience. To further elucidate this point, Wittgenstein returns to a much beloved topic – the color red. How do we know that we’re all seeing the same color when we say “red”? How do we know that, in our private worlds, we’re seeing the same color “red” today as the color “red” we saw yesterday?

Wittgenstein’s analysis of these questions — and his proposed possible answers — offer not only a highly detailed, unconventional, and thorough investigation of the unexamined norms so common to our social interactions, but also makes a groundbreaking contribution to the often dull canon of analytic philosophy.

Publisher’s original card wraps with dark red lettering to the front cover and the spine. An old pen note (RMH - / p. 383) and two penned dashes can be seen in the upper right corner of the front cover. The spine is ever so lightly sunned. Otherwise, this is an unmarked, tight and bright copy of these extremely interesting explorations by Wittgenstein.

[1936-1937] A LONG AND PRODUCTIVE RESIDENCY IN NORWAY

With his Cambridge fellowship and his classes at an end, Wittgenstein considered following Drury into medical school to become a doctor – a career that he considered as a serious option with some regularity throughout his life. But instead, he decided to devote this new block of open time to revising and expanding The Brown Book into a more coherent whole that would be worthy of publication.

Ludwig returned to his small house overlooking the Norwegian fiord in August of 1936 – surprisingly by himself. Francis Skinner was left behind for reasons that are unclear. Monk claims that Ludwig never considered Francis “seriously as a philosophical collaborator” and speculates that Wittgenstein chose concentrated solitude over distracting companionship as the only environment in which he would be able to make any serious progress clarifying and writing down his philosophical thoughts and insights.

Skinner, having finished his own scholarship, capitulated to Wittgenstein’s belief that he would “never be happy in academic life” and deferentially accepted Ludwig’s advice that he abandon his promising university career. Francis took the job that Wittgenstein recommended and became a factory mechanic. This proved to be
exceedingly unsatisfying – as he repeatedly wrote to Ludwig – but he persisted with the job because it was what Wittgenstein continued to insist was the best life choice for him.

Wittgenstein brought a copy of The Brown Book with him to Norway with every intention of revising this and using it as the foundational base of a much expanded treatise. He intention was to begin this process by translating the English into German and rewriting the text as he went along. But, after three months, he gave this project up as hopeless, noting that “this whole attempt at a revision, from the start right up to this point, is worthless.”

[NOTE: See #40 above, Schriften 5: Das Blaue Buck / Eine Philosophische Betrachtung / Zettel for the German text of this failed attempt at a substantive revision.]

Discarding all of this “worthless” work, Ludwig started over again afresh and while this did not produce a finished book at that time, it did result in a fairly large body of text that was later used – with only minor revisions – as the opening 188 numbered sections of his Philosophical Investigations (76 of the original 232 pages – almost a full third of that amazing and seminal 1953 book).

Wittgenstein was also doing some serious soul searching – so much so that he spent the 1936 Christmas holiday reading aloud his written “confession” of past misdeeds and sins of omission to relatives and friends in both Vienna and Cambridge. He even went so far as to visit and abjectly apologize to several of the children he had physically abused when he had been their teacher.

Following the Christmas break, he returned to Norway and stayed throughout the spring. The beginning of the summer was spent with his family in Vienna and then with Francis in Cambridge to whom he dictated a typescript of the remarks of his most recent writings which – as already noted – would eventually appear as the first 188 sections of Philosophical Investigations.

Wittgenstein returned to Norway in mid-August of 1938 where he experienced two weeks of severe depression before deciding to invite Francis Skinner to join him for two weeks. After a pleasant two weeks with Francis in residence, Ludwig spend the fall and early winter months trying to continue the successful work done during the previous year, but he was not happy with the results.

The writings that did survive from this period were edited by his literary executors and printed as Part I and Appendix I in the Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics published in 1956. To these earlier writings on the subject, the executors added other relevant “selections” later written by Wittgenstein when he significantly reengaged with this topic during the WWII years – from October 1939 to April 1940 (Part II), in 1942 (Part III), in 1942 and 1943 (Part IV) and from 1941 and 1944 (Part V).

45.

[1937-1944] Wittgenstein Revisits the Problem that First Attracted Him to Philosophy


$ 400

As noted above, this posthumous publication was compiled by Wittgenstein’s three executors (G.H. von Wright, Rush Rhees & Elizabeth Anscombe) from Wittgenstein’s notes and reflections on the philosophy of mathematics. These were all written in German and Anscombe – Wittgenstein’s most trusted translator – provided the English translation which appears on the pages opposite the German text. Organized by loosely connected observations and remarks, the book not only lacks a system, it can, at times, even seem to have been written by different authors. Elusive as all that may be, the presentation and impact is pure Ludwig Wittgenstein.

Though lacking a philosophical system and formal position, the overall structure of Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics clearly presents one of the book’s most prominent arguments: there can be no abstract “system” that can remain uniform in its practical application. This is not just a critique of philosophical universalisms and abstract generalizations. It is a devastating critique of the generally accepted foundations of mathematics themselves.

To argue, as Wittgenstein does, that mathematics – which is generally understood to be a “pure” and “unconditional” structure – is actually dependent on context sounds more than a little counterintuitive (and perhaps even just a little bit crazy). How could anyone say that basic mathematical truths, like $3 \times 3 = 9$, are not only not a truth, but does not remain uniform in their applications?
But Wittgenstein never says that 3 x 3 = 9 is liable to change based on environmental or historical conditions. Instead, he claims that 3 x 3 = 9 isn’t a proposition, that is, it isn’t a truth-statement at all. It is a rule.

This does not necessarily mean that it is arbitrary, or simply a convention, but rather that it is an empirical regularity which has hardened into something more than just a pattern. Moreover, the ability to understand 3 x 3 = 9 as the representation of such an empirical regularity is not something arrived at in a vacuum. Rather, it is the result of mathematical training in a certain classroom, with a certain instructor.

Wittgenstein is presenting a critique of the claim that mathematics results in a representation of absolute truths; ones that are truly independent of the mind perceiving them. This, since Plato, had been a foundational belief on which the mathematician’s entire identity rested.

Wittgenstein doesn’t just stop with his critique of Platonism. He also offers a critique of other mathematical “-isms”: formalism, conventionalism, logicism, etc. Though the content of his critiques vary, what remains uniform throughout is his absolute unwillingness to grant any mathematical system with any kind of legitimate claim to representing the absolute. What he insists on is the significance of where the mathematical formula is situated: in a classroom, in a tradition, or, most importantly, in language.

Building on the themes of Philosophical Grammar and The Blue and Brown Books, Wittgenstein condemns mathematicians’ casual use of language to obscure simple mathematical formulae. What makes mathematics appear difficult is not the content itself, but rather the language used to describe it.

The five Parts of Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics are grouped according to topics specifically addressed during their years of composition:

**PART I** (written 1937): On the nature of mathematics; an exploration of the nature of mathematical propositions and the language used by mathematicians; the relationship between mathematical objects, symbols and the world.

**PART II** (written October 1939 to April 1940): Formalism and logicism; to what extent is mathematics reducible to formal systems or logical principles.

**PART III** (written 1942): Mathematical proof and certainty; the nature of mathematical truths and the criteria for establishing them.

**PART IV** (written 1942 & 1943): Foundations and paradoxes; foundational issues in mathematics and the challenges posed by “Russell’s Paradox” and Gödel’s “Incompleteness Theorems”.

**PART V** (written 1941 & 1944): Language and meaning; exploring the relationships between language, symbols and mathematical concept and the roles each of these play in mathematical discourse.

Publisher’s original very lightly chipped and sunned dust jacket with red lettering and decorative edging to the front and back panels and to the spine. Over publisher’s original dark blue cloth binding with gilt lettering to the spine. With the number “1750” lightly stamped to the upper right corner of the front free endpaper and the former owner’s name (Harold A Thomas Jr.) neatly penned to the middle of that same page. Otherwise, a tight, bright and clean copy of this important work by Wittgenstein.

[1938] **CAUGHT IN A POLITICAL CRISIS AS NAZI GERMANY ANNEXES AUSTRIA**

Ludwig left Norway on December 10th and returned to Vienna where the entire Wittgenstein family met to celebrate their traditional Christmas festivities. Despite the most ominous warning signs, no one in the family seemed worried about the tremendous political upheaval that was looming on the near horizon.

Still undecided on what to do with the remainder of his life, Ludwig left for Dublin on February 8th where he stayed with Drury with every intention of further exploring the possibility of becoming a doctor – and perhaps even a psychiatrist. Wittgenstein was an admirer of Sigmund Freud.
All of this changed dramatically and decisively when the German army marched into Austria on March 12th and formally annexed the country into the greater German Reich. Hitler led a triumphant procession in Vienna to celebrate this military and political victory on March 14th.

The Vienna Wittgensteins were slow to absorb the full impact of this change. They were no longer Austrian citizens. They were now German Jews – and, as such, they were subject to the draconian 1935 Nuremberg Laws which were aimed at eliminating Jews from every aspect of German life.

Ludwig was desperate to hurry back to Vienna to help his family, but was strenuously advised that doing so would have the gravest of consequences – his Austrian passport would surely be confiscated and his ability to get a new German passport to replace it would likely not be possible because of his Jewish heritage. He was advised to secure a university teaching job for himself and to apply for British citizenship as quickly as possible.

Heeding this advice, Wittgenstein left Dublin for Cambridge on March 18th where – with John Maynard Keynes’ help – he applied for British citizenship and was given a lecturing post at Cambridge for the upcoming April term. The complications of British citizenship took much longer, but a passport was finally issued to him a year later.

The family also survived. His brother Paul escaped to Switzerland and then to America, but his two sisters, Hermine and Helene, insisted on remaining in Austria. (Ludwig’s third sister, Gretl, was married to an American and was by then a US citizen living in Switzerland.) By turning over most of the family wealth to the Reichsbank, Hermine and Helene were granted special status as being of “mixed” rather than “full” Jewish blood – allowing them to survive the war in relative peace.

Wittgenstein moved in with Francis Skinner and began teaching classes to a small group of select students.

46. [1938] After a Two-Year Hiatus, Ludwig Returns to Cambridge to Lecture on Aesthetics and Religious Beliefs


$ 120

Upon his return to Cambridge for the Easter Term (April to June) of 1938, Wittgenstein delivered two short sets of lectures to just ten students. But rather than dealing with either philosophy or mathematics, one course took up the subject of aesthetics and another discussed religious belief. His attention to these subjects in 1938 make them unique among Wittgenstein’s lectures.

The first section of the book has been compiled from notes on the four aesthetic lectures taken down by three of his students: Rush Rhees, Yorick Smythies, and James Taylor. Faced with the challenge of three different sets of notes, the editor has chosen Smythies as the most complete for the first three lectures. That text is supplemented with footnotes incorporating additional nuances or information from the notes of “R” [Rhees] and “T” [Taylor]. The text for the fourth aesthetic lecture is taken from Rhees’ notes with footnote additions by “T” and “S”.

Notes from the three religious beliefs lectures are by either Smythies or Rhees (the editor is not clear and scholars disagree) and they appear here without any additional footnotes.

Finally, Rhees – feeling that this was perhaps the most appropriate place to include this material – offers a report of his talks with Wittgenstein on Freud which took place in 1942 and 1946 – much later than these 1938 lectures.

Wittgenstein’s shift in subject matter is interesting and important in the extreme. But the approach he takes in relation to aesthetics and religious beliefs is just a variation on what he has been doing all along when discussing the basic problem with philosophy and mathematics – namely their insistence that the way forward is “to ask and answer questions in the way that science does.” In these 1938 lectures, Ludwig underlines the “wretched effect that the worship of science and the scientific method has had upon our whole culture” and insists that aesthetics and religious belief are “areas of thought and life in which the scientific method is not appropriate” (Monk, p. 404).

His lectures during this Term bordered on the conversational, saying thing such as: “You might think Aesthetics is a science telling us what’s beautiful – almost too ridiculous for words. I suppose it ought to include also what sort of coffee tastes well.” And, once again, he returns to a familiar Wittgensteinian explanation of the varieties of aesthetic appreciation: “What is artistic appreciation?
They are, he says, linked by a complicated series of ‘family resemblances.’ ... It is not only difficult to describe what appreciation consists in, but impossible. To describe what it consists in we would have to describe the whole environment.”

The need to find a ‘scientific’ explanation and justification for religious belief is the clear target of his second set of lectures. There is no necessity, he says, for religious beliefs to have either philosophical or theological justifications. Such an insistence flies in the face of the very nature of religious belief as Wittgenstein understands it. It is, at bottom, an experiential thing which needs no evidence for its tenets nor any proof for the existence of God.

Publisher’s original dark green card wraps with white lettering on the front and back covers and the spine which is just a bit worn for 1” along the top front edge. Otherwise, a lovely, clean, tight copy.

47.

The First US Edition of Wittgenstein’s 1938 Lectures on Aesthetics and Religious Belief


$80

Copy #46 above was published from British sheets. This issue was simultaneously published by the University of California Press from sheets printed in the US.

Publisher’s original white card wraps with dark green and blue lettering to the front and rear panel with blue lettering on the spine. There are two prices stickers ($5.95), one each pasted to the front and rear covers. With two former owner’s inscriptions (one in ink and the other in pencil dated 2/96) to the top border of the half title. Otherwise, a tight and clean copy.

[1938]  MORE FRUITLESS WORK ON PHILOSOPHICAL INVESTIGATIONS

Ludwig spent the summer preparing a typescript for Philosophical Investigations based on the work he had done in Norway and, in September, he offered this to Cambridge University Press for publication. But a month later he informed the Press that the whole project had to be put on hold pending the resolution of two problems.
Most important, he was increasingly unhappy with his treatment of the philosophy of mathematics – which made up the second half of the book. The other problem was the English translation of his German text that Rush Rhees had laboring on throughout the fall term. Wittgenstein was extremely unhappy with it, telling Keynes that “the translation is pretty awful, and yet the man who did it is an excellent man. Only he’s not a born translator, and nothing is more difficult to translate than colloquial (non-technical) prose.” Ludwig did his best to make his own corrections to the translation, but finally abandoned that attempt as “hopeless”.

Wittgenstein would have to wait four more years before his model translator, Elizabeth Anscombe, arrived in his classroom at Cambridge.

Those two problems seemed insurmountable and the project languished and was – at least for the moment – forgotten.

[1939] WITTGENSTEIN SUCCEEDS MOORE TO THE CHAIR OF PHILOSOPHY

For years, Ludwig had been reluctant to publish anything, so his desire to finally publish a second book in late 1938 calls for some explanation. The most important driver was G. E. Moore’s pending resignation as the Chair of Philosophy and Wittgenstein was applying for that position. Both Moore and Wittgenstein felt that a new book – especially one with an accessible English translation – would cement his philosophical reputation and significantly bolster his chances for getting the job.

Although the book did not get published and despite some formidable competition, Wittgenstein’s application for the Chair was – with, once again, significant help from John Maynard Keynes – successful. Even without a new book, his reputation as a towering philosophical intellect was already recognized as unassailable. As one of his critics said at the time: “To refuse the chair to Wittgenstein would be like refusing Einstein a chair of physics.”

On February 11, 1939, Ludwig Wittgenstein was elected to the Chair of Philosophy at Cambridge. It was a position he held – with some wartime service intervening – until he resigned at the end of 1947.

Having struggled and been dissatisfied with what he had written about the philosophy of mathematics for the recently shelved version of *Philosophical Investigations*, Wittgenstein attempted to clarify his thoughts by devoting all three 1939 Terms (Lent, Easter and Michaelmas) to the foundations of mathematics.

48.

[1939] Ludwig Diligently Investigates the Foundations of Mathematics


These lectures were given twice a week for two hours during which time Wittgenstein spoke entirely without notes. They were attended by a host of current and future philosophical luminaries including R. G. Bosanquet, Norman Malcolm, Rush Rhees, and Yorick Smythies – whose notes form the basis for the thirty-one lectures presented here.

In one sense, these lectures were an extension of the ones he had delivered the previous year on aesthetics and religious belief, i.e. having ‘rescued’ those two areas of thought from the abject worship of the scientific method, Wittgenstein was now trying to wrest the foundations of mathematics from the philosophical theorists who were similarly enthralled in their idolization of science.

Here Wittgenstein enlarges on the premises he had roughly outlined in the *Remarks*; elaborating in a more organized fashion on the distinction between mathematical and everyday language while carefully delimiting the parameters of both. He also spends considerable time in presenting his critique of logicism, Platonism, and formalism in mathematics.

The whole point of these lectures was to destroy the philosophizing mathematician’s faith in the validity of the metaphysics produced by ‘mathematical science’ and to prove that the discipline does not discover *facts* about mathematical objects (i.e. numbers, sets, etc.). As he stated at the beginning of these lectures: “I shall try again and again to show that what is called mathematical *discovery* had much better be called a mathematical *invention*.” In short, a given mathematical proof does not establish the *truth* of a conclusion. Instead, it merely fixes the meaning of certain signs; it is really nothing more than a grammatical proposition which follows certain rules.
Most intriguingly, these lectures were attended by Alan Turing – a mathematical genius in his own right – who was teaching the exact opposite view of the foundations of mathematics in his own Cambridge course at that same time. According to Monk: “The lectures often developed into a dialogue between Wittgenstein and Turing, with the former attacking and the latter defending the importance of mathematical logic.” It was truly a Clash of the Titans!

This whole pursuit of a solid, logical foundation for mathematics was largely driven by the fact that the calculus was known to be “manifestly inconsistent” and that this inconsistency introduced an element of possible error into the realm of accepted mathematical principles. Wittgenstein’s position was that this inconsistency was of no particular importance while Turing insisted that admitting a contradiction might be hidden in the very heart of the mathematical enterprise was completely unacceptable. It needed to be logically rectified or the entire mathematical project was fatally compromised.

Wittgenstein’s presentation of his position befuddled and infuriated Turing who could not understand how anyone could adopt such an untenable position. The two men argued regularly in class and at least one of these lectures was consumed with an argument between them about this exact point.

Finding it impossible to reconcile Wittgenstein to his own view, Turing finally stopped attending the lectures.

[1939]

**WORLD WAR II BREAKS OUT**

Germany invaded Poland on September 1, 1939 and Britain declared war on September 3rd. Ludwig was in Wales visiting Drury at the time and, because of his German name, he was told to report to the local police station the next day. Once there, he had no trouble establishing his credentials as a British citizen.

While he continued with his regular teaching schedule, Wittgenstein was desperately trying to leave Cambridge and make a positive contribution to the war effort. This response – so different from the way things unfolded in 1914 – was, of course, driven by a completely different political situation and by his own experiences over the previous twenty-five years.

He wrote to a friend: “I feel I will die slowly if I stay here. I would rather take a chance of dying quickly.”

But, despite his most strenuous efforts to find a position that would allow him to make a contributions to the war effort, Wittgenstein spent the next two years delivering his usual sets of lectures at Cambridge. He had been regularly and consistently rebuffed because of the suspicions raised by the authorities based on his German name and his Austrian background.

Adding to Ludwig’s pain and confusion, his by-then somewhat estranged lover, Francis Skinner was taken ill and died suddenly of polio on October 11, 1941. Wittgenstein was torn with guilt over the distance that had grown up between them over the past two years and he lacerated himself mercilessly over the next few years over his “failures” in this important relationship.

In his exhaustive biography (*Ludwig Wittgenstein: The Duty of Genius*), Ray Monk quickly elides over the period from late 1938 to 1942 – presumably for lack of any substantial documentation for those years. But seventeen years after Monk’s book appeared, *Wittgenstein’s Whewell’s Court Lectures: Cambridge 1938-1941* was published providing a wealth of information about the lectures that he gave during those years just before and after the war started.
In the mid-1990’s, Yorick Smythies’ widow gave the editor of this book “around 30 typescripts of lecture notes Smythies took during lectures held by Wittgenstein mostly between 1938 and 1941”. Yorick had tried to prepare these for publication before he died in 1990, but his insistence on publishing an absolutely accurate transcription – with no edits for misspelling, incomplete sentences, expletives, interjectory phrases or slangy asides – ran him afoul of the publisher and so the project never went to press.

The editor here has been more liberal in correcting obvious mistakes and other problems and has carefully included the 70 illustrations – which Wittgenstein would write on the board – found in Smythies’ notes and transcriptions.

Presented here are two lectures from the 1938 Easter (April-June) term:
- Lectures on Knowledge
- Lectures on Necessary Propositions and Other Topics

One from the 1939 Michaelmas (October-December) term:
- Lectures on Similarity

Three from all three 1940 terms:
- Lectures on Descriptions
- Lectures on Belief
- Lectures on Volition

And one from the 1941 Lent (January-March) term:
- Lectures on Freedom of the Will

Also included here is an English translation of Rabindranath Tagore’s play, *The King of the Dark Chamber*, a text that served as a touchstone of interest for Wittgenstein throughout his life. During this 1938-1941 period, Smythies and Wittgenstein studied the text and produced this ‘updated’ translation on their own.

Publisher’s hardcovers decorated with gold and white lettering to the front panel over a faded photo looking out of Ludwig’s Whewell Court room. The rear panel and the spine with gold and white lettering. A bright, tight and clean copy of this important book filling in several gaps found in these four years of Wittgenstein’s intellectual life.

**WITTGENSTEIN’S WAR-TIME SERVICE**

In September of 1942, Ludwig was finally successful in finding a way to make a substantive contribution to the war effort. Two years earlier, Gilbert Ryle’s brother, John had returned to Guy’s Hospital in London to help them prepare for the Blitz. Wittgenstein met with John and implored him to find him a position within the hospital. John Ryle was impressed and a week later Ludwig assumed his duties as a porter delivering medicine from the dispensary to hospital patients.

Taking on this job, Wittgenstein insisted on complete anonymity and, although some knew that “one of the world’s most famous philosophers” was serving as a lowly porter at Guy’s, many did not.

This was dangerous work as the Germans firebombed London. One person at Guy’s reported that “the hospital had scores of firebombs dropped on it and at least a dozen exploded or unexploded bombs on its premises.”

During his time at Guy’s, Ludwig returned to Cambridge on weekends to teach his classes – i.e. for the Michaelmas Term (starting in October 1942) and the Lent Term (starting in January 1943).
Seven months later, when the German aerial assault on London had begun to lessen, Wittgenstein changed jobs and joined the Clinical Research Unit (which was studying patients with “wound shock”). They had been bombed out of their London facility and moved much farther north to Newcastle where Ludwig joined them on April 29, 1943. He was now working as a probationary Laboratory Assistant and very likely grateful for this much less physical job and for the almost four-fold increase in pay.

Wittgenstein found the work in Newcastle so all-consuming that he wrote no philosophy at all while he was there. (He had filled three notebooks with ideas about the foundations of mathematics while at Guy’s Hospital.)

While at Newcastle, he suspended his classes at Cambridge, telling Norman Malcolm: “I’ve given up my rooms at College. I’m supposed, of course, to come back there as a professor after the war, but I must say I can’t quite imagine how I’ll be able to do it. I wonder if I’ll ever be able to teach philosophy again regularly. I rather think I shan’t be able.” This was, thankfully, not the case.

He continued with this job until February 16, 1944 when he supposedly left to return to Cambridge. According to his supervisor, “he had been called back to his Cambridge Chair to write a treatise on Philosophy, which has been in the air for the last year or so, but they now want it on paper.” In this case, “they” would be the Cambridge University Press which had accepted a proposal to publish his *Philosophical Investigations* in January, 1944.

Whatever his supervisor may have thought, Ludwig did not go directly back to Cambridge. Instead, he went to Swansea to work on his book, but, like a similar arrangement in 1938, this never came to fruition.

In October of 1944, Wittgenstein finally returned to Cambridge and resumed his teaching career during the Michaelmas Term.

**ENTER ELIZABETH ANSCOMBE**

Arguably the most important female philosopher of the 20th century – if not simply one of the most important philosophers of the 20th century – Elizabeth Anscombe graduated from Oxford in 1941 and was awarded a research studentship from Newnham, a woman’s college at Cambridge University where she arrived in 1942.

Once there, the 23-year-old immediately began attending Wittgenstein’s lectures – a practice that continued right up until he retired from teaching in 1947. She quickly overcame his deep suspicion of women’s intellectual abilities. In October of 1945, he described her to Norman Malcolm as “a woman who’s very good, i.e., more than just intelligent” – and they became close friends and collaborators right up until his death in 1951.

Besides her own very substantial and important work, Anscombe was selected by Wittgenstein to be one of his three literary executors (along with Rush Rhees and G. H. von Wright). As such, she not only edited and translated many of his unpublished manuscripts, she was also the person he personally selected to translate *Philosophical Investigations* – the masterpiece he had been working on for so many years. (This was a task that Rush Rhees had failed at so miserably several years before.) Working closely with Anscombe – even sending her to Vienna for a summer to learn the nuances of Austrian German – Wittgenstein found her comprehension of his thought to be profound and her ability to accurately translate his often cryptic sayings into English remarkably satisfying.

This unlikely relationship was immensely important to both of them and there is hardly another person who had such a profound and important influence during the last decade of his life on Ludwig Wittgenstein – a man notoriously famous for his almost complete lack of normal interpersonal skills.

In 1970, Anscombe was awarded the Chair of Philosophy at Cambridge – the seat previously held by Wittgenstein – from which she retired in 1986. Along with her two fellow literary executors, Elizabeth Anscombe was devoted to spreading an understanding of her teacher’s life and thought – right up until her death in 2001.

**THE TURN FROM MATHEMATICS TO PSYCHOLOGY**

Sigmund Freud’s psychological theories had fascinated Ludwig since his sister, Gretl, had been psychoanalyzed by him in Vienna in 1937. Recovering from an April 1942 gallbladder operation, Wittgenstein recuperated in Swansea with Rush Rhees where they spent more time discussing the foundations of psychology than the foundations of mathematics. The following summer he was again with Rhees in Swansea and their conversations once more centered on psychology. By the time he arrived back in Swansea in 1944 to work on *Philosophical Investigations*, his focus on mathematics had waned almost completely. Noting this radical shift, Rhees asked: “What about your work on mathematics?” to which he replied “Oh, someone else can do that.”

[See “Conversations on Freud” in *Lectures and Conversations* (pp.41-52) – #46 & 47 above in this catalog – for Rhees’ notes on these Swansea talks with Wittgenstein.]

With *Philosophical Investigations* still unfinished, Ludwig returned to Cambridge and resumed teaching in October 1944. For the next three years, his lectures dealt primarily with philosophical psychology as he sought to discover “the geometry of psychology” and to “think through” the problems he was facing as he prepared the second section of *Philosophical Investigations* for publication.

He was, however, painfully unhappy with his teaching during this time and constantly talked to close friends about his pending resignation – which did not happen until the summer of 1947.

**BEN RICHARDS, HIS FINAL LOVE, ARRIVES**

Deeply dissatisfied with his position as a philosophy professor, frustrated with the difficulty of ever finishing his book, severely critical of the post-War state of British politics and culture and often depressed by “the darkness of this time” that he was certain would soon result in another and even worse worldwide conflagration, the 57-year-old Ludwig Wittgenstein fell in love and found some relief from all these distracting troubles in his relationship with the 22-year-old Ben Richards.

The two men remained close throughout the rest of Wittgenstein’s life. Together they made Ludwig’s final trip to his mountainside hut in Norway in December of 1950 and Richards was with Wittgenstein on the day that he died in April of 1951.

Because they were necessarily separated on a number of occasions during the five years of their relationship, they corresponded regularly.

[See #71 below, *Briefwechsel Ludwig Wittgenstein – Ben Richards 1946–1951*, in the “Letters” section of this catalog for many of the letters they exchanged.]
Peter Geach graduated from Oxford in 1938. When WWII broke out, he declared himself a conscientious objector and contributed to the war effort by serving in the timber industry.

In 1941, he married Elizabeth Anscombe, Wittgenstein’s close friend and later one of his literary executors. Working together, they published *Descartes Philosophical Writings* in 1954 and *Three Philosophers: Aristotle, Aquinas, Frege* in 1961.

At the end of the war, Geach went to Cambridge to continue his studies where his wife introduced him to Wittgenstein. They became friends and often took walks together. In his “Editor’s Preface” to the 1988 publication of these notes [see items #51 & 52 immediately below], Geach wrote that:

Before I attended his lectures I had gone for walks with Wittgenstein. This continued to happen from time to time while he was Professor in Cambridge. The walks were very beneficial to me, but I found them a considerable strain. Wittgenstein did not go in for small-talk and did not tolerate casual thoughtless remarks: there would fall silences that I dared not break. The concentration of mind he demanded was fatiguing.

Geach edited his own notes, along with those of A. C. Jackson, and K. J. Shah and published them in 1988. According to the “Publisher’s Preface” in those books:

Professor Geach’s notes depict in greater detail than the other two what actually went on in the lectures and allow us to see how Wittgenstein interacted with his students in the course of his lectures. The dialogue format shows us how he would expand his ideas to clarify any misunderstanding or difficulties his student might have.

In his “Editor’s Preface” to those books, Geach notes that:

The course of lectures I attended in 1946-47 was the last course Wittgenstein delivered before his retirement: I could not attend in 1945-46, for I was babysitting while Elizabeth went to the lectures. [Note: they eventually had seven children together.] Wittgenstein lectured without notes: but manifestly not without preparation. He expected of his audience close attention and cooperation. Since after the first lecture of a course the way the discussion went depended on what had been brought up at the previous meeting, there could have been no question of his following a prearranged syllabus. Wittgenstein was patient with people’s genuine difficulties, and often brought out from a listener’s remark much more than might have been expected. He could, however, be ruthless with what he took for thoughtlessness; he [once] reacted quite violently to a suggestion that knowledge was ‘more intense’ than belief.

Regarding the editing of his own notes and those of Jackson and Shah, he said:

I have used a very light hand as editor: I have expanded abbreviated words and sentences, and corrected obvious errors of transcription, and am responsible for paragraphing and punctuation, including the insertion of quotation marks [emphasis added]. The three records as they stand are bona fide reports of what three young men could make of a great philosopher’s living words. Their authenticity would have been much damaged by any heavier editing, and altogether destroyed by any attempt at harmonization or conflation.
This typescript comes from the library of C. Wade Savage (1932-2020) who was director of the Minnesota Center for the Philosophy of Science. His copy may have come directly from Peter Geach, but another listing for this text – a Xerox copy rather than an original typescript – is known to have come through Norman Malcolm. Since Savage did his dissertation under Malcolm at Cornell in 1955, this gift of an original typescript may well have come from Malcolm.

Whatever the case, the fact that this original typescript came from Savage – a student of Malcolm's, who in turn was part of Wittgenstein's inner circle that included Geach – confirms its solid provenance.

Norman Malcolm was, of course, not just a student, but a close friend of Wittgenstein's. He published a well-regarded memoir of him in 1958 [see item #79 in the “Memories” section of this catalog]. Malcolm figures prominently in Geach's account here: he is quoted in several sections where he joins in the classroom discussions, actively engaging with Wittgenstein.

WorldCat lists just four holdings: Hampshire College (Amherst, MA), Saint Olaf (Northfield, MN), Washington University (St. Louis, MO), and Randolph College (Lynchburg, VA).

An original Acco-bound typescript with stiff, dark green covers and a typed paper label to the front cover. Whoever prepared these pages for binding, mistakenly double-punched all the pages from p. 180 onward – i.e. there are holes to both the binding edge and the outer edge. Original typed copy (as can be seen, for instance, by the ribbon change after p. 53) with handwritten additions to 23 pages. Rare and Magnificent!
51.\[1946-1947\]
Lectures on Psychology from His Final Year of Teaching


P. T. Geach, A. C. Jackson, and K. J. Shah each kept meticulous notes from the last course that Wittgenstein taught at Cambridge. To reconstruct these lectures as accurately as possible, this volume compiles all three sets of notes with no attempt to conflate or edit them beyond rendering them into lucid English.

According to Jackson’s notes, Ludwig opened these lectures by noting that:

These lectures are on the philosophy of psychology. And it may seem odd that we should be going to discuss matters arising out of, and occurring in a science, seeing that we are not going to do the science of Psychology … But there are questions, puzzles that naturally suggest themselves when we look at what psychologist may say, and what non-psychologists (and we) say…

“The science of mental phenomena” – by this we mean what everyone means, namely, the science that deals with thinking, deciding, wishing, desiring, wondering, etc. And an old puzzle comes up. The psychologist when he finds his correlations finds them by watching people doing things like wrinkling their noses, having rises in blood pressure, looking anxious, accepting this after S seconds, rejecting that after S plus 3 seconds, writing down “No” on a piece of paper, and so on. So where is the science of mental phenomena? Answer: You observe your own mental happenings. How? By introspection. But if you observe, i.e. if you go about to observe your own mental happenings, you may alter them and create new ones; and the whole point of observing is that you should not do this. Observing is supposed to be just the thing that avoids this. Then the science of mental phenomena has this puzzle: I can’t observe the mental phenomena of others, and I can’t observe my own, in the proper sense of “observe”. So where are we?

These final lectures are important because they involve exactly the problems that he would wrestle with for the next two years. Those problems – including the nature of sensation, the relation between mind and body, the possibility of private language, and the nature of psychological explanation – would find their final resolutions (at least, for Wittgenstein) in Part II of Philosophical Investigations.

Publisher’s original dust jacket with white and gold lettering on a brown field – front, back and spine. Over black boards with gilt lettering on the spine. The spine of the dust jacket has been sunned to blue. Otherwise, a near fine copy.

52. The First US Issue of the Final Lectures on Psychology


Originally published the year before by Harvester in England, this edition was assembled from British-printed sheets.

Publisher’s original dust jacket with white and gold lettering on a brown field – front, back and spine. Over black boards with gilt lettering on the spine. Several pages have unobtrusive pencil notes in a small, tight hand. Otherwise, a near fine copy.
WITTGENSTEIN RESIGNS HIS POSITION AT CAMBRIDGE

Just before the Lent Term (late April to mid-June) began, Ludwig was in despair over a number of things and finally decided to go through with his longstanding threats to resign his post at Cambridge.

In mid-April he wrote: “In this country there is no more obvious reaction for people like me than misanthropy. It is as though one could say of this country: it has a damp, cold spiritual climate.” A few days later he wrote: “Cambridge grows more and more hateful to me. The disintegrating and putrefying English civilization. A country in which politics alternates between an evil purpose and no purpose.”

He taught the Lent Term, but was then undecided on whether to spend the summer in Norway or in Ireland. He finally ended up travelling to Vienna that September where he was devastated by his repeated face-to-face encounters with the realities of the ongoing Russian occupation of the city.

Immediately upon his return to Cambridge, he tendered his resignation effective at the end of the year, turning his Chair of Philosophy over to his friend and later literary trustee, G. H. von Wright. Fortunately, Ludwig still had some sabbatical leave due, meaning that he did not have to teach the upcoming Michaelmas Term (October to December). He was effectively retired from Cambridge by the end of the Easter Term in mid-June 1947.

53.

Ludwig’s “Little Slips of Paper”

Collected by Wittgenstein and Saved in a Box


$350

Zettel (the German word for “slips of paper”) is a collection of over 717 clippings selected by Wittgenstein's from his writings. Most are from between 1945 and 1948 although a few are from as early as 1929. These zettel – compiled and numbered by Anscombe and Wright – were never meant to be published, but rather serve here as a look into the personal laboratory of Wittgenstein’s philosophical inquiries.

The book does not present a single linear argument. Each short fragment explores a specific thought, often connected to others only through cross-referencing and thematic links – creating a web of ideas that invites readers to actively navigate their way through and make their own connections.

Throughout, Wittgenstein delves into a host of philosophical topics including language, knowledge, meaning, mind, psychology, mathematics, the infinite and logic. He jumps from everyday observations to abstract questions regarding thought and being, certainty and uncertainty – all the while offering insightful if often cryptic remarks.

What connects these ideas, however, is Wittgenstein’s concern with the problems emerging from statements that contain words like “mean,” “intent,” “think,” or “seem.” Here Wittgenstein questions the orbit of associations that come to define what someone or something “means,” or what someone or something might “seem” like. Instead, Wittgenstein investigates how what is said differs from what is meant, and how intention – or lack of it – must similarly distinguish between what is said and what is simply meant.

One outstanding benefit of this book – and clearly the one driving Anscombe’s and Wright’s decision to publish it – is the opportunity to track the development of Wittgenstein's thoughts over time. We see him revisit, refine, and sometimes even contradict his earlier thoughts, showcasing the dynamic process of his methods of philosophical exploration.
While clearly not intended for public consumption, Zettel has become a valuable resource for scholars as well as anyone interested in Wittgenstein’s philosophy. It offers a unique glimpse into his thought process, revealing the depth and complexity of his intellectual journey.

Publisher’s original light brown dust jacket with red and black lettering over a graphic design in red to the front panel, black lettering on the spine and black and red lettering on the rear panel. There is a small closed tear to the upper edge of the front panel and the spine is very lightly sun-darkened. Publisher’s original dark blue boards with gilt lettering on the spine. The former owner’s name (“D. L. Fowler”) contained within a triangle stamped to the center of the front free endpaper. Otherwise, this is a truly gorgeous copy of this fascinating book.

[1947-1948] **ONCE RETIRED, LUDWIG SPENDS MORE TIME ON PSYCHOLOGY**

Wittgenstein spent his final month in Cambridge preparing a typescript of his most recent thoughts on psychology – a process that he hoped would help clarify his thinking before finally committing them to paper as the second section of *Philosophical Investigations*. This typescript was later published as *Remarks on the Philosophy of Psychology, Volume I* [see #54 below].

Leaving Cambridge, he went to Ireland, where he continued his work on psychology. A year later, he was back in Cambridge, once more dictating the results of his most recent notes to another typist. This typescript eventually became *Remarks on the Philosophy of Psychology, Volume II* [see #54 below].

54.

[1946-1949] **Building on His Final Cambridge Lectures**

Wittgenstein Expands His “Remarks” on the Philosophy of Psychology


$ 400

Published simultaneously from British sheets.

Wittgenstein’s method in these texts was marked by an exceptional versatility which allowed him to swiftly shift from the philosophy of mathematics to the philosophy of psychology, traversing the previously uncharted common-ground between the two.

To Ludwig, both mathematics and psychology orbit around a central question: what does it mean to follow a rule? Building off of the original structuring of his deliberations on mathematics, Wittgenstein’s response to this same question relative to psychology quickly developed into a whole new branch of philosophy.

He proposed that the study of psychology (or, really, any subject) was analogous to the practice of mathematics in that they were both organized by following rules or propositions. He claims that there are two types of propositions: “grammatical” propositions and “material” propositions. The former, to which Wittgenstein dedicates much of his attention, are the propositions that form concepts (such as Freud’s unconscious). These, he says, do not necessarily contribute novel discoveries, but rather novel terms to our conceptual grammar.
The veracity of these “grammatical” propositions, he says, is determined by the “material” propositions, which structure the utility of the “grammatical” proposition. In other words, the cultural and material context (the “material” proposition) into which the “grammatical” proposition emerges determines the utility of the “grammatical” propositions.

One could read here how this would play out in the “nature” vs “nurture” debate so salient to philosophies of psychology. Instead of arguing that psychology is due to either nature or nurture, or even both, Wittgenstein attempts to demonstrate how neither of these necessarily function as the structuring factor in the study of psychology.

Instead, this subject is universally determined by following rules, which is the general structure for “behavior”. These rules do not spring forth from a material context (nurture) nor are they immutable logical propositions (nature). Instead, there are “grammatical” propositions whose utility is determined by “material” propositions — customs, norms, and practices that delineate what kind of self-understanding is meaningful and possible — which are themselves shaped by “grammatical” propositions. These “grammatical” propositions do not put forward new ideas, but rather put into terms an understanding that has always already existed — they explicate ideas so that they become a part of the grammar we use to understand ourselves and the world.

Here, Wittgenstein exhibits his belief that psychology is a way for us to comprehend how we understand ourselves in our world. What psychology should not do, according to him, is to accumulate more data through analysis or introspection and, especially, not try to invent a theory of thought. Instead, psychology should literally be a discipline: a discipline of attention to words that affect self-understanding (words like “intention”, “observation”, “apprehension”) and the process through which they acquire meaning. Wittgenstein’s psychological inquiry is about how these words are used and how they gain meaning from how they affect our lives.

**Volume I:** Publisher’s original dust jacket with white lettering on a graphics-laden red front panel and spine. The rear cover is white lettering on a black field. Over the publisher’s black boards with gilt lettering on the spine. A fine copy.

**Volume II:** Publisher’s original dust jacket with white lettering on a graphics-laden green front panel and spine. The rear cover is white lettering on a black field. Over the publisher’s black boards with gilt lettering on the spine. A fine copy.

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**[1948-1949]**

By October, 1948, Ludwig was back in Dublin where he took up residence in Ross’s Hotel. He spent the next several months writing (but not preparing typescripts for) what would later be published by his literary executors as *Last Writings on the Philosophy of Psychology*.

At the same time, he was trying to organize his writings for publication in *Philosophical Investigations*. Elizabeth Anscombe arrived and spent the first two weeks of December working with him in this organizational effort. Immediately after she left, Rush Rhees came to stay for two weeks, helping him with that same work.

But once his two future literary executors had left, Wittgenstein fell ill and spent the next several months unable to produce any kind of meaningful work at all. By late June 1949, his condition had improved enough for him to accept Norman Malcolm’s long-standing invitation to visit him in the USA. Ludwig sailed on the Queen Mary leaving on July 21st, arriving back in England at the end of October, 1949.

But just before departing for America, Wittgenstein was feeling sufficiently well to go to Cambridge where he dictated a typescript of what would become the second part of *Philosophical Investigations*.

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**Wittgenstein’s Last Recorded Thoughts on the Philosophy of Psychology**

The “Preliminary Studies” for Part II of *Philosophical Investigations* and his Final Writings on the Psychological Problems of “The Inner” and the “Outer”

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While the *Remarks on the Philosophy of Psychology* were printed based on typescripts that Wittgenstein personally supervised, the text of these two volumes is based on Ludwig’s handwritten manuscripts which had not benefited from the editing process he always employed when working with a typist.

As such, the editors caution the reader that what appears in these two books is “of a more provisional and improvised nature than the *Remarks on the Philosophy of Psychology*. They further note that “there are frequent repetitions; sometimes a whole remark will reappear, virtually word for word. If Wittgenstein had ever dictated a typescript based on these manuscripts, he would certainly have avoided such repetitions and would also have made many other changes.”

The two volumes are distinctly different – both in their content and in the time of their composition.

**The first volume** was written between October 1948 and March 1949, when Wittgenstein had moved to Dublin and was enjoying one of his most fruitful working periods. These writings complemented and completed the work on the philosophy of psychology that he had begun in 1946. Taken together, these provide the source material for Part II of *Philosophical Investigations*.

When he composed the manuscript for Part II of *Philosophical Investigations* in late 1949, he selected more than half the remarks for it from his Dublin manuscript.

**The second volume**, which was published ten years after the first volume, is from writings done from 1949 to 1951 – the last years of Wittgenstein’s life. Here he writes of his ongoing engagement with some specific psychological concepts, namely, with the particular problems raise by the relationship between “the inner” and “the outer”, i.e. between our so-called mental states and our bodily behavior.

The editors of this volume have selected, transcribed and presented here the contents of six different notebooks in which Wittgenstein wrote these final thoughts. Despite some discontinuity, these six are related to one another in ways that are amply explained in the “Editor’s Preface” to Volume II.

**Volume I**: Publisher’s original blue dust jacket with black graphics and white lettering to the front panel and the spine. The back panel has black lettering on a blue field. Over publisher’s original black boards with gilt lettering to the spine. With a former owner’s signature to the upper right corner of the front free endpaper in blue ink (Jennant Reambey?). This is a tight, bright, clean copy of this scarce book.

**Volume II**: Publisher’s original black dust jacket with white and pale green lettering to both panels and the spine along with a small portrait of Wittgenstein to the front cover. Over publisher’s original black boards with silver lettering to the spine. This is a tight, bright, clean copy of this scarce book. Fine.

56. 

The First American Issue of

*Last Writings on the Philosophy of Psychology*

The “Preliminary Studies” for Part II of *Philosophical Investigations*

NOTE: While Blackwell printed a second volume of these Last Writings ten years after the first volume was published (see #55 above), The University of Chicago Press did not issue that second volume – for reasons unknown to us. It must also be noted that this lack of the second volume does not make this book any less valuable in and of itself.

The second volume contains Wittgenstein’s writings from a later period and on a different topic than what he covers in this first volume. The two volumes stand alone, complementing each other but are in no way dependent upon each other for the value of their content.

Most especially, this Volume I is important because when Ludwig composed the manuscript for Part II of Philosophical Investigations in late 1949, he selected more than half of the remarks for it from his transcription of this Dublin manuscript written between October 1948 and March of 1949.

Anyone with an interest in the second section of Philosophical Investigations can learn much by consulting how Wittgenstein first presented those thoughts that he chose to include in Philosophical Investigations and, perhaps even more important, to see those earlier thoughts which he did not include in Part II.

His Last Two Years

By mid-1949, Wittgenstein felt that his philosophical creativity was at an end and he decided that Philosophical Investigations would have to be left in its unfinished, unpolished state. Others would have to be responsible for bringing it to press should they decided to do so. But despite his felt lack of any original thoughts, his trip to America did provide him with the opportunity to discuss, argue and dissect several topics brought up by Malcolm and the philosophers he met at Cornell University – including Stuart Brown, Max Black and Oets Bouwsma. His engagement with these issues was the driving force behind the philosophical writing he did during the last two years of his life – including the questions and the psychological complications of the “inner” and the “outer” self which appear in Last Writings on the Philosophy of Psychology, Volume II (#55 above).

Wittgenstein did manage to write two important works during this final period of his life. Norman Malcolm had written a critique of two articles by G.E. Moore (“Proof of an External World” and “A Defense of Common Sense”) which he discussed in detail with Ludwig during his stay in the US. Wittgenstein’s response to this stimulating discussion was later published as On Certainty.

Briefly ill while at Cornell, his condition worsened when he returned to England in late October 1949 and he was soon diagnosed with prostate cancer. He travelled to Vienna on December 24th and stayed until March 23rd. While there, his interest in the questions surrounding color was piqued as he read Goethe’s Farbenlehre (Color Theory). His own investigation of that topic – along with discussions during his regular meetings with Anscombe (who was there working on her Viennese German) – prompted the writing of another final work, Remarks on Colour.

Back in England, he had originally planned to return to Dublin but his ill health prevented this. In Cambridge, he first stayed with Jean Rhees and then with von Wright. By late April, he had moved to Oxford where he lived with Elizabeth Anscombe. Throughout this time, he continued to write about his thoughts and insights on both certainty and color. Then, in early October, on holiday with Ben Richards, he made his final visit to his hut in Norway and made arrangements to go back there alone in late December.
But before he could return to Norway – where he hoped to do some serious new work – his health took a serious turn for the worse and by the beginning of February, 1951 he was force to admit the inevitable. He accepted the very generous offer of his Cambridge doctor, Edward Bevan, to come live in his home where he could die while receiving the best of personal care.

**THE DEATH OF LUDWIG WITTGENSTEIN**

At the end of February, it was decided to stop all his medications and treatments for the cancer and this produced a lucidity that allowed him to be surprisingly productive during the last two months of his life – writing almost 400 numbered paragraphs (#300 to #676) that appear in *On Certainty*.

The final remark for that book was written on April 27, 1951 – just two days before he died. The next day, the doctor’s wife, Joan Bevan, told Ludwig that his close friends – Ben Richards, Elizabeth Anscombe, Yorick Smythies and Maurice Drury – would be coming to see him the next day. His final words to her before losing consciousness were:

“Tell them I’ve had a wonderful life.”

The next day, April 29, 1951, with those four friends gathered around his bed, the still unconscious Ludwig Wittgenstein died.

57.

Wittgenstein contra Goethe


Returning to a topic that he had discussed repeatedly during his Cambridge career, Wittgenstein provides his final thoughts on the topic of color. Written partly as a rebuttal to Goethe’s *Farbenlehre* (Color Theory), which Wittgenstein noted was “partly boring and repelling, but in some ways also very instructive and philosophically interesting,” Goethe himself considered his work to be an effective refutation of Newton’s theory of optics, but Wittgenstein did not hold his theory in such high esteem.

Goethe prided himself on having presented an explanatory theory of the laws of color based on careful, seemingly scientific investigations, but Wittgenstein completely disagreed with his methodology.

While observation, the method employed in standard treatments of perception, might elucidate certain propositions, it can neither explain nor codify their causes. One can say “this book is red,” and even talk about what makes it red, what red is, et cetera — but one cannot start with observation and end with an explanation of what is observed.

Observation, Wittgenstein argued, is a phenomenological process, based on experience, and is tethered to the empirical realm. It does not generate laws of physics.

There are three separate parts to the book. Part I was written in Cambridge in March 1951, Part III was written in Oxford in the Spring of 1950. It is unclear whether Part II antedates or postdates Part III.

Anscombe, who compiled and edited the three parts, removed some of Wittgenstein’s notes on Shakespeare along with some of his general observations about life. These would appear later in *Culture and Value* (see #59-61 below).

Publisher’s red dust jacket with white lettering on the front panel and the spine. The rear panel has red lettering on a white field. With a Blackwell price sticker to the bottom of the front inside flap (£5.00 Net). Publisher’s original burnt orange boards with gilt lettering to the spine. A former owner’s name (“D. L. Fowler”) is contained within a triangle stamped to the center of the front free endpaper. Otherwise, a clean, tight and bright copy of this book.
58.

Wittgenstein contra G.E. Moore


$ 200

On Certainty is a collection of loose sheets and notebooks Wittgenstein wrote in the eighteen months before his death in April 1951. These were left to Elizabeth Anscombe, who edited them with the help of G.H. von Wright.

During his three-month visit to America, Ludwig and his host, Norman Malcolm, had engaged in lively discussions about the critique Malcolm had published challenging two of G.E. Moore’s most important papers (“Proof of an External World” [1939] and “A Defense of Common Sense [1925]). Both men saw serious problems in the positions Moore was advocating.

On Certainty presents Wittgenstein’s later written comments of his own critique of Moore’s claim that there are facts we can “know” with certainty. And, because any discussion of certainty necessarily involves engagement with radical skepticism, he is equally critical here of that opposing position – claiming that “a doubt that doubted everything would not be a doubt.”

Regarding Moore’s thesis, Wittgenstein concedes that there is something about which we can have certainty. However, he criticizes Moore’s all-too-liberal use of the phrase “I know”. Moore had claimed he could “know” some facts with certainty. “I can prove now,” he writes, “that two human hands exist. How? By holding up my two hands, and saying... ‘Here is one hand.’” Ludwig argued that such utterances were entirely context-dependent and meaningless in any philosophical attempt to refute skepticism.

While propositions may be foundational, saying “I know” in this context adds nothing to the argument and is positively misleading. Wittgenstein argues that Moore misconstrues the nature of justification for what he calls these “hinge propositions.” They do not require the kind of evidence or proof that Moore seeks. Justification comes from their role within our practices and language rather than from any sort of external validation.

For Wittgenstein, certainty is not a mental state or something achieved through individual justification. It is a characteristic of certain propositions exhibited within a form of life and their role in our actions. Such propositions are simply not open to doubt in certain contexts.

Regarding skepticism, Wittgenstein argues that in its most radical form, it necessarily expresses a contradiction — that doubting everything implies the necessity of doubting doubt itself. Wittgenstein points out that to allow doubt to reach its most extreme limit would “break the rules” of the “language game” we are all playing, leading to the entire game collapsing in upon itself.

Certainty and doubt, he famously says, are not analogous with truth and falsity. Instead, certainty and doubt exist within a framework where propositions can be made without the framework imploding. As with propositions, this framework cannot itself be proven to be true or false – rather, it simply delineates the parameters within which proof can take place. The question is emphatically not about instances where certainty can be achieved. It is about the way language provides a framework within which knowledge, certainty, and doubt are even possible.

Overall, Wittgenstein acknowledges the value of Moore's insights but takes issue with his philosophical method. They both value common-sense propositions and reject radical skepticism, but differ in their understanding of what it means to “know” something. Their disagreement is over how one can “justify” knowledge and over the nature of certainty itself.

In typical Wittgensteinian fashion, On Certainty delineates and then carefully navigates the terrain between the contradiction of total doubt and the unlikeliness of absolute certainty.

Publisher’s original unclipped (30s. net) light tan dust jacket with red and black lettering to the front and rear panel and black lettering to the spine. There is a 2” closed tear at the top of the rear panel of the dust jacket. With dark blue publisher’s boards with gilt lettering on the spine. There is a former owner’s (L. E. Andrade) bookplate to the inside from cover and a small blue ink signature to upper right corner of the front free endpaper. Otherwise, a tight, bright and clean copy of this important book by Ludwig Wittgenstein.
59. The Original German Edition of Culture and Value


$150

This book was an attempt by G. H. von Wright – one of Wittgenstein’s three literary executors – to preserve and present a selection of the many ‘non-philosophical’ writings made by Ludwig Wittgenstein during his lifetime.

Some of these notes are inconsequential but the majority are certainly of interest. Sometimes they are strikingly beautiful and profound; making it evident to his literary executors that a select number of these notes should be collected, culled and published.

The selections are listed chronologically – with a single entry from 1914 (when he was 25-years-old) and then covering 1929 to 1951, the year of his death. G. H. von Wright decided on this chronological arrangement rather than superficial categories. Such an organizing principle was a temptation that the editor studiously avoided although the topic headings he originally considered give some idea of the breadth and depth of Ludwig’s musing – they included music, architecture, Shakespeare, aphorisms of practical wisdom and the like.

Publisher’s original dust jacket with black lettering on a white field with a single red band across both panels and the spine. Over the publisher’s original pale grey boards with a red field label with gilt lettering to the spine. A perfect copy.

60. The First English Translation of Culture and Value Published Three Years after the Original German Edition


$175

Culture and Value is an attempt by G. H. von Wright – one of his three literary executors – to preserve and present a selection of the many ‘non-philosophical’ writings made by Ludwig Wittgenstein in his diaries and notebooks during his lifetime. It was a task that he described as “decidedly difficult” given the depth of the man’s far-ranging mind and the wide breadth of his interests in life.

The German-only edition published three years earlier [see #59 above] received a second edition in 1978 which contained additional materials added by von Wright. This excellent English translations on facing-pages with the German by Peter Winch is based on that second edition and therefore contains all of those later additions to the text.

The selections are listed chronologically – with a single entry from 1914 (when he was 25-years-old) and then covering 1929 to 1951, the year of his death – rather than being grouped into superficial categories. Such an organizing principle was a temptation for von Wright, but he studiously resisted it although the topic headings he originally considered give some idea of the wide range Ludwig’s musing. These include music, architecture, Shakespeare, aphorisms of practical wisdom and much else.

While the book lacks a coherent or general structure, these aphorisms provide a wide survey of how Wittgenstein approached life, his thought process, and his resistance to conventional wisdom. Some of these notes may appear to be of casual interest, but they can be deceiving. Most of them are seriously interesting and many are profound. Their striking beauty and insightfulness make it evident to his literary executors that a select number of these notes should be collected, culled and published.

By presenting such a wide swath of material, this book provides an glimpse into Wittgenstein’s mind — his remarks, often of remarkable simplicity, mirror his attitude to life and to philosophy – and present the changes that occurred in his interest and his thoughts as he matured over those 30+ years.

The curious newcomer will surely come away with an appreciation of his creative approaches to life and those more familiar with his philosophical ideas will experience a personal encounter with one of the most fascinating people to emerge in the 20th century.
A small sample of some interesting quotes might include:

“Nothing is so difficult as not deceiving oneself.”

“A man will be imprisoned in a room with a door that's unlocked and opens inwards; as long as it does not occur to him to pull rather than push.”

“There is no more light in a genius than in any other honest man – but he has a particular kind of lens to concentrate this light into a burning point.”

“There is no religious denomination in which the misuse of metaphysical expressions has been responsible for so much sin as it has in mathematics.”

“Ambition is the death of thought.”

“It’s only by thinking even more crazily than philosophers do that you can solve their problems.”

“The point is not to get all of the propositions correct. That is a matter for science. Religion is about getting yourself correct.”

“What is good is also divine. Queer as it sounds, that sums up my ethics. Only something supernatural can express the Supernatural.”

“When you are philosophizing you have to descend into primeval chaos and feel at home there.”

“Man has to awaken to wonder - and so perhaps do peoples. Science is a way of sending him to sleep again.”

“I really do think with my pen, because my head often knows nothing about what my hand is writing.”

“Telling someone something he does not understand is pointless, even if you add that he will not be able to understand it.”

Publisher’s original red dust jacket with uniform white lettering throughout and with a dark brown illustration made by Wittgenstein’s sister, Hermoine, of a staircase that he designed for her house on the front panel. The spine has been lightened by exposure to the sun. There is a publisher’s black on white sticker to the bottom of the inside front flap identifying the cover drawing picture on the front as being made by his sister. Over publisher’s original burnt orange boards with gilt lettering to the spine. Otherwise, a tight, bright and clean copy of this popular book.
THE LONG GESTATION OF PHILOSOPHICAL INVESTIGATIONS

Wittgenstein found it all but impossible to say exactly what he meant philosophically – a very understandable problem for a man whose writings constantly undermined the validity of language. Imagine how difficult it must have been to write a critique of language while using the language you were critiquing. This resulted in sixteen tortured years of stops and starts as he repeatedly tried to bring his second philosophy book to press.

His first attempt to write what would finally become Philosophical Investigations was based on the notebooks he had kept since his arrival at Cambridge in 1929. This resulted in The Big Typescript which was completed in 1933 and soon rejected as unsatisfactory [see #30 & 31 above].

In 1934-1935, he dictated The Brown Book to his select students and, the next year, he tried to use this as the starting point for his next attempt. He soon abandoned this as “worthless” [see #38, 39 & 40 above].

Wittgenstein spent November and December of 1936 in his hut in Norway where he produced a 167-page manuscript that he entitled: Philosophical Investigations. After visiting Vienna for the Christmas holiday, he returned to Norway and between February and May of 1937, continued writing this manuscript. Later in 1937, these two were combined and turned into a 137-page typescript (TS 220).

Returning to Norway in August of 1937, he produced what he thought of as the logical continuation of his previous work, now focusing on the philosophy of mathematics (TS 222). With these three elements in hand, Ludwig approached Cambridge University Press in the late summer of 1938 to discuss publication of a book that he planned to call Philosophical Remarks. However, he soon changed his mind and withdrew this offer.

Excerpts from these three manuscripts were continually revised and rearranged and in September of 1943 he again offered this package to the Cambridge Press to be published as Philosophical Investigations. In early 1944, the Press agreed to print this, but Wittgenstein once more changed his mind and withdrew the offer. (Much of that TS 222 materials later appeared as Part I of Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics which was published in 1956 [see #45 above].)

Throughout 1944, he continued to write new materials and attempted to blend them into his existing drafts for the book. At the end of this effort – initially happy with what he had done – Ludwig wrote a two-page “Preface / Foreword” for the work (which appeared in Philosophical Investigations in 1953).

That “Preface / Foreword” is dated January 1945 and famously begins by saying:

The thoughts that I publish in what follows are the precipitate of philosophical investigations which have occupied me for the last sixteen years. They concern many subjects: the concepts of meaning, of understanding, of a proposition and sentence, of logic, the foundations of mathematics, states of consciousness, and other things. I have written down all these thoughts as remarks, short paragraphs, sometimes in longer chains about the same subject, while I sometimes make a sudden change, jumping from one topic to another. —— It was my intention, at first to bring all this together in a book whose form I pictured differently at different times. But the essential thing was that the thoughts should proceed from one subject to another in a natural order and without breaks.
After several unsuccessful attempts to weld my results together into such a whole, I realized that I should never succeed. The best that I could write would never be more than philosophical remarks; my thoughts were soon crippled if I tried to force them on in any single track against their natural inclination. —— And this was, of course, connected with the very nature of the investigation. For this compels us to travel over a wide field of thought criss-cross in every direction. —— The philosophical remarks in this book are, as it were, a number of sketches of landscapes which were made in the course of these long and involved journeys…

Still unsatisfied, Wittgenstein spent most of 1945 writing, rewriting and reorganizing these materials. Those efforts resulted in a 324-page typescript (TS 227) that was finalized in 1946. This became – with only the most minor of Wittgenstein’s handwritten corrections – Part I of Philosophical Investigations as it was edited, translated and published two years after his death in 1951.

In addition to the 693 entries that Wittgenstein edited and approved (now comprising Part I of Philosophical Investigations), the executors found a typescript (TS 234) among his papers which dealt more specifically with ‘the philosophy of psychology’ issues that he had been addressing since his approval of the Part I typescript in mid-1946. Gathering together his thoughts from 1946 to 1949, Ludwig combined and edited them and had a typescript made in July 1949.

Anscombe and Rhees, the executors in charge of this project, were sufficiently confident that this material was meant to be included in Philosophical Investigations and they edited and then included TS 234 as Part II of that book – noting in their “Editor’s Note” that Wittgenstein would have surely “worked what is in Part II, with further material, into its place” had he been given the chance.

Subsequent scholarship has challenged the inclusion of Part II in the book and the editors of the fourth edition (2009) make a case for its exclusion in their “The Text of the Philosophische Untersuchungen” – a case they feel is strong enough to justify retitling Part II as “Philosophy of Psychology – A Fragment” in that fourth edition.

62.

[1953] The Most Important Philosophy Book Written in the 20th Century
Irreversibly Changing the Way Philosophy is Done Today


$ 2,000

As Norman Malcolm, so succinctly stated of his friend, Ludwig Wittgenstein: “He is probably unique in the history of philosophy – a thinker producing, at different periods of his life, two highly original systems of thought, each system the result of many years of intense labors, each expressed in an elegant and powerful style, each greatly influencing contemporary philosophy, and the second being a criticism and rejection of the first.”

Published posthumously in 1953, Philosophical Investigations was edited by Elizabeth Anscombe and Rush Rhees with Anscombe’s English translation printed on facing pages. Part I, containing 693 numbered paragraphs, was reluctantly approved for publication by Wittgenstein in 1946. Part II has fourteen sections of varying length numbered in roman numerals – focusing on the philosophy of psychology – which the editors confidently added here as an integral part of this book.

In stark contrast to the message of his 1922 Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus (see items #11-16 above), this book offers a radically different way of “doing philosophy.” The Tractatus unequivocally claimed that ‘the world is what we can say about it.’ Philosophical Investigations wonders (over and over again) ‘but what CAN we actually say about it?’

The style of the two books is also radically different. One offers conclusions with hardly any arguments. The other is almost all argument with only a handful of suggested solutions. In Philosophical Investigations, Wittgenstein’s project is to raise problems – deep, serious, intractable language-problems – while offering little in terms of solutions for those problems (other than ongoing “investigations” similar to those in the book).
In the autumn of 1948, Ludwig captured the essence of this work in a conversation with his friend Drury who had mentioned Hegel to him. “Hegel seems to me to be always wanting to say that things which look different are really the same. Whereas my interest is in showing that things which look the same are really different.” He followed this up, Drury said, by noting “I was thinking of using as a motto for my book a quotation from King Lear: ‘I’ll teach you differences.’ Then laughing [he added]: “The remark: ‘You’d be surprised’ wouldn’t be a bad motto either.”

The philosophical world has certainly been reeling with perplexed surprise ever since as they wrestle with Wittgenstein’s counter-intuitive arguments that repeatedly point out and underline the uncertainties, confusions and complications which lie buried deep within what he called our “language-games”.

“It is as if one had altered the adjustment of a microscope. One did not see before what is now in focus.” (PI 645)

Indeed!

It would be foolhardy in the extreme to attempt any short description of the contents and scope of this brilliant book with its devastating critique of philosophy and language. Perhaps the best possible solution is to offer some of Wittgenstein’s own words on a number of broad topics found in Part I… as for instance:

On the Challenge of Philosophy:

“What is your aim in philosophy? – to show the fly the way out of the fly-bottle.” (PI 309)

“The results of philosophy are the uncovering of one or another piece of plain nonsense and bumps that the understanding has got by running its head up against the limits of language.” (PI 119)

“When we do philosophy we are like savages, primitive people, who hear the expressions of civilized men, put a false interpretations on them, and then draw the queerest conclusions from it.” (PI 194)

“Here it is difficult as it were to keep our heads up, – to see that we must stick to the subjects of our every-day thinking, and not go astray and imagine that we have to describe extreme subtleties, which in turn we are after all quite unable to describe with the means at our disposal. We feel as if we had to repair a torn spider’s web with our fingers.” (PI 106)

On the Challenges of Language:

“Language is a labyrinth of paths. You approach it from one side and know your way about; you approach the same place from another side and no longer know what you are about.” (PI 203)

“When we look into ourselves as we do philosophy, we often get to see… a full-blown pictorial representation of our grammar. Not facts; but as it were illustrated turns of speech.” (PI 295)

“Our investigation is therefore a grammatical one. Such an investigation sheds light on our problem by clearing misunderstanding away.” (PI 90)

“There must not be anything hypothetical in our considerations. We must do away with all explanation, and description alone must take its place… Philosophy is a battle against the bewitchment of our intelligence by means of our language.” (PI 109)

_Philosophical Investigations_ is a monument of complexity, but some of the major ideas which have drawn the marked attention of philosophers over the years since its publication would include:

**Language-games:**

“Imagine a language-game in which…” (PI 60 and throughout)

“What does it mean to say…?” (PI 51 and throughout)

“The question is not one of explaining a language-game by means of our experiences, but of noting a language-game.” (PI 655)
“When I think in language, there aren’t ‘meanings’ going through my mind in addition to the verbal expressions: the language is itself the vehicle of thought.” (PI 329)

“What did the thought consist in, as it existed before its expression?” (PI 335)

“Where does our investigation get its importance from, since it seems only to destroy everything interesting, that is, all that is great and important? (As it were all the buildings, leaving behind only bits of stone and rubble.) What we are destroying is nothing but houses of cards and we are clearing up the ground of language on which they stood.” (PI 118)

“How did we learn the meaning of this word (‘good’ for instance)? From what sort of examples? in what language-games? Then it will be easier for you to see that the word must have a family of meanings.” (PI 77)

Family Resemblances:
Regarding the word ‘games’: “What does it mean to know what a game is? What does it mean, to know it and not be able to say it?” (PI 75)

“What is common to [all of these games]?... For if you look at them you will not see something that is common to all, but similarities, relationships, and a whole series of them at that. To repeat: don’t think, but look!” (PI 66)

Rules and Rule-Following:
“But what does a game look like that is everywhere bounded by rules.” (PI 84)

“…if anyone utters a sentence and means or understands it he is operating a calculus according to definite rules.” (PI 81)

“The fundamental fact here is that we lay down rules, a technique, for a game, and that then when we follow the rules, things do not turn out as we had assumed. That we are therefore as it were entangled in our own rules. This entanglement in our rules is what we want to understand (i.e. get a clear view of). It throws light on our concept of meaning something.” (PI 125)

Private Language:
“The individual words of this language are to refer to what can only be known to the person speaking; to his immediate private sensations. So another cannot understand the language.” (PI 243)

“The essential thing about private experience is really not that each person possesses his own exemplar, but that nobody knows whether other people also have this or something else.” (PI 272)

“If I know it only from my own case, then I know only what I call that, not what anyone else does.” (PI 347)

Meaning-As-Use:
“What we do is to bring words back from their metaphysical to their everyday use.” (PI 116)

“Whereas, of course, if the words ‘language’, ‘experience’, ‘world’, have a use, it must be as humble a one as that of the words ‘table’, ‘lamp’, ‘door’.” (PI 97)

“One cannot guess how a word functions. One has to look at its use and learn from that.” (PI 340)

“…we judge whether [a word] was rightly employed by what [the speaker] goes on to do.” (PI 180)

Taken as a whole, Part I is 145 pages long, but many of the numbered aphorisms at the end deal with Wittgenstein’s early musings on the philosophy of psychology. This prompted Anscombe and Rhees to append Part II, a 51-page section, to the book based on Ludwig’s more mature thought on the subject, thoughts which he had collected together and prepared in a 1949 typescript.

Rather than numbered aphorisms, Part II is made up of fourteen roman numeraled sections. Seven of these are only one page long, five are two pages long, and one is three pages. But the bulk of Part II is taken up by Section xi, which is a full thirty pages long.

Here we find some of Wittgenstein’s most incisive remarks on psychology as he massively deconstructs the words “see” and “know” beginning with his famous analysis of the duck-rabbit illustration.

“We can see the illustration now as one thing now as another – So we interpret it, and see it as we interpret it.” What exactly, he wonders, is happening in our minds when we first see the duck and then realize that it could also be a rabbit? Here, he says, he “must distinguish between the ‘continuous seeing’ of an aspect and the ‘dawning’ of an aspect.” This literally leads him down yet another rabbit hole of insightful “investigation”.

He notes that “There are here many interrelated phenomena and possible concepts” and the rest of this section masterfully mines the depth of those interrelationships and possibilities with a deftness that can only be described as “Wittgensteinian”.

...
Wittgenstein’s *Philosophical Investigations* single-handedly revolutionized both the content and the methodology of philosophy forever. The book simply cannot be ignored. By insisting that the philosophical eye focus on *specifics* rather than *generalizations*, Wittgenstein effectively redirected the philosophical project away from empty abstractions and plunged it into the realm of a more realistic (if far more complicated) ways of understanding the reality of our lives as language-speaking human beings.

*No one had ever made such statements, asked such questions or conducted such an investigation before!*

Publisher’s original light green dust jacket with dark burgundy lettering and decorative border. The spine has been darkened by the sun and there is some light chipping – mostly to the top of the spine. Over publisher’s original dark blue boards with gilt lettering to the spine. A tight, bright, clean copy of this monumentally important book.

**63.**

**The Second Edition of Philosophical Investigations**


$750

*Philosophical Investigations* was in ever increasing demand within the philosophical community necessitating this second edition – just five years after the release of the first edition.

In the “Note to Second Edition”, Anscombe says that the text has been “revised” but that the “alterations on the German side have been few, and have been confined to mistakes in spelling and punctuation.” She does say, however, that “a large number of small changes have been made in the English text” after which she lists the specific numbers of 22 aphorisms from Part I that have been changed and six page numbers identifying changes made to Part II.

Publisher’s original light tan dust jacket with dark red lettering and decorations. The spine is just a bit sun darkened. Over publisher’s dark blue boards with gilt lettering to the spine. This is a lovely, clean and tight copy of this second edition of Ludwig Wittgenstein’s second very famous book.
64.

The Third Edition of *Philosophical Investigations*


$125

After several printings of the second edition, this 50th anniversary edition [sic] of *Philosophical Investigations* was released in 2001. It contains “the final revisions” made by Elizabeth Anscombe along with the “correction of some typesetting errors.” In addition – and most importantly – the text has been repaginated so that any former page references to this work (rather than by aphorism number) would now be inaccurate.

Finally, the 47-page Index and Register at the end of the book are completely new – providing scholarly resources that were not available before this edition.

Publisher’s original light grey dust jacket with white and black letter (plus a picture of Wittgenstein) to the front panel and white lettering to the spine. The rear panel is printed in black and white. Over publisher’s original black boards with silver lettering to the spine. An immaculate, ‘as new’ copy of this important update to Wittgenstein’s most important book.

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**LETTERS**

65.

A Wealth of Interesting and Intimate Details about Wittgenstein at Cambridge

from *His Correspondence with Russell, Keynes & Moore*


$150

Including four facsimiles of Wittgenstein’s handwritten letters and of two illustrations that he drew into his letters.

An intimate and sensitive look at the vulnerable, anxious, and often overzealous Wittgenstein as he navigates his relationships with three of the most famous dons to teach at Cambridge during the first half of 20th century.

Fifty-seven of Wittgenstein’s letters to Bertrand Russell between 1912 and 1935 have been preserved. In his “Introduction”, the editor of this collection, G.H. von Wright, claims that “of overwhelming interest are the letters to Russell” detailing Wittgenstein’s evolution from student to teacher between 1912 and 1921. Perhaps most significant in those letters is Wittgenstein’s reactions to Russell’s comments on his evolving thoughts which culminated in the publication – with Russell’s help – of the *Tractatus*. Due to an explosive rupture in their friendship, there is a gap in these letters between 1922 and 1928, when Wittgenstein sheepishly extended Russell a olive branch to repair the breach.

Thirty-one of the letters Wittgenstein wrote to John Maynard Keynes between 1913 and 1939 appear here – amply demonstrating the high esteem that he always had for the preeminent architect of macroeconomic theories and policies for the 20th and 21st centuries. Keynes was perhaps Wittgenstein’s most powerful and committed ally at Cambridge. He was instrumental in getting him back to Cambridge in 1929 where he then secured Wittgenstein fellowships and scholarships and defended him against an administration distressed by his reluctance to publish. Keynes could always be counted on in times of financial trouble or bureaucratic difficulties – even going so far as getting Ludwig an appointment with the Russian foreign ambassador in London when he was trying (unsuccessfully) to get a visa to work on a Soviet farm in 1935.

Also included here is one of the few preserved letters written by Frank Ramsey who wrote to Keynes in March of 1924. He gave Keynes a report on his time in Austria with Wittgenstein and then goes into elaborate details about Wittgenstein’s thoughts and feelings about visiting or not visiting England during the summer (see pp. 117-18).

Finally, are fifty-seven letters that Ludwig wrote to G.E. Moore between 1913-1948. Many of these early letters document Wittgenstein’s endless pleading for Moore to join with him in Norway, which finally resulted in a difficult visit. Readers might also enjoy Wittgenstein’s vehement 1914 anger at Moore’s denial of Wittgenstein’s *Notes* as a bachelor’s thesis, and later letters where
Wittgenstein says that “[his] wrath has cooled down and [he’d] rather be friends with [Moore] again than otherwise.” Moore was grievously offended by Wittgenstein’s anger and this resulted in a break in all of their communication from 1914 to 1929. Their relationship was only repaired when they met on the train in 1929 as Ludwig was returning to Cambridge.

What a reader might find most charming in these letters is Wittgenstein’s social anxiety – an anxiety that burned with a fervor equal only to his intellectual passion. Ludwig regularly ruminates here on the perceived unfriendliness of his correspondent, as well as constantly wondering if he had alienated someone with his unusual habits. Readers see a painfully self-conscious thinker whose social life was continually dominated by the ongoing conflict between his incessant need to express (and argue for) his own thoughts and his desire for genuine human companionship.

Publisher’s original dust jacket with white lettering on a red field for both the front panel and the spine and red lettering on a white field for the rear panel. The dust jacket spine is very lightly sun-lightened. Over publisher’s dark brown boards with gilt lettering. With a former owner’s name (“D. L. Fowler”) contained within a triangle stamped to the center of the front free endpaper. Otherwise, this is a tight, bright and clean copy of this lovely collection of Wittgenstein’s letters.

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66.

Correspondence with von Ficker during World War I

Artistic Contributions, Surviving the War & Publishing the Tractatus


Wittgenstein first learned of von Ficker, the editor of leading literary journal of the German avant-garde called Der Brenner, from a laudatory article written by Karl Kraus – a writer that Wittgenstein greatly admired. He wrote to von Ficker just before the outbreak
of World War I and offered to send him 100,000 crowns – asking only that the money be distributed “among Austrian artists who are without means.” He made this offer, he said, because he was confident that von Ficker was “acquainted with many of our best talents and know which of them are in most need of support.”

However, von Ficker had no idea who this strange new benefactor might be, so he travelled to Vienna where he spent two days with Wittgenstein; learning that he had come into a large fortune when his father died. The weekend they spent together was also the weekend that Austria declared war on Serbia.

Wittgenstein sent von Ficker the 29 letters between July 1914 and January 1920. In the beginning, these were about the distribution of the money he contributed to the arts which eventually went to assist the poets Rainer Maria Rilke and Georg Trakl along with the architect Alfred Loos and a host of other recipients deemed worthy by Ficker.

Then, in 1915, with both men in the Austrian army, Wittgenstein told Ficker about how he had been managing to survive the ordeal: “And if I… offer some advice it might seem asinine. Are you acquainted with Tolstoi’s The Gospel in Brief? At its time, this book virtually kept me alive. Would you buy a copy and read it?! If you are not acquainted with it, then you cannot imagine what an effect it can have upon a person.”

Ficker was also a player in Wittgenstein’s unsuccessful 1919 attempts to find a publisher for the Tractatus. As previously noted, by the time he approached von Ficker, the book had already been rejected by three publishers. Ludwig asked von Ficker if his literary journal, Der Brenner, would be interested in publishing the book. After much back and forth – “I am pinning my hopes on you” he wrote to von Ficker – this offer too was rejected. Von Ficker even asked his friend, the poet Rainer Marie Rilke, if he could find a publisher for the work, but if Rilke ever approached his own publisher, Insel-Verlag, nothing ever came of it.

Following the 31-pages of letters is 28-page article by the Austrian literature professor Walter Methlagl with details about the relationship between these two men. The book then closes with another 28-page article, this one by G.H. von Wright ’s (but translated into German by Methlagl) on the “origins” of the Tractatus.

The book is in German. An English translation of the letters to von Ficker can be found in Wittgenstein: Sources and Perspectives (Harvester, 1979: Fr/McG #1222).

Publisher’s original blue boards with white lettering to the front panel and the spine. The tips of the spine edges are lightly worn. With a former owner’s name (“D. L. Fowler”) contained within a triangle stamped to the center of the front free endpaper. Otherwise, this is a tight, bright and clean copy of these 29 letters from Wittgenstein to von Ficker.
Publisher’s original dust jacket with white lettering on a red field for both the front panel and the spine and red lettering on a white field for the rear panel. The dust jacket spine is sun-lightened as is a small, long triangle at the bottom of the front panel. Otherwise, this is a tight, bright and clean copy of this lovely collection of Wittgenstein’s letters illuminating the preparation of the *Tractatus* for the press.

68.

**Twenty Years of Correspondence with Paul Englemann**

*His ‘Spiritual / Philosophical Friend’*


$125

This book has a wealth of important information about Wittgenstein the man. It is broken down into eight sections – the first of which prints the 54 letters Ludwig wrote to him between 1916 to 1937.

In October 1916, Wittgenstein was home on sick leave when he was introduced to the architect Paul Englemann by Adolf Loos and the two men bonded almost immediately. Beyond the philosophical, Wittgenstein’s insightful cultural commentary and quick wit shines through these letters, brightly illuminated by their shared belief in the religious and the mystical – which was perhaps the most salient feature of their friendship.

Paul became Ludwig’s philosophical, psychological and spiritual sparring-partner for the next two decades. Both men had a decidedly ‘mystical’ bent along with a penchant for lacerating self-criticism. In addition, they shared a worldview firmly grounded in the belief that the only kind of meaningful transformation in this life was individual rather than social or political.

Engelman claimed that their friendship and ongoing relationship grew out of their similar spiritual predicaments which “enabled me to understand, from within as it were, his utterances that mystified everyone else. And it was this understanding on my part that made me indispensable to him at that time.” Wittgenstein was no less clear on Engelman’s importance to him throughout the last
years of the war and the decade that followed: “If I can’t manage to bring forth a proposition,” he said, “along comes Engelmann with his forceps to pull it out of me.”

Paul’s singular importance to Ludwig is no better demonstrated than by the fact that once the first complete manuscript of the *Tractatus* was available, it was successively shared with only three people: Bertrand Russell, Gottlob Frege and Paul Engelmann.

Beyond this first section of letters, this book offers seven more chapters written by Engelmann. The first is devoted to Wittgenstein in the war, followed by his ideas on religious matters, literature, music and cinema along with chapters relating his observations on the *Tractatus*, stories of Wittgenstein’s family, Ludwig’s relationship to Karl Kraus and Alfred Loos before closing with a lovely chapter on spirituality entitled “Wordless Faith”.

Perhaps most interesting from these memoir sections are the details we learn from 1926, when Engelmann was designing and building a house in Vienna for Wittgenstein’s sister, Margarete. Ludwig couldn’t help but offer advice and before long he had become everything but a formal partner to Paul. The final plans are dated November 13, 1926 and Engelmann later commented that “he and not I was the architect, although the ground plans were ready before he joined the project, I consider the result to be his and not my achievement.”

An important book on so many different levels and valuable reading for anyone interested in Ludwig Wittgenstein, the man.

Publisher’s original dust jacket with white lettering to a front cover banded in dark and light brown with white lettering. The spine with dark brown lettering. The front edge of the dust jacket’s spine if very lightly worn. This over the publisher’s original red cloth boards with gilt lettering on the spine. With a former owner’s name (“D. L. Fowler”) contained within a triangle stamped to the center of the front free endpaper. Otherwise a tight, bright, clean copy of this intimate look into the life and personality of Ludwig Wittgenstein.

69.

They Met in 1919 as Prisoners of War and then Corresponded for Over 30 Years


Ludwig Hänsel met Wittgenstein in 1918 in Cassino, Italy where they were both being held captive as prisoners of war.

Hänsel had previously studied German, French, and philosophy and they met while Hänsel was giving a class on logic to prisoners who hoped to become teachers. A friendship quickly blossomed between the two men, based largely to their shared interest in Kant’s *Critique of Pure Reason*, Augustine’s *Confessions*, and the works of Dostoyevsky.

Wittgenstein also discussed the manuscript of the *Tractatus* extensively with Hänsel at this time.

When Wittgenstein retreated to the Austrian hinterlands to teach grammar school, Hänsel remained an important intermediary between him and his Viennese friends and family – Hänsel being involved in the Viennese intellectual circles while also becoming a close friend to the Wittgenstein family.

Hänsel became a teacher and professor, publishing works on pedagogical theory and practice. In the early years, he offered Wittgenstein copious advice on his teaching career.

Hänsel continued to dabble in philosophy and would send Wittgenstein some of his own philosophical works. This book includes not only Hänsel’s philosophical essays but also the
letters exchanged between the two men regarding these works. In those letters, Wittgenstein was relentlessly and harshly critical of Hänsel’s philosophical ambitions – finally driving them into oblivion. Despite the viciously unapologetic and abrasive tone of many of these letters, the two men remained loyal and wrote to the other right up until Wittgenstein’s death in 1951.

[See pp. 257–327 of Ludwig Wittgenstein: Public and Private Occasions (item #35 above) for an English translation of many of these letters.]

Publisher’s original off-white dust jacket with black lettering with two portraits on the front panel and two portraits on the rear panel. Over publisher’s dark blue boards with light blue lettering on the spine. A clean, tight, bright and fine copy.

70.
Ludwig Wittgenstein’s Musical ‘Soul Mate’
with almost 30 Years of Correspondence Devoted to Music


Wittgenstein and Koder became friends during their time as elementary school teachers, where the two bonded over their love of music. Koder taught music at the school where Wittgenstein also taught. He first caught Wittgenstein attention by playing Beethoven’s ‘Moonlight Sonata’. The pair quickly became friends, meeting almost every afternoon to play duets for the clarinet and piano.

Koder was soon incorporated in the Wittgenstein family where he often played music with Ludwig’s sisters, Hermine and Helene. In addition to their shared love of music, Koder was also, for decades, Ludwig’s confidant on family matters.

The Wittgenstein family – though fraught with tortured minds and tense relationships – was brought together by music. Ludwig’s father was a musician in his youth, and his mother considered music to be the most important aspect of her life — second only to the well-being of her husband. Husband and wife were both patrons of the musical arts in Vienna, attracting Brahms, Mahler, and lesser-known composers to their home for frequent evening gatherings. Ludwig’s brother, the celebrated pianist Paul Wittgenstein, was perhaps the family’s most talented musician. When Paul lost his right hand in World War I, his talent and family connections resulted in a number of “piano for the left-hand” compositions written for him by several famous composers. Reared in such an environment, it is no surprise that Ludwig, Hermine and Helene (who were both taught by Brahms) were so passionately devoted to classical music.

When Hermine was dying of cancer in the late 1940s, Rudolf Koder faithfully played piano quartets for her until she died.

These letters, stretching from 1923 until Wittgenstein’s death in 1951, center on their shared love of music, but also afford readers a glimpse into Wittgenstein’s familial life, to which music was a most central aspect.

Also included in this book are two essays by Martin Alber which draw a connection between the musical background of the Wittgenstein family and Ludwig’s philosophical style. The first essay is dedicated to Josef Labor, the “house composer” of the Wittgenstein family and among Ludwig’s list of his own favorite “six greatest composers” (Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Brahms, and Labor). The second, more extensive essay, deals primarily with the musical aspects of Wittgenstein’s philosophical style and the relationship between music and language as formulated by Wittgenstein. This is an important piece of scholarly work with some excellent thoughts into the connection between musical theory and Wittgenstein’s conception of the “language-game.”

Publisher’s original dust jacket with red and white lettering to a front cover and the spine. The rear panel is the facsimile of a letter by Koder in white lettering. Over publisher’s original dark teal boards with silver lettering to the spine. A tight, bright and clean copy of this interesting look into Wittgenstein’s thoughts and general taste in classical music.
71. A Treasure Trove of Wittgenstein’s Late in Life Love Letters


$50

In 1946, Wittgenstein fell in love with Ben Richards and he was profoundly relieved to discover that he still had the capacity for love so late in life. Richards was kind, gentle, shy, and sweet — all of which had a powerful effect upon the ever-sensitive Wittgenstein.

Ray Monk notes that he was unaware of these letters when he was researching his biography of Wittgenstein. Richards never mentioned them during their interviews. Only later did Alfred Schmidt, who managed the Wittgenstein collection at the Manuscripts and Rare Books Department at the Austrian National Library, discover them and finally show them to Monk.

Here is a treasure trove of love letters between Ludwig and Ben, a young medical student at Cambridge. In his roster of loves, Wittgenstein could be sullen with David Pinsent, stern with Marguerite Respinger, and dominating with Francis Skinner. But things were different with Richards. Wittgenstein was joyfully aware of how happy Richards made him and he was genuinely interested in making Ben happy in return.

These letters clearly present a besotted Wittgenstein. While his compulsion for logical rigor often left his emotions in a state of disarray, the exact opposite happened here. Richards derails his philosophical compulsion and we see instead Ludwig’s endless and almost debilitating introspection.

These unfiltered letters offer deep insights into the tumult that characterized Ludwig’s final five years. In 1946, when their correspondence began, Wittgenstein is literally sickened by Cambridge’s pomp and circumstance and almost completely unable to do meaningful and creative philosophical work. He gave his last lectures in 1947 and departed for Ireland, where he remained until leaving for America in 1949. Upon his return, he was diagnosed with prostate cancer and the pair soon left for a quasi-honeymoon in Iceland. In 1951, Wittgenstein died with Ben at his side.

Throughout this time, Wittgenstein was desperately attempting to make final revisions to Philosophical Investigations, but was all but incapacitated by depression, loneliness, and what he calls an “uncanny tiredness”, likely intensified by his sickness. Whatever joy and happiness he experienced in his final years was because of his relationship with Richards.

There is, indubitably, an inextricable connection between Wittgenstein’s meticulous, unprecedented brilliance and the agony and despair that dominates his relationships to himself, his world, and his work. Here, we see that while the form and subject matter may have changed — from propositions remarking on logic and words to a series of letters to this most adored lover — the depth of his commitment is in no way different.

Given all of the gifts that these letters provide about Ludwig Wittgenstein the man, perhaps their most valuable gift is to shine some light on his most enigmatic and unexpected final words before dying: “Tell them I’ve had a wonderful life”. In his last letter to Richards, Wittgenstein writes:

“There is one thing I want to tell you. Whatever happens to me now, I want you to know that you have given me more than I could have ever hoped for. You have given me happiness and joy that I never deserved and overall changed my life in a way that it never would have been without you. Thank you for everything you have done for me. You are the background of all my happiness.”

Publisher’s printed hardcovers with multi-colored writing and photos to the front board and the spine. The rear board has dark grey lettering on a white field. A fine copy of this most recently published book.
Ludwig met the 22-year-old Marguerite Respinger in 1926 when his nephew brought her to Vienna for an extended visit. She was Swiss and came from her own wealthy family. She has been described as lively and artistic but with absolutely no interest in philosophy or any of the “serious” questions of life – typical prerequisites for any kind of friendship with Ludwig Wittgenstein. Still, for months they spent time together every day. During the late 1920s, Wittgenstein created his only known sculpture, reputedly using Marguerite as a model. Despite being fifteen years older, Wittgenstein believed that their relationship had a serious future – writing to her regularly and frequently once he returned to Cambridge in 1929.

In 1931, he invited Marguerite to join him in Norway for two weeks of her summer holiday where they maintained separate residences. His plan was for them to prepare for a life together, but after two weeks – having had little real contact with him – she left for Rome to attend her sister’s wedding. Later that summer, back in Vienna, they were, once again, constantly in each other’s company for three weeks. However, during the Norway interlude, she had realized that Ludwig’s intentions were for a strictly Platonic, childless marriage – something in which she had no interest.

While staying with the Wittgenstein family over the 1933 Christmas holidays, Marguerite announced her engagement to Talle Sjögren – a lifelong friend of the Wittgensteins – whom she had fallen in love with. They were married that New Year’s Eve.

[See items #34, 35 & 36 above for Wittgenstein’s Private Diaries 1930-1932 which have many entries regarding their on-again, off-again relationship and the emotional turmoil that he suffered because of it.]

Marguerite Respinger lived a long and fruitful life. She and her husband later moved to a farm in Chile where Talla was killed by poachers in 1945. Four years later, she married Benoît de Chambrier and beginning in 1952, they lived on a Swiss estate near Neuchâtel. She wrote and privately published these memoirs for her grandchildren in 1982 when she was 78-years-old. Marguerite died in 2000.

In this rare book – written and privately printed for her grandchildren in an edition of just 200 copies – she tells the story of her eventful life in seven chapters which cover her life in Switzerland, England, Austria, the United States and Chile. Two of those seven chapters cover the years when she was closely associated with Ludwig Wittgenstein.

In her recollections of her time spent with the Wittgenstein family, she describes both the wonders she found in that world along with the expectations that came with such splendor: shows at the Opera, meetings in society, jewelry, concerts, receptions, along with charitable works for the poor of Vienna. And not least of which here are her recollections of the exhausting walks she took with Wittgenstein, who on every occasion, she reports, wore a tweed jacket and an open shirt without a tie.

“My presence brought him the peace which he needed while he was nurturing his ideas,” she later said.
73.
An Interview with the 91-year-old Marguerite de Chambrier (née Respinger)
Answering Two Philosophers Questions about Wittgenstein and their Relationship


$ 175

In 1985, Josef Rothhaupt and Aidan Seery sent a list of 103 question to the 91-year-old Marguerite de Chambrier (née Respinger), focusing on her recollections of Ludwig Wittgenstein and their relationship from the mid-1920s to the 1930s.

On April 27, 1995 she sent back her answers to the questions along with the following reply letter:

In the attached you will find short answers to your questions. There is hardly anything more to add to what is written in “Granny”. While writing, I was always aware of Ludwig Wittgenstein’s critiques, which always demanded the highest truth. This should provide you with a clear picture of me. I will ignore everything else.

The interview is here formatted in traditional question and answer fashion, but Marguerite frequently refers her questioners to long sections of her memoir, *Granny et son temps* – which they include here – rather than answering anew in detail.

The many passages from *Granny et son temps* quoted here have been translated from the French into German by the authors.

Publisher’s blue wraps with a photo of Wittgenstein, some handwritten graphics and lettering in black, grey and white to the front cover. The spine and rear cover have uniformly white lettering on a blue field. An all-but-new copy of this interesting interview with Ludwig Wittgenstein’s only known female love-interest.

74.
Waismann’s Notes on Wittgenstein’s Conversations with the Vienna Circle
An Intimate Look into This Transitional Phase of His Philosophy


$ 150

During the summer of 1927, Ludwig attended his first meeting at Mortiz Schlick’s house where a group that would come to be known as “The Vienna Circle” regularly met. He frequented these meetings – attended by Friedrich Waismann, Rudolf Carnap and Herbert Feigl among others – whenever he was in Vienna in the late 1920s and early 1930s. Members of the Circle were enthralled with the *Tractatus*, but they were confused on several difficult points.

At these meeting, Wittgenstein would be asked to clarify some of the questions raised by their reading of the *Tractatus* and from late 1929 until mid-1932, Waismann filled several notebooks with his recordings of these conversations. Over the course of the nineteen different evenings presented here, we can clearly see Wittgenstein’s rapidly changing thoughts on the validity of many of the positions he had taken in the *Tractatus*. 
Waismann’s reporting comes in several different forms. Some of it consists of conversations and arguments between Wittgenstein, Waismann and Schlick. Others present questions by Waismann and Schlick with Wittgenstein’s answers. Some relate Wittgenstein's comments on select passages from his writings read to him by Waismann or on works by others that had evidently been mentioned. Much of it is simply an account of Wittgenstein’s views taken down as he expressed them in his vivid, conversational style.

These talks have considerable historical interest. Most of the ideas here are ‘dated’, but they frequently shed important light on Wittgenstein’s thinking during this transitional phase – often in ways for which we have no other source. These conversations come from the same transitional period as the Philosophische Bemerkungen (see items #25 & 26 above). Many of the doctrines of the Tractatus are defended and expounded in it, while others are criticized and withdrawn. Moreover, here – as in none of the other preserved materials – we can see with real clarity how Wittgenstein reacted to probing questions, criticisms and objections.

Publisher’s original light grey dust jacket with red and black lettering to both panels and black lettering to the spine (which is very lightly sunned). This over publisher’s original red boards with gilt lettering and the publisher’s device to the spine. The former owner’s name (“D. L. Fowler”) contained within a triangle stamped to the center of the front free endpaper. Otherwise, this is a truly gorgeous copy of this important glimpse into the working mind of Ludwig Wittgenstein.

The First English Translation of Waismann’s Notes on Wittgenstein & the Vienna Circle


$125

Twelve years after the scholarly work done on the German transcriptions from Waismann’s notebooks, this translation by Joachim Schulte and Brian McGuiness was published making these fascinating conversations available to English readers.

The “Editor’s Preface” is particularly helpful in describing the time and place of these conversations along with the transitions that Wittgenstein’s thought was going through at this time.
Publisher’s original dark brown dust jacket with white lettering to both panels and the spine. Over publisher’s original yellow boards with gilt lettering on the spine. A lovely tight, bright and clean copy of this important book for anyone interested in the ongoing evolution of Wittgenstein’s thought during this all-important transitional period.

76.

Alice Ambrose’s “Ludwig Wittgenstein: A Portrait” in this Outstanding Collection of Essays on Philosophy and Language


$ 95

The first essay here is “Ludwig Wittgenstein: A Portrait” written by Alice Ambrose; a task she was amply qualified to perform.

Ambrose studied with both Moore and Wittgenstein at Cambridge where she earned her second PhD in 1938. During that time, she developed a close relationship with Wittgenstein; becoming one of his most trusted students. When he decided to finally put some of his thoughts on paper by dictating The Blue Book, The Brown Book and the Yellow Book (see items #37-41 above) she was one of those selected to take down and print up his dictations.

Ambrose and Wittgenstein famously quarreled in 1935 after she published (with Moore’s encouragement) an article entitled "Finitism in Mathematics" in the philosophical journal Mind. It was meant to give an account of Wittgenstein’s position on the subject, but he repudiated it and, furious with her for this breach, abruptly terminated their relationship.

Alice also made secret notes during his lectures – a practice he forbade – and published these in 1979 as Wittgenstein’s Lectures: Cambridge 1932-1935 (see items #42 & 43 above).

Publisher’s original dust jacket with white and black lettering on a blue field to both panels and the spine. Over burgundy boards with gilt lettering on the spine. A lovely copy of this fascinating up-close and personal portrait of Wittgenstein.

77.

A Student’s Memoir of Wittgenstein from 1934 to 1940


$ 75

This late memoir by a Fellow of Trinity College is of particular value since the author not only attended Wittgenstein's Cambridge seminars as a philosophy student in the years 1934–1940 but also came to know him outside his teaching hours. It was the period just after The Blue Book, when Wittgenstein was giving birth to The Brown Book and preparing early drafts for Philosophical Investigations. Other Cambridge philosophers mentioned here include G. E. Moore and John Wisdom, both of whom the author knew personally.

Dr. Redpath describes the excitement he felt on first reading passages in the Tractatus, his first sight of Wittgenstein, the absorbing experience of participating in the unusual seminars, and his impressions of the man and his opinions in various contexts – musical, literary, political, religious and philosophical. Discussion of his very technical philosophy has been judiciously limited here. Instead, the contradictory elements in Wittgenstein's personality – he could be a moral, aesthetic or intellectual bully, or a figure of almost angelic care and kindness – is tellingly exemplified in the brilliant vignettes sketched by this perceptive observer.

Publisher’s original greyish-tan dust jacket with black lettering throughout and photo of Wittgenstein on the front cover. There is a 1” closed tear to the lower spine edge of the front cover. Over publisher’s grey boards with gilt lettering to the spine. Overall, a lovely, tight and clean copy of this memoir.
Rhees has collected here important and informative memories of Ludwig Wittgenstein from his sister, Hermine and four friends, Fania Pascal, F. R Leavis, John King and, most especially, Maurice Drury – along with his own long “Postscript”.

Hermine, whom Ludwig said was “by far the deepest” of his brothers and sisters, presents excerpt on her brother (in both the original German and an English) – taken from the much larger *Familieninnerungen* (Family Memories) which she wrote late in life.

Fania Pascal began as Wittgenstein’s Russian tutor and became a close friend for years afterwards. Her memoir is organized with several sub-headers: “The Student of Russian”, “Wittgenstein and Skinner”, “Visiting Russia and Norway”, “The Confession”, “A Lunch and Other Incidents”, “Attitudes to England and Russia” and “Wittgenstein’s Freedom”.

F. R. Leavis was a Lecturer in English at Cambridge during the time he knew Wittgenstein. “I had better say at once,” he begins, “that I didn’t discuss philosophy with Wittgenstein” – so philosophers will likely be disappointed with what follows. But anyone interested in Wittgenstein the man will find much of interest in Leavis’ recollections.

John King was one of Ludwig’s students during the 1930 to 1932 terms. He and Desmond Lee published the notes that they took at those classes in 1980, *Wittgenstein’s Lectures, Cambridge 1930-1932* (see items #27 & 28 above). These eight pages with his personal memories of his illustrious teacher make a worthy addition to that book’s recording his lectures.

By far the largest (100 pages) and the most interesting memoirs here is by Maurice Drury – an intimate and important friend who was with Wittgenstein when he died. Ludwig had a profound influence on his life which is duly and lovingly described here.

Finally, Rush Rhees concludes with his 40-page “Postscript” to clarify Wittgenstein’s “confession” and his desire to go to Russia.

Publisher’s original graphic dust jacket with red lettering to the front panel and the spine. The rear panel has black lettering on a white field. Over publisher’s red boards with gilt lettering to the spine. A lovely tight, bright and clean copy of this informative collection.
79.

The Memoir in which Wittgenstein’s Personality is “Most Memorably and Accurately Described”


$100

Monk has written that “it is in [Malcolm’s] memoir that [Ludwig’s] personality is most memorably and (in the opinion of many who knew Wittgenstein) accurately described.”

Malcolm – fresh out of Harvard – met Wittgenstein in 1938 and took classes from him in 1939. They quickly became close friends and took regular walks together – discussing everything from deep philosophical questions to the latest Western film that Ludwig had seen.

Back in the USA in early 1940, Malcolm was a regular correspondent – not least of which because he had been assigned the task of regularly supplying Wittgenstein with the latest issues of the “hard boiled” detective magazines he was so addicted to.

During the summer of 1949, Wittgenstein sailed to America and spent three months with Malcolm who was then teaching at Cornell University. It was on this trip that Ludwig met, among other notables, O. K. Bouwsma – with whom he had a lively relationship right up until his death. [See item #80 below for Bourwsma’s own account of their relationship.]

Publisher’s original blue dust jacket with white and black lettering and decorations – which is lightly chipped across the edges. Over publisher’s black boards with gilt lettering to the spine. This is a lovely copy of what is regularly admitted to be the most accurate portrait of Ludwig Wittgenstein by a friend.

80.

A Kindred Spirit on His Conversations with Ludwig


$75

Bouwsma was Malcolm’s teacher at the University of Nebraska who suggested that he go to Cambridge to work with Moore where Malcolm then met Wittgenstein. During Ludwig’s 1949 visit to Cornell, he invited his former teacher to come meet Wittgenstein. The two became close friends. This started in small discussion groups, but soon led to long personal walks where Bouwsma queried Wittgenstein about his thoughts on a wide variety of topics.

Before returning to England, Wittgenstein visited Bouwsma for three days in late October at Smith College in Northampton MA. The next year, Bouwsma was invited to give the annual John Locke lecture at Oxford and at that time, Wittgenstein was living in Oxford. They immediately renewed their friendship and their walks – although by now Ludwig’s health was failing. Bouwsma faithfully recorded all of these conversations which are presented here.

Publisher’s original light blue wraps with dark brown letter to both covers and the spine. An immaculate copy of this important book from the last two years of Wittgenstein’s life.
81.

Bertrand Russell’s Obituary of Ludwig Wittgenstein


$ 145

With some lovely remarks by Russell that focus on the early years of their relationship.

“At first I was in doubt as to whether he was a man of genius or a crank, but I very soon decided in favour of the former alternative.”

“Getting to know Wittgenstein was one of the most exciting intellectual adventures of my life. In later years there was a lack of intellectual sympathy between us, but in early years I was as willing to learn from him as he from me. His thought had an almost incredible degree of passionately intense concentration, to which I gave whole-hearted admiration.”

Publisher’s original light grey wrappers printed front and back, inside and out. With very minor dings to the wrappers and the spine. Overall, a lovely copy of this obituary written by Bertrand Russell.

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CODA

...Words strain,
Crack and sometimes break, under the burden,
Under the tension, slip, slide, perish,
Decay with imprecision, will not stay in place,
Will not stay still...

T.S Eliot

*Burnt Norton V*
"The owl of Athena flies only at dusk"
Georg W. F. Hegel Preface, Philosophy of Right

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