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**Lieutenant-General Edward Hutton and 'Greater Britain':
Late-Victorian Imperialism, Imperial Defence and the Self-Governing
Colonies**

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Preface

The chief primary source used in the writing of this thesis was the large collection of Edward Hutton's papers held by the British Library. These cover nearly all of his life. Largely consisting of letters received, the collection also contains memoranda of interviews, copied letters sent, speeches, diaries, and an unfinished memoir. The Australian Defence Force Academy Library has the entire collection on microfilm. I am grateful to ADFA, the British Library and the inter-library loan staff of the University of Sydney for helping me view this collection.

The bulk of the Australian material used is held at State Records New South Wales (Colonial Secretary Correspondence), the National Library of Australia (which holds Hutton's South African Letters and his personal collection of news clippings), the Australian War Memorial, and the State Library of New South Wales (Henry Parkes collection and Joint Copying Material). Thank you to everyone who assisted me at those institutions, especially Graham Powell who tendered advice at the beginning of this thesis that proved helpful all the way through.

I would like to convey my sincere appreciation to the Menzies Centre, KCL, for a grant that made overseas research possible. I would especially like to thank Carl Bridge, Stuart Ward, and Glenn Calderwood for all of their assistance while I was in London. The main repositories I visited in the United Kingdom were the Public Record Office (now part of the National Archives of the United Kingdom), the British Library, the Birmingham University Library, and the National Library of Scotland. For Canadian sources, I relied heavily on the Borden Papers held by the Public Archives of Nova Scotia and the Department of Militia and Defence Forces fonds

held by the National Archives of Canada. The librarians and archivists at all of these institutions were professional and welcoming.

Many others have helped along the way. Guy Verney and Craig Wilcox were both very generous in offering advice. I presented the chapters of this thesis in draft form to the 'dinner seminar': a very big 'thank you' to Eddie Kim, Tobias Seldon, Matt Reason, Dieter Michel, Matt Jordan, James Curran, Tom Switzer, and Tony Buchan for all of their suggestions, comments, and comradeship.

On a personal note, I would like to thank the ladies in my life, my mother Rosalind, my sister Felicity and Silay, who have been my support structure and proofing team. Thank you Andy for helping me over the line.

Neville Meaney, my supervisor, has been so much more than that over the course of this thesis: friend, chef, bush walking companion. For all that is worthwhile in this thesis, I owe a great debt to Neville's inspiration, advice and encouragement.

I dedicate this thesis to my father, John Lehane.

Table of Contents

Preface	ii.
Portrait of Major-General Edward Hutton	v.
1. Introduction	1.
2. An Education in Empire: 1850s to 1880s	29.
3. Preparing for the Coming Struggle: 1880s and 1890s	78.
4. Patriot and Citizen: New South Wales 1893 to 1896	105.
5. Conflicts of Interest: Canada 1898 to 1900	143.
6. A Dream Brigade: the Second South African War 1900	190.
7. Australia's General Officer Commanding: 1902 to 1904	223.
8. Conclusion	262.
Appendix – Borden's business and the later contingents	268.
Bibliography	272.



Portrait of Major-General Edward Hutton

By Tom Roberts, 1896.

1. Introduction

We live in a creative, and therefore a critical, time. On what we are doing depends the future of the Empire, and it is only by free intercourse between our statesmen here and those of the dominions beyond the seas that we can hope to maintain and strengthen the bonds of unity. I feel sure that the time for small kingdoms has passed away. The future is with the great Empires, and it rests with us to say whether our own shall be counted for many ages to come as one of the greatest or whether we shall split up into minor and comparatively unimportant nationalities.¹

Joseph Chamberlain, 1902

In the final quarter of the nineteenth century a wave of British nationalism swept Great Britain and her self-governing colonies, binding them together with a vision of an Empire united as one. Institutions, especially the Royal Colonial Institute (founded in 1868) and the Imperial Federation League (1884), and writers, such as John Seeley, Charles Dilke and James Froude, actively promoted the unity of the British race. Benjamin Disraeli's Crystal Palace speech of June 1872 gave the movement early official voice and Joseph Chamberlain, Colonial Secretary from 1895 to 1902, its fullest expression in policy. In 1876, Queen Victoria emerged from 15 years of mourning to be styled Empress of India and was embraced as figurehead; General Gordon, massacred at Khartoum in 1885, became the movement's martyr. *Britannia*, premiering in London musical halls in the wake of that famous death, reassured its audiences with the refrain, 'There's little fear for England/ With brave Colonial sons/ Ready at the hour of need/ With money, men and guns.'² In seeming response, the Colonial Defence Committee began coordinating defence policies around the Empire in that same year. Two years later, during the 1887 Jubilee, representatives from the self-governing colonies gathered for the first colonial conference ever held. The phenomenon moved Seeley to announce, in the early 1880s, the birth of 'a new state,

¹ Letter, J. Chamberlain to G. Reid, 13 June 1902, BUL, Joseph Chamberlain Papers, JC14/1/1/52.

² P. Summerfield, 'Patriotism and Empire: Music-Hall Entertainment 1870-1914' in *Imperialism and Popular Culture*, ed. J. Mackenzie, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1986, 28.

English in race and character,' comprising Britain, Canada, parts of South Africa, and the Australasian colonies. He named that state 'Greater Britain.'³

This late-Victorian imperialism was a new development. Earlier in the century it had been widely held that the self-governing colonies would eventually go the way of the United States of America and separate from the mother country. The British willingness to grant self-government to the Australian colonies at mid-century and the 1867 Canadian Confederation seemed to justify such a view. Disraeli himself had been a separatist, grumbling as late as 1866, 'what is the use of these colonial dead weights which we do not govern?'⁴ Riding the wave of their industrial supremacy, the British people were more inclined to trade than rule, and with the 1865 *Colonial Laws Validity Act*, and the withdrawal of most British army garrisons from Australia and Canada by 1871, their government appeared to be phasing out its involvement with the colonies.

There are some historians who challenge this orthodox position. Taking their lead from Robinson and Gallagher, economic historians who question the *laissez faire* understanding of the Empire of the early nineteenth century, they stress the continuity of British interest in the Empire.⁵ Yet even these revisionists will generally concede that something of the character of British imperialism changed after 1870. Hyam and Martin, for example, admit to a 'more strident, more pompous and circumstantial'

³ J. Seeley, *The Expansion of England*, ed John Gross, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1971, 14 & 17. Seeley borrowed 'Greater Britain' from the title of Sir Charles Dilke's 1868 account of his travels in the colonies.

⁴ H. Browne, *Joseph Chamberlain, Radical and Imperialist*, Longman, Essex, 1974, 19.

⁵ P. Kennedy, 'Continuity and Discontinuity in British Imperialism 1815-1914' in *British Imperialism in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. C. Eldridge, Macmillan, London, 1984, 38.

devotion to the Empire by 1900.⁶ Porter is more reluctant, accepting a change, but contending that its extent has been exaggerated and challenging the popular appeal of imperialism in the late nineteenth century.⁷

A clear definition of late-Victorian imperialism can help resolve some of the problems posed by the revisionists. As Darwin demonstrates, the nineteenth century British Empire was no simple, monolithic structure but a 'tripartite world system' consisting of the self-governing colonies, the dependent empire, and a large informal empire.⁸ The British people interacted with these separate empires in quite different ways and lumping these relationships altogether into a single 'imperialism' generates a confusing picture. Additional complication arises from the baggage attached to the word 'imperialism': in the mid-nineteenth century Britons themselves negatively associated it with authoritarian government and only towards the end of the nineteenth century did they comfortably begin to use it to describe their relationship with the self-governing colonies.⁹ We will use imperialism in the same limited way: to only describe the relationship between Britain and the self-governing colonies (Seeley's Greater Britain: New Zealand, Canada and the Australian and south African colonies).

The exceptional features of this relationship – one of deep cultural and sentimental attachment, and not just power, politics and economics – justify the narrowness of the definition. It was in fact a nationalist relationship: to borrow Cobban's colourful

⁶ R. Hyam and G. Martin, *Reappraisals in British Imperial History*, Macmillan, London, 1975, 117.

⁷ B. Porter, *The Absent-Minded Imperialists: Empire, Society, and Culture in Britain*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2004, 18, 194.

⁸ J. Darwin, 'A Third British Empire? The Dominion Idea in Imperial Politics' in *The Oxford History of the British Empire*, Volume 4, ed. J. Brown and Wm. Roger Louis, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1999, 65.

⁹ A. Thompson, *Imperial Britain: The Empire in British Politics c. 1880-1932*, Pearson Education, Essex, 2000, 15; G. Young, *Victorian England: Portrait of an Age*, 2nd ed., Oxford University Press, London, 1953, 176.

description, '[a] kind of bastard imperialism which is merely nationalism writ large';¹⁰ others use 'pan-British nationalism,'¹¹ or 'Britannic nationalism.'¹² The special nature of this imperialism was recognized even at the time; Lord Rosebery, speaking in May 1899, declared, 'I mean the greater pride in the Empire which is called Imperialism. Sane Imperialism, as distinguished from what I might call wild cat Imperialism, is nothing but this, a larger patriotism.'¹³ Late-Victorian imperialism can in this sense be understood within the broad context of the great flowering of nationalism around the world in the period 1880 to 1914.¹⁴

'Nationalism' presents an additional problem of definition. It has its own spell, posing as a natural and inevitable force, in existence throughout history and driving all peoples towards self-determination and independence. However, as Hobsbawm demonstrates, nationalism is an historical phenomenon, consisting of 'invented traditions', and its appearance demands full explanation – it is not sufficient to merely point to the awareness of local interests and expect nationalism's 'inevitability' to fill out the argument.¹⁵ This is a common trap for scholars who neglect to define nationalism, owing to the debasement of the term in the vernacular: a popular confusion of 'nations' and 'states' has diluted to 'nationalism' to the point where it is often used simply to mean loyalty to a state.¹⁶ This usage was widespread even in the

¹⁰ A. Cobban, 'The Idea of Empire', in *Ideas and Beliefs of the Victorians: an historic revaluation of the Victorian Age*, ed. N. Annan, Sylvan Press, London, 1949, 329.

¹¹ A. Thompson, 'Thinking Imperially? Imperial Pressure Groups and the Idea of Empire in Late-Victorian and Edwardian Britain', DPhil Thesis, Corpus Christi College, Oxford, 1994, 229.

¹² D. Cole, 'The Problem of "Nationalism" and "Imperialism" in British Settlement Colonies', *Journal of British Studies*, 10, 1971, 174.

¹³ quoted in G. Kitson Clark, *An Expanding Society: Britain 1830-1900*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1967, 70.

¹⁴ E. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Empire: 1875-1914*, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London, 1987, 142.

¹⁵ E. Hobsbawm, 'The Nation as Invented Tradition', in *Nationalism*, eds J. Hutchinson and A. Smith, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1994, 76.

¹⁶ W. Connor, 'A Nation is a Nation, is a State, is an Ethnic Group, is an...', in *Nationalism*, eds J. Hutchinson and A. Smith, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1994, 38-40.

nineteenth century. For example, in discussions in New South Wales on the subject of that colony's participation in the Australian federation movement, the Premier, George Reid, was challenged as to what he meant by 'national.' He responded:

There is no reason why the Australian nation so constituted shall not subsist in perpetual harmony and alliance as a part of the British Empire... the tendency of humanity is strikingly in that direction.¹⁷

Edward Hutton used the term 'nation' in a similarly fluid way, often referring to Australia and Canada as young nations, but meaning young British nations. A nation is more than a state; it is a group of people who believe themselves to be culturally and ethnically distinct. Loyalty to a nation – nationalism – is more than mere provincialism; it is a consciousness of a unique identity and, as Kohn argues, a desire to forge a nation-state that will embody that belief.¹⁸

With the growth of the idea of Greater Britain in the late nineteenth century, it was to this *British* nation that the populations of Britain and of the self-governing colonies felt culturally and ethnically attached, while still remaining conscious of their local autonomy and jealous of their local interests. What factors underlay this shift in identity?

Ironically, the granting of colonial self-government and the withdrawal of the garrisons were themselves partly responsible for the renewed British interest in the self-governing colonies from mid-century; as Northrop Frye puts it, 'nobody has much use for a colony, apparently, or at least for the human part of it.'¹⁹ The reduced

¹⁷ NSW Parliamentary Debates, 1895 Session, Volume 80, 30 October 1895, 2177.

¹⁸ H. Kohn, 'Western and Eastern Nationalisms', in *Nationalism*, 162.

¹⁹ N. Frye, *Divisions on a Ground: Essays on Canadian Culture*, ed. J. Polk, Anansi, Toronto, 1982, 44.

cost to the British exchequer made it possible for the Empire to now be conceived as an asset (both financial and defensive) rather than a burden.²⁰ In a similar way, the people of those colonies, 'the human part', were no longer dependent subjects and could now be considered fellow members of a common imperial nation.

To understand why late-Victorian imperialism developed in Britain it is necessary to contend with both this 'human part' and with the economic and security interests involved: with sentiment and self-interest. Politicians of the day recognised this; when Lord Salisbury opened the 1887 Colonial Conference he endorsed the colonialists' wisdom in approaching the negotiations on grounds other than mere affection, on the 'solid and reasonable foundations of self-interest and security.'²¹

Ten years later, Joseph Chamberlain made the same point when opening that year's Colonial Conference:

Strong as is the bond of sentiment, and impossible as it would be to establish any kind of relations unless that bond of sentiment existed, I believe we all feel that it would be desirable to take advantage of it, and to still further tighten the ties which bind us together...

I have said that I believe in sentiment as the greatest of all the forces in the general government of the world, but, at the same time, I should like to bring to the reinforcement of sentiment the motives which are derived from material and personal interest.²²

²⁰ D. Morton, *A Military History of Canada*, Hurtig Publishers, Edmonton, 1990, 107-8.

²¹ R. Shields, 'Australian Opinion and Defence of the Empire', *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, 10, 1964, 47.

²² Right Hon. Joseph Chamberlain's Speech at the First Meeting of the Colonial Conference of 1897 in *Selected Speeches and Documents on British Colonial Policy 1763-1917*, Vol. 2, ed. A. Keith, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1918, 210 and 223.

Seeley himself defined Greater Britain as constituting a 'community of race, community of religion, [and a] community of interest.'²³

As a community of sentiment, Seeley's Greater Britain responded to the emotional dislocation caused by the great social changes of the late nineteenth century.

Anderson argues that nationalism first appeared in Europe only in the late eighteenth century with the fragmentation of traditional communities by industrialisation and urbanisation.²⁴ These twin processes continued relentlessly through the course of the nineteenth century, severing ties and undermining old social structures. By 1900 seventy percent of the British population lived in towns and cities.²⁵ At the same time, the great expansion of the British franchise (the *Reform Acts* of 1867 and 1884 quadrupled the electorate) necessitated a new basis of cohesion. The 1885 parliament was the first in which landowners were outnumbered – how were these new classes of citizens to be incorporated into the British political community?

Greater Britain answered to this need for a new community and in doing so it drew from the rich vein of British Romanticism, from the poetry of Coleridge and the histories of Carlyle. As Kitson Clark describes it, 'what happened in politics was connected undeniably if mysteriously with the romantic movement in literature.'²⁶ This influence is apparent in the rhetoric of late-Victorian imperialism: Garnet Wolseley, for example, the late-Victorian army's chief reformer and popular hero, derided cosmopolitan hopes for perpetual peace as base materialism and proffered the Romantic argument, 'I cannot help thinking that it would deprive life of some of its

²³ Seeley, *The Expansion of England*, 15.

²⁴ B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins of Nationalism*, Verso, London, 1983, 4

²⁵ Porter, *The Absent-Minded Imperialists*, 170.

²⁶ G. Kitson Clark, *The Making of Victorian England*, Methuen and Co, London, 1962, 34.

finest poetry, the poetry of nationality, and of an intense and ardent love of country.²⁷

It is also apparent in the racial language of late-Victorian imperialism. The idea of an Anglo-Saxon racial community blossomed in the period, having derived pseudo-scientific credibility from scientific discoveries and from social Darwinism.²⁸

Science assisted the development of late-Victorian imperialism in other ways. The introduction of rotary presses in the 1850s caused an explosion in publishing that facilitated the communication of the new imperial ideas to an increasingly literate society (in 1869 the National Education League, founded in Birmingham, began lobbying for universal, non-denominational schooling). The steamship and the telegraph were revolutionary: with the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, and the completion of the Atlantic (1866) and Australian (1872) cables, Britain seemed closer than ever to the colonies. These triumphs of the Rational age allowed late-Victorians to view their Empire in new, and sometimes hopeful, ways.

Finally, Seeley's 'community of interest' is tremendously important in explaining the development of late-Victorian imperialism in Britain. There is a consensus among historians that a principal cause of the imperial shift was a feeling of insecurity in the face of increasing commercial and military international competition after 1860.²⁹

The unification of Germany and Italy; economic rivalry with the booming populations of the United States and Germany; and military threats from the mass, national armies

²⁷ Wolseley address to the Harborne and Edgbaston Institute at Birmingham, 25 January 1889 (Joseph Chamberlain in the Chair), quoted in the *Times* (London), 26 January 1889, 12.

²⁸ R. Huttenback, *Racism and Empire: White Settlers and Colored Immigrants in the British Self-Governing Colonies 1830-1910*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1976, 15.

²⁹ P. Knaplund, 'Intra-Imperial Aspects of Britain's Defence Question, 1870-1900', *Canadian Historical Review*, June 1922, 126; H. Strachan, *The Politics of the British Army*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1997, 41; A. Thompson, *Imperial Britain: The Empire in British Politics c. 1880-1932*, Pearson Education, Essex, 2000, 23.

of France, Germany, and Russia all combined to challenge British power in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Insecurity caused the British people to look to their Empire for moral and material support. Late-Victorian imperialism gained a bipartisan consensus in the 1880s when key Liberal politicians and intellectuals joined the imperial cause, their confidence in perpetual free trade shaken by the trade depressions of 1868 and 1876.³⁰ As Thompson puts it, 'it [the Empire] offered a way of preserving and protecting British power when the foundations of that power looked ever more insecure.'³¹

Kitson Clark identifies the two 'formidable legacies' of the nineteenth century in the idea of nationalism and the modern, omnipresent state.³² It was this combination of the Romantic and the Rational that defined the late-Victorian age. It was a period of both hope and fear, a time when science and the successes of Rationalism seemed to promise a limitless future, but also a time when fierce competition and rapid change created confusion and doubt.³³ The development in Britain of the idea of Greater Britain was the result of the Romantic pull of sentiment and of the push of interests, economic and military, generated by the Rational development of the nation-state.

All of these changes touched the self-governing colonies as well. The idea of Greater Britain was as seductive to them as to the British; for example, Empire Day was celebrated in Canada from the 1890s and in Australia from 1905, both well before its adoption in Britain itself. According to Page, nothing moved Canadians in this

³⁰ P. Burroughs, 'John Robert Seeley and British Imperial History', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 1, 1973, 205, H. Browne, *Joseph Chamberlain, Radical and Imperialist*, Longman, Essex, 1974, 55.

³¹ Thompson, 'Thinking Imperially?', 25.

³² Kitson Clark, *An Expanding Society*, 126.

³³ P. Crook, *Darwinism, war and history: The debate over the biology of war from the 'Origin of Species' to the First World War*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1994, 63.

period so powerfully as the Empire.³⁴ The response of these self-governing colonies to late-Victorian imperialism, a force that exerted a profound influence on their developing national identities, has not, however, received sufficient scholarly attention.³⁵

In a way this is understandable – it is a complex problem and historians have tended to approach it in pieces. The entire relationship, between the idea of Greater Britain, Britain itself and the self-governing colonies, contains elements that are not easily reconciled. Greater Britain as a ‘community of interest’ is itself easily approached: facing military and financial challenges from many quarters the British government at times sought military guarantees and reciprocal tariffs from the colonies, those colonies balanced these requests against their own security and economic interests. Colonial responses to proposals to politically federate the Empire can be similarly treated; MacLean, for example, gives a detailed account of Canada and the Imperial Federation League. But how does one combine that problem with colonial responses to Seeley’s communities of race and religion (or, to use Meaney’s umbrella term, the ‘community of culture’)?³⁶ This was a side of Greater Britain to which the self-governing colonies responded far more whole-heartedly, perhaps even more strongly than the British themselves.³⁷ In his conclusion, ‘the imperial federation movement in Canada was largely nationalist. Its supporters were motivated by a variety of interests, but most of them may be related directly to Canadian national interests,’ MacLean does demonstrate Canada’s distinct ‘community of interest’ – but such a

³⁴ R. Page, ‘Canada and the Imperial Idea in the Boer War Years’, *Journal of Canadian Studies*, 5, 1970, 33.

³⁵ N. Meaney, ‘Britishness and Australia: Some Reflections’, *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 31, 2003, 123.

³⁶ N. Meaney, ‘The Problem of Nationalism in Australian History and Historiography’, *Australian Historical Studies*, 116, 2001, 85.

³⁷ Meaney, ‘Britishness and Australia’, 121.

narrow answer ignores the harder problem of the Canadian response to the 'community of culture' represented by Greater Britain.³⁸ McLean himself quotes Canadian P.M. John Thompson indicating that business is business, and it does not reflect upon loyalty to the Empire:

When we are to consider questions relating to the promotion of trade between the different colonies, trade with the Mother Country, the facilities of communication throughout the different portions of the Empire, we realize that while there is ample room for patriotism and loyalty, methods of business have to be followed.³⁹

Can one describe the Canadian response as 'largely nationalist' if that 'nationalism' was just based on the protection of Canadian interests?

A study of Lieutenant-General Edward Hutton's colonial career offers valuable insights into this problem: in his various postings Hutton brought British hopes for the development of Greater Britain; he encountered colonial reservations (based on the protection of local interests) and enthusiasm (based on a sense of shared identity); and in constructing his plans for colonial contributions to imperial defence he endeavoured to reconcile those responses. In his attempts to implement those plans the difficulty of the task is apparent and, as a result, important features of colonial identity are revealed. The career of one British army officer cannot pretend to offer an exhaustive account of late-Victorian imperialism. It can, however, demonstrate key aspects of the relationships between Greater Britain, Britain, and the self-governing colonies.

³⁸ G. MacLean, 'The Imperial Federation Movement in Canada, 1884-1902', PhD thesis, Duke University, 1958, 313.

³⁹ J. Thompson at the Ottawa Conference 1894, in MacLean, *Imperial Federation Movement*, 123.

The British army played a central role in the development of late-Victorian imperialism. Following the German model, the two generally accepted paths to greater imperial unity were a *kriegsverein* (military union) or a *zollverein* (customs union). The idea of an imperial customs union was tremendously important but it was a debate dominated by hard-headed calculations of economic self-interest and the ideological divisions between free traders and protectionists. Defence, as Burroughs notes, was the most potent empire unifying issue of the day.⁴⁰ In fact the whole imperial movement had a decidedly militarist tone. Of the two military arms, the Royal Navy was the more decisive factor in imperial defence and colonial contribution to the navy was a central issue; however, this tended to boil down to financial contribution, questions of control and guarantees of security.⁴¹ In studying Greater Britain the army is, in many respects, a more interesting subject because it better represents the community of culture at work. The colonies sent men, not money, to the Sudan and to South Africa. The departures of those contingents and the campaigns they fought aroused a passion and an excitement that an Australian contribution to the Admiralty coffers, for instance, could not. Colonial contributions to the British army demonstrate the interaction of those separate communities of culture and interest. As Hutton himself wrote, throughout history mutual defence has bound 'individuals as well as nations together by ties at once of mutual sentiment, sympathy, and self-interest.'⁴²

⁴⁰ P. Burroughs, 'Imperial Defence and the Victorian Army', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 15, 1986, 63 and P. Burroughs, 'The Mid-Victorian Navy and Imperial Defence', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 30, 2002, 113.

⁴¹ The one notable exception of the period being the naval contingent Australia sent to China during the Boxer Rebellion. Even this was overshadowed a 'hundred-fold' by the contingents leaving at the same time for the South African war. [R. Wilde, 'The Boxer Affair and Australian Responsibility for Imperial Defence', *Pacific Historical Review*, 26, 1957, 57].

⁴² E. Hutton, 'The Bond of Military Unity' in *The Empire and the Century*, John Murray, London, 1905, 227.

Among British army officers of his day, Hutton was one of the most experienced in commanding colonial forces. He served in Canada and Australia at critical moments for Greater Britain: he commanded the Canadian militia during the initial stages of the Second South African War (the Boer War), arguably the high-point of late-Victorian imperial sentiment and a moment that split the Canadian population and the Canadian cabinet on the question of whether to send a contingent; he led a combined colonial mounted force on campaign in that war; and he commanded military forces in Australia in the lead up to, and immediately following, Australian federation, a time of vital importance for Australian identity formation and for its relationship with the Empire.

In those positions he conceived of himself as being much more than a mere commander:

Humble individual though I was, some inner voice seemed to force me into undertaking the mission of showing that military service is the main factor for training democratic communities in their primary duties of citizenship. It was a new role for a soldier to undertake.⁴³

Hutton considered the problems of the Empire, admired its luminaries (such as Seeley and Chamberlain), and constructed his own schemes for imperial defence in the light of the new imperialism. He was forceful in attempting to introduce these ideas to the colonies. A close friend of his once warned him off attempting to be a 'big man':

Do stick to your own business, the army, and leave great national questions to the people it concerns. Let us reform the army by all means, but let it be their doing and not ours, and let us efface ourselves and our part in it, as far as

⁴³ E. Hutton, 'Memoirs of Lieutenant-General Sir Edward Hutton', Chapter 13 (First Typed Draft), 16, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50113 [Hutton's emphasis].

possible: All this public speaking and preparing the public mind for changes is not our business and is absolutely ruinous to the cause.⁴⁴

It is fortunate for the historian that Hutton ignored this good advice. Hutton's fiery public speaking, his provocative use of the press, and his heated conflicts with colonial politicians all throw a great deal of light on the issues of late-Victorian imperialism.

One of the concerns of this thesis will be to test the colonial response to Hutton and his attempts at reforming the military forces of Australia and Canada. The account of that response is, by necessity, limited to the spheres in which he moved and it goes beyond the scope of the thesis to conduct a thorough survey of colonial opinion for each stage of his career. Melhuish warns that the British understanding of colonial opinion was distorted by the fact that the people who gauged that opinion tended to have contact only with the colonial upper classes, or with colonists who had returned to Britain.⁴⁵ McLean concludes his dissertation by arguing that the sentiment behind the Imperial Federation movement was never a popular one – it was limited to those born or educated in Britain, to members of the United Empire Loyalists, and the Loyal Orange Order, and the like.⁴⁶ Berger agrees that sections of the Canadian public, particularly farmers and the labour movement, opposed the Imperial Federationists.⁴⁷ Porter's study of imperialism in Britain concludes, in a similar fashion, that it was largely an upper class affair of only marginal interest to the working class.⁴⁸ All of

⁴⁴ Letter, Kitson to Hutton, 6 December 1901, BL, Hutton Papers, 187.

⁴⁵ K. Melhuish, *Australia & British Imperial Policy: Colonial Autonomy and the Imperial Idea, 1865-1902*, PhD thesis, University of Sydney, 1965, 64.

⁴⁶ MacLean, 'Imperial Federation', 394.

⁴⁷ C. Berger, 'Imperialism and Nationalism: 1884-1914' in *Readings in Canadian History Post-Confederation*, ed. R. Francis and D. Smith, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Canada, 1982, 95.

⁴⁸ B. Porter, *The Absent-Minded Imperialists: Empire, Society, and Culture in Britain*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2004, 39 and 208.

these arguments are summarised by Trainor, in his call for the study of imperialism not simply as an inter-nation issue but also in terms of its relative influence on different segments within societies: different classes, genders, ethnic groups, and so forth.⁴⁹

It is useful to recognise that different sectors of society may have responded in different ways to late-Victorian imperialism; indeed in Canada, with its population split between French and English speakers, it is vital. But this does not negate the value of searching for positions of consensus, for a dominant culture. Britain and the self-governing colonies could not escape the age of nationalism and historians should not ignore the task of defining how the dominant portion of those communities conceived the nation. Indeed Trainor himself is not above such generalities – describing, by the end of the 1880s, an ‘anti-imperial response’ and the ‘the emergence of Australian nationalism’ – indicating that his fragmentation of colonial opinion may simply amount to a desire to find ‘true believers’ to carry the torch of Australian nationalism through dark days.⁵⁰

Hutton’s career in the colonies offers a useful way of searching for such positions of consensus. He certainly belonged to the kind of elite circles McLean describes; but nevertheless, in his political and his public roles, he did engage with representative samples of the colonial populations. Primarily a political actor in these positions, he dealt extensively with colonial governments that had been elected by universal manhood franchise and were therefore generally representative of colonial opinion. Hutton continually tested the limits of his authority, he was a difficult general, and

⁴⁹ L. Trainor, *British Imperialism and Australian Nationalism: Manipulation, conflict and compromise in the late nineteenth century*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1994, 4.

⁵⁰ Trainor, *British Imperialism and Australian Nationalism*, 66.

each of his clashes with the local political reality throws light on what the colonial public would allow. Hutton conceived of his role in the colonies more widely than most commandants: he sought to educate, inform, and engage with the general public. In each colony he travelled the breadth of his command. He hosted public events – tattoos, tournaments and the like – and spoke publicly wherever he could find an audience. These attempts to reach the colonial publics directly, and the reactions of his audiences, reveal additional insights into colonial opinion.

No secondary authority treats Hutton's career in its entirety. His life before the colonial appointments has been hardly touched (Badsey's detailed account of the mounted infantry movement being the notable exception).⁵¹ Hutton's career in the colonies has received more attention but in piecemeal fashion; no source takes the wide view of Hutton's colonial career necessary to fully establish his overall approach to the role of the colonies in imperial defence. Existing scholarship has merely looked at Hutton in particular roles, either in Australia or in Canada.

Mordike, Trainor and Preston all study Hutton from a radical nationalist perspective (Berger critiques this type of history in Canada history using the term 'liberal nationalist'): they construct stories of gradual but inexorable national development, from a subservient colonial status to free and independent nation-hood.⁵² Hutton figures in these accounts as a soldier obsessed with the (metropolitan focussed) imperial ambition of seeking colonial defence commitments in service to the British Empire. They contend that Hutton acted on imperial plans worked out in Britain and

⁵¹ S. Badsey, 'Fire and Sword: The British Army and the Arme Blanche Controversy 1871-1921', DPhil Thesis, University of Cambridge, 1981, 91-100.

⁵² C. Berger, 'Introduction', in *Imperial Relations in the Age of Laurier*, ed. C. Berger, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1969, viii.

without any real reference to local conditions, beyond the Machiavellian use of local fears and interests to conceal those ambitions. They define colonial opposition to those plans as evidence of local nationalism. Taking a different line, Penlington, Norris and Meaney agree that Hutton did have an imperial motive, but they argue that his ambitions in the colony were not restricted to this. They describe a variety of objectives, including a professional interest in the local defence of the colonies, and they allow for causes for the colonial response other than a simple local nationalism.

The British government, according to Johnson, planted a 'Trojan horse' in New South Wales when they recommended Hutton for the post of commandant, his first colonial command.⁵³ This is a popular argument, made most completely by Mordike and Trainor. These two historians give short shrift to the basic military reforms Hutton initiated in the colony, preferring to concentrate on his imperial agenda, as Mordike puts it:

Undoubtedly, his achievements had been considerable, but in introducing his various organisations and reforms and in developing his proposals for federal defence, he had kept imperial requirements firmly in mind. The issue of local defence and its unique requirements had not been addressed seriously.⁵⁴

Trainor agrees; to him, Hutton was simply 'an over-eager imperialist.'⁵⁵ Trainor places Hutton within the context of late-Victorian imperial defence policy, highlighting the 1888 naval agreement and the Bevan Edwards report of 1889.⁵⁶ He contends that the British authorities from the late 1890s looked to the colonies for a

⁵³ D. Johnson, *Volunteers at Heart: The Queensland Defence Forces, 1860-1901*, University of Queensland Press, St Lucia, 1975, 183.

⁵⁴ J. Mordike, *An Army for a Nation: A history of Australian military developments 1880-1914*, Allen and Unwin, Sydney, 1992, 43.

⁵⁵ Trainor, *British Imperialism and Australian Nationalism*, 103.

⁵⁶ L. Trainor, 'British Imperial Defence Policy and the Australian Colonies, 1892-96', *Historical Studies*, 14, 1970, 206 & 208.

cheaper means of ensuring the Empire's defence.⁵⁷ Mordike points to a widespread belief that the colonies would grow faster than Britain, both financially and demographically, and that their military and material assistance was therefore deemed vital for her future.⁵⁸ Trainor and Mordike concur that these British authorities wished to federalise Australia's military forces so that they could be more easily tapped during times of crisis.⁵⁹ Their argument can be briefly summarised: Hutton was briefed before his departure from London by British imperialists (Conservative M.P., Howard Vincent, and the Permanent Undersecretary for the Colonies, Robert Meade); in those meetings he was instructed in general terms to achieve a federal defence arrangement and to promote the Empire; and on arrival in Australia he single-mindedly set out to achieve those ends.⁶⁰

This portrait of Hutton establishes a potent, British imperial figure – an ideologue – against which the budding elements of a new Australian nationalism can be seen to clash. Mordike, for instance, concludes from this episode, 'nationalism and the realities of colonial self-government conspired to frustrate British attempts to guide and influence colonial military developments.'⁶¹ Trainor describes a 'clash of imperialism and nationalism' and suggests that Hutton was forced to keep his agenda secret for fear of rubbing, 'the raw nerve of Australian nationalism.'⁶² Hutton's agenda, however, seems to be all these historians have to offer in the way of evidence for such a nationalism. They find little concrete evidence amongst sentiments expressed by the colonists themselves, and content themselves with a few awkward

⁵⁷ Trainor, 'British Imperial Defence Policy', 204.

⁵⁸ Mordike, *Army for a Nation*, 8.

⁵⁹ Trainor, 'British Imperial Defence Policy', 208; Mordike, *Army for a Nation*, 11.

⁶⁰ Trainor, 'British Imperial Defence Policy', 210; Mordike, *Army for a Nation*, 23 & 43.

⁶¹ Mordike, *Army for a Nation*, 43.

⁶² Trainor, *British Imperialism and Australian Nationalism*, 104; Trainor, 'British Imperial Defence Policy', 212.

examples. Mordike, for instance, asserts that Premier Dibbs's reductions in the military budget demonstrate suspicion of Hutton's deeper motives, despite the far more obvious cause of economic depression.⁶³ He also claims that 'the fundamental issue which divided Dibbs and Hutton was the commandant's determination to fulfil his imperial directions by organizing an Australian federal military force,' despite the fact that it was Dibbs himself who in January 1894 first encouraged Hutton to draft a scheme of federal defence.⁶⁴

Neither historian explores the concept of nationalism with any depth and their readings of Hutton's command in New South Wales suffer as a result. They delve into the nature of colonial identity but because they are looking for a particular result they miss fundamental questions – what did Hutton actually represent? Was he an agent of centralised and organised 'British authorities' or, more simply, a member of a widespread and popular movement favouring greater imperial unity? What did opposition to Hutton's reforms in New South Wales represent? Was it distaste with his sentiments of imperial unity deriving from a competing model of local identity? Or just a distrust of the effects of his reforms based on a conception of local interests? Such questions must be posed if an accurate portrait of colonial identity and of its relationship with the idea of Greater Britain is to be reached.

Writing a continent away, Preston takes a line very similar to Mordike and Trainor in his assessment of Hutton's command of the Canadian militia. Hutton determined the principles he would apply in Canada before ever setting foot there: without reference

⁶³ Mordike, *Army for a Nation*, 35.

⁶⁴ J. Mordike, 'The Origins of Australia's Army', *Australian Defence Force Journal*, 87, 1991, 13; E. Hutton, 'Memoirs of Lieutenant-General Sir Edward Hutton', Chapter 13, First Typed Draft, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50113, 20.

to local needs Hutton, he argues, planned to implement the conclusions reached in his 1898 paper on a 'Co-operative System for the Defence of the Empire.'⁶⁵ Hutton, Preston insists, had a 'determination to build a force to serve the empire' without reference to Canadian interests.⁶⁶ Like Trainor and Mordike, Preston downplays the importance of Hutton's practical reforms by positioning them as ancillary to his imperial agenda:

Sir Edward Hutton had much military lore to teach the amateur soldiers of the colonies, but he did not understand the political situation in the Empire. He regarded the Canadian command not as a Canadian national military organisation but as a district of the British military command system.⁶⁷

Hutton's protestations about constructing a national army for Canada were just a smoke screen towards that end; the national army was Hutton's 'best line.'⁶⁸ Like Mordike and Trainor, Preston leans on this caricature of a single-mindedly imperialist Hutton as a foil to imply a countervailing Canadian nationalism, emphasising Hutton's frequent conflicts with Canadian politicians.⁶⁹ Preston's remaining arguments to support a local nationalism are not convincing: he cites, for example, the embarrassing incident when Hutton, taking the first shot on a rifle range during an inspection, was given a blank cartridge by an insubordinate trooper as evidence of a popular 'suspicion' of the imperial relationship.⁷⁰ Yet even this single example of a popular distaste for the new commandant's imperialism is disputed and Penlington

⁶⁵ R. Preston, *Canada and 'Imperial Defense': A study of the origins of the British Commonwealth's defense organization, 1867-1919*, Duke University Press, Durham, 1967, 250.

⁶⁶ Preston, *Canada and 'Imperial Defense'*, 252.

⁶⁷ Preston, *Canada and 'Imperial Defense'*, 255.

⁶⁸ Preston, *Canada and 'Imperial Defense'*, 251.

⁶⁹ Preston, *Canada and 'Imperial Defense'*, 252.

⁷⁰ Preston, *Canada and 'Imperial Defense'*, 253.

provides the more likely explanation that Hutton was ill-treated on this occasion due to a residual dislike of his predecessor.⁷¹

Penlington's approach to Hutton's Canadian service is more balanced. He interprets Hutton's talk of a Canadian national army as a genuine attempt to foster popular interest in the militia, and thereby strengthen Canadian defence, and he supports this contention by enumerating the specific local reforms Hutton introduced – such as his reorganisation of the military branch.⁷² At the same time, Penlington does not ignore Hutton's broader imperial agenda; but he seeks to reconcile this with Hutton's other stated aims. Hutton wanted Canada to have a national army capable both of defending Canada and of contributing, 'to the military defence of the British Empire in a manner and with a power which will place Canada in a position of unparalleled dignity and influence among all the possessions of the Crown.'⁷³ Such imperial elements in Hutton's plans were possible because of the strong pro-British sentiment existing in Canada at that time. This sentiment was cultural and also represented a temporary alignment of interests, especially Canadian fears of American encroachment and British assistance in resolving the Alaskan boundary dispute. For Penlington's Hutton therefore, 'colonial and imperial motives were entwined with the more important national motives.'⁷⁴

Morton and Miller both provide excellent and detailed accounts of Hutton's Canadian command and they offer valuable insights into key episodes, especially the Domville dispute and Hutton's recall. Hutton features in Miller's study of the Governor

⁷¹ N. Penlington, *Canada and Imperialism, 1896-1899*, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1965, 143.

⁷² Penlington, *Canada and Imperialism*, 144 & 177.

⁷³ Penlington, *Canada and Imperialism*, 153.

⁷⁴ Penlington, *Canada and Imperialism*, 234.

General to Canada as the 'greatest cross of Minto's early administration.'⁷⁵ Morton's subject is the Department of Militia and Defence and he is interested in Hutton as reformer and agent of conflict between the civil and military branches of the department.⁷⁶ Both of these historians focus on Canadian political history and they are less inclined than either Penlington or Preston to draw conclusions from that material to make claims for the nature of Canadian identity.

Hutton's military command in South Africa has received little coverage. Mordike notes in a general way that British hopes for future support from the colonies were encouraged by the Second South African War and contends that events such as the Morant-Handcock affair fuelled the cause of the Australian nationalists.⁷⁷ Field, in his work on Australia's participation in the war, barely mentions Hutton, merely noting Hutton's leadership of the Australian brigade and reproducing Hutton's enthusiastic assessment of the quality of Australian troops.⁷⁸ Wilcox and Miller both give very good accounts of the movements of Hutton's brigade; however, their interests are, respectively, the roles of Australians and Canadians in the war – this thesis will focus on the war's effect on the development of Hutton's ideas about Greater Britain.⁷⁹

The final colonial command, Hutton's role in forming an Australian Army after federation, has received the most attention. Mordike applies essentially the same

⁷⁵ C. Miller, *The Canadian Career of the Fourth Earl of Minto: The Education of a Viceroy*, Wilfrid Laurier University Press, Waterloo, 1980, 64.

⁷⁶ D. Morton, 'Authority and Policy in the Canadian Militia, 1874-1904', PhD thesis, University of London, 1968, 5, 383 & 429.

⁷⁷ Mordike, *Army for a Nation*, 63.

⁷⁸ L. Field, *The Forgotten War*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1979, 111.

⁷⁹ C. Wilcox, *Australia's Boer War: The War in South Africa 1899-1902*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 2002; C. Miller, *Painting the Map Red: Canada and the South African War, 1899-1902*, Canadian War Museum and McGill-Queen's University Press, Montreal, 1993.

argument to Hutton's service as G.O.C. of the Australian army that he used in describing Hutton's command in New South Wales. The battle between the forces of British imperialism and Australian nationalism seemingly continued. Once again Mordike argues that before departing Britain for Australia Hutton received his imperialist orders from British authorities. In this instance it was an interview with Chamberlain himself, as well as meetings with King Edward, St John Brodrick (Secretary for War), and Lord Roberts, to each of whom he promised 20,000 mounted infantry. Hutton, according to Mordike, was overawed by these men and 'under extreme pressure to produce the results which he had promised his patrons.'⁸⁰ On arrival in Australia, therefore, Hutton was even less tolerant of opposition, 'He promoted the scheme with a passion and energy which gratified his ego but distorted his judgement.'⁸¹ Mordike ties all Hutton's actions in Australia to the imperial agenda:

It suited his imperial goals to use national requirements to fabricate the case for overseas service for the military forces.⁸²

Mordike's account is again distorted by his understanding of Australian military history as 'a contest between the two ideologies' of nationalism and imperialism.⁸³ In line with this conceptualisation, Mordike conceives British overtures for formal defence arrangements as a grasping imperialism and Australian rebuffs as examples of a burgeoning nationalism; for instance: 'It soon became apparent that Barton had decided to adhere to a national approach to defence.'⁸⁴ Hutton certainly had an imperial agenda, but this is not of itself sufficient evidence of Australian nationalism,

⁸⁰ Mordike, *Army for a Nation*, 91.

⁸¹ Mordike, *Army for a Nation*, 87.

⁸² Mordike, *Army for a Nation*, 101.

⁸³ Mordike, *Army for a Nation*, xviii.

⁸⁴ Mordike, *Army for a Nation*, 108.

and Mordike once again struggles to establish such a sentiment. He grasps at the smallest opportunities to assert nationalist sentiment: parliamentary cost cutting is not simply economising, but demonstrates that parliament was, 'also suspicious about his report on Australian defence.'⁸⁵ This quickly becomes a parliamentary nationalist consensus: '[there was] genuine bipartisan concern about the dangers of organising the Australian defence forces for imperial ends.'⁸⁶ Mordike, however, finds it difficult to sustain this nationalist argument against the force of evidence to the contrary. His definition of Australian nationalism shifts from the triumphal radical version of his preface,⁸⁷ to a 'sub-imperial nationalism'⁸⁸, to merely a qualified imperialism.⁸⁹ In describing the intent behind Forrest's (Minister of Defence) *Defence Act* he concedes that it, 'like the personal loyalties he shared with most of his countrymen, was ambivalent on issues of national versus imperial loyalties.'⁹⁰ Participation in the Second South African war, which continued during Hutton's initial years in Australia, actually excited a 'popular imperialistic fervour.'⁹¹ Grey, who relies on Mordike in his discussion of Hutton's Australian command, also believes Hutton saw 'his duty in imperial and not national terms' but is similarly slippery in defining Australian nationalism, referring to 'the nationalist content of the imperial sentiment in Australia and Canada.'⁹²

Norris and Meaney provide more plausible explanations for the parliamentary resistance Hutton encountered in attempting to implement his defence plans. Both

⁸⁵ Mordike, *Army for a Nation*, 107.

⁸⁶ Mordike, *Army for a Nation*, 97.

⁸⁷ Mordike, *Army for a Nation*, xviii.

⁸⁸ Mordike, *Army for a Nation*, 56.

⁸⁹ Mordike, *Army for a Nation*, 116.

⁹⁰ Mordike, *Army for a Nation*, 77.

⁹¹ Mordike, *Army for a Nation*, 80.

⁹² J. Grey, *A Military History of Australia*, revised ed., Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1999, 62 & 67.

agree that defence was not an important issue for the Commonwealth.⁹³ The defence portfolio was initially assigned to 'the man of least stature in the whole cabinet', Dickson, who in fact died just a few weeks after assuming his new role; Forrest took over the reins hoping that Defence would prove a less taxing portfolio than the Post and Telegraph.⁹⁴ For the first Commonwealth government economy was of far greater concern than defence, especially given the restrictions on Commonwealth revenue imposed by the constitution's Braddon Clause.⁹⁵ Opposition to Hutton's policies, therefore, did not necessarily arise from an Australian nationalism. Mordike's picture of an obsessively imperialist Hutton is also distorted and Meaney, like Penlington for Canada, provides a more balanced picture, pointing to a mix of 'professional, national and imperial aims.'⁹⁶ Hutton, Meaney argues, 'belonged to a new breed of British officer' who took a 'professional and meritocratic' view of his position.⁹⁷

Failures to define key terms, particularly 'nationalism', plague many of the secondary sources that have examined Hutton's career. From this survey of the secondary literature it is apparent that Preston, Mordike and Trainor suffer from what Thompson and Cole agree to be a false dichotomy between nationalism and imperialism.⁹⁸ This corrupts their descriptions of both Hutton's imperialism and colonial identity. It also distorts their estimation of Hutton's level of agency. One of the key contentions made

⁹³ R. Norris, *The Emergent Commonwealth; Australian Federation: Expectations and Fulfilment 1889-1910*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1975, 119; N. Meaney, *A History of Australian Defence and Foreign Policy 1901-23, v. 1: The Search for Security in the Pacific, 1901-14*, Sydney University Press, Sydney, 1976, 40.

⁹⁴ Norris, *Emergent Commonwealth*, 120.

⁹⁵ Norris, *Emergent Commonwealth*, 120; Meaney, *History of Australian Defence and Foreign Policy*, 42

⁹⁶ Meaney, *History of Australian Defence and Foreign Policy*, 73.

⁹⁷ Meaney, *History of Australian Defence and Foreign Policy*, 57.

⁹⁸ D. Cole, 'The Problem of "Nationalism" and "Imperialism"', 178; A. Thompson, *Imperial Britain*, 28

by all three is that Hutton did not act from his own initiative, but at the bidding of imperialists in London such as George Clarke and Joseph Chamberlain. Porter warns against constructing a simple metropolitan against periphery model of the Empire.⁹⁹ While Hutton certainly had an imperial vision – and he did respect the imperial notables with whom he had contact – he enjoyed much freedom of action. Hutton developed and promoted his own schemes for greater imperial cooperation, asserting these views in competition with the mainstream of the imperial federation movement. On that movement Hutton pronounced publicly:

A certain influential body of those who are pressing Imperial Federation seek to bind all portions of the Empire hand and foot to one given policy both of defence and of finance. Attractive as this may seem, a sojourn in our Colonies, even of short duration, will soon demonstrate the impossibility of such a system being accepted by the majority of our fellow-subjects of Greater Britain.¹⁰⁰

Hutton's relations with London were at times as complicated as his relations with colonial governments. He was never blind to the local priorities. By the end of his career Hutton had become convinced that asking the colonies to meet requests for more definite military support without in return giving them a greater say in the use of those troops was folly.¹⁰¹

The picture of Hutton's imperialism that Preston, Mordike and Trainor present is a straw man set up to imply an opposing colonial nationalism. Penlington, Miller, Morton, Norris and Meaney explain Hutton's conflicts in the colonies more

⁹⁹ A. Porter, 'Introduction', *The Oxford History of the British Empire*, vol. 3, ed. A. Porter, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1999, 4 & 16.

¹⁰⁰ E. Hutton, 'Our Comrades of Greater Britain', Paper read before Aldershot Military Society, 24 November 1896, in E. Hutton, *The Defence and Defensive Power of Australia*, Angus and Robertson, Melbourne, 1902, 43.

¹⁰¹ Letter, Hutton to Kelly Kenny, 4 August 1902, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50097, 163.

satisfactorily by offering a range of causes: including Hutton's fiery personality, his professionalism, and, more generally, an awareness of local colonial interests. These latter historians have written good accounts of Hutton in the various phases of his colonial career. However, none of these scholars follow his career across those roles and they ask different questions to the ones posed by this thesis – why did Hutton act the way he did in the colonies? How did he view Greater Britain? How did his experiences in the colonies change that view? What does the colonial response to Hutton truly indicate? What does it reflect of their sense of identity, their relationship with Britain, and their conception of Greater Britain?

To answer these questions it is necessary to first establish Hutton's own position.

This evolved over the course of his early life and career. Greater Britain was a late nineteenth century phenomenon and Hutton did not begin his life or career pre-programmed with imperial views. Indeed he grew up in a country which looked on the British Empire very differently than it did at century's end. At the outset, Hutton shared with his stepfather a vision of a limited, civilising, just and Christian Empire. This slowly changed over the course of his early career until, in the late 1880s and 1890s, Greater Britain finally emerged as central to Hutton's worldview. This thesis will examine that change and then endeavour to apply that picture to Hutton's colonial commands.

In his role in New South Wales Hutton had his first opportunity of applying this vision; it was a period of experimentation and of discovery. He brought those lessons to Canada, his most controversial command, where he faced a unique set of challenges related to Canadian identity and its relationship to the idea of Greater

Britain. He bounced back from an embarrassing exit from that country to lead a mixed brigade of mounted troops from Britain, Canada, the Australian colonies and New Zealand on campaign in South Africa. Hutton's campaign, because of the hopes with which he invested his command, reveals the full extent of his vision for the British Army and for the British Empire. The Australian army, amalgamated after federation from the militias of the former colonies, was Hutton's final and most important colonial command. He was charged with constructing a new national army; his attempt to do so marked the culmination of his colonial career.

In each of his colonial commands Hutton engaged with colonial identity. He brought his own set of values to the task; he certainly had British interests in mind – but he was no simple-minded imperialist scheming to subvert colonial interests. His story is much more interesting than that. In his struggles to understand the colonial mind, to harness shared values, to reconcile British and colonial interests, and – yes, sometimes – to impose his own ideas on reluctant governments, he reveals the complexity of late-Victorian imperialism.

2. An Education in Empire: 1850s to 1880s

Edward Hutton carried several key ideas to his posts of command in the self-governing colonies. Ideas of imperial unity and national development were paramount. Other notions – manliness, race, Christianity, professionalism – were also prominent, feeding into the grander themes of Empire and nation. Understanding where those ideas came from is vital in understanding his actions in the colonies. As Joll discovered, when seeking to understand the mindsets of British leaders of the First World War, such ideas often develop in early life, a phase when the influence of family, teachers, and peers is strongly felt.¹ This chapter will examine the development of Hutton's thought through his childhood, education, and early career.

This period of Hutton's early life and career, besides illuminating his subsequent actions in the colonies, stands alone as a subject worthy of study. The quarter century, 1860-1885, spanned a period of great change in the British people's sense of identity, in their perceptions of themselves and of their place in the world. Streets summarises it as a 'shift from a moral, Liberal, Christian imperial ideal at mid-century to a hawkish, jingoistic, military ideal by century's end.'² The British moved from a confident, prosperous, and outward-looking mode to become warier and more defensive. This is clearly seen in their relationship with the Empire.

This chapter will seek to understand how these grand trends affected an individual – how Hutton's ideas of Empire gradually evolved to the point of his adoption of the new imperialism of the late nineteenth century. It will begin by establishing Hutton's

¹ J. Joll, '1914: The Unspoken Assumptions' in *Origins of the First World War*, ed. H. Koch, Macmillan, Basingstoke, 1972, 311.

² H. Streets, "'The Right Stamp of Men': Military Imperatives and Popular Imperialism in Late Victorian Britain', PhD Thesis, Duke University, 1998, 13.

early ambivalence towards concepts of nation and Empire. It will then study the qualities that conditioned Hutton to the embrace of a nationalist and imperialist perspective: in his schooling and early career he learned professionalism and manliness; in his first active service – the African campaigns of the early 1880s – he began to think about race; and, finally, his adoption of a nationally unifying form of Christianity was a vital element in his imperial transformation.

Edward Hutton was born into a middle class family in Torquay, Devon, on 6 December 1848. His father, a banker, perished six months later, leaving Hutton to be raised by his mother and stepfather, a lieutenant colonel of the British Army, Arthur Lawrence. Hutton grew very close to Lawrence, who raised him as his own son, and in adulthood Hutton came to regard him as ‘the kindest friend I have in the world.’³ Lawrence exerted two important influences on his young charge: a career soldier himself, he encouraged Hutton to adopt a professional approach to the army; and he was an active and evangelical Christian, prominent in military Anglican committees, who practiced the kind of doctrinally based faith dominant in British life in the first half of the century.⁴

Over the course of his early career, Hutton drifted from his stepfather’s evangelical Christianity. Indeed, by the time he came to draft his memoir, during the First World War, it was the example of his mother’s more sentimental faith that he stressed, ‘At her knee I learnt the principles of religion in its highest sense. She taught me that earnest work and thought for others should be the real aim and object of human

³ Letter, Hutton to Lawrence, 1 November 1884, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50090.

⁴ Letter, Copland-Crawford to Hutton, 22 December 1892, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50093: ‘Your dear stepfather was a leader in that regard and a great force. Why not you?’

existence.’⁵ Yet in his early life Hutton was undoubtedly affected by Lawrence’s religious position and it influenced the way he viewed the Empire. As late as 1879, in an address to the Staff College on the Zulu war, he expressed the old liberal, Christian vision of an Empire dedicated not to the expansion, or maintenance, of British power but to ‘advancing the spread of civilisation and the truths of religion.’⁶ He continued, in words that could have as easily been his stepfather’s:

But do not let us only give way to feelings akin to that of the Romans whose proud boast was that the sun never set upon their Empire – let us rather recognise the fact that we are fulfilling the inscrutable will of Providence and that it is our mission to carry civilization and the blessings of peace and religion among the native races of South Africa.

Our knowledge of the Bible will easily find some parallel to reconcile the means of war and bloodshed with the end I speak of.

As the Israelites of old were, under divine directions, destined to conquer the natives of Canaan and bring among them the knowledge of the only true God, so may we not but believe that a like demand is made upon us, and that this, our favoured nation, is but after all the instrument in God’s hand for bringing ultimate peace and the blessings of civilization upon all races, no matter what their colour, who acknowledge us as conquerors.

Let us not then repudiate our responsibility – let us rather – be we soldiers – be we civilians – be we colonists – assist in spreading the blessings of the religion

⁵ E. Hutton, ‘Memoirs of Lieutenant-General Sir Edward Hutton’, Chapter 1, 5, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50112.

⁶ E. Hutton, Notes for Lecture on ‘Personal Recollections of the Zulu War’ – presented to Staff College 1880, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50110, 75.

and civilisation which we possess among all the native races with whom we are brought in contact.⁷

Within a decade Hutton had set aside this vision and had come to view the British Empire not as a responsibility but as a privilege: an inheritance to be protected – against military and economic rivals – and unified by strengthening the bonds between Britain and her self-governing colonies.

Those self-governing colonies, which became so important to him in later life, barely figured in his thinking during his early career. When the British government began the final phasing out of the bulk of its Canadian and Australian army garrisons in the late 1860s, Hutton was serving in Canada and his battalion was withdrawn home to England. In his reaction he expressed no disquiet at the imperial implications of such a policy, fearing only the professional military consequences: ‘I hear from an extract in the St. John paper of an article in the ‘Times’, that it is far from impossible that all the troops will be withdrawn from Canada and Australia next year. I hope it will not prove to be the case, for then there will be no choice between England and India; and we shall lose the best and healthiest quarter out of England.’⁸

How did Hutton progress to an intense identification with the people of the self-governing colonies from that dispassionate starting point? How did he move from a vision of a civilising and Christian Empire, with a mission to assist the undeveloped world, to a beleaguered Empire, whose maintenance was vital to the wealth and security of the British nation?

⁷ E. Hutton, ‘Personal Recollections of the Zulu War’, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50110, 76 (Hutton’s emphasis).

⁸ Letter, Hutton to Mother, 25 October 1868, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50090.

The British people as a whole embraced late-Victorian imperialism in response to an internal need for new forms of identity and the external stimulus of growing economic and military competition. Hutton's adoption of the idea of Greater Britain can be understood in the same way. His perception of his role within society – as a professional soldier and a manly officer – oriented him to a British nationalist and imperialist perspective. His awareness of external threats to British power spurred him along in that direction and influenced his views on race. The change in his religious belief would prove decisive.

A defining quality of Hutton's military career was the professional spirit with which he approached it. In this he reflected something of the age. Bowle suggests that the most characteristic idea of the Victorian era was 'progress.'⁹ The rise of professionalism accompanied this, a result of the specialization forced by advances in technology and a response to the requirements of increasingly bureaucratic and competitive states.¹⁰ This was particularly marked in the last two decades of the nineteenth century when the number of professional associations in Britain almost doubled (from 27 to 49).¹¹ Hutton came to identify with this group; for example, in 1897 he wrote to Charles Dilke (author of *Greater Britain*) on the subject of army reform:

To break down the barrier of social, court and professional conservatism now in times of professional peace is, many of us think impracticable – no one except a

⁹ J. Bowle, 'Origins and Development of the Idea of Progress' in *Ideas and Beliefs of the Victorians: an historic revaluation of the Victorian Age*, Sylvan Press, London, 1949.

¹⁰ G. Kitson Clark, *An Expanding Society: Britain 1830-1900*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1967, 167; S. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations*, Harvard University Press, Massachusetts, 1957, 32.

¹¹ H. Perkin, *The Rise of Professional Society: England Since 1880*, Routledge, London, 1989, 20.

professional man and one who has the business instincts common enough in commercial life can really grasp the hopeless chaos.¹²

This quote also indicates that, although a professional viewpoint flourished, it was largely restricted to the middle class. In the British army it remained a rare quality, limited to particular regiments and individuals (such as Garnet Wolseley and his clique).¹³ Most officers of Hutton's day were dilettantes and romantic amateurs, gentlemen who had bought their commissions and who treated soldiering as a respectable and congenial pursuit, but one not to be taken too seriously. They were largely uninterested in exploring military problems; for instance, the discussion of professional matters in the officers' mess was virtually forbidden.¹⁴ Hutton was a much more vigorous and intellectually engaged officer: he actively sought out opportunities for professional education and advancement, he investigated technical questions in a scientific spirit, and he attempted to spread this professional spirit amongst the rest of the British officer corps.

An understanding of Hutton's professionalism is essential for two reasons – it motivated him and it was intimately tied to his developing sense of identity.

Professionalism was a powerful driver that propelled Hutton on an ambitious career path. It drove him to study the defensive problems of the Empire, to draft solutions, and to travel to the furthest reaches of the Empire in order to implement those schemes. It also thrust him into conflicts with politicians and fellow officers who did

¹² Letter, Hutton to Dilke, 9 February 1897, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50095.

¹³ G. Wolseley, *The Story of a Soldier's Life*, Vol. 2, Archibald Constable and Co., Westminster, 1903, 233.

¹⁴ Hutton, 'Memoirs', Chapter 11, 2.

not share his views. Huntington points out that the great problem with military professionalism is that it generates tension between the expert and the politician, between the military and civilian spheres, and indeed Hutton's professionalism would later impact on his relations with colonial governments.¹⁵

Hutton's professionalism is also of significance in its connection to his budding nationalism – it mediated the way he attached his sense of identity to the British nation and the British Empire. A professional is not simply an expert; they also derive status by using their skills to serve society or the nation. This distinguishes them from mere money-makers or entrepreneurs.¹⁶ As Reader puts it, the professional class comprises a 'subtle blend of self-interest and public spirit.'¹⁷ Also noting this, Kitson Clark connects the growth of British professionalism in the nineteenth century to the challenge facing the class system; the great expansion of the middle class demanded new ways of making a gentleman and professional careers offered a means of attaining the necessary respectability.¹⁸

For professional soldiers this idea of service was, if anything, more significant than it was for the other classes of professional. Huntington and Bond agree that a professional officer corps requires a single, permanent source of authority to give it legitimacy and that its development in the nineteenth century was tied to the appearance of nation-states.¹⁹ As a professional-minded officer Hutton came to view

¹⁵ Huntington, *Soldier and the State*, 20.

¹⁶ Perkin, *The Rise of Professional Society*, 121 and 123.

¹⁷ W. Reader, *Professional Men: The Rise of the Professional Classes in Nineteenth-Century England*, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London, 1966, 2, 199 and 203.

¹⁸ G. Kitson Clark, *The Making of Victorian England*, Methuen and Co, London, 1962, 255.

¹⁹ B. Bond, *The Victorian Army and the Staff College 1854-1914*, Eyre Methuen, London, 1972, 13; Huntington, *Soldier and the State*, 35.

himself as a defender of the Empire, responsible to the nation and not just to a particular class. The way he conducted himself professionally informed and reflected his growing nationalism and it is therefore vital to understand whence that professionalism came.

Hutton inherited much of his military professionalism from his stepfather. Lawrence had forged a successful career from soldiering and he encouraged his sons to do likewise. In their youth he prompted them to seek opportunities that would prepare them for successful lives in the military; for example, he had his sons learn French and German before enlisting since language was a valuable skill, and an aid to promotion, but not taught within the army.²⁰ He sent Hutton to Switzerland after Eton for a year's study of French and Classics in preparation for the army entrance exam.²¹ Throughout Hutton's early career Lawrence was a constant influence, prompting him to seek all manner of opportunities for professional advancement. It was at his stepfather's instigation that Hutton attended Staff College in the early 1880s.²²

This family professionalism was bound up in their relatively humble class position. In his memoir Hutton is defensive about the paucity of information he provides about his family: 'I propose, therefore, to preface this narrative with a brief allusion to my family, showing how in my case, heredity may have been an important element in the formation of my character, but in a far greater degree how environment exercised a controlling power, and one to which I feel indebted in no small measure.'²³ This statement reveals a measure of awkwardness in Hutton's attitude to his family's place

²⁰ Letter, Lawrence to Hutton, 17 July 1879, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50090.

²¹ Hutton, 'Memoirs', Chapter 1, 8.

²² Letter, Hutton to Father, 24 June 1881, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50090.

²³ Hutton, 'Memoirs', Chapter 1, 1.

in British society. While he was educated at Eton, studied abroad, had a commission in a good regiment purchased for him, mixed with generals, and eventually married into the aristocracy, he was not born into that class. He was sensitive to this. In his memoir he described, for instance, Lady Charles Paulet's hesitation in allowing his marriage to her daughter.²⁴ Given this sensitivity it was natural for him to place environment over heredity. And it was natural for him to adopt the army as a sort of surrogate family. He threw all his energy into becoming the most successful officer he could because for him the army became a principal source, and not merely an expression, of his sense of identity. His authority would depend on his skills as an expert and his service to the nation, rather than from any automatic status attached to his class.

This was of course a two-edged sword and, just as industrialisation had undermined traditional social ties, professionalism would increasingly challenge the old, purely aristocratic basis of the officer corps, causing Hutton to chafe against dilettantes who looked 'upon their profession as a source of amusement and pleasure,' products of the 'mischievous Purchase system.'²⁵

Hutton's intense identification with his school, Eton, which he attended for just over two years in the mid-1860s, also grew from class. Eton, ironically, had been established so that poor students might have the opportunity to be educated alongside wealthy gentlemen. From the mid-nineteenth century, however, the middle classes sought to distinguish themselves within society and to be an Etonian became a social

²⁴ Hutton, 'Memoirs', Chapter 12, 1.

²⁵ Hutton, 'Memoirs', Chapter 3, 2.

distinction in itself.²⁶ Hutton formed a lifelong connection with the school, despite the brevity of his enrolment; such was its significance to his sense of status. He willingly adopted the ideals and attitudes of that institution.

A particular master at Eton, Edmund Warre, fostered Hutton's military professionalism. Hutton spent two years under Warre's tutelage, the beginning of a lasting acquaintance. Warre had only recently begun teaching at Eton (he later became headmaster and then provost of the school); he was young, in his twenties, and saw himself as something of a new broom. During the height of the 1859 war scare, a volunteer movement spread throughout Britain, Tennyson penned his poem, 'Form, Riflemen, Form,' and Volunteer Rifle Corps sprung up around the country.²⁷ Warre had been swept up in this – he joined the Oxford Rifle Corps and, in his first year at Eton, he founded the Eton cadet corps, borrowing drill instructors from the Windsor Grenadier Guards.²⁸ This cadet corps became his educational passion. In 1866 he reconstituted the corps, joining it to the local Bucks Volunteers and equipping his boys with Enfield rifles.²⁹ He instituted an army class, to specially prepare boys for a military career.³⁰ Hutton saw Warre as his first military instructor, describing him as, 'by education and circumstances a Parson, and English Gentleman, a Scholar and a Schoolmaster, but by nature a Soldier, a Man of Action and a Leader of men.'³¹

²⁶ C. Hollis, *Eton: A History*, Hollis and Carter, London, 1960, 289.

²⁷ J. Dunlop, *The Development of the British Army 1899-1914*, Methuen, London, 1938, 56.

²⁸ A. Ainger, *Memories of Eton Sixty Years Ago*, John Murray, London, 1917, 275 and 277.

²⁹ Ainger, *Memories of Eton Sixty Years Ago*, 49.

³⁰ Hollis, *Eton: A History*, 284.

³¹ E. Hutton, 'Life of the Rev Edmund Warre', BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50111, 278.

Warre was also Hutton's first connection to the clique of very influential army officers led by Garnet Wolseley. Redvers Buller, one of the principal members of that group, had been Warre's fag at Eton. Hutton claimed Warre admired Wolseley as 'the greatest Military Genius of our era' and sympathised with Wolseley's aim to reform the army, extend the educational opportunities for officers, and implement modern ideas of military organisation and tactics.³² Hutton's military professionalism, which derived from his stepfather, was affirmed by Warre who once declared, 'the safety and success of an army depends more than ever upon the intelligence and professional knowledge of the officers.'³³

Warre had a dominating, charismatic influence on his students.³⁴ He exercised a profound influence on Hutton. Such was his debt to his teacher that, on Warre's death, Hutton composed a panegyric, his, 'Life of the Rev. Edmund Warre.'³⁵ In it, Hutton described Warre as a kind of manly apostle: 'The boys around him seemed to breathe an atmosphere of manliness and to become inspired by his magnetic power with the highest principles of honour and of truth.'³⁶ Warre's 'manly physical bearing' had an 'ascendancy over the Eton boys, such indeed as only a school hero of the highest merit and renown can ever achieve.'³⁷ Warre fused together the virtues of an imperial, athletic, ethical manliness in the profession of soldiering.

This ideal of manliness – the idea that vitality, verve and 'go-aheadness' are linked to an outdoors, athletic and sporting life – became another essential pillar of Hutton's

³² Hutton, 'Life of the Rev Edmund Warre', 281.

³³ E. Warre, 'History of Tactics', Lecture 2, *Military Lectures*, Aldershot Military Society, 23 February 1888, 3.

³⁴ Ainger, *Memories of Eton Sixty Years Ago*, 59; Hollis, *Eton: A History*, 286.

³⁵ Hutton, 'Life of the Rev Edmund Warre', 275.

³⁶ Hutton, 'Life of the Rev Edmund Warre', 279.

³⁷ Hutton, 'Life of the Rev Edmund Warre', 275.

identity. Hutton's idea of manly virtue is significant because, with his professionalism, it informed the character of his developing nationalism and imperialism. Hutton's professionalism lent him a legitimacy founded on expertise rather than class and thereby helped transfer his sense of primary loyalty to the nation. Skill alone, however, was not deemed a sufficient basis for leadership and the qualities valued in an officer largely remained those of the country gentleman: strength, courage, honour, and skill on horseback.³⁸ A bias persisted in favour of 'natural' education as against 'artificial' classroom study.³⁹ A quality was wanted to fill the place of aristocratic notions of an inherited chivalry and a manly, physical bearing substituted for aristocratic blood as the basis for the right to leadership, thereby serving to enhance the connection between officers and the nation.

In his view of manliness, Hutton reflected a general trend in late-Victorian society. Tosh describes a consensus position among scholars in the field that representations of masculinity changed during the nineteenth century, from the 'earnest, expressive manliness of the Evangelicals to the hearty, stiff-upper-lip variant in the era of Kitchener and Baden-Powell.'⁴⁰ He warns that this was mainly confined to the upper classes but suggests that, at moments of alarm about British military preparedness (and the 1860s were such a moment), this bled into the mainstream.⁴¹ Deslandes, in his examination of the undergraduate culture at Oxford and Cambridge, concludes that there was a firm emphasis in this period on traits such as fortitude, loyalty,

³⁸ Reader, *Professional Men*, 74.

³⁹ Bond, *The Victorian Army and the Staff College*, 19.

⁴⁰ J. Tosh, 'What Should Historians do with Masculinity? Reflections on Nineteenth-Century Britain', *History Workshop Journal*, 38, 1994, 181.

⁴¹ Tosh, 'What Should Historians do with Masculinity?', 182.

athleticism, respect, tradition and service.⁴² Dawson suggests that this, like professionalism, was related to the changing class structure: the middle class sought to appropriate the 'romance of heroic adventure' as part of their bid for power.⁴³

At Eton, manliness was primarily transmitted through sport. Under Warre's influence a vigorous athletic culture developed at Eton.⁴⁴ This was a decided change for the school – in the early half of the century sportsmen were discouraged (and if they dared leave the grounds to represent the school in games they were flogged).⁴⁵ Crotty suggests that by the 1870s athleticism had become rampant in British public schools and attributes the rise to a fear of impending war: fit boys were necessary to defend the nation.⁴⁶ Militarism was in the air, and athleticism had a serious purpose. The soldier, and more particularly the officer, came to represent a masculine ideal.

After Eton, Lawrence directed the early stages of Hutton's military career. He purchased a commission for his son in the 60th Rifles in August 1867. Lawrence followed his son's early progress with a keen eye, corresponding with Colonel Hawley, Hutton's new colonel.⁴⁷ Lawrence's choice of regiment was significant. He looked at only the most professionally dynamic regiments in the army for his son, eschewing the aristocratic but effete cavalry. Hutton echoed these prejudices, writing to his stepfather of his new regiment: 'My brother officers are... fellows, and above all such gentlemen, no "cavalry swagger" about them, but simply gentlemen.'⁴⁸ The 60th

⁴² P. Deslandes, "'The Foreign Element': Newcomers and the Rhetoric of Race, Nation, and Empire in 'Oxbridge' Undergraduate Culture, 1850-1920', *Journal of British Studies*, 37, 1998, 57 and 62.

⁴³ G. Dawson, *Soldier Heroes: British adventure, Empire and the Imagining of Masculinities*, Routledge, London, 1994, 108.

⁴⁴ Mangan, *The Games Ethic and Imperialism*, 23.

⁴⁵ Hollis, *Eton: A History*, 294.

⁴⁶ Crotty, *Making the Australian Male*, 222.

⁴⁷ Letter, Hawley to Lawrence, 25 September 1868, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50090.

⁴⁸ Letter, Hutton to Lawrence, 8 December 1868, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50090.

Rifles were a forward-looking regiment. They were proud of encouraging an 'independence of thought' and of having a tradition of adopting 'new methods.'⁴⁹

Hutton joined the 4th Battalion of the 60th Rifles, then stationed in New Brunswick, Canada. These first few months, spent in Canada, worked to confirm and extend the ethos inculcated in Hutton at Eton. Hutton recalled in his memoir that, 'the spirit of Eton was in a large measure the spirit of the Regiment.'⁵⁰ He discovered that most of his fellow officers were former Etonians. It was a Regiment entirely in sympathy with the type of education Hutton had received at Warre's hands – in fact Warre himself later trained with the Regiment, learning modern tactics with which he then drilled his cadets at Eton.⁵¹

Hutton was very impressed with his new colonel, Hawley, describing him as, 'as near to my... ideal of a Colonel as it is possible for any ordinary individual to be.'⁵²

Hawley was the model of a professional soldier. He developed novel systems of training and tactics and had an enlightened concern in the welfare of his soldiers.⁵³

The key to Hawley's approach was the devolution of command – a trust in the capacity of his soldiers and junior officers. Hutton explained this in a letter to his mother:

I was quite astonished to find how well the art of light infantry movements was understood by the men, it would have charmed Papa to see how each individual soldier seemed alive to the advantage to be gained by the smallest [illegible] or

⁴⁹ E. Hutton, 'Introduction', *A Brief History of the King's Royal Rifle Corps 1755-1948*, 3rd ed, Wellington Press, Aldershot, 1948, 1.

⁵⁰ Hutton, 'Memoirs', Chapter 2, 2.

⁵¹ Hutton, 'Life of the Rev Edmund Warre', 280.

⁵² Letter, Hutton to Lawrence, 8 December 1868, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50090.

⁵³ Hutton, 'Memoirs', Chapter 2, 2.

inequality in the ground. The Colonel's system is I think a very good one – he assembles the officers and explains how he wishes a certain manoeuvre done, for instance we are supposed to be marching up a road and deadly artillery open fire on us, we extend at once on each side of the road, leaving the road itself clear, and get under cover ourselves whence we can keep up an effective fire on the enemy and yet be protected to a certain extent: well this having been explained to us we return to our respective companies and explain it fully to the men, and then execute it by companies. This enables the men to follow what is going on, and they take it in, and understand the idea thoroughly.⁵⁴

Hawley's approach to training had made a great impression on Hutton. The idea that individual officers and even soldiers could be trusted to act independently was founded on assumptions about the character of those men. At the end of his career, summarising the key lesson he had learned from Hawley, Hutton wrote that,

The essence of Hawley's training was the development to the utmost of individuality among his officers and riflemen. He recognised that the chief characteristic of our race – the true source of our greatness as a world-power – is the self-reliance and initiative of the free-born individual Briton, and the recognition that the machine-like methods of collectivism, as practised in the conscript armies in Europe, has no true place among successful British troops.⁵⁵

It is significant that Hutton attached 'individuality' to 'race.' Hawley's training taught Hutton to identify with his soldiers and to view them as fellow 'Britons', members of the same race and the same nation. Such respect for the individual soldier necessitated a greater duty of care and this was linked to a shared national mission; Hawley taught, 'firstly, assiduous care in the organization, the well-being, and the

⁵⁴ Letter, Hutton to Mother, 18 October 1868, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50090.

⁵⁵ Hutton, 'Memoirs', Chapter 2, 4 (Hutton's emphasis).

discipline of all ranks; secondly, the physical and mental culture of officers and men; and lastly, that forgetfulness of self and of self-interest which prompts Englishmen under all conceivable circumstances to 'play the game' – to sacrifice all, their lives if need be – in fulfilling their duty.⁵⁶

Hutton's inculcation into a manly, sporting culture also continued in Canada. Writing home to his mother, Hutton expressed his ambition of soon becoming 'an efficient sportsman.'⁵⁷ Hawley encouraged his officers to hunt, freely granting them leave for shooting expeditions. He believed that there was no better form of training for young officers.⁵⁸ For Hutton's contemporaries, hunting was deemed 'the manliest of sports.'⁵⁹ The sport was associated with the best qualities of the British character, 'dash, determination, and go-straight-to-the-pointness.'⁶⁰ Hunting produced the ideal type of soldier, 'no man takes so readily to soldiering as a sportsman, and particularly a man who rides well to hounds.'⁶¹ It is not surprising that hunting was particularly prized as a manly sport, drawing, as it did, on aristocratic traditions of leadership. By joining rides and shoots, Hutton connected himself with that tradition. By emphasising the sporting and athletic aspects of the hunt, however, he helped reposition it as a sport for men, rather than a sport for a privileged elite.⁶²

⁵⁶ Hutton, 'Memoirs', Chapter 2, 4.

⁵⁷ Letter, Hutton to Mother, 24 September 1868, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50090.

⁵⁸ Hutton, 'Memoirs', Chapter 2, 8.

⁵⁹ Lord Minto, 'Introduction', in E. Alderson, *Pink & Scarlet: or Hunting as a School for Soldiering*, London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1913, vii.

⁶⁰ Alderson, *Pink & Scarlet*, 4.

⁶¹ Lord Minto, 'Introduction', *Pink & Scarlet*, ix.

⁶² What was progressive in the 1860s was rather less so forty years later when Hutton's continuing attachment to the hunt became something reactionary and, even, unprofessional. De Lisle recalls with a shudder an incident during the Boer War when he marched with Hutton's brigade – a herd of Blesbok stampeded through the column and several officers began shooting, heedless of the danger to the men and badly wounding one. Chief amongst these 'thoughtless sportsmen' was Hutton. [De Lisle, 'Memoirs of the Great Boer War', KCL, De Lisle Papers, GB99 KCLMA De Lisle Item 2 Vol 1].

The completion of the withdrawal of the colonial garrisons that precipitated Hutton's departure from Canada was one of a series of reforms instituted by Edward Cardwell, the British Secretary of State for War from 1868 to 1874. During that term of office, Cardwell restructured the British army. He made his office supreme over the military administration, he ended the purchase of commissions (from 1 Nov 1871), and he reduced the minimum term of military service from twelve to six years. In effecting these reforms Cardwell received the support of the army's most dynamic general, Wolseley.⁶³ These reforms, especially the abolition of purchase, encouraged officers to take their work in the army seriously and to treat it as a profession. Junior officers now had to qualify for their ranks and courses were set up to prepare them.

The abolition of purchase spurred Hutton on in his professionalism. In his ambition to gain up-to-date military knowledge, he travelled (on his own initiative) to the continent to view the 1870 Franco-Prussian war. This war would have profound impact on British military thought; as Wolseley put it, 'it silenced those who had been loudest in denunciation of war as the inhuman practice of a barbarian age, and in their honest, though foolish, pooh-poohing of any possibility of its recurrence upon a great scale in civilized Europe.'⁶⁴ Hutton travelled to the site of Germany's most crushing victory and in his diary expressed a passing sympathy for the victims of the conflict, 'conversation with these poor people who have seen and have suffered so much is interesting to me in the extreme.'⁶⁵ He was far more interested, however, in the professional, as opposed to the human, side of the war. He was very impressed by the Prussian army. He particularly admired the fact that each battalion had its own supply

⁶³ E. Spiers, *The Late Victorian Army 1868-1902*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1992, 8.

⁶⁴ Wolseley, *The Story of a Soldier's Life*, 227-8.

⁶⁵ E. Hutton, 'Diary of visit to Franco-Prussian War', 31 October 1870, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50107, 28.

arrangements, enabling them to move independently of the transport corps.⁶⁶ In his later colonial commands he paid especial attention to the transport arrangements of his field armies, and this seems to have been the earliest inspiration for that reform.

Hutton's obsession with manliness also comes through in his diary describing his trip to the Franco-Prussian war. He admired the 'workmanlike' quality of the Prussian troops and especially of their 'well-bred' officers.⁶⁷ On the other hand he despised the Americans he saw, 'who ape the French in manners and dress, especially in high heeled boots poor creatures! and the men most particularly seem to have an effeminacy of voice which I think is a very sure sign of the degeneracy of all the most noble manly qualities.'⁶⁸

In his schooling and early years in the army, therefore, Hutton attained two essential qualities: professionalism and manliness. Professionalism promoted a scientific and Rational approach to soldiering; manliness, on the other hand, was an essentially Romantic notion – heroic, chivalric and vital. The upwardly mobile middle class reconciled these two quite distinct qualities: they harnessed progress for power and tradition for legitimacy. In Hutton, the two qualities operated together. His manliness was intimately connected to his professional sense: as a young officer, for example, he took pains to organise for his battalion rifle and athletics meets, boxing, cricket and football games in the belief that, 'all great leaders of troops in all ages seem to have laid great stress upon team games.'⁶⁹ When Hutton entered Staff College, he was

⁶⁶ Hutton, 'Diary of visit to Franco-Prussian War', 31 October 1870, 28.

⁶⁷ Hutton, 'Diary of visit to Franco-Prussian War', 9 November 1870, 57.

⁶⁸ Hutton, 'Diary of visit to Franco-Prussian War', 29 October 1870, 4.

⁶⁹ Hutton, 'Memoirs', Chapter 3, 8.

elected whip and the Honorary Secretary of Drag, and captain of the cricket eleven.⁷⁰ These appointments were boons to his career. He described them as ‘positions which were much in demand and considered to be antecedents to coveted staff appointments later.’⁷¹ The commandant of the Staff College in fact placed such emphasis on hunting that a bad rider was effectively barred a staff appointment.⁷² Sporting excellence was equated with professional vitality and verve. Hutton encouraged his brother Fred to take up cricket, suggesting, ‘In the cricket field or racket court or in the hunting field you will always find the best and most go ahead fellows in every garrison.’⁷³ He confided to Fred that he would be as proud seeing him playing at Lords as he would at the top of the Sandhurst admissions list – he felt Fred needed no encouragement academically (his stepfather no doubt provided that) but needed prodding towards sports.⁷⁴

In the period 1879 to 1885 Hutton had his first experiences of active service, fighting in a series of small wars in Africa: the Zulu War (1879), the first Boer war (1881), the Egyptian campaign (1882), and the relief expedition to the Sudan (1884 and 1885). It was a vital phase in Hutton’s progression towards the adoption of the idea of Greater Britain. Under the test of battle, Hutton’s qualities of professionalism and manliness matured. This period also offers insights into Hutton’s early racial thinking.

Hawley’s influence was enduring. In 1876 Hutton wrote his first book, based upon Hawley’s system, entitled, *Light Drill for Men in the 60th Rifles*. In it he promoted

⁷⁰ Hutton, ‘Memoirs’, Chapter 5, 1.

⁷¹ Hutton, ‘Memoirs’, Chapter 5, 1.

⁷² Alderson, *Pink & Scarlet*, 4.

⁷³ Letter, Hutton to brother, Fred, 25 April 1881, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50090.

⁷⁴ Letter, Hutton to brother, Fred, 11 May 1879, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50090; Letter, Hutton to brother, Fred, 25 April 1881, postscript, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50090.

the individuality of riflemen and the importance of acting 'as little like machines as possible.'⁷⁵ His respect for the qualities of the soldiers as individuals is also evident in remarks in his letters home from the 1879 Zulu campaign, which followed from the disastrous defeat of Lord Chelmsford's South African army and was the first war Hutton participated in: 'the more I see of the soldier,' he wrote to his stepfather, 'the more certain I feel that we do not give him credit for the intelligence, and quickness of perception which he possesses – this quality is particularly marked with us, who recruit almost entirely from London.'⁷⁶ Hutton, taught by Hawley to promote individual resourcefulness in order to achieve the tactics and manoeuvres required by the modern battlefield, had abandoned the aristocratic disdain with which a British officer traditionally viewed the recruit. This growing identification with the British soldier would influence his adoption of a racial perspective.

Hutton's view of the British soldier matched a general shift in the attitude of the British public towards the troops. Anderson notes that, after the Crimea, the British public began to look far more fondly on their soldiers: early in the century they had been feared as drunken, press-ganged louts and were often refused service and even denied communion while in uniform; after the Crimea, preachers began to associate the army's mission with Christian virtue.⁷⁷ Anderson ascribes this to a general militarisation of the British public.⁷⁸ The practical effects of this were improvements made to the conditions of army service in the latter part of the nineteenth century –

⁷⁵ E. Hutton, Circular letter, 1876, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50092.

⁷⁶ Letter, Hutton to Lawrence, 14 March 1879, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50090.

⁷⁷ O. Anderson, 'The growth of Christian militarism in mid-Victorian Britain', *English Historical Review*, January 1971, 46.

⁷⁸ Anderson, 'The growth of Christian militarism in mid-Victorian Britain', 52.

rations, barracks, and leisure facilities were all improved with the hope of attracting more recruits.⁷⁹

The British public's growing militarism also fostered a greater coverage of military affairs and correspondents followed the army on most of its campaigns in this period. Individual officers, such as Wolseley, Roberts and Buller, had risen on the basis of their public reputations and had realised the importance of fostering good relationships with the press.⁸⁰ Hutton was beginning to understand the importance of the press, too. During the first few months of the Zulu War he worked as a paid correspondent for the *Times*, describing the movements of his regiment. In May 1879, when Hutton was appointed to the staff of General Crealock, he gave up his presswork, lamenting that, 'All my friends are not equally scrupulous.'⁸¹ Hutton's relationship with the press over the course of his career is an interesting one, marked by a conflict between his professional ambition and his sense of professional conduct; and between his relationship with the public and his relationships with his fellow officers.

Hutton's professional military ambitions began to be fulfilled in Africa. His appointment as aide de camp to Major-General Hope Crealock on 30 April 1879, owing to good reports of his conduct on the march to Ekowe, marked the beginning of a military career outside his regiment – promising new paths to promotion and allowing Hutton more freedom to manage the direction of his career.⁸² Ambitious officers of Hutton's day would transfer between regiments to participate in as many

⁷⁹ Streets, 'The Right Stamp of Men', 57.

⁸⁰ A. Tucker, 'Army and Society in England 1870-1900: A Reassessment of the Cardwell Reforms', *Journal of British Studies*, May 1963, 117.

⁸¹ Letter, Hutton to Lawrence, 16 July 1879, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50090.

⁸² Letter, Hutton to Lawrence, 29 April 1879 [30/4 postscript], BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50090.

campaigns as possible in the hope of receiving brevet promotions (an army rather than a regimental rank).⁸³ Shortly after accepting the post Hutton received an offer from Redvers Buller, commanding the Frontier Light Horse, to act as his second in command. He would quickly regret his rejection of that offer: Buller's force was operating with Evelyn Wood's column and both were members of Garnet Wolseley's 'Ashanti ring'; Wolseley assumed command of the British campaign in June. His 'ring' was a coterie of British officers formed from the thirty-six officers whom he led in the Ashanti campaign of 1873.⁸⁴ This group of reform-minded officers mostly fought together in a series of campaigns over the next few decades.

In contrast to the dynamic, modern style of Wolseley and his disciples, Hutton's new commander in South Africa, Crealock, proved to be cautious and plodding. Wolseley commented that no one who knew him would appoint Crealock to a 'command requiring dash and energetic movements.'⁸⁵ Crealock positioned his force badly, it was poorly supplied, unable to support Lord Chelmsford, and so far from its target Ulundi that, according to Wolseley, it 'might as well have been operating on the road to Aldershot.'⁸⁶ Hutton learned valuable lessons of the importance of transport, of adequate medical arrangements, and of mobility.⁸⁷ But they were lessons grounded in frustration and by July Hutton fully realised his mistake in not joining Buller's force.

⁸³ E. Spiers, *The Army and Society 1815-1914*, Longman, London, 1980, 19.

⁸⁴ Strachan, *The Politics of the British Army*, 103.

⁸⁵ Letter, Wolseley to Stanley, 4 July 1879, Hove, Garnet Wolseley Papers, SA.2 South Africa 1879-80, 20.

⁸⁶ Letter, Wolseley to Stanley, 4 July 1879, Hove, Garnet Wolseley Papers, SA.2 South Africa 1879-80, 21.

⁸⁷ On medical arrangements: he deplores lack of surgeons and army's failure to make adequate medical arrangements in Letter, Hutton to Lawrence, 7 April 1879, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50090; on mobility: he sees the potential of mounted infantry in countries such as South Africa with poor roads and rail - Letter, Hutton to Lawrence, 9 April 1879, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50090; On supplies: he favours the decentralisation ideas of the Germans and control of supplies being given to officers in 1880 lecture 'The Operations of the 1st Division or Coast Column under General Hope Crealock in Zulu War 1879', BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50110, 33.

He confided to his stepfather his disappointment with Crealock as a commander, his despair that in the public's estimation all their tiresome labour would count for nothing, and he took solace only in the fact that Wolseley would shortly arrive – presenting him with an opportunity 'of making valuable acquaintances.'⁸⁸ Hutton had seen no action and therefore received no promotion. Worse yet was Wolseley's disdain: he could 'ill disguise his opinion of our General's slow but sure strategy, and we in his Staff come in for our share of ill favour.'⁸⁹

In May 1879 Hutton attended the bedside of Arthur Mynoor, a British officer and fellow Etonian, dying of disease by the Inyzane river. He was so deeply moved by the experience that he wrote his stepfather, 'His last moments were so extraordinarily happy that I must tell you how one of the noblest specimens of an Eton boy I have ever met can die even in the horrible tortures of a wasting and frightful disease like dysentery.' He wrote of prayers, of lending Mynoor his one luxury, a pillow, and of the young officer's dying words, 'Hush, don't touch me. I am going to heaven.'⁹⁰ He also asked his stepfather to convey his report to Warre, who had been Mynoor's tutor, to be sent on to the boy's parents. Warre used the account in a Sunday sermon to the boys at Eton. Mynoor represented the ideal Etonian warrior as cultivated by Warre: he was a sportsman ('a plucky rider, and first rate runner'), a Christian, and he met death with a stoic, manly bravery.⁹¹ This episode reveals that, fifteen years on from his education at Eton, Hutton remained deeply influenced by that schooling. He did not merely continue to subscribe to the Etonian ideal; but, in his continuing relationship with his *alma mater*, he helped it to flourish.

⁸⁸ Letter, Hutton to Lawrence, 3 July 1879, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50090.

⁸⁹ Letter, Hutton to Lawrence, 23 July 1879, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50090.

⁹⁰ Letter, Hutton to Lawrence, 3 May 1879, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50090.

⁹¹ Letter, Hutton to Lawrence, 3 May 1879, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50090.

This ideal contrasted starkly with Hutton's impression of his quarry, the Zulu, whom he viewed as an inhuman and savage race:

He is a brutal, fat, cunning looking savage, with a cast in his eye and a tendency to elephantiasis, brought on they say by drinking beer – His wives, six in number, are more distinguished for their want of clothing than for their beauty – a string of small coloured beads being the sole costume of his favourite spouse! These savages are the only instance I have ever heard of human beings who had no religion, and no systems of burying their dead – for you cannot call a few superstitious sites a religion. However both physically and mentally these Zulus are a very vigorous race.⁹²

Hutton's use of race changed significantly over the course of his life. As he became more fearful for the continuance of British power, he became ever more absolute in his racial language. To give one example: his initial opinion of the French Canadians, formed in the 1860s, was of a 'very industrious quiet people... [who] speak their own language and keep to themselves in consequence; but they get on well with their English neighbours.'⁹³ At the turn of the century, following his Canadian command and his experience of French Canadian opposition to the Second South African War, that early tolerance had completely vanished, 'Must they not feel that the day will dawn when an Australian Army will land in Vancouver, a British Army at Quebec, and a South African Army at St John N.B. who together will force the French

⁹² Letter, Hutton to Lawrence, 23 April 79, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50090.

⁹³ Letter, Hutton to Mother, 12 November 1868, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50090.

Canadian of the future to forever hold his peace should his efforts to force the tricolor upon Canada make such efforts necessary.⁹⁴

Britons, generally, changed in their use of race from mid-century. Though they had previously felt a measure of superiority towards other peoples, this tended to be conceived as a cultural rather than racial difference; in the latter part of the century, however, such difference was increasingly viewed as inherited and innate.⁹⁵ Noting the shift, Thompson provides the important corrective that Britain never experienced the kind of xenophobia which occurred elsewhere in Europe.⁹⁶ Nevertheless, the old liberal and Protestant hope for individual – and national – salvation was challenged by this new idea. Lorimer explains it as a product of changes in the British class structure: membership of a common race promised all orders of society a connection to the nation.⁹⁷ Rich suggests that external competition and imperial expansion were also powerful drivers behind the change.⁹⁸ Both arguments have force: the use of race in the late nineteenth century was at once an expression of fear and a call for unity – and in both senses it was essential in the development of the idea of Greater Britain.

During the Zulu war, Hutton was quite ambivalent in his racial thinking. He tended to relate the experience of war itself to his closest peacetime equivalent, hunting, once confessing to his stepfather that, 'I am rather ashamed to own it, but I like this life and am as happy as the day is long. It is to me like a shooting expedition only there is no

⁹⁴ Letter, Hutton to Minto, 10 January 1902, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50081, 72.

⁹⁵ A. Porter, 'Introduction', *The Oxford History of the British Empire*, vol. 3, ed. A. Porter, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1999, 22; Streets, 'The Right Stamp of Men', 10.

⁹⁶ A. Thompson, 'Thinking Imperially? Imperial Pressure Groups and the Idea of Empire in Late-Victorian and Edwardian Britain', DPhil Thesis, Corpus Christi College, Oxford, 1994, 170.

⁹⁷ D. Lorimer, *Colour, Class and the Victorians: English attitudes to the Negro in the mid-nineteenth century*, Leicester University Press, Leicester, 1978, 16 & 113.

⁹⁸ P. Rich, *Race and Empire in British Politics*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1986, 12.

actual sport!’⁹⁹ And he accepted the justice of British actions; yet still felt sincere regret at the consequences. This is most evident in his pity for the victims of British punitive raids, ‘poor people we burnt their kraals – necessary to show our intentions to enforce our demands – (I suppose!!)’¹⁰⁰ In July, at the war’s end, Hutton was surprised at the docility of his former enemy, ‘They have the most perfect confidence in our good faith. These savages who two weeks since would have assegaied us all if they could, now stand round as we pass looking on with the greatest interest, and kindly looks – and come into our camps and laugh and talk to our men without the least apparent dread of us.’¹⁰¹ He ascribed to the Zulu an almost child-like simplicity but still retained his stepfather’s liberal, Christian paternalism. Rich describes this ambivalent mixture of feelings, suggesting the British saw the blacks as ‘both savage and bestial figures who needed to be controlled at all costs and as passive and helpless beings in need of missionary care and protection.’¹⁰²

That same ambivalence is evident in a lecture Hutton presented to the Staff College based on his experiences in the war. In it he combined Christian paternalism with a crude social Darwinism. Social Darwinism became increasingly popular in Britain from the 1860s, by which time many had given up on assimilation, doubting whether ‘savage’ races could survive the advance of white culture.¹⁰³ Hutton in his lecture referred to a ‘natural law of nations’ and warned of ‘continual struggle with the native races’:

⁹⁹ Letter, Hutton to Lawrence, 29 April 1879, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50090; The blurring of sport and war was common in contemporary accounts of fighting; see M. Adams, *The Great Adventure: Male Desire and the Coming of World War I*, Indiana University Press, Indianapolis, 1990, 10 and 43.

¹⁰⁰ Letter, Hutton to Lawrence, 3 July 1879, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50090.

¹⁰¹ Letter, Hutton to Lawrence, 30 July 1879, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50090.

¹⁰² Rich, *Race and Empire in British Politics*, 12.

¹⁰³ Lorimer, *Colour, Class and the Victorians*, 147.

The history of all colonies is in this aspect the same – a life struggle between savagery and civilisation!

The result in all cases is the same!

Sooner or later the savage becomes extinct either in his being or at least in his habits – as instances may be quoted the North American Indians who in Canada are disappearing before the onward march of Anglo-Saxon settlers – the Maoris in New Zealand who are fast disappearing in point of number – the more degraded Aborigines in Australia are almost extinct – the Hottentots again in the Cape Colony, though they have by intermarriage lost their identity, may be said still to exist, from the fact of their having adapted themselves to the usages of civilised life, and been absorbed into the homogenous coloured populations accordingly.¹⁰⁴

The Zulu, in this speech, was an instinctual warrior – a racial, rather than merely cultural, predisposition – as is evident in Hutton's discourse on Zulu biology:

The Zulu is above all else a warrior! His whole life is devoted to hunting and military exercises. His whole thoughts are of war, and his greatest ambition is to have wetted his spear, and thus acquired the right to marry.

His countenance is open and features engaging, the features, more often than not lit up by a smile for his sense of the ridiculous is great, are certainly prepossessing and not of the low type of African savage, characterised by thick lips and low forehead.

¹⁰⁴ Hutton, 'Personal Recollections of the Zulu War', 45.

Their average height is about 5.9 and symmetrical as they are the development of the muscles of their lower limbs are especially remarkable.¹⁰⁵

Within this scheme of conflict, and of savage races, pity was a sign of weakness and defeat fatal to prestige. Native populations could only be controlled by the use and display of power.

Surprisingly, however, it was in this same speech that Hutton also promoted the old Christian mission (quoted fully at the beginning of this chapter): 'to carry civilization and the blessings of peace and religion among the native races of South Africa.'¹⁰⁶ As Hutton became ever more sensitive to challenges to British power this ambivalence faded away.

The contemporary British stereotype of an African ruler, as represented in popular productions like *The Zulu Chief* and *Cetewayo at last*, was one of lust, chaotic violence, and trickery.¹⁰⁷ In mid-August 1879, following the conclusion of hostilities, Hutton had an opportunity of testing that stereotype when he was invited to join a patrol attempting the capture of Cetewayo. On that journey they visited the kraal of another Zulu chief, Somkeli, seeking intelligence. This episode afforded Hutton his most intimate view of Zulu life. He later described it as one of the most 'delicate and dangerous situations' of his career.¹⁰⁸ The tone of the meeting was friendly, Hutton flirted with the chieftain's many wives and passed out biscuits to the children; however, the scouting party was small and would have been helpless had their Zulu hosts revolted.

¹⁰⁵ Hutton, 'Personal Recollections of the Zulu War', 50.

¹⁰⁶ Hutton, 'Personal Recollections of the Zulu War', 76.

¹⁰⁷ J. MacKenzie, *Propaganda and Empire: The Manipulation of British Public Opinion, 1880-1960*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1984, 50.

¹⁰⁸ Hutton, 'Memoirs', Chapter 4, 28.

In that position, Hutton viscerally felt the importance of British prestige. He wrote to his stepfather admitting that, 'our lives depended upon the moral effect of the English Impi 70 miles off at Ulundi and [we] were careful to keep watch ... horses saddled that night.'¹⁰⁹ In his memoir he represented British prestige in the figure of Herbert Stewart, their leader: 'Standing in the centre of the circle in front of the chief, he looked, as he was, a dignified gentleman, and a leader such as any man, black or white, would be proud to follow.'¹¹⁰ British prestige is incarnate in an individual. This type of encounter, where a solitary Briton meets a large and threatening body of natives, quelling them with a natural authority, recurred a couple of years later in Hutton's career when General Archibald Alison saved Hutton and others at Tanta from a mass of retreating soldiers by boldly demanding that the senior Egyptian officer come before him and surrender.¹¹¹ It also mirrored a popular trope of the day. Hutton's Zulu story, for instance, is reminiscent of the way General Gordon was said to have wielded his personal authority.¹¹² Such encounters were under girded by the feeling that British power was fragile and that their authority would collapse with a loss of face.

Burroughs suggests that because the Victorian army was numerically small it relied, to a significant extent, on the threat of force. He describes this as 'a form of imperial bluff.'¹¹³ Prestige was deemed a vital accession to British strength. During this period Hutton increasingly felt the absolute necessity of maintaining that prestige –

¹⁰⁹ Letter, Hutton to Lawrence, 24 August 1879, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50090.

¹¹⁰ Hutton, 'Memoirs', Chapter 4, 27.

¹¹¹ Hutton, 'Memoirs', Chapter 6, 23.

¹¹² L. Strachey, *Eminent Victorians*, Chatto and Windus, 1918, 216 & 228.

¹¹³ P. Burroughs, 'Imperial Defence and the Victorian Army', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 15, 1986, 58.

indicating a growing awareness of external threats that spurred him on in his developing nationalism.

The destruction of the Zulu nation left a vacuum in South Africa that emboldened the Boers. They clashed with the British at Majuba Hill, defeating a small British force there. The symbolic effect of that defeat was, for Hutton, devastating:

Thus ended an action disastrous to the British Arms and far more important to the Boer Forces than might be supposed from the small number of British troops engaged. Their prestige as fighting men was established and the moral effect of their victory was by far the most important event that had occurred in the history of the Boer Race in South Africa.¹¹⁴

The themes of race and of prestige, which had emerged during the Zulu war, recur. It was vital to Hutton that the symbolic power of British arms be recovered: 'Every officer and man felt that the occasion demanded that some effort should be made to restore British prestige if South Africa was to remain part of the British Empire.'¹¹⁵

Hutton was incensed at the Boers' expedient response to British reversals, and their willingness to make cause with the Zulus to protect their independence, and he was adamant that the British must not withdraw in the face of such challenges. 'They [the Boer leaders],' Hutton fulminated to his stepfather, 'must be ignorant of the characteristics of Englishmen.'¹¹⁶

Hutton therefore eagerly responded to a telegram requesting that he return to South Africa and take command of a squadron of mounted infantry. However, he barely had a chance to organise his force, let alone see any action, before the armistice with the

¹¹⁴ Hutton, 'Memoirs', Chapter 5.

¹¹⁵ Hutton, 'Memoirs', Chapter 5, 15.

¹¹⁶ Letter, Hutton to Lawrence, 18 March 1879, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50090.

Boers was renewed (in March 1881). Hutton was disgusted at the early peace talks. He described the Boers to his stepfather as 'a semi-barbarous people' and doubted they could be influenced into submitting to any British terms in the face of their victories.¹¹⁷ The great issue at stake for Hutton was British military prestige. No peace could last, for Hutton, until the British army's power to deal with rebellion was re-established and their standing in South Africa reasserted.¹¹⁸ Hutton regretted the terms of the peace treaty, decrying the loss of British status:

The Boers were always looked down upon by the worthy Briton who in his usual self-sufficiency considered the Boer and his opinions as beneath contempt. In my opinion it was very much this feeling which brought about the premature annexation of the Transvaal. The Boers have now more than indicated their character both as warriors and as free men capable of self-government. But that our ministry should at such a critical moment, after practically 3 reverses, give in to the rebel Boers, is to give direct encouragement to lawlessness and riot. Loss of prestige in a country like this, where a few white men hold a country the mass of the population is either Dutch or black and inimical to our race, is a more important matter than Messrs Gladstone and Co seem to think.¹¹⁹

In this quote, Hutton painted a dire picture of a British Empire based on racial prestige, threatened with rebellion and conflict at every turn. He emphasised that it was Downing Street that forced the peace: there is a sense that Gladstone, his ministers, and politicians generally, had betrayed the nation; and that it was soldiers and British fighting prestige that upheld the Empire. Governments must be strong. Hutton wrote to his brother, Fred, of further peace talks in April: 'Peace or war will follow the weakness or firmness of the government at the present crisis. If again the

¹¹⁷ Letter, Hutton to Lawrence, 15 March 1881, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50090.

¹¹⁸ Letter, Hutton to Lawrence, 21 March 1881, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50090.

¹¹⁹ Letter, Hutton to Lawrence, 27 March 1881, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50090.

government yield now, there must be eventually war. The Boers are too opposed to civilization and trade to be allowed to have the exclusive management of such a country as the Transvaal.¹²⁰ Hutton's experience of the Boers had confirmed in him the importance of maintaining British prestige, had excited in him racial feelings, and had shown him that politicians could not always be trusted to maintain the national interest.

Hutton was therefore beginning to adopt a racial perspective of the Empire, one that competed with his stepfather's liberal Christian vision. This grew from his identification with British soldiers (a product of his professionalism), his manly ideal of the British officer (the pinnacle of the race), his encounters with other races, and his increasing sense of external challenges to British power and the need to maintain prestige.

Hutton's return to South Africa to fight the Boers marked a further professional disappointment. His failure to see action meant no promotion and no new career prospects. He lingered in the country, hunting with Redvers Buller, and contemplated the future of mounted forces. This was the one positive note of a second abortive African campaign: Hutton had been introduced to mounted infantry, a new type of British army unit, first used in the Zulu war, and in the development of which he came to play a leading role. Unlike cavalry, who were armed with a carbine and sword, lance or pistol, and who used the horse itself as a weapon, mounted infantry rode only for mobility, carried rifles, and would dismount in combat. Organising his squadron had been a valuable experience for Hutton; he saw great potential in mounted infantry

¹²⁰ Letter, Hutton to his brother, Fred, 25 April 1881, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50090.

and he hoped that a permanent Corps of Mounted Infantry might be established in England (and that he might thereby gain some sort of command).¹²¹ Refusing an offer to stay on in South Africa to establish a squadron of mounted infantry there (preferring to complete Staff College), he proposed that a school of mounted infantry be established at Peitermaritzberg to train detachments from the infantry battalions serving in South Africa. This scheme was accepted and the school was established along lines planned by Hutton.¹²² When Hutton returned to England in September 1881, therefore, although professionally frustrated, the potential of mounted infantry had been brought alive to him. He had developed a scheme for the instruction of regular infantry units in mounted infantry duties, by way of a mounted infantry school. On his return to England he began lobbying for the formation of a similar school at Aldershot.¹²³

If Hutton's imperialism was realised most fully in his colonial commands, then his central role in the development of mounted infantry was to become the highpoint of his military professionalism. He achieved this in concert with Garnet Wolseley and his ring, the most professionally dynamic British officers of their day. Hutton became directly involved with Wolseley in the early 1880s, having been appointed to the post of private secretary to General Archibald Alison, the head of the Intelligence Department at the War Office. On 1 June 1882, Hutton was appointed to a committee for training the Reserve on which Wolseley sat. Wolseley was impressed and invited Hutton to act as assistant secretary to another body he chaired: the mobilisation committee for the contemplated expedition to Egypt.¹²⁴ In order to understand

¹²¹ Letter, Hutton to Lawrence, 2 May 1881, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50090.

¹²² Hutton, 'Memoirs', Chapter 5, 22.

¹²³ Letter, Pollexfein Radcliffe to Hutton, 8 September 1881, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50092.

¹²⁴ Hutton, 'Memoirs', Chapter 6, 4.

Hutton's later career in the colonies, it is vital to contend with the influence of Wolseley. Hutton had several important mentors in his life – his stepfather, Warre, Hawley, and Seeley – but if he could be said to have modelled his career on just one person then it must be Wolseley.

Wolseley represented Hutton's ideal of a manly, professional soldier. The son of a poor Irish officer, Wolseley had risen in the army by virtue of a series of daring actions on campaign in the Crimea, Burma and China. He was also the army's chief reformer and believed in a professional and educated officer corps.¹²⁵ Wolseley combined the scientific with the Romantic; as he himself once wrote, 'All this means that whilst no one can be a general who lacks the inestimable gift of imagination, yet not all the imagination of a Milton will of itself alone enable any one to be great in war.'¹²⁶

Hutton came to hold many views in company with Wolseley: a distrust of politicians, fear of a great continental war, and a belief that soldiers had a duty to defend the Empire. This letter of Wolseley's is indicative:

The great war still hides behind the horizon of our power of forecast. No cloud, even as big as a man's hand, is yet to be seen to windward. All the cleverest calculations as to the future have failed and the world outside of Europe has become too commonplace and well known for the man of action. 'Jaw' is now King, and the man who can flatter the crowd most effectively is he who obtains the privilege of being its well paid servant. As yet there is no decline in the manly characteristics of our soldiers and sailors, our Generals and Admirals; it is

¹²⁵ Bond, *The Victorian Army and the Staff College*, 127.

¹²⁶ Wolseley, *The Story of a Soldier's Life*, 372.

only the quality of our rulers, the fibre of our ministers that has undergone a change for the worse: they have conformed to the democratic system of the day... We want leaders and we are told to look for them in some howling fellow who for the time being is in the front rank of the most ignorant of our people.¹²⁷

Wolseley despised politicians and longed for the return of 'Statesmen.'¹²⁸ He blamed party politics for cuts in defence estimates and believed that only soldiers were truly loyal to the nation.¹²⁹ He imagined this to be a politically neutral stance (he encouraged his brother George to never refer to politics and keep his opinions to himself),¹³⁰ yet, as Strachan demonstrates, this hatred of politicians was in fact a distrust of parliamentary democracy and a political stance in itself.¹³¹

Hutton also came to adopt many of Wolseley's strategies. Wolseley's signal achievement was to form from the British army a corps ready for mobilisation for service at home or abroad (as Hutton later did in the colonies with his field armies).¹³² The continental threat posed by mass conscription was to be met by the creation of a small, but highly professional, army.¹³³ Wolseley achieved this and other reforms, over the opposition of spendthrift governments and conservative officers, by making direct appeals to popular opinion.¹³⁴ To this end he used the press to exploit British fears of its vulnerability to French invasion.¹³⁵ Wolseley's expedient habit of responding to crises overseas by the plundering of experienced troops from home

¹²⁷ Letter, Wolseley to Ardagh, 19 July 1893, TNA, PRO, Ardagh Papers, 30/40/2.

¹²⁸ Letter, Wolseley to Goldwin Smith, 6 September 1890, Hove, Garnet Wolseley Papers, Autograph Collection: Wolseley, Garnet, 117.

¹²⁹ Spiers, *The Late Victorian Army*, 46.

¹³⁰ Letter, Wolseley to brother, 6 February 1895, Hove, Garnet Wolseley Papers, W/W.4/47.

¹³¹ H. Strachan, *The Politics of the British Army*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1997, 101.

¹³² H. Kochanski, *Sir Garnet Wolseley: Victorian Hero*, The Hambledon Press, London, 1999, 274.

¹³³ Hamer, *The British Army*, 1.

¹³⁴ Letter, Wolseley to Ardagh, 3 November 1894, TNA, PRO, Ardagh Papers, 30/40/2.

¹³⁵ Kochanski, *Sir Garnet Wolseley*, 273 and Spiers, *The Late Victorian Army*, 9.

battalions was imitated by Hutton in his plans for the formation of a mounted infantry *corps d'elite* by harvesting experienced troops from infantry regiments.¹³⁶

On campaign in North Africa in the early 1880s, Hutton gained further experience with mounted infantry units. In mid-1882 he followed Alison, commanding the advance force, to Egypt where Arabi, an Egyptian army officer, had risen against his government. Hutton was charged with the raising of a small corps of mounted infantry police to conduct reconnaissance and patrols. He later claimed that he formed it with an eye to proving his 'conviction that the innovation [mounted infantry] was worthy of adoption in some form as a permanent arm of the British Army.'¹³⁷ Whether this is true or not, he certainly profited from this opportunity to further experiment with the creation of a mounted force. He also prospered by his part in the action that followed, especially Tel-el-Kebir, and received a promotion to brevet major in the November 1882 gazette, proudly claiming many friends 'among the rising lot.'¹³⁸

The 1882 Egyptian campaign was the grandest moment of Hutton's early career – he finally had scope to display a manly and athletic valour on active service. Once again he compared the dangers to sport: they 'appeared as no more than the chances of the football field; we threw ourselves into the "game" with all our might and thoroughly enjoyed it, and looking back, I think it is this spirit which enables great victories to be won and great deeds done.'¹³⁹ Hutton left his mounted infantry to serve with Alison's brigade, which comprised four battalions of Highlanders within the second division.

¹³⁶ G. Wolseley, 'Journal Sudan Expedition', 16 October 1884, 71, TNA, PRO, WO 147/8 and Spiers, *The Late Victorian Army*, 10.

¹³⁷ Hutton, 'Memoirs', Chapter 6, 11.

¹³⁸ Letter, Hutton to Lawrence, 26 November 1882, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50090.

¹³⁹ Hutton, 'Memoirs', Chapter 6, 12.

The whole force was under Garnet Wolseley's command. Hutton quickly distinguished himself in action: on 5 August Alison's brigade conducted a reconnaissance in force and Hutton's actions in the ensuing battle earned him a mention in Alison's despatch.¹⁴⁰ The mounted infantry corps he had formed also did conspicuously well, losing by death or wounding every officer posted to it except Pratt and Melgund (later Lord Minto, Hutton's Governor General in Canada). Wolseley made much mention of them and Hutton shared in the praise.¹⁴¹

The battle of Tel-el-Kebir, on 13 September 1882, was the largest and fiercest engagement Hutton ever fought in. Among all the little wars of the period, this was one of the few occasions when the British army fought a large-scale action against a trained and well-equipped enemy. General Wolseley gained great fame from an encounter that he had planned with audacity, ordering a difficult night march over miles of Egyptian desert culminating in a pre-dawn bayonet charge on Arabi's encampment, an entrenched position consisting of well-engineered earthworks and gun emplacements.

The Highland brigade, commanded by Alison, assumed a prominent role in the assault: it was the leading unit of the second division, the first British unit to make contact with the enemy, and it faced the toughest sector of Arabi's entrenchments.¹⁴² At this time Highland units were venerated, supposedly possessing a racial aptitude for war, and were used in the fore of battles as elite shock troops.¹⁴³ Alison and Hutton shared in their mystique. In a letter home to his wife, Alison describes feeling

¹⁴⁰ A. Alison, Despatch No. 7, 7 August 1882, BOD, Archibald Alison Papers, Mss Eng Lett c. 452, 118.

¹⁴¹ Letter, Alison to wife, 1 September 1882, BOD, Archibald Alison Papers, MS Eng Lett e. 151, 63.

¹⁴² G. Clarke, *My Working Life*, John Murray, London, 1927, 37.

¹⁴³ Streets, 'The Right Stamp of Men', 226.

like a Highland Chief, 'Hutton,' he wrote, 'is thinking of calling himself McHutton & getting a kilt.'¹⁴⁴ Hutton wrote shortly afterwards of the glorious conduct of his brigade at Tel-el-Kebir, 'It was a splendid day for the Highland brigade – a triumph of discipline and true British dash worthy of what are called the days when we really had army of something else than boys!!'¹⁴⁵

During the battle, Hutton himself had ample opportunity of displaying the manly, martial gallantry he had come to hold as a key virtue. 'A soldier's battle indeed it was', he reminisced later, 'men fought in groups or singly, hand to hand, until their foe, fighting as desperately, were bayoneted or put to flight.'¹⁴⁶ Hutton acquitted himself with an impressive valour. Early in the battle, when the initial assault was failing, he was instrumental in rallying the troops, being one of the few officers to have kept his mount, and therefore looked to in the dark and confusion.¹⁴⁷ His exploits continued even after his horse was killed under him: recovering, covered in blood, and finding himself separated from the rest of the staff, he gathered together a band of men from several different regiments. Leading them, he charged a redoubt, taking it and its three guns. He continued on, capturing a Krupp field-piece and bringing it into action against the enemy's flank.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁴ Letter, Alison to wife, 4 September 1882, BOD, Archibald Alison Papers, MS Eng Lett e. 151, 65.

¹⁴⁵ Letter, Hutton to Lady Alison, 3 October 1882, BOD, Archibald Alison Papers, Mss Eng Lett d 420, 121.

¹⁴⁶ Hutton, 'Memoirs', Chapter 6, 20.

¹⁴⁷ Colonel Maitland's report of the battle in A. Shand, *The Life of General Sir Edward Bruce Hamley*, vol 2, 2nd ed., William Blackwood and Sons, London, 1896, 163.

¹⁴⁸ A. Alison, Unpublished Despatch, 18 September 1882, BOD, Archibald Alison Papers, MS Eng Lett e. 151, 127; Hutton, 'Memoirs', Chapter 6, 20.

The war ended soon after that battle and Cairo fell the following day. Before the conclusion of hostilities Hutton contracted a tropical disease in the festering town of Tanta and almost died – later relapses nearly ended his career.¹⁴⁹

Arabi was captured and sentenced to death (later commuted to lifelong exile). Hutton's reaction to the trial reveals his growing feelings about the relative merits of soldiers and politicians, and also his sense of a connection between the professional soldier and the nation. He was angered by a trial that he felt indecently brief and which failed even to pretend to justice and he sympathised with Arabi as a fellow soldier.¹⁵⁰ He contrasted Arabi's patriotism with the machinations of the politicians whom he believed were truly responsible for the uprising against Turkish rule: Arabi had 'shown himself to be a patriot at heart, and it was generally felt that the determined effort of Arabi and his friends had been encouraged by their belief that Egypt had only to follow in the steps of the Boers to gain from the British Government all that they laid themselves out to require.'¹⁵¹ It was Gladstone and politicians that were truly to blame – a very Wolseleyan sentiment.

North Africa remained in turmoil after the Egyptian campaign. A religious leader, the Mahdi, had fomented an insurrection in the Sudan. His army surrounded General Gordon, who had remained in Khartoum against the Gladstone government's orders. Gladstone resisted demands for a relief expedition through much of 1884, yet there were persistent rumours of one being sent. Hutton lobbied Buller to be included in any such expedition.¹⁵² He was also devoting much thought to the development of

¹⁴⁹ Letter, Alison to wife, 2 October 1882, BOD, Archibald Alison Papers, MS Eng Lett e. 151, 100.

¹⁵⁰ Letter, Hutton to Lawrence, 4 December 1882, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50090.

¹⁵¹ Hutton, 'Memoirs', Chapter 7, 5.

¹⁵² Letter, Hutton to Buller, 13 February 1884, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50086.

mounted infantry – he drew up a scheme at the beginning of 1883 for submission to the War Office and, in early 1884, wrote an article on the subject for the *Illustrated Naval and Military Magazine*.¹⁵³ He had consolidated his thoughts on the subject, based upon his experiences in South Africa and Egypt. In the Spring of 1884 Wolseley asked Hutton to draw up a scheme for the establishment of a mounted infantry force in the event of war.¹⁵⁴ Hutton did so and, when the commander of the Egyptian Mounted Infantry broke his back riding, Hutton was invited to go to Egypt to prepare the force.¹⁵⁵

What followed was one of the gravest disappointments of Hutton's career. Hutton's professional dreams, which had been established by his stepfather, nurtured by Warre at Eton, encouraged by Hawley in his regiment, spurred on by reforms to the British army itself and confirmed by experience of the Zulu, First South African, and Egyptian campaigns, were finally being realised with his role in the development of mounted infantry and his association with Wolseley. These, however, were struck an awful blow by his failure to live up to the manly ideal that had become another essential pillar of his identity.

On his return to North Africa, Hutton assembled a force of 500 men mounted on camels, a feat never before attempted without native drivers. He later claimed it as a kind of racial victory, demonstrating 'that British soldiers could do what no other soldier, black or white, in the world had never yet done' and proving the 'adaptability

¹⁵³ Letter, Hutton to Lawrence, 16 April 1883, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50090; Hutton, 'Memoirs', Chapter 8, 2.

¹⁵⁴ Hutton, 'Memoirs', Chapter 8, 3.

¹⁵⁵ Letter, Stephenson to Wolseley, 6 May 1884, Hove, Garnet Wolseley Papers, Autograph Collection: Sir Frederick Stephenson, 1.

of the British soldier.¹⁵⁶ It was a fine command and Hutton imagined sneaking it through the desert, cooperating with Bedouins, and launching a coup-de-main upon Abou Hamed.¹⁵⁷ Unfortunately he was struck low with severe heat exhaustion, linked to his earlier tropical fever. Hutton was ordered home, a terrible setback, and he complained to his stepfather of having to abandon the 'finest command any young officer has ever [Hutton's emphasis, underlined seven times] had.'¹⁵⁸ Hutton was deeply ashamed, he had been unable to fulfil the manly ideal demanded of officers: 'I realized that I had disappointed my friends, and, through my break-down in health, had not come up to their expectations. I had failed in active work in the field which after all is the one and only test of an officer's value.'¹⁵⁹ When Hutton returned months later he suffered a major relapse almost immediately. He viewed this as the saddest moment of his life.¹⁶⁰ He made one final attempt, procuring a white parasol for the march, and was again beaten back by the sun.¹⁶¹ In February 1885 this last ill-fated trip came back to haunt him: Buller was furious, he had found Hutton a billet on the condition he stay put, and was now rewarded by Wolseley's accusation that he was 'keeping lame ducks' about.¹⁶² Hutton was ordered home.

If Tel-el-Kebir was the manly summit of Hutton's early career, then this Sudanese fiasco was the nadir. It was not just a failure to live up to the sporting, athletic ideal: to Hutton, this also made it a professional failure. During the Zulu war he had ridiculed the effete and unsporting officers who joined him on a scouting party

¹⁵⁶ Hutton, 'Memoirs', Chapter 8, 6.

¹⁵⁷ Letter, Hutton to Lawrence, 3 August 1884, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50090.

¹⁵⁸ Letter, Hutton to Lawrence, 3 August 1884, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50090.

¹⁵⁹ Hutton, 'Memoirs', Chapter 8, 19.

¹⁶⁰ Note, 11 September 1912, on Letter, Hutton to Lawrence, 1 November 1884, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50090.

¹⁶¹ Letter, Hutton to Lawrence, 20 December 1884, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50090; Note, 11 September 1912, on Letter, Alison to Hutton, 24 December 1884, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50092.

¹⁶² Letter, Buller to Hutton, 29 February 1885, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50086.

remarking that they 'could hardly saddle their own horses much less catch a meal at the end of a day's work.'¹⁶³ In North Africa it was he who had failed that test and he despaired, 'My professional hopes of the intermediate present are dashed again rudely to the ground.'¹⁶⁴

Hutton's notions of professionalism and manliness therefore encouraged and informed the character of his developing nationalism and imperialism. He conceived of a professional responsibility to defend the nation, respected British regulars, and favoured leaders who were vigorous and manly. The notions of professionalism and manliness – courage and skill – acted in concert to provide Hutton with a sense of legitimacy as an officer not based on class. If challenged in the 1880s, he might very well have given almost identical answers to those prescribed by the soldier's catechism for Cromwell's New Model Army, issued in 1644 by the British parliament:

- | | |
|----------|---|
| Question | What are the principall things required in a soldier? |
| Answer | 1. That hie bee religious and godly.
2. That hie be courageous and valiant.
3. That hie be skilfull in the Militarie profession. ¹⁶⁵ |

The one point of difference would have been the meaning implied by 'religious and godly.' As Huntington demonstrates, although Cromwell's army was very similar to the professional, national armies of nineteenth century Europe, it was distinguished by

¹⁶³ Letter, Hutton to Lawrence, 24 August 1879, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50090.

¹⁶⁴ Letter, Hutton to Lawrence, 1 November 1884, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50090.

¹⁶⁵ Quote from T. Bowyer-Bower, 'Some Early Educational Influences in the British Army', *Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research*, 33, 1955, 5-12.

its 'ideological-religious fervour.'¹⁶⁶ It had a religious rather than a national focus. Hutton himself was yet to voice the strident nationalist and imperialist sentiments that appear later in his career, and to that extent he remained ambivalent towards the nation and Empire. It was the kind of Christianity taught him by his stepfather that had held him back. For this reason, the change in Hutton's Christian faith during his early career is fundamental in an understanding of how he came to embrace late-Victorian imperialism.

Throughout his life Hutton was influenced by his stepfather's religious opinions. Over time, however, these views were challenged by exposure to a different kind of Christianity. At Eton and in the army Hutton discovered a religion that was ecumenical, nationally unifying, and sentimental. The contest between these two types of faith was an essential feature of Hutton's early career.

In this period a great change took place in British religious life for which the 1860s were pivotal years. Kitson Clarke describes the decade as the peak of the 'crisis of the nineteenth-century attack on religion.'¹⁶⁷ The publication of *The Origin of Species* in 1859 opened a door for the penetration into ordinary society of ideas that challenged fundamental tenets of Christian faith, culminating in the late 1860s with the battle in Britain over the status of the Athanasian Creed (the most troubling part of the service for many Anglicans who could no longer accept official Church doctrine).¹⁶⁸ The Romantic faith of the Broad Church movement offered a way of resolving these doubts. This movement had its intellectual origins in Coleridge and

¹⁶⁶ Huntington, *Soldier and the State*, 21.

¹⁶⁷ G. Kitson Clark, *An Expanding Society: Britain 1830-1900*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1967, 96.

¹⁶⁸ Kitson Clark, *An Expanding Society*, 96; P. Marsh, *The Victorian Church in Decline: Archbishop Tait and the Church of England, 1868-1882*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1969, 8 and 39.

his challenging of a literal reading of the scriptures.¹⁶⁹ It offered a practical, rather than doctrinal, approach to Christianity and stressed the virtues of patriotism, morality and civic unity.¹⁷⁰ In the 1860s it posed its own challenges to the established Church: in 1860 seven churchmen produced the influential Broad Church tract, *Essays and Reviews*, and in 1865 Seeley published *Ecce Homo*, a wildly popular work which challenged biblical literalism with its unorthodox portrayal of Jesus. The general result was a retreat from doctrinal, theological Christianity: by the 1880s the Anglican Church itself was hesitant in intellectual controversy and many of its parishioners had turned to the example of Christian lives, rather than doctrine, as the basis for their faith.¹⁷¹

Hutton's induction in these ideas began at Eton under Warre, whose religious practice was tied to his notions of manly conduct. Warre favoured character over intellect and believed that Eton must send forth 'Christian gentlemen.'¹⁷² Christian faith was essential – but it was a faith built on ethics, not doctrine. Christianity, to Warre, was something to be practiced rather than studied. This type of faith was witnessed in valour, in patriotism, and in honesty.¹⁷³ It was a type of faith that contrasted sharply with the theological beliefs of Hutton's stepfather, but a type of faith that Hutton came slowly to accept.

¹⁶⁹ S. Prickett, *Romanticism and Religion: The Tradition of Coleridge and Wordsworth in the Victorian Church*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1976, 45.

¹⁷⁰ R. Shannon, 'John Robert Seeley and the Idea of a National Church' in *Ideas and Institutions of Victorian Britain*, ed. R. Robson, G. Bell and sons, London, 1967, 237 and 245.

¹⁷¹ Marsh, *The Victorian Church in Decline*, 9; L. Elliott-Binns, *English Thought, 1860-1900: The Theological Aspect*, Longmans, Green and Co., London, 1956, 321.

¹⁷² Hollis, *Eton: A History*, 288.

¹⁷³ Hollis, *Eton: A History*, 288.

It was only in the 1880s that this religious dialogue fully matured in Hutton. Serving in the army of occupation in Egypt after Arabi's defeat, Hutton led an invigorating life: he mixed with the European community in Cairo, attended functions and dinner parties, and was engaged in much earnest discussion. On one such occasion the after-supper talk drifted to matters of faith and Lord Dufferin, challenged as to his silence, declared theological debate to be pointless and claimed to have an unquestioning faith in the 'religion of my mother's knee.'¹⁷⁴ This resonated with Hutton who felt that this, 'better meets one's needs than the abstruse arguments which have been brought to bear on this great and vital question.'¹⁷⁵ Hutton wanted a practical faith, founded on morality rather than on doctrine. Hutton's religion of his 'mother's knee' answered to those needs but it was a stance directly repudiated by his stepfather: 'There are some who will follow you with their prayers, and I hope you are going forth upon their responsible charges, strong in dependence upon the Lord – and *this not in a general way*, but in the apprehension of the Christ as your saviour, which would enable you to lay with the great apostle.'¹⁷⁶

Hutton drifted from his stepfather's intellectual and theological Protestantism during the 1880s. So much so that when his stepfather wrote Hutton introducing a temperance speaker and asking for his son's assistance, Hutton replied sympathetically but in the negative – fearing that temperance societies created ill will amongst soldiers.¹⁷⁷ His stepfather was an active churchman and it was assumed that Hutton would follow him; however, at the end of 1883, when the Church of England Soldiers' Institute Committee approached him to join, Hutton replied that, though he

¹⁷⁴ Hutton, 'Memoir', Chapter 7, 6.

¹⁷⁵ Hutton, 'Memoir', Chapter 7, 6.

¹⁷⁶ Letter, Lawrence to Hutton, 7 June 1884, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50090 [my emphasis].

¹⁷⁷ Letter, Hutton to Lawrence, 17 December 1882, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50090.

was concerned about soldiers' welfare, he shied from 'anything which tends to be of a sectarian character and which however indirectly may set one class against another' and that:

My views with reference to all similar institutions are that they would accomplish a far larger amount of good and that to a far larger section of the Army if the religious element were entirely omitted.¹⁷⁸

In his dealings with military chaplains of different faiths, Hutton was catholic in his sympathies: in his letter to his stepfather, he describes a Roman Catholic chaplain, Father Brindle. He felt Brindle did much better work for the sick than his Anglican counterpart and favoured him for a position with the regiment.¹⁷⁹ In this attitude, Hutton reflected the current mainstream army view – indeed Brindle was one of the most popular men in the Sudan expedition and Wolseley himself tried to get him knighted – chaplains were valued for their utility and doctrine hardly mattered.¹⁸⁰ Anderson notes this shift, which occurred from the mid-1860s, from an exclusively Anglican to a broadly Christian army. She links it with the recruiting crisis and the need to improve conditions for recruits.¹⁸¹ There was another, more fundamental, cause. As Hanham argues, this shift was connected to the rise of nationalism – the soldier could finally be trusted to view their primary obligation as belonging to king and country.¹⁸²

¹⁷⁸ Letter, Hutton to Honorary Secretary, Church of England Soldiers' Institute Committee, 12 November 1883, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50092.

¹⁷⁹ Letter, Hutton to Lawrence, 20 December 1884, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50090.

¹⁸⁰ E. Wood, *From Midshipman to Field Marshal*, Vol. 2, 3rd ed., Methuen and Co, London, 1906, 174; A. Skelley, *The Victorian Army at Home: The Recruitment and Terms and Conditions of the British Regular, 1859-1899*, Croom Helm, London, 1977, 165.

¹⁸¹ Anderson, 'The growth of Christian militarism in mid-Victorian Britain', 64.

¹⁸² H. Hanham, 'Religion and Nationality in the Mid-Victorian Army', in *War and Society: Historical essays in honour and Memory of J.R. Western 1928-1971*, ed. M. Foot, Paul Elek, London, 1973, 174.

The religious crisis had significant implications for the development of late-Victorian imperialism: a vital plank of the Broad Church position was its view of a church co-extensive with the nation state.¹⁸³ The Church of England, for its part, sought to reposition itself as the 'National Church.'¹⁸⁴ For Hutton personally, religious change was critical. It allowed his stepfather's evangelical vision of Empire, whose focus was the spread of civilisation and religion to benighted heathen, to be replaced with a vision of a white, self-governing Empire, united by a shared national religion. Wolseley captured the mood eloquently in a speech in 1889, when he ridiculed those who disdained nationalist rhetoric on the grounds that we are all God's creatures, claiming, 'But I cannot for one moment believe that the strong instinct which has been given to me, and I daresay to most of you, of love of country and of intense nationality, can be in any way opposed to the teachings of religion.'¹⁸⁵

In the years of his schooling, and the first decades of his career, nation, race and Empire therefore gradually assumed for Hutton the places traditionally held by class and a strict Protestant faith. He had attained two essential qualities that predisposed him to nationalist and imperialist feelings: professionalism and manliness – one middle class, the other pseudo-aristocratic. Throughout this period the religious positions of his stepfather, his school, and the army contended. This religious debate softened his racial views and delayed his full adoption of a nationalistic perspective. Hutton finally came to adopt a Christianity that identified the Church with the nation and allowed him to fully embrace late-Victorian imperialism.

¹⁸³ Prickett, *Romanticism and Religion*, 127.

¹⁸⁴ Marsh, *The Victorian Church in Decline*, 94.

¹⁸⁵ Wolseley address to the Harborne and Edgbaston Institute, *Times*, 26 January 1889, 12.

It is therefore not surprising that it was in March 1885 that Hutton first referred to the possibility of defence assistance from the colonies, a theme which dominated his later career.

The precipitating factor was the 1885 war scare with Russia. Russia had been moving into North-West Afghanistan, exciting British fears for the defence of India. A clash between Russian troops and Afghans at Pendjeh, the key to the Herat Pass, sent Britain to the brink of war. British relations with Russia had been particularly tense over the past decade: in 1875 Russia had enrolled a quarter of its males over the age of 21 for fifteen years service, to create a massive conscript army; in 1877 Russian troops had begun to march on Constantinople – nearly triggering war with Britain; in 1878 Russia had signed a treaty with the Afghani emir which had caused General Roberts to march on Kabul. Russia was viewed as Britain's most potent threat – particularly in its designs on Central Asia.¹⁸⁶

This turn of events prompted Hutton to consider more closely the possibility of raising a mounted infantry force in the event of a national emergency. On March 7 1885 he drafted a scheme for the raising of a brigade of mounted infantry volunteers, writing, 'In the event of hostilities with Russia or indeed in any national emergency which may necessitate a sudden and considerable development of the military resources of the British Empire.'¹⁸⁷ Hutton proposed that a selection of British volunteer forces – from the Volunteers and the Militia – be trained as mounted infantry in order to relieve the cavalry, which lacked sufficient reserves. His scheme

¹⁸⁶ Streets, 'The Right Stamp of Men', 128.

¹⁸⁷ E. Hutton, 'Scheme for raising a Brigade of Mounted Infantry Volunteers', 7 March 1885, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50111.

allowed for the creation of a brigade of 2000 mounted infantry.¹⁸⁸ He sent this home for consideration and received compliments from General Alison and the British Commander in Chief, the Duke of Cambridge.¹⁸⁹ This was an important moment in the development of his plans for mounted infantry.

It was also a milestone in the development of his thinking about the Empire. At the time, Hutton was serving in Cairo and he had been guiding around that city a group of Canadian voyageurs come to assist Wolseley – he was also no doubt aware of the contingent sent to the Sudan by New South Wales the previous month (it arrived at the end of March) – and perhaps these factors excited in him the hope he expressed to his stepfather, that a war with Russia, ‘would be the best thing in the world for the British Empire, and would do more to weld the units of Greater Britain to the Mother Country than anything else.’¹⁹⁰ This was a subject to which Hutton gave much thought over the next decade, when he consolidated the idea of Greater Britain that he took with him to his colonial commands.

¹⁸⁸ Letter, Hutton to Lawrence, 8 March 1885, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50090.

¹⁸⁹ Letter, Hutton to Lawrence, 12 April 1885, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50090.

¹⁹⁰ Letter, Hutton to Lawrence, 16 March 1885, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50090.

3. Preparing for the Coming Struggle: 1880s and 1890s

Gentlemen, we are warned on all sides by the leading Statesmen of this country, and by the political condition of our Continental neighbours, that a great crisis in the world's history is at hand, that, as was said by a well known and prominent military leader not long since, – 'a war cloud is hanging over Europe, greater than any which has hung over Europe before.' This crisis cannot be long deferred, and may, indeed, be upon us at a moment's notice, and we may then find ourselves as soldiers the Champions of the Unity, nay, of the very Existence, of this Great Empire, an inheritance which has been built up piece by piece by the successive efforts of our predecessors in arms, and which now stands as the vastest, the richest, the most intellectual, the most advanced in civilization of any empire which has ever existed in the world's history.¹

Edward Hutton, 1889

Edward Hutton came to this outlook by way of the influence of several men and the experience of many years. He did not start out this way and, as late as 1879, he had still clung to the old liberal view that Britain had a civilising and evangelising mission to the world. A mere decade later and Hutton spoke of a rich and a vast 'inheritance' that must be protected against rapacious neighbours and impending crisis.

Intellectually, many of the different threads came together in Hutton's mind during the late 1880s and early 1890s.

This period of creativity grew from professional failure. The mounted infantry distinguished themselves in the Sudan. They played a key role in several battles – on two occasions repulsing the enemy when the British square failed. Hutton described how, as selected men, the mounted infantry came to be viewed as a *corps d'elite* and 'the name of Mounted Infantry a byword for all the most brilliant characteristics of the British Soldier.'² It was a sentiment shared by Wolseley himself.³ The dying

¹ E. Hutton, 'Mounted Infantry - Its Present and Its Future', Lecture 18, *Military Lectures*, Aldershot Military Society, 21 March 1889, 19.

² Letter, Hutton to Lawrence, 1 March 1885, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50090.

³ Letter, Alison to Hutton, 25 April 1885, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50092; Letter, Barrow to Hutton, 1 April 1885, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50092.

words of General Herbert Stewart, killed on the advance to Khartoum, were 'I will never forget the Mounted Infantry.'⁴

Wolseley and Buller, when gazetting officers for promotion after the campaign, however, did forget. Many mounted infantry officers were overlooked and Hutton, who had been unable to fight, missed out altogether. Buller assured Hutton he had done his best but Wolseley would not have it.⁵ Lack of promotion stalled the progress of Hutton's career. He seemed headed back to a quiet regimental life when, in late 1885, he was presented with an alternative. Major-General Frederick Middleton, commanding the Canadian militia, offered him the leadership of the Canadian Northwest Mounted Police. Middleton envisaged Hutton organising that force along the lines of the mounted infantry units he had been developing.⁶

Hutton was initially unimpressed by an offer that would isolate him from the War Office, and promotion to a staff vacancy at home, for several years, and prevent him fighting in any intervening major war – the fastest track to promotion. He had also begun lobbying in earnest for the formation of a mounted infantry school at Aldershot and he hoped to be appointed to its command. Members of the Wolseley ring encouraged Hutton to set aside his qualms and embrace the offer. He confided to his friend Melgund the influence of those officers: 'I am not so particularly anxious for the billet – but both Lord Wolseley and Buller advise me to go if asked.'⁷ Hutton therefore agreed to two interviews with the Canadian Prime Minister, John Macdonald, who fired his imagination with the great future ahead of the Northwest

⁴ Letter, Gough to Hutton, 16 July 1885, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50092.

⁵ Letter, Buller to Hutton, 26 May 1885, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50086.

⁶ Letter, Middleton to Hutton, 9 October 1885, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50092.

⁷ Letter, Hutton to Minto, 18 January 1886, NLS, Minto Papers, Ms. 12386, f. 4.

following the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway.⁸ Macdonald tentatively offered Hutton the job and he accepted, anticipating that the post 'will require the greatest tact, for as an Imperial Officer I must expect much passive resistance.'⁹ It was with surprise, and some indignation, that Hutton learned in February 1886 of his rejection by the Canadian government who had decided that a civilian commander would better suit the role.¹⁰

This episode was significant in focussing Hutton's attention on the self-governing Empire. It also demonstrates the influence members of the Wolseley ring exerted over his career – it was only at their encouragement that he considered accepting the offer. Its most important aspect, however, was in its further stymieing of Hutton's military progress. Frustrated and professionally inactive, Hutton turned to intellectual activity as the only outlet for his considerable drive. He spent the following few years considering a range of issues – the threat of war, military reform, professionalism, manliness, race, nation and empire – and adopting positions that he carried into his later career in the colonies.

By the late 1880s the British Empire had become central to Hutton's worldview: he had witnessed colonial participation in the Sudan expedition; John Macdonald had awakened him to the material potential of the colonies; and by 1886 he himself was proselytising for the Empire. In a lecture he gave to the boys at Eton in that year, entitled 'Our Recent Campaigns', he spoke of the Empire's 'extraordinary growth and

⁸ E. Hutton, 'Memoirs of Lieutenant-General Sir Edward Hutton', Chapter 9, 2, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50112.

⁹ Letter, Hutton to Gen Harmon, 10 January 1886, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50093. This statement is prescient. Hutton later ran into severe political trouble as commander of the Canadian militia.

¹⁰ Letter, Middleton to Hutton, 19 January 1886, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50093; Letter, Macdonald to Hutton, 18 February 1886, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50083, 6.

development.’¹¹ Interestingly, it was to the commercial side of the Empire that Hutton gave most of his attention. Discussing the Ashanti campaign, for example, he stressed the ‘many thousands of miles of coast added, as a consequent [sic] to an Empire and above all the growth of a great trade with the tribes and densely populated values [sic] of the Niger has been hastened.’¹² Of the Sudan war, Hutton emphasised ‘the Establishment of a British protected state upon the high road to India, and in the future the development of a fresh market for our Manchester goods and from Birmingham hardware, among the dense populations of the Equatorial Provinces.’¹³ The ongoing war in Burma, again, was necessary in order to add to British possessions in India and to open trade routes to China so that ‘fresh impetus’ might be given to ‘our manufactures and to our commerce in every branch.’¹⁴

This emphasis on the commercial side of empire was something of a new departure for him. This is evident from objections to the lecture held by his stepfather, Arthur Lawrence. ‘You hold forth to the “Rising Generation”,’ Lawrence criticised, ‘the increase of trade and coupled with the extension of our Territories which are unworthy objects of the ambition of a Christian people!’¹⁵ Lawrence took special objection to Hutton’s statements about the potential of trade in Africa, arguing that suppressing slavery ought to be Britain’s overriding concern there; and, ‘independent of the slave trade I think it is taking low ground to put before us the increase of our trade, acknowledging the chance that we are but a nation of shopkeepers.’¹⁶

¹¹ E. Hutton, ‘Our Recent Campaigns’, Lecture read to the Boys of Eton, 13 November 1886, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50111, 136.

¹² Hutton, ‘Our Recent Campaigns’, 137.

¹³ Hutton, ‘Our Recent Campaigns’, 143.

¹⁴ Hutton, ‘Our Recent Campaigns’, 143.

¹⁵ Letter, Lawrence to Hutton, 16 November 1886, 5, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50090.

¹⁶ Letter, Lawrence to Hutton, 16 November 1886, 5, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50090.

Lawrence also found Hutton's treatment of religion to be too vague.¹⁷ Seven years earlier, when addressing fellow students at the Staff College about the Zulu war, Hutton's emphasis had been completely different – the spread of religion had been the chief object of Empire.

Hutton had strayed from his stepfather's evangelical, Christian, and limited Empire to a vision of expansion and trade. In this he was undoubtedly influenced by the general economic climate of the time. The 1870s and 1880s were years of depression, tariffs and ever-increasing competition for Britain – particularly from the United States and Germany.¹⁸ British reliance on imported foodstuff made this challenge especially potent.¹⁹ In this context, it was natural for Hutton to stress the economic value of the Empire. In attaching the British army to this, and claiming for it a role as defender of the British Empire, Hutton challenged the common perception that it was the navy which defended, and extended, British trade and that the army was a barely necessary drain, a 'purely destructive agency entailing endless expenditure.'²⁰

It was, however, the imagined military threat from Europe that gave most impetus to Hutton's imperial turn. By 1887 Hutton was convinced of the likelihood of a European conflagration. After dining with the British resident in Berne, Switzerland, for example, he noted that:

Like all far seeing politicians he looks forward to a life or death struggle
between Germany & France – insists that our one aim should be a German

¹⁷ Letter, Lawrence to Hutton, 16 November 1886, 2, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50090.

¹⁸ A. Thompson, 'Thinking Imperially? Imperial Pressure Groups and the Idea of Empire in Late-Victorian and Edwardian Britain', DPhil Thesis, Corpus Christi College, Oxford, 1994, 235.

¹⁹ P. Burroughs, 'Defence and Imperial Disunity', *The Oxford History of the British Empire*, vol. 3, ed. A. Porter, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1999, 334.

²⁰ P. Burroughs, 'Imperial Defence and the Victorian Army', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 15, 1986, 56.

alliance – that we have nothing to fear in the immediate future from Russia, but that we must be prepared for any act on the part of France, which her profound jealousy and restlessness may prompt.

The political situation is so interesting just now from the fact that it is so open to conjecture, & from the knowledge that a great crisis is near at hand.²¹

This threat imperilled the Empire, a theme evident in an address entitled ‘Modern Warfare’ which Hutton delivered to the Inns of Court Volunteers in December 1886:

To the impecunious and struggling nations on the continent of Europe this country with its vast wealth must present itself to their minds as a prize worth many risks to possess. The British Empire is the greatest inheritance which any generation of men have ever had entrusted to them.²²

Fear of a great European war was widespread in Britain from the mid-1870s and it was particularly common among members of the British army.²³ It was based on a belief that the European balance of power could not be maintained given the rapid expansion of the continental armies (conscript forces had been introduced throughout Europe after the dramatic French defeat in the Franco-Prussian war). Welsh explains how the contemporary idea of progress – that industry and nations were advancing inexorably – led many to the fear that unrestrained and rapid progress in military science must lead to catastrophe.²⁴ Hutton belonged to this group. ‘The enormous and increasing armaments of the European Powers,’ he cautioned, ‘cannot much

²¹ Letter, Hutton to Charlotte, 8 September 1887, BL, Charlotte Shaw Papers, ADD 56490, ff. 82-88.

²² E. Hutton, ‘Modern Warfare’, Lecture delivered to the Inns of Court Volunteers, 16 December 1886, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50111, 179-80.

²³ M. Welsh, *Science in a Pickelhaube: British Military Lesson Learning at the RUSI (1870-1900)*, Royal United Services Institute for Defence Studies, Whitehall, 1999, 8.

²⁴ Welsh, *Science in a Pickelhaube*, 39.

longer exist and statesmen solemnly acknowledge that a great crisis is at hand.²⁵ He warned that, 'a war if it does come will require all the military resources that we possess,' echoing Colmar Von Der Goltz's theory of total war (published only a few years earlier), which prophesied that 'The day of cabinet wars is over. It is no longer the weakness of a single man, at the head of affairs, or of a dominant party, that is decisive, but only the exhaustion of the belligerent nations.'²⁶

The maintenance of the British Empire was therefore now vitally important to Hutton. It was an Empire under threat, however, and Hutton's response to this challenge had important implications for his colonial career. This response was both a practical one – witnessed in his efforts at army reform – and an intellectual one: in a series of remarkable lectures delivered during 1886 and 1887 he promoted Britain's moral resources; and he met J. R. Seeley who provided an intellectual basis for his imperial ideas.

The fear of European war provoked a popular concern for the adequacy of Britain's defences. Burroughs, examining the British navy, discovers a flurry of defence spending after 1884 and a dramatic change of mood: newspapers, the government and the British people were suddenly alive to the threat of war.²⁷ The army was in an even more perilous position: how could it hope to successfully meet these large, well-trained national armies? As it stood, because of a constitutional reluctance to keep a large standing army dating back to the days of Cromwell, Britain had a force that was

²⁵ Hutton, 'Modern Warfare', 179.

²⁶ Hutton, 'Modern Warfare', 179; C. Von Der Goltz, *The Nation in Arms: A Treatise on Modern Military Systems and the Conduct of War*, trans. P. Ashworth, 5th ed., Hugh Rees, London, 1906 (originally published 1883), 9.

²⁷ P. Burroughs, 'The Mid-Victorian Navy and Imperial Defence', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 30, 2002, 106.

in effect a 'colonial service army.'²⁸ The problem was exacerbated by severe recruitment shortfalls throughout the period.

Hutton was acutely aware of this problem. Early in 1887 he had accepted a post at the British training facility at Aldershot (where Archibald Alison was now commandant). He immersed himself in preparations for the Aldershot Review, celebrating the Queen Victoria's 1887 jubilee, in which two army corps – 58,948 men – were paraded. This was the largest number of British troops ever assembled in one place; yet, as Charles Dilke pointed out in his series of seven articles, 'The British Army', written for the *The Fortnightly Review*, it was essentially a sham: the force was puffed up with volunteers and entirely lacked the necessary subsidiary services (transport, medical, etc.) to constitute real corps.²⁹ Hutton avidly read this series in which Dilke bemoaned the ill-preparedness of the British army, argued for the necessity of revolutionary change, and pressed for the creation of a field force capable of serving effectively around the world.³⁰ To meet this aim, Dilke advocated elements of the Swiss militia system and favoured the fuller use of militia and volunteers.³¹

Dilke's plans for the use of militia were enthusiastically received by Hutton, who had been one of the first British officers to inspect the Swiss system. During the summer of 1887 he had been instructed to attend their manoeuvres. The War Office was interested in technical details such as the quality of their new magazine rifle.³² Hutton

²⁸ D. Gordon, *The Dominion Partnership in Imperial Defense, 1870-1914*, Johns Hopkins Press, Maryland, 1965.

²⁹ C. Dilke, 'The British Army', *The Fortnightly Review*, No 252, 1 December 1887, 753.

³⁰ C. Dilke, 'The British Army', *The Fortnightly Review*, No 251, 1 November 1887, 610. For Hutton reading series see – Letter, Hutton to Charlotte, 7 January 1888, BL, Charlotte Shaw Papers, ADD 56490, f. 96.

³¹ C. Dilke, 'The British Army', *The Fortnightly Review*, No 253, 1 January 1888, 38 and No 255, 1 March 1888, 315.

³² Letter, Intelligence Department to Hutton, 1 September 1887, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50093.

initially doubted the value of the visit, as the Swiss army was not considered an efficient force. Witnessing their manoeuvres, however, he was astounded at the quality to which a well organised and equipped militia could attain with only a short period of training. They were far more efficient than any of Britain's volunteer or militia units. This experience impressed Hutton with the potential value of a partially trained militia; and this would later influence his assessment of the value of colonial militias for imperial defence.³³

Wolseley, at this point Adjutant General, was also considering the challenge facing the British army. He responded by campaigning, with the support of the Duke of Cambridge (the Commander in Chief), for the establishment of a field army, comprising two army corps and one cavalry division.³⁴ Edward Stanhope, the Secretary of State for War, affirmed that aim in his famous 1888 memorandum. Wolseley still faced, however, opposition from a parliament perennially hoping to cut army estimates. Furious, he declared 'party government' a curse and publicly campaigned to remove political interference from the army.³⁵ Frustrated, Wolseley resorted to the sort of expediency he had employed in the raising of troops for his various campaigns. The most pressing shortage was cavalry – yet these units were expensive, their officers were generally resistant to change, and cavalry tactics were widely viewed as obsolete. Funds were not available to increase their numbers and the existing cavalry regiments were hostile to any reorganisation.³⁶ Wolseley circumvented the problem with the authorisation of the mounted infantry school that

³³ E. Hutton, 'Report of the Swiss Manoeuvres', 15 September 1887, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50111, 184.

³⁴ S. Badsey, 'Fire and Sword: The British Army and the Arme Blanche Controversy 1871-1921', DPhil Thesis, University of Cambridge, 1981, 95.

³⁵ E. Spiers, *The Army and Society 1815-1914*, Longman, London, 1980, 220.

³⁶ E. Spiers, *The Late Victorian Army 1868-1902*, Manchester University Press, Manchester 1992, 67.

Hutton had been proposing, a cheap means of enhancing Britain's mounted forces.³⁷

The school would train volunteers – picked from regular infantry regiments, Militia units, and the Volunteers – who could then act as mounted infantry units in the event of a military emergency.

Hutton was by this stage Britain's leading mounted infantry expert. He did not invent the mounted infantry idea: in fact, he was not even the first to run a school (Baker Russell experimented with the same ideas a year earlier at Shorncliffe); yet, he did determine, more than any other British officer, the shape the British form of mounted infantry took before the Great War.³⁸ In March 1886 he had presented a lecture to the United Service Institution on the subject. Hopeful of a school for mounted infantry training being established at Aldershot, but believing that the Treasury stood in the way, he sought to publicise the issue, 'giving public opinion in military circles a chance to express itself.'³⁹ Wolseley chaired the evening's discussion. Many years later Hutton would thank Lord Minto for his support, 'Well do I remember your stalwart advocacy in 1886 at my memorable lecture in the U.S. Institute with Lord Wolseley in the Chair, when the M.I. movement was formally launched on the waters of criticism & petty jealousies.'⁴⁰ According to one attendee, 'the discussion was the most lively one he ever heard there.'⁴¹

On his return from Switzerland in September 1887 Hutton was asked to draw up a complete scheme for the founding of his mounted infantry school. The scheme was

³⁷ Badsey, 'Fire and Sword', 97.

³⁸ Hutton, 'Memoirs', Chapter 10, 1; A. Godley, *Life of an Irish Soldier*, John Murray, London, 1939, 32.

³⁹ Hutton, 'Memoirs', Chapter 9, 3.

⁴⁰ Letter, Hutton to Minto, 15 February 1911, NLS, Minto Papers, MS 12404, f. 125.

⁴¹ General Sir Arthur Herbert quoted in Letter, Alison to Hutton, 6 June 1886, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50093.

approved and in the early months of 1888 he trained his first two companies. He was delighted with the command, claiming he would not exchange the position to be Commander in Chief.⁴² On 5 March 1888 the actual Commander in Chief, the Duke of Cambridge, visited Aldershot to inspect the result. Hutton's school was deemed a success – even men without previous riding experience had become serviceable mounted infantry.⁴³

This appointment demonstrates how closely Hutton had become associated with Wolseley and his ring. He had come to think of himself as one of Wolseley's band, later assuring him, 'Your Lordship will, I think, believe that I am in no way a member of the Old School, but rather a Progressivist of your own School.'⁴⁴ Wolseley was happy with Hutton's work at Aldershot, promising to ensure a decent pile of equipment for his mounted infantry when he finally won complete control of the army, and praising Hutton: 'you have done wonders & it is you who have given an impetus to the movement which all men who thoroughly understand war now fully realize the importance of.'⁴⁵

Not all officers were as supportive of Hutton's mounted infantry work. After training his first company he had difficulty securing the money needed to continue the scheme. It was a novel project and he found himself open to continual criticism: 'Our every act, & word (nay even adjective) is criticized unsparingly by a not too indulgent military public.'⁴⁶ Behind this controversy lay the central problem that the form that mounted infantry should take had never been agreed upon. Since their inception in

⁴² Letter, Hutton to Charlotte, 26 February 1888, BL, Charlotte Shaw Papers, ADD 56490, ff 98-104.

⁴³ Lord Minto, Diary, 16 January 1889, NLS, Minto Papers, MS 12493, 52.

⁴⁴ Letter, Hutton to Wolseley, 12 December 1897, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50085, 112.

⁴⁵ Letter, Wolseley to Hutton, 16 May 1892, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50085, 93.

⁴⁶ Letter, Hutton to Charlotte, 26 February 1888, BL, Charlotte Shaw Papers, ADD 56490, ff 98-104.

the British army, mounted infantry had been improvised whenever emergency dictated: their tactics and organisation were determined, at the time, by whoever raised them. This was confused further by the variety of names given such troops – mounted infantry, mounted rifles, dragoons, light horse – and by the fact that the cavalry themselves were beginning to train in dismounted fighting. The functions that mounted infantry would perform in war, such as scouting and raiding, were vigorously contested. Many cavalry officers feared encroachment and resented expenditure that they felt could be better allotted to them.⁴⁷

Hutton also excited opposition from among the volunteers. His training of Volunteer officers caused some Yeomanry to fear becoming submerged by a Mounted Infantry Corps and losing their traditional function.⁴⁸ They were touchy on this subject: in 1882 Wolseley had proposed turning them all into mounted infantry.⁴⁹ The British volunteer forces were at that time split in three – the Militia, Yeomanry, and Volunteer Corps. They were poorly organised and unlikely to be of useful service in their existing state. The Militia, even by the late 1890s, lacked the departments necessary for modern war: transport, supply, even field artillery.⁵⁰ There was no provision to allow its being sent abroad, the members would have to volunteer individually. The Yeomanry were antiquated – only in 1888 was legislation passed to allow their calling up for service throughout Great Britain (previously an attack on a neighbouring county was no business of the local unit).⁵¹ Hutton had been inspired by his attendance at the Swiss manoeuvres to improve the fighting capacity of these forces. He hoped, like Wolseley, to develop some of them as mounted infantry. To

⁴⁷ Badsey, 'Fire and Sword', 93.

⁴⁸ Letter, Hutton to Minto, 6 June 1891, NLS, Minto Papers, MS 12388, f. 67.

⁴⁹ Badsey, 'Fire and Sword', 100.

⁵⁰ J. Dunlop, *The Development of the British Army 1899-1914*, Methuen, London, 1938, 43.

⁵¹ Dunlop, *The Development of the British Army*, 53.

this end, Hutton refined the scheme for British volunteer units that he had begun in 1885.⁵²

Hutton therefore responded to the threat of a coming conflict with practical efforts at reform: his mounted infantry school and his plans for the use of militia. These efforts fitted into Wolseley's broader agenda of building a field force capable of being sent overseas to meet the national armies of Europe.

Hutton's other main reform at Aldershot was an educational one. At the end of 1887 he formed a professional association there, the Aldershot Military Society. Its object was to stimulate professional interest by developing the camp's library and by arranging occasional lectures and discussions.⁵³ Hutton was disappointed that a professional spirit had not yet taken hold in the officer corps at large. Through his Society he sought to awaken a 'professional zeal' amongst his brother officers – something that he sensed was latent and was just starting to come to life.⁵⁴

In this initiative, Hutton's continuing attachment to the cult of manliness and athleticism, and his association of it with professionalism, is also apparent. In forming his society, he sought 'the best horsemen, the best cricketers, the best athletes' to join him, feeling these were the most dynamic and progressive men, and arguing, 'It could only be in the hunting field, in the racquet courts, playing cricket and on the race-course, among the cheerier element that one could hope gradually to

⁵² Letter, Hutton to Minto, 31 December 1888, NLS, Minto Papers, MS 12386, f. 141.

⁵³ H. Cole, *The Story of Aldershot: A History and Guide to Town and Camp*, Gale and Polden, Aldershot, 1951, 56.

⁵⁴ Hutton, 'Memoirs', Chapter 11, 1-2.

change public opinion.⁵⁵ The topics of some of the Society's early lectures supported this. The third lecture given was presented by Colonel Onslow and entitled, 'Physique of the Soldier and his Physical Training.' In it, Onslow referred to fears of the degeneration of the British race and suggested that soldiers be encouraged 'to play cricket and football, and all other manly games.'⁵⁶

Hutton's Society was a success. It was emulated in many other British military centres around the Empire. With a certain hubris he claimed, 'I am convinced that of all the reforms initiated at that period, there was none that had a greater or more direct effect amongst officers of all grades in the Army in promoting zeal and interest in their profession.'⁵⁷ To Hutton's immense satisfaction, it won the wholehearted approval of Wolseley who expressed this at a couple of the Society's meetings; on one occasion he proclaimed, 'I would wish to take this opportunity of congratulating all the officers whom I have the honour of addressing on the great success which has attended this Institution, which has been so recently started in Aldershot for [the] purpose of increasing the knowledge of officers.'⁵⁸ Yet this success was not sufficient for Hutton's satisfaction. He hoped to engage with a much wider audience.

Hutton had come to conceive of soldiers as occupying a central place in the national community, as protectors of the national honour and defenders of its prestige. In his 1886 lecture to the boys at Eton, Hutton described the murder of the British envoy that precipitated the Afghan war (1879), 'a severe lesson was required to re-establish

⁵⁵ Hutton, 'Memoirs', Chapter 11, 2.

⁵⁶ Col. Onslow, 'Physique of the Soldier and his Physical Training', Lecture 3, *Military Lectures*, Aldershot Military Society, 22 March 1888, 17.

⁵⁷ Hutton, 'Memoirs', Chapter 11, 5.

⁵⁸ Wolseley's remarks at 'Field Artillery', Lecture 6, *Military Lectures*, Aldershot Military Society, 11 June 1888, 33; and C. Slade, 'Modern Military Rifles and How to Use Them', Lecture 24, *Military Lectures*, Aldershot Military Society, 4 February 1890, 20.

our prestige which had suffered so severe a shock.’⁵⁹ The British army was more than equal to the task: ‘the British Army of to-day is equal in discipline and unsurpassed in efficiency to any army which this country ever placed in the field.’⁶⁰ Politicians, on the other hand, had repeatedly betrayed the nation in their failure to protect British prestige; he scornfully described government policy during the first Boer war (1881), ‘when our military honour had been dragged through the mud, and when we had at hand a fine army of 10,000 seasoned troops the government of the day elected to make peace to “avoid” as was said “useless blood shed.”’⁶¹

When Hutton returned a year later to address the boys of Eton a second time he echoed these themes but with an even stronger tone. He boosted the Empire, describing it as ‘a vast inheritance the like of which the world has never seen.’⁶² The connection he made between the army, the nation, and the Empire was much more forthright. ‘We, soldiers of today,’ he enthused, ‘are the nation! We are bred of, and we claim in fairness to represent the nation.’⁶³ The modern British soldier was no longer press-ganged or lured with bounties but joined of his own free will and, ‘After our six years of change, and of adventure we return to the nation and to civil life. We are therefore essentially of the British people, and not a class apart.’⁶⁴ As integral to the nation, the British soldier was also a vital part of the Empire:

If it has been our lot, the lot of the British soldier of yesterday and today to assist in bringing this Great Empire with the blessing of Heaven to the pinnacle

⁵⁹ Hutton, ‘Our Recent Campaigns’, 153.

⁶⁰ Hutton, ‘Our Recent Campaigns’, 143.

⁶¹ Hutton, ‘Our Recent Campaigns’, 141.

⁶² E. Hutton, ‘The British Soldier of Yesterday and Today,’ Lecture read to the Boys of Eton, 26 November 1887, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50111, 215.

⁶³ Hutton, ‘The British Soldier of Yesterday and Today’, 214.

⁶⁴ Hutton, ‘The British Soldier of Yesterday and Today’, 215.

of Greatness, which we realize at this moment; it will be yours, my friends, in a few short years to defend the legacy we shall bequeath.⁶⁵

Hutton felt called to share his ideas with society at large. This was the other side of his response to the crisis facing the Empire. He drew on Britain's moral resources as he had come to conceive them – racial uniqueness, manliness and professionalism – and he publicised them in lectures: to the Inns of Court Volunteers (1886) and to the boys of Eton (1886 and 1887).

None of the European armies developed mounted infantry forces comparable to Britain's. Hutton came to view this as having a national significance. He believed that such forces could prove to be the saving grace in the coming war: 'In the next great war that power which makes its infantry most mobile so as to act in conjunction with the large masses of cavalry manoeuvring 20 & 30 miles in front of a great European Army will have enormous odds in its favour.'⁶⁶ Furthermore, he believed that the European Armies were incapable of mounting their infantry in the improvised manner that the British had adopted: 'Neither French, German nor Italian infantry could be readily Mounted *a l'improviste* as we do with our men.'⁶⁷ Hutton felt that native adaptability allowed the British alone to accomplish this and he described the 'particular genius of our Anglo-Saxon race which possesses in so remarkable a degree those qualities of which we are so proud to credit ourselves with, viz., a love of horses, a spirit of adventure, and an adaptability to all circumstances.'⁶⁸ Hutton went further, saying, 'We Englishmen are, gentlemen, too apt to undervalue ourselves at

⁶⁵ Hutton, 'The British Soldier of Yesterday and Today', 216.

⁶⁶ Letter, Hutton to Minto, 6 May 1890, NLS, Minto Papers, MS 12387, f. 34.

⁶⁷ Letter, Hutton to Minto, 6 May 1890, NLS, Minto Papers, MS 12387, f. 34.

⁶⁸ E. Hutton, 'Mounted Infantry - Its Present and Its Future', Lecture 18, *Military Lectures*, Aldershot Military Society, 21 March 1889, 4.

the expense of our neighbours. We do not, I firmly believe, rate the value of our soldiers sufficiently high! The quality of our officer, the physique and the adaptability of our rank and file are, I believe, unrivalled in Europe!’⁶⁹

Hutton expounded on this theme of a supposed British trait of individual resourcefulness in his public speeches. Huttenback describes a growing faith, among Victorian Britons, of their racial uniqueness, founded upon a ‘special capacity for governing itself’ by combining ‘liberty, justice and efficiency’ in a constitutional system incapable of emulation by others.⁷⁰ Hutton looked at the British soldier and at the British officer and he saw similar qualities. This view had developed during his early career – beginning with Hawley’s training and continuing in experiences on campaign in Africa. In his speech to the Inns of Court Volunteers he described the ‘independent and sturdy character of our nation’ and the ‘individual courage and initiative of subordinate commanders and even individuals.’⁷¹ Against the collectivist automatons of the armies of Europe, Hutton posed the individual, adaptable, and self-reliant British soldier. These qualities gave the British army ‘steadiness and valour’ and ‘the greatest power of manoeuvring’ – useful qualities given the effect the speed and accuracy of modern rifle fire had on battlefield tactics.⁷² In this particular lecture, Hutton described these British attributes as the result of ‘improved education and a growth of political freedom’ – rather than as inherited characteristics.⁷³ In a lecture to students at Eton in 1886 Hutton associated Wolseley with the independent-minded

⁶⁹ Hutton, ‘Mounted Infantry’, 8.

⁷⁰ R. Huttenback, *Racism and Empire: White Settlers and Colored Immigrants in the British Self-Governing Colonies 1830-1910*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1976, 15.

⁷¹ Hutton, ‘Modern Warfare’, 169-70.

⁷² Hutton, ‘Modern Warfare’, 169 & 171.

⁷³ Hutton, ‘Modern Warfare’, 169.

quality of British troops, arguing that in the Ashanti campaign Wolseley recognised the value of independence – witnessed in his use of small sections.⁷⁴

He took a much more assertively racial line when he returned a year later to address a second gathering at Eton. Whereas his earlier speech had emphasised education as the key to Britain's soldierly qualities, in 1887 he tied these virtues to the national character, making them uniquely British and not necessarily open to the peoples of other states:

Self reliance, and a natural independence of character begotten of the national love of liberty have given the British soldier that steadiness and natural confidence in danger which has enabled him alone of all nations in the past to fight in line with a quiet and impassive coolness which has won him the praise of all critics and military writers.⁷⁵

Extending his argument Hutton conducted a racial autopsy on the body of the British soldier, to identify whence these racial characteristics had come:

The term 'British' soldier includes the three nationalities: English, Irish and Scotch – each different, each of value in making up the excellence of the 'British soldier'.

The Englishman contributes cool courage, impassiveness, amenability to discipline, a fine physique, and an independent spirit.

The Irishman contributes an impetuous bravery, an almost love of danger for itself, a hardy frame, and a natural aptitude for war.

The Scotchman contributes a stern regard for duty, a rigid and almost mechanical discipline – not ignorant of danger but by nature callous to it, a deep

⁷⁴ Hutton, 'Our Recent Campaigns', 150.

⁷⁵ Hutton, 'The British Soldier of Yesterday and Today', 203.

national spirit begotten of a religious enthusiasm, a powerful and hardy physique.

These national characteristics have become less marked because they have become more welded together in the same individual, hence the British soldier as we find him today.⁷⁶

Hutton was not alone in holding such views. They seem to have become quite common among British officers of his day. In Hutton's views the distinct influence of his commanding officer, Archibald Alison, can be traced. Alison voiced very similar sentiments in a speech in Glasgow in 1883.⁷⁷ Alison bemoaned, as Hutton repeatedly did, the loss of British prestige following the 'chequered events of the Zulu War' and 'the defeats of the Boer campaign' and he came to the same conclusion as Hutton as to its remedy: speaking of 'the great influence which the principle of nationality, has always possessed in our army, and upon which we can always rely to carry us through every difficulty.'⁷⁸ And as Hutton reconciled the competing members of the British race, so did Alison, 'This great principle of nationality works among our soldiers to unmixed good. It leads to emulation only, never to discord. It has no disintegrating effect. We soldiers are all alike united in our attachment to the British Empire – but there is a keen spirit of generous rivalry amongst us, as to which nation will most excel in supporting it on the field of battle.'⁷⁹

Hutton maintained a very close connection with Eton and especially with his old master, Dr Warre. He assisted Warre in training the school's cadets, attending classes

⁷⁶ Hutton, 'The British Soldier of Yesterday and Today', 202.

⁷⁷ A. Alison, Speech in Glasgow, 18 October 1883, BOD, Alison Papers, MS Eng Lett e. 151, 107.

⁷⁸ Alison, Speech in Glasgow, 107.

⁷⁹ Alison, Speech in Glasgow, 108.

and organising field days where Eton boys drilled alongside cavalry and Royal Horse Artillery units from the British regulars.⁸⁰ These were grand exercises, managed on a large scale – on one occasion the poor boys from Eton were doing so much strategic marching about that they did not even get to engage the enemy.⁸¹ Remaining so closely in touch with Eton, Hutton was always influenced by that institution. By assisting in the training of new Eton boys he also helped perpetuate and re-shape those traditions. He sought to instil in these students the same two values that had had such significance in his own career, manliness and professionalism.

‘As long as the present manly tone is fostered and encouraged at all our great public schools,’ Hutton claimed in the first of his Eton lectures, ‘so surely will a race of men be produced, who are ready and able not only to maintain the legacy of this great Empire left us by our forefathers, but also still further to extend it.’⁸² Manliness entailed courage – both physical and moral. This part of Hutton’s presentation was permeated with talk of race. Hutton claimed that courage was a common virtue among Anglo Saxons.⁸³ As well as being courageous the soldier must possess the virtues of command and obedience, as opposed to simple discipline. Hutton believed these qualities could best be imparted through sport, ‘upon the River and in the Cricket field.’⁸⁴ Sport trained youths to be ideal warriors:

In your football, in your cricket, in your boating in all your manly pursuits you are learning instinctively the qualities which won for the Greeks their warlike renown, for Rome the empire of the World, and which is at this present moment

⁸⁰ Letter, Hutton to Warre, 15 July 1888, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50093.

⁸¹ Letter, Hutton to Warre, 14 February 1889, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50093.

⁸² Hutton, ‘Our Recent Campaigns’, 135.

⁸³ Hutton, ‘Our Recent Campaigns’, 160.

⁸⁴ Hutton, ‘Our Recent Campaigns’, 162.

giving way to [the] Saxon race, a dominion incomparatively [sic] vaster than either.⁸⁵

Hutton again warned of an impending great conflict. Cultivation of these qualities was therefore an urgent matter: ‘Consider therefore gentlemen, that you are now preparing yourselves for the great struggle which must inevitably fall to our lot as a nation within the next few years.’⁸⁶ Manliness was now much more than simply a means for Hutton to establish his legitimacy as an officer. Its connection with his adoption of late-Victorian imperialism is evident in the way he linked manly virtues firmly to the Anglo Saxon race and to the grave imperative of defending the Empire against the threat of the coming war.

Hutton also promoted his professional ideal to the Eton boys. He advocated the professional officer type – arguing that study was the only way to reach real distinction as a soldier. He placed particular emphasis on the value of education. ‘To be a successful soldier,’ he preached, ‘you must work and work thoroughly and conscientiously. War is an art, which must be studied – the knowledge of men and how to deal with human events is the result of study, reflection and constant hard-work.’⁸⁷ War was also, for Hutton, a ‘science – fighting, for which the soldiers exist, is the trial of his strength – the best examination at the end of his course of instruction and study.’⁸⁸ In order to be a successful leader, and in order to gain the confidence of his men, an officer, Hutton argued, must know his profession: ‘men will not believe in those whom they know to be ignorant.’⁸⁹ Hutton repudiated the image of the

⁸⁵ Hutton, ‘Our Recent Campaigns’, 162.

⁸⁶ Hutton, ‘Our Recent Campaigns’, 162.

⁸⁷ Hutton, ‘Our Recent Campaigns’, 157.

⁸⁸ Hutton, ‘Our Recent Campaigns’, 157.

⁸⁹ Hutton, ‘Our Recent Campaigns’, 157.

dilettante, aristocratic officer: the 'military profession is not 'a life of pleasure and idleness' as many conceive it to be.'⁹⁰

Hutton practised what he preached. His own professionalism is evident in the flurry of romantic activity in which he engaged in this period. During these years he enjoyed a prolonged flirtation with Charlotte Payne-Townshend (who later married George Bernard Shaw) and professed his love to that lady, 'I have yearned for a woman to whom I could look for sympathy and help in the long continual battle of life, – one who could fathom my thoughts and understand my ambitions,' and had assured her that, 'If in after life I ever achieve anything great or good you may very safely feel that you, you only, have been the sole woman, who ever had the power to exercise a real and lasting influence over my life.'⁹¹ Hutton had waited until his very late 30s, when his career was finally on a stable footing and his professional ambitions were beginning to be fulfilled, to pursue love. Not all officers had such patience: Evelyn Wood, upset at his own son for tying the knot, hailed Hutton as an example of a soldier for whom duty had come first.⁹² In his letter to Charlotte, Hutton longed for a woman who would accommodate his careerism, his ambition; and, in his future wife, Eleanor Paulet, he found it. Hutton met Eleanor at the end of 1888 and they quickly married. Her family were aristocrats, a fact that would lend Hutton additional social cachet, especially in his later commands in the colonies. However, it was another quality that he remarked upon in his memoir, 'From the very beginning of our married life she realized that professional duty is the first consideration in all circumstances of a soldier.'⁹³

⁹⁰ Hutton, 'Our Recent Campaigns', 158.

⁹¹ Letter, Hutton to Charlotte, 16 July 1887, BL, Charlotte Shaw Papers, ADD 56490, ff 73-79.

⁹² Letter, Wood to Hutton, 9 March 1893, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50086.

⁹³ Hutton, 'Memoirs', Chapter 12, 2.

Hutton's imperial identity, the values that were bound up in that, and his sense of a mission to share those with the general public were all powerfully affirmed by the British historian, J. R. Seeley, the most important intellectual influence on Hutton's burgeoning imperialism.

Seeley was foremost among the late-Victorian theorists of Empire. Hutton admired Seeley's major work *The Expansion of England* as an 'epoch-making book' which he claimed to have 'carefully studied.'⁹⁴ This book was a bestseller, selling 80,000 copies in its first two years in print. Although Seeley spent most of the work dwelling on British problems in India and America, it was the self-governing colonies that he viewed as being vital to the Empire's future. Clive argues that these colonies were in fact his essential theme.⁹⁵ Seeley asserted an essential unity between Britain and these colonies. He expounded the notion of Greater Britain, suggesting that the British should stop thinking of the Empire as an assortment of colonies but rather as 'a new state, English in race and character.'⁹⁶ Seeley suggested that bonds of 'nationality, language and religion' constituted 'natural ties which unite Englishmen.'⁹⁷ Seeley confirmed Hutton in the opinion that Britain shared with its white settlements a common racial heritage that bound them together. It was a British nationalism that incorporated the self-governing Empire.

Seeley's position was non-prescriptive. Although he was a member of the Imperial Federation League, and looked to the eventual embodiment of Greater Britain in a

⁹⁴ Hutton, 'Memoirs', Chapter 13, 2nd Draft, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50113, 296.

⁹⁵ R. Clive, 'Introduction', in J. Seeley, *The Expansion of England*, ed. J. Gross, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1971, xiv.

⁹⁶ Seeley, *The Expansion of England*, 17.

⁹⁷ Seeley, *The Expansion of England*, 234.

political federation, he believed that the work of the League itself should be primarily educational. He never promoted a particular scheme for imperial unification, believing that closer ties would naturally evolve from the basic, cultural connection.⁹⁸

If this process could not be structured, it could be encouraged, and Seeley believed that civic education was vital. He argued that only a broad education compassing moral, as well as intellectual, cultivation could enable Greater Britain to achieve its 'potential as a world power'.⁹⁹ Seeley's conception of Greater Britain fused together many of the different strands of Hutton's own developing worldview. Seeley shared Hutton's enthusiasm for 'manliness' – an essential component, for Seeley, of a schooling in character.¹⁰⁰ Just as Hutton favoured a broad, inclusive Christianity that would bond soldiers together, rather than divide them, Seeley believed in a national church that would promote national unity.¹⁰¹ In his two major religious works, *Ecce Homo* and *Natural Religion*, Seeley offered an essentially Romantic response to the problems posed to traditional Christianity by the Rational age and scientific enquiry. He drew from Coleridge's distinction of 'reason' and 'understanding' to argue for an emotional understanding of religion.¹⁰² People were born to their religions, in the same way they were born to their nationality: religions to Seeley, as Wormell describes it, were simply 'nationalities in an idealized form.'¹⁰³ Seeley conceived of

⁹⁸ P. Burroughs, 'John Robert Seeley and British Imperial History', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 1, 1973, 202; D. Wormell, *Sir John Seeley and the Uses of History*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1980, 96 and 167.

⁹⁹ D. Wormell, 'John Robert Seeley (1834-95): Educational reformer, historian and political scientist', PhD Thesis, University College London, 1977, 99-101.

¹⁰⁰ Wormell, 'John Robert Seeley', 155.

¹⁰¹ Wormell, 'John Robert Seeley', 310.

¹⁰² D. Wormell, *Sir John Seeley and the Uses of History*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1980, 15 and 28.

¹⁰³ Wormell, *Sir John Seeley and the Uses of History*, 36.

the nation state as a sacred institution, above politics, which all manly, moral, Christian men (including soldiers) must protect.¹⁰⁴

Hutton accepted Seeley's views whole piece. He invited the author to present a lecture to the Aldershot Military Society, an occasion he remembered reverently: 'I was an enthusiastic disciple, and even now recall with a glow the peroration of his address.'¹⁰⁵ In his address, Seeley reiterated the fears of officers like Hutton and Wolseley of an impending European conflict: 'we watch with dismay the gradual approach of a struggle between civilised nations which seems likely to eclipse in magnitude all that has hitherto been known among barbarians.'¹⁰⁶

Hutton took up not only Seeley's aim of an Empire more tightly knit; but also adopted Seeley's means – education to assist a process of natural evolution. Hutton was encouraged by the role Seeley allowed for soldiers in this process. Seeley overturned the traditional idea that the army must be neutral and stand outside of the national debate; instead, he encouraged the assembled officers to consider themselves not just specialists, but also 'citizens and patriots.'¹⁰⁷ He attacked the notion that the army was a burden on the economy, asserting that it was essential to the expansion of trade, and he challenged colonial reluctance to assist in imperial defence:

You may tell English trade that you have been from the outset its instrument, that you sprang into existence along with the trading policy of England, and grew with its growth. You may tell the Colonies that it has been your great work from the outset either to found or to protect them, that England has not

¹⁰⁴ Wormell, 'John Robert Seeley', 309.

¹⁰⁵ Hutton, 'Memoir', Chapter 13, 2nd Draft, 296.

¹⁰⁶ J. Seeley, 'The Empire', Lecture 17, *Military Lectures*, Aldershot Military Society, 24 April 1889, 5.

¹⁰⁷ Seeley, 'The Empire', 14.

engaged in European wars against their interest, but that the wars of England have been from first to last undertaken in the cause of the Empire, so that it would be far truer to say that the Colonies have dragged England, than that England has dragged the Colonies, into war.¹⁰⁸

Hutton was deeply affected by this. He quoted extensively from the passage in his memoir.¹⁰⁹ At the conclusion of Seeley's address he was the first (besides the Chair) to respond. He rose, claiming to speak for the 'rising generation,' to assure Seeley that British officers felt keenly their role 'with reference to the Empire here and throughout the world:'

I can only assure Professor Seeley that we feel our responsibility deeply, very deeply, and in the discharge of our duties as officers towards those superior to ourselves and towards those whom we command we have the maintenance and welfare of the Empire profoundly at heart, and that we are in the best sense of the term both patriots and citizens.¹¹⁰

Seeley therefore gave Hutton a goal, a means, and also permission to act.

In earlier stages of Hutton's career he had begun to grapple with the problems of nation and Empire. As he had become increasingly sensitive to the maintenance of British prestige, his racial perspective had grown harder. Hutton's growing awareness of threats of European war through the 1880s, the challenge posed by international rivalries, drove him to a new awareness of the Empire. In his lectures of 1886 and 1887 he considered these problems of Empire. Hutton owed something of his conception of that threat to Wolseley and his response was very similar to Wolseley's: blaming politicians for failing to uphold British prestige, attacking parliament for

¹⁰⁸ Seeley, 'The Empire', 12.

¹⁰⁹ Hutton, 'Memoir', Chapter 13, 2nd Draft, 296.

¹¹⁰ Seeley, 'The Empire', 12.

refusing to allocate money to the army, and seeking to mobilise public opinion by use of the press. Hutton's development of mounted infantry, and his ambitions for British volunteer units, fitted into Wolseley's broader agenda of seeking to work around chronic under-funding by expedient means (such as training infantry in the tasks of cavalry) and thereby attempting to cobble together a field force that could fight these continental foes. When Hutton later served as a colonial commandant he kept that aim in mind. Hutton had also discovered Seeley – a Cambridge don who shared his views on manliness, religion, and the British character – and in whom he found a vision of Empire that synthesised his developing sentiments into an intellectual whole. Seeley ratified Hutton's concerns for the Empire, justified his desire to maintain it whole and, by situating soldiers within the national debate, he gave Hutton permission to act. Seeley, it might be said, sent Hutton off to the self-governing colonies.

4. Patriot and Citizen: New South Wales 1893 to 1896

New South Wales was a defining chapter in Edward Hutton's career. From May 1893 to March 1896 he served as General Officer Commanding the New South Wales Military Forces. He brought to this command modern military ideas and late-Victorian imperial aspirations. During his service in New South Wales he was confronted with the realities of colonial politics and colonial opinion, of imperial sentiment and colonial self-interest. The result was a fusion of his imperial dreams with colonial realities.¹ He moderated his own views, accommodating the colonial perspective, and he sought to engage with colonial opinion and educate the public. Out of this experience he developed a model for colonial armies, his 'Co-operative System for the Defence of the Empire', which he took to his later commands and championed for the rest of his life.

By the time of his appointment Hutton had come under the influence of two men: Seeley and Wolseley. He shared Seeley's imperialism – a vision of a white, self-governing Empire already essentially united as Greater Britain. Closer cooperation should be encouraged by education and not forced with prescriptive measures. 'We are in the best sense of the term both patriots and citizens,' Hutton had proclaimed, echoing Seeley's assertion that soldiers shared in the responsibility of promoting a united Empire.² Likewise, Hutton, as a member of Wolseley's clique of reform-minded officers, agreed on the need to build a British field army, capable of fighting wherever British interests dictated, to meet the threat of European war. Wolseley had worked around the financial strictures imposed by a parliament intent on economy

¹ Phrase borrowed from R. Moyles and D. Owrham, *Imperial Dreams and Colonial Realities. British Views of Canada, 1880-1914*, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1988.

² J. Seeley, 'The Empire', Lecture 17, *Military Lectures*, Aldershot Military Society, 24 April 1889, 4.

with stopgap solutions such as Hutton's mounted infantry school. Hutton shared these expedient methods, seeing a role for volunteer forces in the proposed field army. He also shared Wolseley's suspicion of politicians and readiness to mobilise public opinion through appeals to the press and through war scares.

There were other influences on Hutton. He had been inspired to apply for the New South Wales command after meeting with a group of British parliamentarians interested in military affairs. These men, including Howard Vincent and John Columb, had suggested that as military commander Hutton could assist in moving the Australian colonies towards a national federation by working for a closer cooperation between the various colonial military forces.³ Hutton also consulted with Captain Peacocke, Secretary to the Colonial Defence Committee, who introduced Hutton to the writings of Colonel Sydenham Clarke. Hutton would later claim that:

It was a close study of those papers which more than ever inspired me with the ambition of taking a share in so vastly important a work, and of putting its principles into effect in a practical form through, in the first instance, a system of co-operative defence between the six States of Australia, and ultimately into a complete federation of the Island Continent.⁴

Clarke shared Wolseley's fears of a coming great war and he supported Wolseley in his ambition to form a field force capable of meeting that threat.⁵ Clarke fused those ideas with the Empire by arguing that the white, self-governing colonies could

³ E. Hutton, 'Memoirs of Lieutenant-General Sir Edward Hutton', BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50112, Chapter 12, 6.

⁴ Hutton, 'Memoirs', Chapter 13, 1.

⁵ G. Clarke, *Imperial Defence*, Imperial Press, London, 1897, xiv & 217.

usefully contribute to such a force.⁶ Clarke favoured federation for defence purposes as a stepping-stone to a wider political Imperial Federation.⁷ In these respects, Clarke acted as a bridge for Hutton, translating his Wolseleyan agenda to the colonies.

Before he left for Sydney Hutton received instructions from the Permanent Undersecretary of State for the Colonies, Robert Meade. Meade informed Hutton that his primary object in New South Wales was to organise the local defences for the protection of the colony itself. However, he also encouraged Hutton to press for an Australian federal defence arrangement, to foster imperial sentiment in the colonies, and to prepare a mobile force for possible overseas service. Hutton made this summary of Meade's instructions:

1. Defence of the Colony itself.
2. Federation of the colonies for Defence purposes
3. In the possible event of Imperial War complications an expeditionary force for service in the Pacific.
4. In the remote contingency of the safety of the Empire being compromised, a contingent of Troops for Imperial Military Operations.⁸

Meade suggested that Hutton tread lightly in pursuing this agenda, warning him that 'a party of opposition to any imperial policy is apparent in each colony' and advising him to 'omit, as a question of practical Imperial policy, any reference to the

⁶ Clarke, *Imperial Defence*, 218.

⁷ Clarke, *Imperial Defence*, 232.

⁸ E. Hutton, 'Memorandum of Conversation with Robert Meade', 9 March 1893, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50078, 252.

possibility of Colonial Forces being necessarily expected to take part in Imperial military operations.’⁹

Hutton took these instructions seriously. In implementing them, however, he did not act as an imperial automaton. Most historians who discuss Hutton’s command in New South Wales portray him as a single-minded and dogged imperialist who attempted to foist metropolitan British policies onto the colonial periphery.¹⁰ In judging Hutton in this easy manner they miss opportunities to reflect upon the nature of British policy and to test colonial sentiment fairly. This chapter will examine Hutton’s intentions, studying his conception of his role in the colony, his plans for New South Wales, Australia, and the Empire, and his actions while commandant, and thereby attempt to place the colonial response in a richer context.

Soon after arriving in the colony Hutton held a major review at the recently opened Centennial Park. The response to his review caused the reporter from the *Australian Agriculturalist* to opine that, ‘Young Australia was “British yet”... the true country colonial gentleman, rich or poor man, will be known by his race feeling and federation sentiment.’¹¹ Not everyone who attended was so enthusiastic. The *Sydney Morning Herald’s* correspondent, taking quite a different angle, reported dissatisfaction among the military officers present. These unhappy officers were concerned by Hutton’s ‘imperialising tendency’ made evident by his supposed ambitions to assimilate the colony’s troops to the Imperial model, preparing them for service overseas. They feared the colony’s being left naked and at the mercy of the

⁹ Hutton, ‘Memorandum of Conversation with Robert Meade’, 252.

¹⁰ See survey of historiography in Introduction.

¹¹ ‘The Yeoman Under Arms’, *Australian Agriculturalist*, 25 July 1893, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 6, 52.

enemy while its army fought 'the battles of the mother country' overseas; and they declared that, 'their view of patriotism is confined to the country in which they reside; at all events, they say, that country should have their first care.'¹² This criticism was based on a desire to retain local control over the use of the colony's army.¹³

These two different responses to the Centennial Park review illustrate the fundamental problem with most accounts of Hutton's imperialism and the colonial response.

These accounts posit a simple dichotomy between Hutton's 'imperialism' and 'colonial nationalism' – any opposition to Hutton or his imperial agenda is taken to indicate an early form of Australian nationalism. This neat equation accounts for neither the subtlety of Hutton's imperialism nor the complexity of colonial opinion.

In the wake of the Centennial Park review one journal lauded British race feeling while another feared the sacrifice of colonial autonomy to the British cause. This pattern was repeated throughout Hutton's command and it illustrates the duality of colonial identity: a cultural and sentimental attachment to Britain and to the British Empire coexisted with a concern to protect local interests.

Hutton's response to the Centennial Park review row indicates the way in which he gradually became attuned to these separate loyalties of culture and interest. He responded to the Centennial Park review critics on their own grounds, claiming that he was only interested in economy and efficiency, having been brought up in the

¹² *Sydney Morning Herald*, 19 August 1893, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 6.

¹³ It ought to be briefly noted that much of the criticism arose from frustrations that had nothing to do with imperial politics. The officers voicing complaints were unhappy with the pay reductions Hutton had recently forced and resented the fact that Hutton had publicly criticised their professional abilities, reserving all praise for the horsemanship and skill of the troops themselves. That praise was itself characterised as something sinister and they suggested that Hutton wanted these horsemen transferred to India to maintain the British Empire, beguiling the colony into expenses unnecessary for its own defence.

‘British school’ where ‘nothing... is done by the military authorities except on absolutely the most stringent lines of economy.’¹⁴ In this reply he neatly reconciled British cultural sentiment with local interests – economy became a British trait. Hutton was not always so adept in straddling the two planks of colonial identity and a study of his successes and missteps in New South Wales provides useful insights into the nature of pre-federation colonial identity.

In a very similar way, the British were themselves divided in their imperial identity. As Burroughs suggests, ‘just as colonial sensibilities coexisted with Imperial sentiment, so British self-sufficiency jostled with collaborative impulses.’¹⁵

Thompson agrees, arguing that the British electorate was just as wary of sacrificing its interests for the Empire as the colonists were.¹⁶ They too had a sense of identity that was sentimentally bound to the Empire but also conscious of local British interests. Both Thompson and Burroughs conclude that as a result of this dual identity there existed an ambivalence in Whitehall that prevented a consistent approach to the problem of imperial military integration.¹⁷ In the absence of such a clear policy, Hutton was able to act as a relatively free agent in New South Wales: besides Meade’s broad instructions he received little advice from London.

Like that of his compatriots, Hutton’s view of the Empire was a mix of pure imperial sentiment, concern for the general defence, and a desire to enhance the security of Great Britain (as the centre of the Empire). This becomes quite apparent when

¹⁴ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 23 August 1893, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 6.

¹⁵ P. Burroughs, ‘Defence and Imperial Disunity’, *The Oxford History of the British Empire*, vol. 3, ed. A. Porter, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1999, 323.

¹⁶ A. Thompson, ‘Thinking Imperially? Imperial Pressure Groups and the Idea of Empire in Late-Victorian and Edwardian Britain’, D.Phil. Thesis, Corpus Christi College, Oxford, 1994, 234.

¹⁷ Burroughs, ‘Defence and Imperial Disunity’, 327 and 336 and Thompson, ‘Thinking Imperially?’, 234.

discerning the separate influences of Seeley and Wolseley on his actions. In New South Wales it was Seeley's influence that helped Hutton engage with colonial British race patriotism: Seeley minimised questions of interest and emphasised instead the fostering of imperial sentiment. Wolseley, however, had taught Hutton expediency and had impressed on him the desperate need to bolster the British army against a coming war on the continent. Navigating these competing influences, interests, and sentiments would prove a challenging task. In much of Hutton's work, especially in his practical military reforms, he sought to enhance the colony's ability to defend itself (as a part of the Empire); at other times he looked to the possibility of colonial assistance in a general war; and, finally, Hutton also worked to foster a common British imperial sentiment.

Hutton was the youngest acting major-general in the British army at this time. He had been made an aide de camp to the Queen just before his appointment. He and his charming new wife were to become very popular in Sydney society. He was dynamic. He came to Sydney keen to make changes and to shake-up the colony's militia. He saw himself as a reformer, in the mould of Wolseley, and he sought to implement his modern professional ideas in New South Wales. These plans had been stimulated, during the voyage from England, by his study of the findings of the 1892 Military Service Inquiry Commission.¹⁸ This commission had inquired into the state of the colony's defence forces and, discovering them to be 'unsatisfactory,' urged prompt and extensive reforms such as restructuring the political administration of the department to make the naval and military commanders responsible advisers to the Minister, rationalising the forces to reduce expenditure, replacing the permanent

¹⁸ Hutton, 'Memoirs', Chapter 13, 2.

officers in command of the artillery, drafting a complete defence scheme for New South Wales, and convening a meeting of representatives from all the colonies to discuss federal defence.¹⁹

On his arrival Hutton immediately initiated a string of practical military reforms. Many were along the lines recommended by the Commission. The Commission had pointed to problems in the defence department (at this stage the Chief Secretary's Department), commenting on the notoriously bad relations that had plagued the colony's military commanders and their ministers.²⁰ To alleviate this, Hutton removed the bureaucratic layers intervening between him and the Chief Secretary, making himself directly responsible to that minister and becoming the sole adviser on defence matters: 'All correspondence for the approval of, or for the information of the Minister of Defence, will in future pass through my hands.'²¹ This reform had the flavour of British changes urged over the previous decade by Wolseley – through the Stephen Royal Commission of 1887 and the Stanhope reforms of 1888 – which clarified the role of the Commander in Chief by making him the central point for all communication with the minister and directly responsible for all matters of personnel and *materiel*.²²

Perry notes the dispiritedness of the troops found by Hutton and concludes that, over the course of his command, he, 'gave to the Colony's small army an experience and a

¹⁹ 'Report of the Military Service Enquiry Commission' with Despatch, Jersey to Colonial Office, No 936, received 18 January 1893, TNA, PRO, CO 201/613.

²⁰ 'Report of the Military Service Enquiry Commission' with Despatch, Jersey to Colonial Office, No 936, received 18 January 1893, TNA, PRO, CO 201/613.

²¹ E. Hutton, 'Memorandum to P.U.S. to be forwarded to Minister for Defence', 16 June 1893, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50084, 197.

²² E. Spiers, *The Late Victorian Army 1868-1902*, Manchester University Press, Manchester 1992, 44; H. Strachan, *The Politics of the British Army*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1997, 120.

confidence it had previously lacked.²³ Many of Hutton's reforms were directed at simply improving the morale of his forces. He planned training camps, organised tournaments, hosted tattoos, led frequent troop inspections, encouraged the development of rifle clubs, and communicated with the press and public. Hutton drafted for New South Wales its first defence scheme. It gave his troops a sense of purpose by assigning, 'to every blue jacket and soldier his particular post and duty, so that each knew where to go and what to do should anything happen.'²⁴ The centrepiece of the scheme was the creation of a mobile column, complete in all arms, to be assembled at Centennial Park in the event of war, and to act as a reserve for the whole colony.²⁵

Hutton encountered manifold difficulties in attempting to effect his reforms. To a great extent this was due to the impoverished state of the colony's finances. A prolonged drought had depressed the economy and Hutton was continually advised to lower his defence estimates. Parliament had been slashing the annual military vote over the preceding years: in 1890 it was £246,000; in 1892, £225,366; and by 1894, a mere £174,372.²⁶ In lean times the army was an easy target for a group of politicians who were only too willing to move reductions, believing that the colony's best protection was its body of 'citizen soldiers' and that 'gold laced soldiers' could be dispensed with.²⁷ Sentiments such as these would have a far greater impact, years later, when Hutton returned to command Australia's federated army.

²³ W. Perry, 'Military Reforms of General Sir Edward Hutton in New South Wales, 1893-96', *Australian Quarterly*, 28, 1956, 69 & 75.

²⁴ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 12 November 1895, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 7

²⁵ E. Hutton, *Defence of New South Wales*, Government Printer, Sydney, 1894, 7.

²⁶ W. Perry, 'Military Reforms in the Colony of New South Wales, 1893-96: The Work of the Commandant, Major-General E.T.H. Hutton', 1996, NLA, Warren Perry Papers, MS 8655/2, 33.

²⁷ Speeches of Chapman and Haynes, 14 March 1894, *NSWPD*, Volume 70, 1544.

In Britain, the army faced similar financial constraints and Hutton was prepared to work within a budget, as one reporter perceptively noted, 'the General will doubtless find his training in the Wolseley and Evelyn Wood school of incalculable service [in that respect].'²⁸ Hutton successfully induced his headquarters staff, the permanent artillery, and the partially-paid militia to accept reductions in pay and allowances.²⁹ He encouraged the rifle clubs to cooperate with the government to form an economical reserve.³⁰ In his first year Hutton made savings of approximately £40,000: allowing for the new expense of £30,000 for an Easter training encampment while still managing to cut the defence bill by £10,000.³¹ The Easter camp was one of the few occasions when the colony's militia could practice large-scale manoeuvres and Hutton believed it vital for military efficiency. He was therefore furious when the colony's Premier, George Dibbs, peremptorily removed the required funds from the budget – cancelling the camp. It was a particularly galling cut for the fact that he had relied on the promise of a camp to persuade his troops to accept the economies originally demanded by the government.³² Finance remained a problem and by 1895 Hutton was worried that the continuing pay cuts, especially affecting his staff officers, would ruin his force.³³

Hutton ineffectually attempted to counter government parsimony by stressing the importance of defence to the colony's financial position. The colony was very sensitive to its financial standing, being heavily reliant on British credit and keenly

²⁸ *Hobart Mercury*, 12/2/94, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 6.

²⁹ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 23 August 1893, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 6; *Daily Telegraph*, 4 November 1893, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 6.

³⁰ *Daily Telegraph*, 2 September 1893, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 6.

³¹ *Daily Telegraph*, 4 November 1893, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 6.

³² *Daily Telegraph*, 1 November 1894, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 7.

³³ Letter, Hutton to Reid, 19 May 1895, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50084, 90.

aware that investor confidence determined the rates of interest charged.³⁴ Hutton argued that the security of Sydney's ports was a matter of great interest to those investors. In 1893 he warned that, 'Any feeling of doubt as to the defensive power of the colony would be inevitably followed by a want of confidence on the part of those foreign capitalists who have so largely promoted commercial enterprise in the colony.'³⁵ In his 1894 Scheme of Defence he stressed the necessity of securing the colony 'beyond all possibility of doubt' so that capital would not flee were Great Britain ever involved in a war.³⁶

As well as stressing the danger of commercial doubt, Hutton encouraged it: fuelling popular fears of conflict with Japan, Russia and China to push his reform barrow. He had learned from Wolseley the value of such fears and how to use the press to exploit them. 'There is a sulphurous smell in the air even here. These Colonies,' he confided to Buller, 'are curiously subject to Panic, and if we should have even a symptom of a war scare we soldiers will boom.'³⁷ He spoke disingenuously to a *Herald* correspondent of the threat from Russia, 'I have no desire to raise groundless fears; but I cannot refrain from expressing the opinion that the present aspect of affairs is very threatening, and makes the necessity for a combined system of defence more pressing than ever.'³⁸

³⁴ L. Trainor, *British Imperialism and Australian Nationalism: Manipulation, conflict and compromise in the late nineteenth century*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1994, 56.

³⁵ 'Our Defences: General Hutton's Views', *Australian Star*, 31 August 1893, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 6.

³⁶ E. Hutton, *Defence of New South Wales*, Government Printer, Sydney, 1894, 1.

³⁷ Letter, Hutton to Buller, 29 October 1894, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50086.

³⁸ 'Russian Aggression and Australia: Major-General Hutton on the Situation', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 29 October 1895, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 7, 117.

Finance was not Hutton's only problem. There was a second obstacle to Hutton's reform program, one that he found even harder to tolerate. Commanding the colony's permanent artillery were two aging officers, Spalding and Airey. Hutton judged these men 'technically and professionally ignorant.'³⁹ They offended his professional sensibilities. Both were ex-Royal Marines who had served in the colony for decades, falling out of touch with the science of modern artillery and lacking the professional qualifications now deemed necessary for higher-level command. The artillery command was vital to Hutton: it was the only permanent unit in the colony and, as such, it was responsible for manning the forts, maintaining equipment, and for training the militia. Furthermore, Colonel Spalding, as the second ranked officer in the colony, would succeed to the command in the event of the Commandant's incapacity. Hutton therefore deemed it essential that these two officers be replaced with one suitably qualified officer from the Royal Artillery. In his three annual reports he recommended their replacement. It was a constant source of friction between Hutton and his two governments, the Dibbs and Reid administrations, who proved reluctant to remove them. Spalding and Airey were both well connected in the colony and had patrons in parliament. Furthermore, parliament was unwilling to vote them both the expensive pensions necessary for their removal given the economic climate.

Hutton, however, made their dismissal the *sine qua non* of military reform. He applied great pressure on both his governments to win the point. In a confidential minute attached to his 1893 annual report he warned that he was not prepared 'to guarantee the defence of this Colony nor of the Naval Base of Sydney in time of war'

³⁹ Letter, Hutton to Buller, 13 November 1893, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50086, 33.

unless a new artillery commander were appointed.⁴⁰ He included the same disclaimer in both his 1894 and 1895 annual reports, but now putting it in the actual body of the reports.⁴¹ He informed the British Admiral on the Australian Station that, without a new artillery commander, Sydney could not be considered safe as a naval base and requested that he 'put every pressure possible so as to secure the change.'⁴² By taking this line Hutton deliberately took advantage of local fears that the British might move its naval base from Sydney.⁴³ Hutton applied additional pressure by writing to the Commander in Chief of the British Army, the Duke of Cambridge, inviting him to attend 'to that portion of my Report [1894 annual report] which bears upon this subject.'⁴⁴ He wrote to the Governor of New South Wales, Lord Hampden, suggesting that the British Government intervene.⁴⁵ He wrote in similar fashion to Wolseley and to the secretary of the Colonial Defence Committee.⁴⁶ Despite all this bluster, all his threats and his petitions home to England, he never got rid of the two officers. The expedient measures he used mirror his Wolseleyan use of the press and betray a cynical view of politicians and parliamentary processes.

Hutton's constant attention to this problem poisoned his relationship with Dibbs. As well as being its Premier, Dibbs was also the colony's Chief Secretary – the minister responsible for New South Wales's defences. However, growing friction meant that they rarely saw one another. In September 1893 Hutton formally complained of the lack of personal interviews, pleading, 'It is quite beyond my power to do what is best

⁴⁰ Confidential Minute, Hutton to Colonial Secretary, undated, SRN, Colonial Secretary Letters Received, 94/15258.

⁴¹ 'Report for the Year 1894' and 'Report for the Year 1895' both sent with Despatch, Hampden to Colonial Office, 25 February 1896, TNA, PRO, CO 201/619.

⁴² Letter, Hutton to Bridge, 24 October 1895, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50094, 250.

⁴³ Trainor, *British Imperialism and Australian Nationalism*, 148.

⁴⁴ Letter, Hutton to Cambridge, 22 April 1895, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50078.

⁴⁵ Letter, Hutton to Hampden, 28 October 1895, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50082, 187.

⁴⁶ Letter, Hutton to Wolseley, 28 October 1895, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50085, 100; Letter, Hutton to Nathan, 29 July 1895, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50097, 135.

in the interests of the Colony unless I have personal access to you as the Minister to whom I am responsible.⁴⁷ By November, when Dibbs withdrew the funds necessary for the Easter camp, their relationship had practically broken down and they descended to trading insults in the press. Hutton gave a newspaper interview warning that the popularity of his force would suffer without a camp.⁴⁸ In a memo to Dibbs he railed against the budgetary cuts and fumed at not being consulted, warning that his 'responsibility [to the government for the efficiency of the forces] must cease if the Estimates for which I, as Military Adviser to the Colony, am responsible are altered or amended without my being consulted.'⁴⁹ Dibbs shot back a reply deprecating Hutton's 'dictatorial' tone and gave his own press interview, publicly censuring Hutton: 'he writes and talks too much.'⁵⁰ On 13 November Dibbs and Hutton finally met to resolve their differences. Hutton was in such a state of agitation that he brought his service revolver to the meeting.

No shots were fired in that interview and Hutton and Dibbs managed to paper over their differences.⁵¹ For a few months their relations normalised and Dibbs even requested Hutton draft a scheme for federal defence.⁵² This rapprochement did not last, however, and things soon soured in 1894. Dibbs discovered in February that Hutton had sent a copy of his Defence Scheme directly to the Governor, as the Queen's representative and therefore the official Commander in Chief. Dibbs was incensed, insistent on the predominance of the responsible minister.⁵³ By May Hutton

⁴⁷ Minute, Hutton to Dibbs, 27 September 1893, SRN, Colonial Secretary Letters Received, 93/12762.

⁴⁸ *Australian Star*, 1 November 1893, SRN, Colonial Secretary Letters Received, 93/14404.

⁴⁹ Minute, Hutton to Dibbs, 2 November 1893, SRN, Colonial Secretary Letters Received, 93/14404.

⁵⁰ Minute, Dibbs to Hutton, 4 November 1893, SRN, Colonial Secretary Letters Received, 93/14404; *Daily Telegraph*, 4 November 1893, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 6.

⁵¹ Hutton, 'Memoirs', Chapter 13, First Typed Draft, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50113, 19.

⁵² Hutton, 'Memoirs', Chapter 13, First Typed Draft, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50113, 20.

⁵³ Letter, Duff to Dibbs, 3 February 1894, SRN, Colonial Secretary Letters Received, 93/15833.

complained that, 'I have constantly to exercise the greatest forbearance in my relations with Sir George Dibbs – such forbearance indeed as I should find hard to show if I did not very keenly realize the importance of maintaining my position here on Imperial grounds.'⁵⁴

Hutton's difficulties with Dibbs ended in August 1894 with the latter's electoral defeat by George Reid. Hutton had a happier time with Reid and J. N. Bruncker, the new Colonial Secretary. In his memoir he wrote of Reid, 'Never have I served any political chief for whom I have had a more sincere admiration, or a warmer personal regard.'⁵⁵ Reid and Hutton shared similar imperial sentiments. The unity of the British Empire, Reid urged in 1896, 'is not derived from schemes of this or that kind of Imperial Federation, but upon the kinship of the peoples which make up the British race.'⁵⁶ When Hutton accepted the command of the Canadian militia in 1898 Reid wrote him, encouraging him in his mission of fostering imperial strength and unity: 'I was hoping that you would soon have scope for your commanding quality and believe that the Canadian Command will give you many chances of "building up" our Colonial Empire in military strength and discipline.'⁵⁷ Bruncker proved Hutton's ideal minister, 'He knows nothing of military matters, is always attentive to argument, and never interferes.'⁵⁸ On a personal level, relations were very amicable between Hutton and his new masters.

⁵⁴ Letter, Hutton to Buller, 28 May 1894, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50086.

⁵⁵ E. Hutton, 'Memoirs', Chapter 13, First Typed Draft, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50113, 24.

⁵⁶ *Daily Chronicle*, 14 February 1905, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 1904-07, 88.

⁵⁷ Letter, Reid to Hutton, 5 October 1898, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50084, 111.

⁵⁸ Letter, Hutton to French, 24 March 1896, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50086.

The underlying conditions, however, had not materially changed. The Reid government faced the same economic difficulties and Spalding and Airey retained their political influence. Hutton became increasingly frustrated with colonial politics. In 1895 he had difficulty getting his annual report for the previous year tabled in parliament because of his insistence that Spalding and Airey be retired. He complained to Cambridge that, 'The Premier, Mr Reid, and the Chief Secretary, Mr Brunner, both tell me personally that they accept my recommendations, but have hitherto not said so officially, in spite of constant representations.'⁵⁹ Hutton increasingly expressed disgust with politicians. He described 'Parliamentary log-rollers'⁶⁰ and despaired that, 'their action depends not only upon the slightest breath of Public Opinion, but upon local wire-pulling.'⁶¹ Hutton was frank in expressing his low opinion of colonial politicians on his departure from the colony. At a staff picnic farewelling him he spoke of his hope that the New South Wales military would soon be part of an Australian force where it would be above 'local influences,... local political influences, and... personal influences.'⁶²

Hutton, therefore, did his best to fulfil what Meade had described as his primary duty in the colony: defence of the colony itself. He had instituted a series of reforms and made many important, lasting, and beneficial changes. In doing so he had been beset with personnel and financial difficulties. Underlying these particular problems lay the general issue of control.

⁵⁹ Letter, Hutton to Cambridge, 24 August 1895, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50078, 130.

⁶⁰ Letter, Hutton to Peacocke, 19 May 1894, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50087, 73.

⁶¹ Letter, Hutton to Grant, 24 February 1894, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50087, 1.

⁶² 'Military Staff Picnic', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 14 February 1896, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 8, 40.

Hutton followed Wolseley in his understanding of the position of a General Officer Commanding. This was based on an idea of the British model in which parliament voted funds, and laid down policy, while the Crown – represented by the Commander in Chief – controlled appointments, discipline and had the direct command. Hutton sought an independent sphere of command, bounded by a defined policy set by a responsible government. ‘My anxious endeavour,’ Hutton assured Dibbs, ‘has been to do what is best in the interests of the Colony and its Defence Force, within the lines of the policy of the Government.’⁶³ Furthermore, as an expert, Hutton expected his government to listen to his opinion when deciding that policy:

The politicians in Australia like the Press require to be educated gradually to necessary changes. Both are, I have found, most susceptible to practical sound sense, if put clearly and firmly before them, and then left to assimilate itself into their intelligence. This can only be compassed by a man who will take an initiative!⁶⁴

This view had informed his restructure of the department to make himself sole adviser to the minister and it lay behind his requests for regular interviews. Hutton’s understanding of his position as General Officer Commanding informed his tireless efforts to retire the artillery officers (in the belief that he should control appointments) and his struggles to hold training camps (he was charged with the efficiency of the force). His frustration at not receiving the level of control to which he felt entitled fuelled his Wolseleyan distrust of politicians (especially Dibbs); and led to his attempts at circumventing his governments by appeals to the public, war scares, and threats of investor panic.

⁶³ Minute, Hutton to Dibbs, 27 September 1893, SRN, Colonial Secretary Letters Received, 93/12762.

⁶⁴ Letter, Nathan to Hutton, 19 January 1896, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50087.

The colonial understanding of the role of a General Officer Commanding proved quite different. Hutton's governments tended to view him as an employee, entirely subordinate to them. Dibbs, especially, refused to admit to any check on his own control and he publicly dismissed Hutton's arguments with the statement: 'No subordinate in this office has a right to find fault with the way the estimates of my department are treated by me.'⁶⁵ This was not anti-imperialism; it was simply a different interpretation of proper civil-military relations. In their view parliament was supreme. Huntington notes that this type of contest was a fundamental problem with the old British system of dual control and was only resolved in Britain itself when parliament finally abolished the position of Commander in Chief.⁶⁶ Furthermore, as Wilcox demonstrates, this problem was exacerbated in the colonies by the nature of their forces: they were not predominantly regulars, as in the British army, but militia, and as such they shared the British citizen soldier tradition, which dated back to Cromwell, in which it was parliament's duty to restrain the power of the monarch.⁶⁷ This was a problem that plagued Hutton in each of his colonial commands.

Hutton's main initiative, in his New South Wales command, was the development of a scheme for federal defence. This is evident, two decades later, in his reaction to the death of Major-General William Bridges, who had been mortally wounded by a Turkish sniper while touring the lines at Gallipoli. Bridges died on 18 May 1915, becoming the first Australian general to perish on active service. Hutton received the sad news in England and, on hearing of the financial straits in which the family of his old friend was left, he set about petitioning the Australian government to vote Lady

⁶⁵ *Daily Telegraph*, 4 November 1893, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 6.

⁶⁶ S. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations*, Harvard University Press, Massachusetts, 1957, 36.

⁶⁷ C. Wilcox, *For Hearths and Homes: Citizen Soldiering in Australia, 1854-1945*, Allen and Unwin, St Leonards, 1998, 15.

Bridges a pension. He wrote to Andrew Fisher, the Australian Prime Minister, describing Bridges's services to the Australian nation. Oddly, he made little mention of Bridges's recent role as General Officer Commanding the Australian Imperial Force; he hardly even described the important role Bridges filled on Hutton's own staff when commanding the new Australian army after federation; instead, Hutton devoted the bulk of his plea to detailing what could be fairly described as a minor footnote in Bridges's military career: his position as secretary to two forgotten colonial military conferences of 1894 and 1896. Hutton concluded that, 'It is not, therefore, too much to say that Major General Sir William Bridges directly contributed in no small degree to the evolution of the Commonwealth as it stands today,' on the basis of that role. 'This first practical step towards Federation,' Hutton claimed, 'was effected by means of the Report of a Military Conference held at Sydney on the 24th October 1894, and out of the Movement thus initiated evolved the creation of the Commonwealth which was consummated five years later.'⁶⁸ Of course, what Hutton was really implying was that he himself, as the architect and main factor at those conferences, was a key figure in the movement towards Australian federation.

The significance that the two federal defence conferences held for Hutton was not merely a product of late-life reminiscence. It informed many of the military reforms he introduced during his command. The mobile column, for example, that formed the heart of Hutton's Defence Scheme for New South Wales was perfectly placed to participate in his scheme for Australian federal defence. He admitted as much to Admiral Bridge, 'In N.S.W. since my arrival I have had to re-construct and re-

⁶⁸ Letter, Hutton to Fisher, 28 May 1915, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50084, 133-4.

organise the whole Force, and this I have done with a fixed regard upon the future requirements for Federation of all the Australian Colonies.’⁶⁹

Hutton’s federal defence scheme was originally drafted at Dibbs’s request in January 1894. It was first publicly aired in a speech of that same month at Bathurst where Hutton claimed that, while ‘committees, speeches, and reports [had] availed little [in advancing federation],’ federation for defence ‘was distinctly within practical politics.’⁷⁰ The scheme was most fully expressed in Hutton’s draft ‘Australian Federal Defence Agreement.’⁷¹ It involved each colony dividing their units into two distinct forces: a garrison-type local defence force and a mobile field army capable of joint action anywhere in Australia (and potentially abroad, as Hutton’s critics suspected). A federal defence council would administer these combined field forces and appoint a Federal General Commanding to lead them. Hutton promoted his federal defence scheme at two separate commandants’ conferences (October 1894 and January 1896), presented his draft Federal Agreement to the second, and the whole matter was considered by the Australian colonial premiers in 1896.

The scheme was never adopted; the premiers decided in 1896 that a solution to the problem of federal defence must await full political federation. Its only concrete achievement was to encourage South Australia to pass an act allowing its troops to serve throughout Australia.⁷² It was, however, a milestone in Hutton’s own thinking on imperial defence cooperation and it formed the basis for his later schemes. The

⁶⁹ Letter, Hutton to Bridge, 14 November 1894, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50094.

⁷⁰ ‘Major-General Hutton at Bathurst’, Newspaper extract, 25 January 1894, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol 6, 110.

⁷¹ ‘Australian Federal Defence Agreement’, Schedule C to ‘Report and Schedules of the Intercolonial Military Committee’, 29 January 1896, Government Printer, Sydney, 1896.

⁷² L. Atkinson, ‘Australian Defence Policy: A Study of Empire and Nation (1897-1910)’, PhD Thesis, Australian National University, 1964, 38.

imperial intent of Hutton's Australian federal defence scheme is also the main source of his characterisation – by historians such as Mordike and Trainor – as a single-minded, British-centred imperialist.⁷³ They rely on the failure of the scheme to imply a countervailing local nationalism.⁷⁴ Hutton's intentions in pursuing this scheme and the reasons for its failure are therefore vital to an understanding of his role in New South Wales.

Hutton evinced three reasons for proposing his federal defence scheme. He believed that it was the most efficient means of achieving Australian continental defence, that it would facilitate any contributions the Australian colonies might make to imperial wars, and he felt it would encourage federation on the wider issue.

In its underlying concept, Hutton's federal defence scheme was not at all new. In large part it was based on the report of Bevan Edwards, a British general who had examined the state of Australian defences in 1889. Edwards stressed the importance of a federal approach to defence and mooted the possibility of an Australian mobile force, about 30,000 strong, being available for imperial service.⁷⁵ A meeting of Australian commandants echoed these recommendations in 1890. In 1892 the British commandant in Victoria, Major-General Tulloch, led the Royal Commission into the state of the defence forces of New South Wales and again recommended a federal defence policy.⁷⁶ Federal defence was a sensible solution to the problem of

⁷³ L. Trainor, 'British Imperial Defence Policy and the Australian Colonies, 1892-96', *Historical Studies*, 14, 1970, 208; J. Mordike, *An Army for a Nation: A history of Australian military developments 1880-1914*, Allen and Unwin, Sydney, 1992, 11.

⁷⁴ Trainor, 'British Imperial Defence Policy', 212; J. Mordike, 'The Origins of Australia's Army', *Australian Defence Force Journal*, 87, 1991, 13.

⁷⁵ 'Proposed Organization of the Military Forces of the Australasian Colonies: Reports by Major-General J. Bevan Edwards', TNA, PRO, CAB 9/1, Remark No. 40 R 16/5/1890.

⁷⁶ 'Report of the Military Service Enquiry Commission' with Despatch, Jersey to Colonial Office, No 936, received 18 January 1893, TNA, PRO, CO 201/613.

Australian defence. Separate defence acts, equipment, uniforms, and training meant that, were the colonies ever required to cooperate against an aggressor, legal and military impediments would intervene. For example, in December 1892, shortly before Hutton arrived, when the Echuca Company of the Victorian Rangers was invited to visit the town of Moama, across the Murray in New South Wales, it required the assent of both colonial parliaments and both commandants.⁷⁷ Bringing the colonial armies together under the control of a central council would strengthen Australian continental security.

It also promised to be of advantage in an imperial context. Due to British naval supremacy it seemed unlikely at that time that Australia would ever face an invading force. The mobile force that Hutton proposed for the protection of Australia against possible foreign incursion would therefore have little chance of actually being deployed for this purpose. It was, however, potentially very useful as a ready-made Australian expeditionary force that might, in the case of Britain being at war with a European power, attack foreign assets in the region, especially the European Pacific colonies. At the second commandants' conference the definition of 'Australia and Tasmania' was enlarged to include a large segment of the Pacific with this very end in mind.⁷⁸ Furthermore, this force – provided its members volunteered for such service – could, if necessary, support British forces anywhere in the world. Nathan, the secretary of the Colonial Defence Committee, wrote that since there was no likely Australian defensive need for a mobile force, the expeditionary function of such an army was 'the chief *raison d'être* of the whole scheme. The Military Defensive

⁷⁷ B. Nicholls, *The Colonial Volunteers: The defence forces of the Australian Colonies*, Allen and Unwin, Sydney, 1988, 151.

⁷⁸ 'Report and Schedules of the Intercolonial Military Committee', 29 January 1896, Government Printer, Sydney, 1896, 9.

justification for it is far less obvious, the conference having accepted the principle “that the most probable form of attack on the Australian littoral would be by means of raids of an enemy’s cruisers.”⁷⁹ Hutton replied confidentially to Nathan, and in full agreement:

I have kept this object steadily in view throughout all the Schemes, both for N.S. Wales, and for Australia, which I have drawn up, but I have never dared to hint publicly at the possible necessity of moving Australian Troops out of Australian Waters, until the 31st ultimo, when at a Banquet I indicated the principle as applied to England. This has not been adversely criticized, and I propose to go a step further upon the next occasion that offers!⁸⁰

At Aldershot, Hutton had developed – at Wolseley’s instigation – *ad hoc* mounted forces to supplement the British cavalry and so contribute to a British field force able to meet the armies of Europe. In the expeditionary aspect of Hutton’s Australian federal defence scheme, he seemed to have kept that end in view. It is significant that a third of the mobile field force Hutton planned in his federal defence scheme would be mounted.⁸¹ Hutton took a special interest in the colony’s mounted forces. He showered constant praise on colonial horsemanship. On his 1893 Northern inspection tour he described Australians as the ‘finest material for cavalry he had ever seen.’⁸² He tied this ability to the natural racial qualities of the Anglo-Saxon; the colonies, he proclaimed, were filled with natural horsemen who, ‘while hardy and of independent

⁷⁹ Letter, Nathan to Hutton, 27 November 1895, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50087, 150.

⁸⁰ Letter, Nathan to Hutton, 5 January 1896, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50087, 158.

⁸¹ ‘Report and Schedules of the Intercolonial Military Committee’, 29 January 1896, Government Printer, Sydney, 1896, 19.

⁸² *Daily Telegraph*, 24 July 1893, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 6.

character, have all those British characteristics which have made and are now making an Empire and a race without parallel in the history of the world.⁸³ If Hutton's plans had been successful, his mobile field force would have been a useful accession to the British army's mounted strength, and this was certainly one of his aims.

There was third reason that Hutton pushed Australian federal defence and this was to give impetus to Australian political federation. At the time of the first defence conference he wrote letters to England making this clear: 'if Federation for Australian Defence is carried through in the manner suggested by the Military Conference, Federation on the larger and far more important issue will be brought nearer'⁸⁴ and 'I can not help thinking that federation is now likely to come about by "natural evolution" rather than by a national cataclysm and that Federation for Defence is the first stage of development to that end.'⁸⁵ He confided to Henry Parkes, 'Humble individual as I am, may I assure you of my anxiety to assist in however small a degree to achieve so great an end [federation].'⁸⁶

Australian political federation was such an important part of Hutton's federal defence plans that the consummation of federation convinced Hutton that he had been successful. He would later describe himself as a father of Australian federation and was disappointed that this was not recognised in Australia. Hutton based his claim on the contention that, even though his scheme was not taken up, it won Reid over to the federal cause and it prompted Reid to call two Premiers' conferences (January

⁸³ E. Hutton, *The Defence and Defensive Power of Australia*, Angus and Robertson, Melbourne 1902, 20.

⁸⁴ Letter, Hutton to Cambridge, 5 November 1894, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50078.

⁸⁵ Letter, Hutton to Robinson, 25 November 94, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50082.

⁸⁶ Letter, Hutton to Parkes, 23 October 1894, SLNSW, Parkes Correspondence, Volume 58, A928, 535 [Hutton's emphasis].

1895 and March 1896). His case, however, does not hold much water. Reid was not greatly influenced by the issue of defence. Hutton was shocked to discover that when Reid published his memoirs defence was never mentioned. In 1915 Edmund Barton felt compelled to write to Hutton to dispel his federal claims, arguing that Reid was not fully converted to the Australian federal cause until 1898. 'Believe me,' he warned, '... there was never a greater mistake than to suppose that support given by Sir George Reid to any measure, military or other, was given out of a desire for Federation.'⁸⁷

In fact, Hutton's scheme, if successful, might have disrupted the federal movement. To try to attempt a union of colonial militaries before political union threw up all sorts of constitutional difficulties. Both the leading Sydney newspapers, the *Sydney Morning Herald* and the *Daily Telegraph*, agreed on the necessity of establishing a national legislature before a defensive union.⁸⁸ Without a federation of the Australian governments there would be no responsible body in control of the force. Several people tried to intimate to Hutton these difficulties. The Governor of New South Wales advised: 'It is obvious, as you say, that without a 'Federal Council' with supreme power in case of emergency the whole scheme would be unworkable. Is it within the scope of the present Conference to make a recommendation for the consideration of such a Council? This seems to me to go to the gut of the whole question.'⁸⁹

⁸⁷ Letter, Barton to Hutton, 12 July 1915, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50084, 36.

⁸⁸ *Daily Telegraph*, 26 January 1894, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 6; *Sydney Morning Herald*, 26 January 1894, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 6, 110.

⁸⁹ Letter, Duff to Hutton, 22 October 1894, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50082, 173.

Hutton's 'Federal Council' was ill-defined: he proposed that two members be appointed by New South Wales and Victoria and one from each of the other colonies – but never elucidated the manner, tenure, or timing of the appointments – and proposed that these members be assisted by three *ex-officio* members: the Federal General Commanding and the Chief of the Military Staff (both to be appointed by the council itself) and a naval officer to represent the Admiral on the Australian Station.⁹⁰ The Federal General Commanding would enjoy the sort of powers Hutton fancied for himself as General Officer Commanding: the entire responsibility for 'discipline, organisation, minor allotment, and the distribution of troops, apart from the policy of Australian defence.'⁹¹ It was a poor substitute for an elected parliament, as the *Herald* editorialised, 'To call into existence an army subject to the orders of no responsible Government would be opposed to the traditions and principles of Englishmen.' The same editorial damned Hutton's system as step away from federation, an attempt 'to pluck the fruit of federation before we have planted the tree'.⁹²

This was why the colonial premiers opted for full federation. It was, once again, the issue of control that disrupted Hutton's plans. Colonial resistance to Hutton's scheme for Australian federal defence is not evidence of colonial nationalism beating back unwelcome British imperialist advances. It represents a colonial determination to preserve control over the military forces for which they were paying: local control – as opposed to imperial – and parliamentary control – as opposed to military.

⁹⁰ 'Australian Federal Defence Agreement', 42, Schedule C to 'Report and Schedules of the Intercolonial Military Committee', 29 January 1896, Government Printer, Sydney, 1896.

⁹¹ 'Australian Federal Defence Agreement', 43, Schedule C to 'Report and Schedules of the Intercolonial Military Committee', 29 January 1896, Government Printer, Sydney, 1896.

⁹² *Sydney Morning Herald*, 25 October 1894, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 7.

Hutton's relationship with Henry Parkes illustrates that this protection of local autonomy did not equate with an assertion of a unique colonial identity. Parkes was one of the sternest critics of Hutton's scheme. He worried that it would damage federation's prospects and he warned Hutton,

The ground you take up is all old ground with us which has been examined time and time and virtually abandoned... There can never be a Federal army except by the creative powers and under the direct control of a Federal Government. That has been thought out by all the men who have grasped the difficulties of Federation. If any person in authority adopted your idea at this late hour of the day, the attempt to give effect to it would take more time and labour than would be necessary for the far higher object of completing the union of the colonies which it must not be forgotten is more than half achieved.⁹³

Hutton was stung; he had hoped that he would have the statesman's support.⁹⁴ In his memoir he attributed Parkes's opposition to old age: 'To delay an improved system of Defence because no Statesman in Australia was strong enough to force on Federation seemed to me the height of imbecility; and in this opinion I had the sympathy of the great mass of thinking Australians.'⁹⁵

Parkes's opposition meant that, for Mordike, he became a champion of the Australian nation. 'Sir Henry Parkes,' he writes, 'was insistent in placing national claims on any

⁹³ Letter, Parkes to Hutton, 26 January 1894, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50084, 168.

⁹⁴ Letter, Hutton to Parkes, 28 January 1894, SLNSW, Parkes Correspondence, Volume 53, A923, 243-244.

⁹⁵ Hutton, 'Memoirs', Chapter 13, First Typed Draft, 21.

future Australian force.⁹⁶ Yet, although Parkes was careful to retain local control over the Australian forces, and to protect Australia's political integrity, he never turned his back on the British Empire. He shared with Hutton a British imperial cultural identity, agreed with Hutton on the likelihood of a European war, and believed that in such a conflict Australia must play a part. He addressed the New South Wales Legislative Assembly months later in words that could have as easily been Hutton's own:

The British Empire has got a very perplexed and stormy future before it. I, believing myself to be a loyal Englishman, which means a loyal Australian – to speak more plainly, believing myself a loyal subject of the greatest Sovereign that ever lived, my Queen; believing all that. I cannot but be anxious about the future of the Empire of which we form part. It is impossible to close our eyes, let us try how we may, to the startling fact that five great Powers have 20 millions of men under arms... We will best be prepared for any eventuality that may happen by doing our duty as faithful members of a common country. We will best be prepared by schooling ourselves, if I may so use the term, to face the necessity.⁹⁷

Parkes did not see Australian Federation as a step away from the Empire. He believed in maintaining the bonds of Empire *and* the political rights of the colonies. In that same speech: 'The spirit which I think ought to pervade the policy of England and her relations to us is exactly the spirit which ought to animate us as a congeries of free

⁹⁶ Mordike, *An Army for a Nation*, 37.

⁹⁷ Parkes, NSW Legislative Assembly, 11 November 1894, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 14 November 1894, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 7.

colonies in this question of federation.⁹⁸ This was Parkes's only point of difference to Hutton – they were allied in sentiment but differed on questions of control and interest.

It is therefore not surprising to find that Parkes, far from being an inveterate, nationalistic opponent of Hutton's, was actually one of his staunchest supporters in the colony. Parkes gave Hutton great encouragement in his military reforms, 'I am so thoroughly alive to the necessity of making our Defence Force adequately effective that you may rely upon me for any support I can give.'⁹⁹ When Hutton came under fire in parliament for his insistence on retiring the artillery commanders it was Parkes who defended him, 'Major-General Hutton was a thorough and genuine soldier, and from what he had heard of him he believed he was the most efficient general who had ever commanded in these colonies.'¹⁰⁰ Parkes lent Hutton fulsome support in his efforts at popularising the colonial military. 'Everything possible should be done to make the Military forces popular – to identify them with the permanent interests and the public liberties of the people,' he wrote.¹⁰¹ He believed that only the military could 'cultivate a true spirit of self-sacrifice amongst our people.'¹⁰²

In his scheme for Australian federal defence, Hutton did enjoy one influential source of support. This was from the new Colonial Secretary, Joseph Chamberlain, a Liberal Unionist and member of Salisbury's 1895 government. Between the two commandants' conferences, when it had seemed that the impetus towards federal

⁹⁸ Parkes, NSW Legislative Assembly, 11 November 1894, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 14 November 1894, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 7.

⁹⁹ Letter, Parkes to Hutton, 24 January 1894, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50084, 167.

¹⁰⁰ *Daily Telegraph*, 17 October 1894, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 7, 52.

¹⁰¹ Letter, Parkes to Hutton, 18 December 1895, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50084, 189.

¹⁰² Letter, Parkes to Hutton, 31 October 1894, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50084, 179.

defence was flagging, Chamberlain had taken a personal interest in the matter and had asked the Colonial Defence Committee to forward its opinions on the subject to Australia to hasten discussion.¹⁰³ Chamberlain shared much in common with Hutton. He was one of the first middle class politicians (he had made his fortune in screw making) to reach high office. Like Hutton he was a professional, arguably the first professional politician in Britain; he pioneered modern party and electioneering techniques.¹⁰⁴ He was, above all else, passionate about the Empire. He had unsuccessfully begged Gladstone for the Colonial Office in 1886, when it was not considered a position worth begging for; and in 1895 he refused the more senior roles offered him by Salisbury in order to take it. With Hutton, he saw the defensive potential of Greater Britain:

In the next 50 years, perhaps in less, there will be in Greater Britain, if it still holds together, an Anglo-Saxon population of something like 100 millions of beings, and if it be understood that any insult or any attack upon any member of this great family would be resented by all the rest – that, I venture to say, would be a greater security for peace than all the arms and all the fortifications with which it might be supported.¹⁰⁵

And like Hutton, he was a disciple of Seeley, believing imperial federation to be the goal, but one that could not be imposed from above; it must be the ‘realisation of a universal desire.’¹⁰⁶

A complete picture of Hutton’s role in the colony must take into account his own debt to Seeley. This influence is most apparent in Hutton’s speechmaking. In addressing

¹⁰³ Minute, Meade to Nathan, 23 October 1895 on Despatch, Darley to Colonial Office, 19 April 1895, TNA, PRO, CO 201/617.

¹⁰⁴ P. Fraser, *Joseph Chamberlain: Radicalism and Empire, 1868-1914*, Cassell, London, 1966, xii.

¹⁰⁵ Chamberlain speech to the Harborne and Edgbaston Institute, *Times (London)*, 26 January 1889, 12.

¹⁰⁶ ‘Mr Chamberlain on the Colonies’, *Times*, 1 April 1897, 25.

the troops and speaking to the general public Hutton demonstrated a clear ambition to increase the imperial sentiment of the colony. Towards the end of his command, emboldened by his impending departure, he was not afraid to declare himself 'an Imperialistic soldier,' a role he defined as serving, 'the colony and her Majesty the Queen,' and he begged, 'to remind all the military people in Australia that they were really British soldiers.'¹⁰⁷ Such sentiments were partly motivated by his desire to secure colonial contributions to imperial defence; just as he had promoted an Australian defensive union – in part – to encourage a colonial contribution to imperial defence. Yet he also pursued a more altruistic imperialism of the kind taught by Seeley.

Hutton's idea of Greater Britain is the key to understanding this. Following Seeley, Hutton believed in the development, in the nurturing, of the *British* nations comprising Greater Britain through education and through the cultivation of civic values. Hutton felt an almost paternal interest in the budding Australian nation. He was excited by the potential for national growth: 'The existing phase of national life and development here is most interesting!'¹⁰⁸ Australian political federation was one of Hutton's goals in pursuing his federal defence scheme precisely because of this concern. As a means of ensuring that the colonies send troops in an imperial crisis, complete federation was unnecessary – the federal defence scheme would alone suffice for that – Hutton desired the further step of federation because he believed it vital to the future national growth of Australia.

¹⁰⁷ *Newcastle Morning Herald*, 22 February 1896, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 8.

¹⁰⁸ Letter, Hutton to Buller, 5 March 1894, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50086, 50.

Seeley had urged his audience at his Aldershot lecture in 1889 that 'it is surely all-important that you should consider your profession not merely as specialists but also as citizens and patriots.'¹⁰⁹ Hutton believed, with Seeley, that soldiers had a role, as citizens, in educating the public towards national greatness. From his memoir:

Humble individual though I was, some inner voice seemed to force me into undertaking the mission of showing that military service is the main factor for training democratic communities in their primary duties of citizenship. It was a new role for a soldier to undertake: its very audacity appealed to the Australian mind.¹¹⁰

As we have seen from his dealings with the Dibbs and Reid administrations, Hutton felt that politicians were untrustworthy, expedient, and quite unable to fulfil their national duty. A soldier, however, could act as statesman and patriot. To Parkes, Hutton wrote, 'a soldier in a position of responsibility, whether in this Colony or in Great Britain should be accepted by the Public as quite removed from any connection with politics or political partisanship.'¹¹¹

In his public speeches in New South Wales, Hutton appealed to race, to common kinship, to religion, to what Seeley believed were the 'natural ties which unite Englishmen [and which will] resume their influence as soon as the counteracting pressure is removed.'¹¹² He was eager to engage with the sentimental side of colonial identity. He promoted values he himself held dear – martial virtues and manliness – in the belief that these would aid national growth.

¹⁰⁹ Seeley, 'The Empire', 4.

¹¹⁰ Hutton, 'Memoirs', Chapter 13, First Typed Draft, 16.

¹¹¹ Letter, Hutton to Parkes, 27 May 1894, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50084, 175.

¹¹² J. Seeley, *The Expansion of England*, ed. J. Gross, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1971, 234.

Hutton spoke of the racial unity of the Empire. He mixed racial with familial imagery to assert this bond: 'we are but one large family, and that, for the British race, the world is beginning to be almost too small.'¹¹³ To another audience he claimed that, 'He felt that all the Australian colonies – of which this was the principal – were part of one great family of which England was the head.'¹¹⁴ And later, when receiving a Cavalry Team about to represent the colony in England, he enthused:

We must always recollect this, that whatever we are we are portions of a great British family. For the time being I am in the antipodes, and to all intents and purposes an Australian, but I am also an Englishman. You who have just come from the old country will agree with me that you are none the less English, none the less British, because you are Australians.¹¹⁵

With kinship came obligation (though here he was careful not to arouse colonial fears for the loss of their military autonomy): 'He could only say this, that we were only a portion of the great Anglo-Saxon family, and we could not disassociate our interests from the great empire of which we formed a part, and it was our duty to guarantee the defence of this portion of the Empire.'¹¹⁶

National unity, in Hutton's opinion, also derived from a shared religion. As commandant he encouraged Christian worship among his men. He held church

¹¹³ *Inverell Argus*, 20 June 1894, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 7, 28.

¹¹⁴ *Campbelltown Herald*, 2 August 1893, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 6, 56.

¹¹⁵ *Star*, 29 August 1893, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 6, 62, [Hutton's emphasis].

¹¹⁶ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 30 October 1893, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 6.

parades and organised a cathedral service for the troops in Sydney. This was not a proselytising, doctrinal affair (of the sort Hutton's stepfather would have appreciated), but an ecumenical, nationally unifying service in line with the way Hutton's own Christianity had developed. The Dean of Sydney wrote Hutton on the subject of this ceremony, claiming to be 'with you in thinking that such services for the troops are valuable in a national point of view, strengthening the loyalty, and helping the cultivation of religion, which is after all the greatest bond of union, and the strongest incentive to duty.'¹¹⁷ When Hutton left the colony the Bishop of Newcastle sent him a fond farewell: 'You have not only taught the seriousness of service and so have lifted the whole thing out of the popular notion of play but you have got behind sheer discipline and have kindled the fine spirit in which such discipline can be best exercised and endured.'¹¹⁸

Hutton travelled throughout New South Wales during the course his command. In 1895 he made his longest trip, out into the Western rural heartland of the state. He did it to show the people of the bush of what stuff Imperial soldiers were made: to 'show the residents of these districts that as soldiers we make light of such physical difficulties as exist.'¹¹⁹ Hutton was gratified by his reception and wrote home describing the strong imperial loyalty of the bush folk: 'I can assure you that I have never in any other part of H.M's dominions experienced so much loyalty or such sound British sympathies.'¹²⁰ He made speeches during this tour referring to the connecting link between the British army and the people of New South Wales. He linked the army and the nation:

¹¹⁷ Letter, Dean of Sydney to Hutton, 14 August 1894, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50094.

¹¹⁸ Letter, Bishop of Newcastle to Hutton, 25 February 1896, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50095.

¹¹⁹ Letter, Hutton to Reid, 29 September 1895, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50084, 103.

¹²⁰ Letter, Hutton to Wood, 3 November 1895, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50086, 173.

He [Hutton] believed in the cultivation of a military spirit, so that when, as an independent people, they became dominant [sic] in this portion of the world, they would have the power that had made England what she was.¹²¹

The ordeal of war was, for Hutton, essential to national progress:

It appeared to me that public opinion was regarding military service from an erroneous point of view. They looked upon it as a species of past-time rather than as the educating medium of the spirit of self-sacrifice and national duty. Far removed from the arena of European wars and of international complications, the public was losing grip of the fundamental laws of national greatness. Some inner voice seemed to urge me to undertake the mission of convincing the Australian public that military service is one of the main factors for training democratic communities in their primary duties of citizenship, and pointing out that, as such, it is a duty to God as well as to the State.¹²²

In his efforts at inculcating martial virtues in the colony, Hutton connected these to his idea of manliness. 'The military spirit represents what has made England foremost amongst the countries of the world,' Hutton declared in a public speech, 'it fosters those manly instincts which go to make a man or a nation. Love of country, duty or honour, and discipline, these are the principles which constitute a nation's greatness.'¹²³ Manliness bred national success. Hutton spoke of 'manly qualities which are vital to the well-being of any great people'¹²⁴ and 'manly instincts which go

¹²¹ *Bass and Young Chronicle*, 8 September 1894, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 7, 45.

¹²² Hutton, 'Memoirs', Chapter 13, 5.

¹²³ *Bega Standard*, 18 June 1895, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 7, 102.

¹²⁴ E. Hutton, 'Our Comrades of Greater Britain', Lecture 59, *Military Lectures*, Aldershot Military Society, 24 November 1896, 11.

to make a man or a nation.'¹²⁵ He felt that military forces were especially important in focusing and fostering manliness. In a speech to a Sydney institute for boys in 1895 Hutton linked this to race:

The British Empire did not become great by the production of frozen mutton or the production of butter in large quantities, but by the development of the manly qualities which had always been apparent in the race.¹²⁶

He encouraged the boys to play cricket and football in order to nurture that portion of their racial inheritance.

All this rhetoric was not simply about greasing the wheels for the forcing upon New South Wales of definite military commitments. For Hutton these speeches had the far greater and more permanent value of educating the colonial public towards national greatness. Like Seeley, Hutton had come to value sentiment as much as schemes. National education was as worthwhile as any definite agreement. 'We are,' he suggested to Cambridge, 'I venture to think most likely to reach our ideal of military perfection by a system of evolution, and by educating public opinion to our ultimate requirements rather than by expecting a species of cataclysm to attain our ends which only an acute war crisis would give us.'¹²⁷ The fact that Hutton trusted as much to sentiment as to schemes is evident in the care he took not to risk that sentiment in his attempts at implementing federal defence. Bevan Edwards had promised a troop of 30,000; Hutton, on the other hand, was far more circumspect.¹²⁸ In the minutes of the federal defence conference of 1894, Hutton is revealed as the most conservative of all

¹²⁵ *Bega Standard*, 18 June 1895, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 7.

¹²⁶ *Daily Telegraph*, 28 August 1895, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 7.

¹²⁷ Letter, Hutton to Cambridge, 5 November 1894, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50078.

¹²⁸ Atkinson, 'Australian Defence Policy', 33.

the colonial commandants in his objectives. It was he, for instance, who amended Clause 11 of the report to ensure that the colonies would control their forces at all times apart from 'national emergency.'¹²⁹ Hutton demonstrated this conservatism in a letter to Cambridge written after the conference, 'we have endeavoured in our Report to... propose just so much as the existing condition of public opinion is likely to concede to us.'¹³⁰ To the secretary of the Colonial Defence Committee he wrote:

I would wish to observe that in all the proposals, Federal or otherwise, made by me, I have endeavoured to submit only those which Public Opinion, advanced by a short stage from the existing condition, would be likely to sanction. To attempt anything in the shape of a Military ideal, ignoring existing political conditions in Australia, would be to court destruction to any scheme.¹³¹

In his New South Wales command Hutton had introduced practical military reforms and had promoted Australian federal defence. He was confronted by the problem of control in both of these endeavours. Hutton's colonial hosts were wary of ceding colonial autonomy to imperial schemes and parliamentary control to their military commander. In his expectations for the powers of his office and his hopes to exact a colonial contribution to imperial defence the distinct influence of Hutton's military mentor, Wolseley, can be traced. But Hutton had another angel whispering in his ear and this was Seeley. On his return from New South Wales Hutton warned fellow imperialists in Britain that:

¹²⁹ Report of 1894 Conference, Minutes and Summary of Proceedings, TNA, PRO, CAB 11/23.

¹³⁰ Letter, Hutton to Cambridge, 5 November 1894, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50078.

¹³¹ Letter, Hutton to Nathan, 19 August 1895, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50087.

A certain influential body of those who are pressing Imperial Federation seek to bind all portions of the empire hand and foot to one given policy both of defence and of finance. Attractive as this may seem, a sojourn in our Colonies, even of short duration, will soon demonstrate the impossibility of such a system being accepted by the majority of our fellow subjects of Greater Britain.¹³²

Hutton's 'sojourn' in New South Wales had taught him the true value of Seeley's emphasis on the sentimental bonds of Empire. He did attempt to translate colonial loyalty into practical military assistance; but in the absence of such a commitment he was willing to accept that in a moment of crisis the essential ties of Empire would impel the colonies to Britain's aid. Furthermore, securing assistance for British imperial defence was not Hutton's sole ambition in the colony. In their focus on the military contribution, radical nationalist scholars dismiss, as mere means to that end, elements of Hutton's command which were of great importance to him – elements such as encouraging federation and the up-building of the Australian nation. These elements point to the distinctive character of late-Victorian imperialism: it was not, primarily, an imperialism of the despotic, grasping, oppressive mould; but, rather, a type of nationalism, a sense of shared belonging to a common nation, Greater Britain.

¹³² Hutton, 'Our Comrades of Greater Britain', 14.

5. Conflicts of Interest: Canada 1898 to 1900

I doubt if you in Canada can ever realize what it is to us Imperial soldiers of, after all, more or less experience: more or less age: and more or less service: to have to serve Ministers who have only their own little pettifogging ambitions and axes to grind, and not the good of the country nor the Militia: and to have to be at the beck and call of such men: and to serve at a pecuniary loss: to get insults and abuse: and really to get not one single benefit out of it.¹

General Gascoigne, Hutton's predecessor in Canada, 1899

No man of any independent value or of any manly individuality as a soldier would ever consent to accept the position of G.O.C. as it exists at present in Canada.²

General Hutton, 1901

In New South Wales Hutton had actively reformed the militia, contended with political influence, had discovered the significance of local interests and had attempted to foster imperial loyalty alongside those interests. During his short period of command in Canada Hutton worked along similar lines but because of the extent of political influence in Canada, and the effects of the Second South African war, he met with even more dramatic results. Hutton's professionalising zeal was evident in the practical reforms that he pursued: restructuring the militia along modern departmental lines, reviving annual training camps, and generally improving instruction. It was also evident in his efforts to combat perceived political patronage in the militia. Hutton promoted the idea of a 'national army' in Canada, motivated principally by Seeley's call to educate the people of Greater Britain. He also boosted the Empire and encouraged a Canadian contribution to imperial defence. The local response to these initiatives was initially quite positive. In the latter stages of his command, however, especially after the outbreak of the Second South African War, his attacks on patronage and his imperial rhetoric began to generate friction between Hutton and his government, creating the conditions for his dismissal from office. These two sides to the Canadian response to Hutton make this colonial command a particularly

¹ Letter, Gascoigne to Jarvis, 20 June 1899, NAC, Ernest Frederick Jarvis Fonds, E258.

² Letter, Hutton to Minto, 27 March 1901, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50081.

interesting one – what do they reflect of Canadian identity and of Canadian loyalty to the Empire?

During the three years between his New South Wales and Canadian appointments Hutton came to conceive of his federal defence scheme for the Australian colonies not only as a solution to the limited problem of Australian defence, but as a broadly applicable model for Empire-wide defence cooperation. In three separate lectures he developed and publicised this idea.

He presented the first, 'Our Comrades of Greater Britain', to his own old comrades at the Aldershot military society in November 1896; a lecture that reveals the great intellectual debt Hutton owed both Seeley and Wolseley. The lecture ranged over the entire self-governing Empire, arguing for the essential unity of soldiers from Britain, Canada, Australia and Africa, and it discussed practical problems such as the extent of political influence in the colonies, the importance of forming complete field armies from their armies, and the necessity of popularising these forces.³ Hutton impressed upon his audience the grave danger of a great war breaking out and of the importance of imperialist sentiment in meeting that threat, 'This is not the spirit of bluster or pride which has been deservedly stigmatised as "Jingoism;" it is a national purpose, it is a national and indeed a natural instinct of self preservation!⁴ The military could contribute to the education of Greater Britain by teaching, 'those manly qualities which are vital to the well-being of any great people,' qualities which had established,

³ E. Hutton, 'Our Comrades of Greater Britain', 24 November 1896, Aldershot, in E. Hutton, *The Defence and Defensive Power of Australia*, Angus and Robertson, Melbourne, 1902, 25, 28 & 34-35.

⁴ Hutton, 'Our Comrades of Greater Britain', 37.

and protect, 'our freedom and free institutions.'⁵ Hutton suggested that the imperial sentiment of the colonies might be harnessed, but he warned of the dangers of attempting to impose any single, fixed military or financial policy on the Empire.⁶ The solution, he believed, must be flexible and he concluded that his own cooperative system best harnessed the type of nationalist sentiment that he had witnessed in New South Wales, a combination of imperial loyalty and an awareness of local interests:

Those who, like myself, have had peculiar facilities for knowing the real feeling existing in our Australian Colonies can alone realize the depth of loyalty and generous affection for, and pride in, the old country. England, throughout Australia, is always known and spoken of as "Home," and with that word are embraced all that makes a "Home" dear to the distant members of a family. Entwined, however, with this deeply rooted loyalty for and love to the old country, is that truly British love of liberty and that freeborn and independent spirit which resents an injury and brooks no interference – a spirit which is and has been for the last three hundred years the heritage of our race. Overlying all lies that very human failing of self-interest. Having realized the important influences of loyalty, sentiment, and self-interest which exist, we shall find it is wisest in the best interests of the Empire to base our schemes upon these and upon the force of public opinion, which has nowhere in the world so quick and intelligent exponents as in the Australian press.

A co-operative system of defence it is which seems best adapted to fulfil our objects, such, for instance, as that which I have sketched as proposed for the five Australian Colonies and Tasmania. A co-operation based on loyalty to Her

⁵ Hutton, 'Our Comrades of Greater Britain', 38.

⁶ Hutton, 'Our Comrades of Greater Britain', 44.

Majesty the Queen and to our common country, upon the sentiment of race and of common birth, and upon self-interest.⁷

In this lecture, therefore, Hutton combined his professional, manly, and nationalist ideas into a coherent vision of the Empire, harmonising the ideas of both Seeley and Wolseley, and creating from that potent mix his cooperative system for the defence of the Empire. In two subsequent speeches he pursued this thesis.

A year later Hutton returned to Aldershot to give his second lecture, 'The German and French Military Manoeuvres. Some Retrospective Deductions.'⁸ This lecture is notable for the renewed urgency with which he viewed military reform. His inspection of the French and German national armies in training, Hutton declared, had shown him that, in their current state, the Empire's auxiliary forces, on whom would rest the bulk of the defence, were not capable of an adequate resistance and that, as a result, 'the existing condition of the military defence of the United Kingdom and the Empire is nothing less than perilous.'⁹ He again asserted that these forces must be reorganised according to a cooperative system, based on the Militia Act.¹⁰

Hutton gave the final speech to a more diverse, civilian audience at the Royal Colonial Institute on Primrose day, in April 1898. In it he proposed that Great Britain reach an agreement with her self-governing colonies whereby each allots a fixed number of troops to the general defence, utilising the militias, organised along the

⁷ Hutton, 'Our Comrades of Greater Britain', 44.

⁸ E. Hutton, 'The German and French Military Manoeuvres. Some Retrospective Deductions', November 1897, Aldershot, in E. Hutton, *The Defence and Defensive Power of Australia*, Angus and Robertson, Melbourne, 1902, 44.

⁹ Hutton, 'The German and French Military Manoeuvres', 80.

¹⁰ Hutton, 'The German and French Military Manoeuvres', 82.

same lines as his Federal Defence Scheme for Australia.¹¹ Once again Hutton faced the vexed issue of control; parliamentary democracy, he admitted, prevented 'the establishment of an ideal system', ways must be adapted to means.¹² His answer, the creation of a 'central controlling council', gave no detail, he simply hoped that the bonds of sentiment would find a way:

Surely in the case where the sentiment of race, of religion, of language, of political inclinations are common to all, it should not be difficult to so plan a central controlling authority which would make possible a system of cooperative defence, such as that framed in, the Australian Federal Defence Scheme.¹³

The intractability of this problem had hamstrung his plans for Australian federal defence and problems of control would haunt Hutton in his Canadian and Australian commands, just as they had in New South Wales.

This Primrose Day speech marked the final form of Hutton's 'Co-operative System for the Defence of the Empire' and he used the occasion to publicise the idea. By commencing and concluding his address with quotes from Joseph Chamberlain, the imperial-minded Secretary of State for the Colonies, he positioned his paper as a practical response to that statesman's calls to 'keep alive the torch of Imperial patriotism.'¹⁴ In a later account, Hutton signalled his willingness to pursue these plans alone, if need be, evoking his two mentors as justification:

No statesman under either Liberal or Conservative administrations had up to that date (1898) enunciated a military defence policy or laid down the requirements for the military defence of the Empire. It was left, therefore, to the members of

¹¹ E. Hutton, 'A Co-operative System for the Defence of the Empire', April 1898, Royal Colonial Institute, in *Selected Papers*, No. 1/05, Royal Canadian Military Institute, Toronto, 2005, 5.

¹² Hutton, 'A Co-operative System for the Defence of the Empire', 3.

¹³ Hutton, 'A Co-operative System for the Defence of the Empire', 4.

¹⁴ Hutton, 'A Co-operative System for the Defence of the Empire', 1&6.

the Wolseley school of military experts to frame such a policy for themselves and to act thereon... The disciples of the great Seeley, no less than the followers of the Wolseley school of military thought, were thoroughly in accord with these primary principles of defence.¹⁵

Hutton departed for Canada with this scheme in mind:

I had the fixed determination in my mind, during the whole period of my command in New South Wales, to be appointed if possible to succeed Major General Herbert in command of the Canadian Militia, and thus establish in Canada the principle of co-operation which I had originated in New South Wales and the other five States of Australia... it was the principles embodied in this scheme [system of co-operation for defence] which it was my aim to carry out in Canada as being the first step towards that larger federation for defence of the whole Empire which has been the burning question with imperialists ever since the days of 'The Imperial Federation League' under the presidency of Lord Roseberry.¹⁶

He hoped to find fertile soil for his ideas in Canada, encouraged by speeches Wilfrid Laurier, the Canadian Prime Minister, had made in England a year earlier, speeches seemingly in close sympathy with Chamberlain's ideas, 'As thoughts of separation disappear, thoughts of union, of a closer union, take their place. To-day the sentiment exists in Canada in favour of a closer union with the motherland.' But Laurier went on to sound a warning note, discouraging any attempts at formalising that connection, 'It is not in the genius of English history to write Constitutions and to devise theories,

¹⁵ E. Hutton, 'John Gilbert, 4th Earl of Minto. Governor General of Canada, 1898-1904. A Narrative,' BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50081, 237-38.

¹⁶ E. Hutton, 'Memoirs of Lieutenant-General Sir Edward Hutton', Period V, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50113, 124.

but it is in the genius of English history, and it is in the genius of the British race to proceed slowly... to proceed only so far as may be necessary to meet existing exigencies.'¹⁷

In his first year in Canada Hutton accomplished a great deal for the militia. Morale had deteriorated during the lethargic command of his predecessor, Gascoigne, and so Hutton made it his first priority to tour the military districts and meet all the officers under his command. The speeches and parties with which he feted his subalterns during his months on the road boosted spirits and established his authority. Seymour, the British General Commanding British Troops in Canada, wrote to the Governor General in November, 1898, noting Hutton's success: 'Hutton with his activity of mind & body, since his arrival 2 months ago, seems to have already obtained a personal influence amongst the Officers of the Force many of whom were hitherto lukewarm.'¹⁸ Spreading his personal influence was certainly important to Hutton. This is clear from the basic draft speech that he gave to soldiers throughout Canada:

The successful command of any army, such as we have in Canada and in other Colonies of the Empire, can only be insured by means of that personal touch which should bind all grades into one harmonious whole, thereby creating a tie which should bind the General, the Officers Commanding Districts, the Commanding Officers, and the junior officers into one body actuated by one single impulse.¹⁹

¹⁷ *Times*, 14 June 1897, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 9.

¹⁸ Letter, Seymour to Minto, 9 November 1898, in P. Stevens and J. Saywell (eds), *Lord Minto's Canadian Papers: A Selection of The Public and Private Papers of the Fourth Earl of Minto, 1898-1904*, Vol 1, The Champlain Society, Toronto, 1981,10.

¹⁹ Address by Major-General Hutton, Commanding Canadian troops, to the District Officers Commanding and Commanding Officers of Regiments and Adjutants at his first inspection of the Military Districts of the Dominion Nos 10 (Winnipeg), 11 (British Columbia) and 12 (Prince Edward Island), during September and October 1898, NLC.

One of Hutton's aides marvelled at his commander's energy during these months of inspection, describing working days beginning at 9:30am and ending at 1am, 'The General's knowledge of detail is something extraordinary, he must be not unlike Kitchener, but probably talks more. He will go into a stable, and point out a hundred little things wrong, go into a store, and find out things in five minutes, that have had sweet quiescence for the last four years.'²⁰

Hutton instituted concrete reforms. In an early memorandum to his minister, Dr Frederick Borden, he described a militia in 'a state of paralysis and chaos,' lacking modern administrative departments, a properly trained general staff, and with a stores department in an utter shambles.²¹ He vigorously set about remedying these deficiencies, seeking to create out of the hodgepodge of existing individual units a new militia army complete in all its necessary parts. To that end he promoted the establishment of new transport, supply and medical corps. Hutton was very fortunate in his minister. Borden was a great supporter of the force – he himself served as a surgeon with the King's County Militia – who had introduced important reforms even before Hutton's arrival, instituting the holding of annual camps and placing a limit on the tenure of officers.²² With Borden's active support Hutton made much progress in setting up an Army Medical Corps during 1899.²³ Hutton's proposed Army Service Corps, on the other hand, failed to materialise until 1902.²⁴ Hutton built armouries, established new units, and amalgamated old ones. He turned the small force of

²⁰ Letter, Bell to brother, 12 October 1898, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50098, 124.

²¹ Memorandum, Hutton to Borden, 2 November 1898, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50083, 93.

²² C. Miller, 'The Public Life of Sir Frederick Borden', MA Thesis, Dalhousie University, 1964, 9; N. Penlington, 'General Hutton and the Problem of Military Imperialism in Canada, 1898-1900' in *Imperial Relations in the Age of Laurier*, ed. C. Berger, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1969, 50.

²³ Hutton, 'Memoirs', Period V, 17; D. Morton, *Ministers and Generals: Politics and the Canadian Militia, 1868-1904*, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1970, 137.

²⁴ A. Warren, *Wait for the Waggon: The Story of the Royal Canadian Army Service Corps*, McClelland and Stewart, Canada, 1961, 29.

permanent soldiers into an instructional cadre. He created new opportunities for senior officers, establishing a staff course at the Kingston military academy, organising staff rides, and conducting large unit training.

As in New South Wales, Hutton sought to augment his own control within the department and to expand the functions of its military branch. To this end he envisaged (without success) establishing an Ordnance Supply Corps to wrest control over stores from the civil branch.²⁵ He instituted a central registry of correspondence at headquarters and ordered that all correspondence from the military branch to the civil bear his signature (or that of an officer signing for him).²⁶ In the most extreme of these measures – and one that would prove controversial during the period of his dismissal – Hutton privately instructed his Adjutant General and Quartermaster General to avoid interviews, wherever possible, with the Minister, and to directly report to him any conversations that did take place.²⁷

Hutton was assisted in his reforms by the report of the Leach Commission, a group of British and Canadian officers and politicians who examined the state of the Canadian militia during the first few months Hutton held office. Its findings, particularly regarding the necessity of reorganising the militia department and establishing departmental corps, echoed many of the reform proposals Hutton himself made in his

²⁵ Letter, Hutton to Harrison, 7 April 1899, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50087, 22; N. Penlington, *Canada and Imperialism, 1896-1899*, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1965, 172.

²⁶ *Toronto Globe*, 3 December 1898.

²⁷ H. Gundy, 'Sir Wilfrid Laurier and Lord Minto', in *Imperial Relations in the Age of Laurier*, ed. C. Berger, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1969, 29.

1898 annual report.²⁸ This dovetailing was not coincidental and Hutton deliberately used the report's findings to push the barrow of his own reforms.

There was one important difference between Hutton's approach and the Leach Commission's, one he confided to the secretary of the Colonial Defence Committee, 'I have gone further [than the Commission] and dealt with the military situation in Canada upon broad national lines.'²⁹ Hutton's attempts at engaging with a Canadian sense of national identity were essential to his whole reform agenda. He consciously and explicitly referred to the militia as Canada's national army. In doing so he deliberately echoed the Canadian Prime Minister:

Sir W. Laurier in his speech during the jubilee year in England repeatedly alluded to "Canada as a nation". I therefore embodied the same idea & proposed that the Canadian Militia should be reorganized as a National Militia Army complete in all parts, & that as a national institution the Canadian army should be placed on a plain above all party political influences, & above all that political interference which is the Upas tree that destroys all that comes within its baneful influence.³⁰

He used this national language to justify his reorganisation of the militia – as a self-contained citizen army – and to combat party political influence.³¹ He also used it to mobilise public opinion behind his reforms. In early 1899 he wrote of the imperative of mobilising public opinion through the press to secure government funding and concluded, 'I have therefore lost no opportunity when speaking in public to allude to

²⁸ Letter, President Defence Committee of Canada to Under Sec of State for War, 30 November 1898, Report No 3: Precis of recommendations attached as Appendix A, TNA, PRO, WO 32/6366.

²⁹ Letter, Hutton to Harrison, 7 April 1899, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50087, 22.

³⁰ Letter, Hutton to Parkin, 23 February 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50083, 200.

³¹ D. Morton, *A Military History of Canada*, Hurtig Publishers, Edmonton, 1990, 112; G. Stanley, *Canada's Soldiers: The Military History of an Unmilitary People*, Macmillan, Toronto, 1960, 290

the Canadian Militia as “the National Army” charged with all the weighty responsibilities of Canadian Defence.’³² In large part, therefore, Hutton deliberately used this language to push his reform agenda. But was this the only reason he used such language? Preston suggests that Hutton’s national army was merely his ‘best line’ – language designed to hoodwink the Canadian public into going along with his imperialising reforms.³³

There was more to it than that. Despite his ulterior motives, there was additionally a good deal of genuine intent underlying Hutton’s use of the language of national sentiment. His calls to make national military service ‘a sacred privilege and a national duty’ were too heartfelt to have been entirely insincere.³⁴ In a private letter to Theodore Roosevelt, Governor of New York during Hutton’s period of command, he contended, ‘The success of the Canadian Militia is a triumphant illustration of what you have always, I believe, held, and of what I have been preaching both in Australia, in Canada, and in Great Britain, viz: that a National Force such as Militia is the true form for an army of any Anglo-Saxon State.’³⁵ Canada, Hutton believed, as an ‘Anglo-Saxon State’ needed, for its national health, a strong military force. This was a theme he pursued on many a public platform. ‘No nation was ever great on agriculture or pastorage alone,’ he declared on one such occasion. ‘History teaches that to become great a nation must be martial.’³⁶ He enacted this in his reforms as well as his rhetoric, particularly in the professional opportunities he created for

³² Letter, Hutton to Coleridge Grove, 9 January 1899, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50096, 7.

³³ R. Preston, *Canada and ‘Imperial Defense’: A study of the origins of the British Commonwealth’s defense organization, 1867-1919*, Duke University Press, Durham, 1967, 251.

³⁴ *Ottawa Citizen*, 15 February 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50096, 227.

³⁵ Letter, Hutton to Roosevelt, 17 October 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50078, 144.

³⁶ *Toronto Globe*, 13 February 1899.

Canadian officers serving within Canada.³⁷ With the 'national army' Hutton was not promoting a separate Canadian identity, nor was he merely cloaking a hidden imperial or reforming agenda; fundamentally, by seeking to educate the public in military values, he was attempting to further Seeley's vision of Greater Britain in Canada.

Protestant Canada, as Penlington notes, responded enthusiastically to this national vision.³⁸ French Canada was less impressed yet Hutton still sought to include them. 'The French-Canadians are very ignorant, and their education is entirely in the hands of an Irish-French priesthood,' he wrote to Chamberlain, 'the militia system can form a great "educating medium" to inculcate "the spirit of military enthusiasm and patriotism."' ³⁹ He believed the aloofness of French Canada was due to the traditional neglect of the military authorities. His national army, he was careful to explain, meant Canada as a whole, the English and French acting as one complete military machine.⁴⁰ In these early stages of his command Hutton was very attentive to the French Canadian units. He himself spoke French fluently and he encouraged bilingualism amongst his officers. By incorporating them in his military reforms Hutton hoped not just to excite a military spirit but to also encourage, 'the all essential feeling of National Patriotism in French Canada.'⁴¹

Seeley lay behind Hutton's 'national army' but Wolseley, as ever, was not too far away. Civic education was not enough for Hutton and he used his 'national army' to promote Canadian defence contributions to the general defence of the Empire. He

³⁷ *Toronto Globe*, 6 March 1899.

³⁸ Penlington, *Canada and Imperialism*, 147.

³⁹ Letter, Hutton to Chamberlain, 2 November 1899, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50078, 200.

⁴⁰ *Toronto Globe*, 4 March 1899.

⁴¹ Letter, Hutton to Harrison, 27 July 1899, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50087, 40.

promoted the idea that with nationhood came responsibilities.⁴² These responsibilities, he confided to Chamberlain, Canada had hitherto shirked:

It is very obvious that since the withdrawal of the Imperial Troops, and the birth of the Dominion no serious effort has been made by Canada to place her defences upon a footing worthy of a Nation. [A new act is needed to] meet the new conditions imposed upon Canada by her responsibilities as a Nation, and by her aspirations to be considered as the chief promoter of Imperial union and inter-colonial identity [referring to Laurier's speeches at the recent Colonial Conference].⁴³

Hutton's early reforms in Canada had a strong imperial hue. In his speeches to soldiers and to the public Hutton made it clear that he envisaged Canada assisting in the defence of the Empire. Initially he did this in a rather tentative fashion, speaking of a national army designed for national defence that might 'possibly' also assist in imperial defence.⁴⁴ He was wary of a negative response, especially given a flurry of rumours that he had been sent to Canada to reorganise the militia along imperial lines.⁴⁵ Gradually Hutton grew bolder and, in a speech given when accepting the presidency of the Officers Association of the Militia of Canada, he publicly set out his views on a connection between Canadian national identity and participation in the Empire. He spoke of the need to develop defence alongside 'development of Canada as a Nation:'

Public opinion in Canada as in other Colonies with responsible Government under the Crown realizes with a growing sense of individuality that each and every part of the Empire must not only insure its own defence, but must be

⁴² *Toronto Globe*, 13 February 1899.

⁴³ Letter, Hutton to Chamberlain, 20 February 1899, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50078, 172.

⁴⁴ *Daily Free Press*, 19 October 1898, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 9, 134.

⁴⁵ *Halifax Herald*, 18 September 1898, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 9, 120.

prepared, when called upon to share in the defence of that Empire to which all owe their birth.⁴⁶

Hutton gave these views official expression in his first annual report as General Officer Commanding. Hutton always held that the great value of this report lay not in the specific reforms outlined but in the general statement of principles governing Canadian defence. He described two principles on which any organization of Canadian defence must be based: firstly, the defence of Canadian soil; and secondly, the ability to participate in a general defence of the British Empire. These principles resembled those of an 1896 Colonial Defence Committee memorandum, drafted as a means of 'educating public opinion', that had advised the colonies to focus primarily on local defence; but that looked to a time when 'the increasing strength and resources of the self-governing Colonies will enable them to materially assist the mother-country' and that hoped for colonial military assistance in the event of an imperial emergency in which their own shores were not threatened.⁴⁷ In its emphasis on imperial assistance, however, Hutton's statement of principles exceeded this memorandum:

It is justly claimed for Canada that she is now a nation. In establishing this claim it must equally be accepted that with her birth as a nation are indisputably born the responsibilities of self defence...Canada is, moreover, a part of that larger empire which has given her birth, and it is the pride of Canada that in the past, whenever British or Imperial interests have been threatened, she has been the first to offer her assistance. If public opinion has been rightly judged there

⁴⁶ E. Hutton, Speech on accepting presidency of Officers' Association of the Militia of Canada, 181, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50095, 181.

⁴⁷ D. Gordon, 'The Colonial Defence Committee and Imperial Collaboration: 1885-1904', *Political Science Quarterly*, 77, 1962, 533; 'Colonial Defence', 19 May 1896, TNA, PRO, CAB 8/1, Memorandum No 57M.

is, at the present time, a universally held determination to uphold at all costs the integrity of the empire, and at all hazards to maintain its interests against hostile aggression or foreign interference.⁴⁸

As commandant in New South Wales Hutton had certainly envisaged colonial military assistance but he had never been so bold as to state this in his official reports nor claim it as the basis of a new defence arrangement. He had been always mindful of local sensibilities and had justified his reforms by referring purely to local needs.

Hutton's annual report was submitted to the government, received his minister's signature, and his estimates were passed by parliament with hardly even a debate. Hutton was fairly astonished, believing he owed his success to the pressure of public opinion upon a reluctant cabinet.⁴⁹ He declared a great victory, 'The success of the bold step which was thus taken in making these clear, showed that the psychological moment for pressing the question of co-operation for defence upon imperial lines had arrived so far as Canada was concerned.'⁵⁰ He wrote proudly to Chamberlain in July 1899 describing the surprisingly calm reception of his report and suggesting that it gave 'good ground for the hope that Canada purposes to take a foremost part in solving the question of a Co-operative System of Defence for the Empire.'⁵¹

Why was the Canadian government so accommodating? Firstly, contrary to Hutton's claims, the Canadian members, in allowing him to express these views, did not necessarily assent to them. Not even Borden, one of the more imperial-minded

⁴⁸ 'Report for the Year Ended December 1898', Department of Militia and Defence for the Dominion of Canada, 40, TNA, PRO, CAB 18/4.

⁴⁹ Letter, Hutton to Wolseley, 31 December 1899, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50085, 146.

⁵⁰ Hutton, 'Memoirs', Period V, 13.

⁵¹ Letter, Hutton to Chamberlain, 28/7/99, BUL, Joseph Chamberlain Collection, JC 29/2/2/156.

members of the Canadian cabinet, actually agreed with Hutton, but he was quite willing to let him talk:

He is of course quite within his right in making speeches if he is particularly anxious to do so, on occasions of military gatherings, provided of course he does not encroach too much upon the prerogatives of other people. His report is his own. This has always been the rule with regard to the Report of the General Officers Commanding, who are Imperial Officers. I saw his Report before it was published and pointed out the respects in which I thought it impossible to have his suggestions adopted, but gave him permission to have the whole published, as he prepared it. I thought it only just to him to do this.⁵²

Despite his boasts to Chamberlain and the proud claims of his memoir, Hutton was probably himself aware at the time of the limits of parliamentary approval. In fact, he seems to have been slightly upset that his report was received so quietly, hoping to have created more of a splash. He sent a proof copy to Dr George Parkin, a principal figure in the Canadian imperial federation movement, claiming that although he had the 'good will' of Cabinet he would need 'Public Opinion' on side to have any real effect and asking Parkin to lend the report his 'powerful support' in the public arena.⁵³ He wrote in a similar fashion to Bevan Edwards and to Sydenham Clarke.⁵⁴ Clearly, if Hutton needed public sympathy to push his reforms, he cannot have been too convinced of government support.

Nevertheless it is still significant that the Canadian government allowed Hutton to publicise the case for imperial cooperation. They seemed to have fewer of the

⁵² Letter, Borden to Chipman, 10 April 1899, PANS, Borden Collection, Borden Letter Book 9, MG 2 90, 456 [Borden's emphasis].

⁵³ Letter, Hutton to Parkin, 13 March 1899, NAC, Parkin Fonds, 3839.

⁵⁴ Letter, Hutton to Bevan Edwards, 12 February 1899, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50096, 38; Letter, Hutton to Clarke, 1 March 1899, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50108, 257.

Australian fears of becoming embroiled and entangled in imperial commitments against their will, or losing control over their defence forces. In March 1899, for example, discussing British contingency planning for a possible war with France, Laurier surprised Minto by assuring him that in his opinion the British government was entitled to mobilise the Canadian militia for service overseas.⁵⁵ Hutton's actions offended neither Canada's sense of cultural identity, nor her sense of her own interests.

There are a few reasons why Canada differed from New South Wales on this point. Firstly, it made strategic sense for the Canadian government to accommodate the British as far as possible. The 1895-96 Venezuelan War Scare⁵⁶ had awakened the Canadian people to the possibility of war with the United States, and the only realistic defence Canada had was the British navy. This had forced the incoming Liberal administration to take defence more seriously and had sparked moves to re-equip the militia with modern rifles, machine guns and artillery pieces.⁵⁷ The Canadians also relied on British power to press their claims in boundary disputes with America over Alaska. Some members of cabinet, particular Borden and Richard Cartwright, felt that Canada should reciprocate and participate in some form in the defence of the Empire.⁵⁸ Britain had also become vital to Canadian trade, especially since the introduction of the McKinley tariff in the United States in 1890, and this had sparked

⁵⁵ Memorandum of conversation, Minto and Laurier, 27 March 1899, *Lord Minto's Canadian Papers*, 44; Letter, Seymour to Under Secretary of State for War, 14 December 1898, TNA, PRO, WO 32/6367, Despatch C 112.

⁵⁶ In 1895 the American Government sent the British Government a peremptory note, the Olney note, insisting she go to arbitration regarding a long running boundary dispute between Venezuela and British Guinea.

⁵⁷ D. Morton, *The Canadian General: Sir William Otter*, Hakkert, Toronto, 1974, 156.

⁵⁸ Letter, Hutton to Chamberlain, 20 February 1899, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50078, 174: 'The Minister of Defence (Doctor Borden) Sir Richard Cartwright, and several other members of the Cabinet have, in conversation, repeatedly said that the Reforms made should be such as would not only guarantee the security of Canadian soil, but would enable Canada to participate in the defence of the Empire.'

Laurier's interest in imperial preferential tariffs.⁵⁹ Secondly, the Canadian government was happy to go quite far because in peacetime the militia was of very little importance to them. As Durrans points out, the militia was simply not a priority for Laurier and his government (before the Second South African War), whose efforts were bent almost wholly towards economic growth.⁶⁰ Even his minister showed only a moderate interest in Hutton's early activities: somewhat bemusedly, Borden commented to a friend in December 1898 that he had hardly seen his new general at all, and did not expect to until the New Year.⁶¹ In 1898 Canada spent less per capita on its defence than any other country in the world.⁶² Laurier could therefore assure the British of their right to call out his militia in the secure knowledge that in its current under-funded and ill-trained state the Canadian militia was hardly likely to do anyone any good.

In Canada, Hutton operated quite independently from British control. He received letters of encouragement from home, yet was left to work on the details of reform entirely under Canadian supervision. Occasionally Hutton took stances contrary to British policy: for instance, he resisted efforts by both Wolseley and Chamberlain to have a British regiment, the Leinsters, depoted in Canada, fearing that this would disrupt his own plans to build a national militia army. Despite this autonomy of command, Hutton pursued some policies with the expectation of British approval. Before leaving Britain for Canada Hutton had interviews with prominent statesmen and soldiers, including Lansdowne (Secretary of State for War), Chamberlain,

⁵⁹ G. Maclean, 'The Imperial Federation Movement in Canada, 1884-1902', PhD thesis, Duke University, 1958, 87.

⁶⁰ P. Durrans, 'Imperial Defence: The Canadian Response during Joseph Chamberlain's Tenure of Office as Colonial Secretary 1895-1903', MA Thesis, Carleton University, 1964, 121.

⁶¹ Letter, Borden to Scully, 15 December 1898, PANS, Borden Collection, MG 2 89, 196.

⁶² Penlinton, 'General Hutton and the Problem of Military Imperialism in Canada', 45.

Wolseley, Hamilton (President of the Colonial Defence Committee) and Ardagh (Head of the War Office Intelligence Department). The most important point these men attempted to impress upon Hutton was the need to overcome political interference in the militia. In 1897 Ardagh had written a memo to Chamberlain bemoaning 'the intrusion of political considerations into defence matters' in Canada, claiming this had prevented past British officers sent to command the militia from effectively reforming the force. 'It has been stated,' Ardagh wrote, 'that in the provision of arms, equipment, and clothing, military necessities have been subordinated to party exigencies'; and, 'It is, however, rather with regard to personnel than to materiel that the Commandants appear to have felt most keenly the effects of political interference.' He concluded, 'In short, no effort at reform, no attempt to secure efficiency, however small, can be made without its being checked by the baneful influence of political expediency.'⁶³ Chamberlain agreed. He believed that Canada's increasing economic strength behoved a concomitant increase in her military strength and feared that 'political exigencies' were the real obstacle to that.⁶⁴ In each interview Hutton was encouraged to minimize political interference in the militia; beyond that he received little direct instruction.⁶⁵ Hutton also outlined in these interviews his own plans to construct a complete militia army capable of rapid mobilization, generally receiving nodding approval.⁶⁶

Remarkably, given later accusations against Hutton of a want of tact made by these same leaders, during the early period of his command they encouraged him to

⁶³ Ardagh to Chamberlain, 10 July 1897, BUL, Chamberlain Collection, JC 9/2/1C/2.

⁶⁴ see Letter, Chamberlain to Denison, 20 April 1899, NAC, Denison Fonds, 3724.

⁶⁵ Minutes of meeting, Hutton and Wingfield (P.U.S. for the Colonies), 10 August 1898, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50078, 256: Hutton summarised the main points of these interviews.

⁶⁶ Record of interview, Hutton and Chamberlain, 8 August 1898, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50078, 168; Record of interview, Hutton and Lansdowne, 3 August 1898, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50085, 4.

mobilise public opinion against the scourge of political patronage.⁶⁷ Chamberlain wrote to Hutton in March 1899 promising to help in publicising militia reform:

I think, however, that considering your military position you are justified in speaking frankly on the subject, and I do not doubt that your public utterances will have great weight. I am glad to see that they have been well received by the public and the press, and I hope that your forthcoming Report will strengthen the impression. I propose to support you as far as possible, and as soon as I get the Report of General Leach from the Colonial Defence Committee, I contemplate the preparation of a memorandum, based on the material which this Report will provide, which I can send to the Governor General in a public Despatch with a request that he will get his Ministers to publish it.⁶⁸

In the same month Wolseley also pressed Hutton on:

Politics influence army efficiency in this country as you know, but in Canada they not only do so far worse, but the patronage of Militia appointments is used for purposes of party jobbery. If you can induce the ministry to surrender into your hands all militia appointments, you will have made the first great move made in any time towards sound military administration in Canada.⁶⁹

Shortly after Hutton's arrival in Canada a new Governor General took office. Lord Minto and Hutton were in many ways kindred spirits. Eton old boys both, they shared a passion for sports and were, as Hutton puts it, 'congenial in our manly tastes.'⁷⁰

They had formed a close friendship in the 1880s when they had served together in

⁶⁷ Minutes by Anderson, Cox and Wingfield, 9 March 1899, BUL, Chamberlain Collection, JC 29/4/8/8.

⁶⁸ Letter, Chamberlain to Hutton, 14 March 1899, BUL, Chamberlain Collection, JC 29/4/8/9.

⁶⁹ Letter, Wolseley to Hutton, 17 March 1899, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50085, 128.

⁷⁰ Hutton, 'John Gilbert, 4th Earl of Minto', 242.

Egypt and afterwards had worked together in the development of mounted infantry. They were disciples of Wolseley and both owed their new positions in Canada to his influence.⁷¹ Hutton suggested that they had 'every military instinct and idea in common.'⁷² Minto also shared Hutton's admiration for Seeley and they viewed similarly the problems of the Empire.⁷³ For Hutton, Minto was a 'soldier-statesman' who wielded his authority with the sole aim of benefiting the state.⁷⁴ Before arriving in the country Minto had assured Hutton, 'you may depend on me to back you heart and soul in whatever line we decide on... I think there is a big game in front of us – both in the larger questions of defence and in the more detailed questions of militia organisation.'⁷⁵ In Canada, Minto and Hutton discussed militia problems in earnest and on several occasions Minto wielded his authority as Governor General on Hutton's behalf. Minto was, for Hutton, an 'ever-constant confidant and strenuous backer in all my efforts.'⁷⁶ After an early favourable reception of Hutton's reforms Minto became more involved, as he put it to Wolseley in April 1899:

As for myself I was anxious at first not to appear too military – there seemed some suspicion that I might try with Hutton to force on military questions here – which might have done harm and I felt the necessity of being quiet – but there is no fear of this now, and I have been doing all I can to encourage militia officers to feel that they are soldiers, and also by bringing them forward socially as officers to bring society to see that as officers their standing and profession should be recognized.

⁷¹ for Hutton, see Letter, Lansdowne to Chamberlain, 11 May 1898 'Wolseley regards him as well suited for Canada', JC 29/2/2/106, Chamberlain Collection, University of Birmingham; and for Minto see Stevens and Saywell, *Lord Minto's Canadian Papers*, Vol 1, 1.

⁷² Hutton, 'Memoirs', Period V, 9.

⁷³ E. Hutton, 'Appreciation of the 4th Earl of Minto', BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50081, 215.

⁷⁴ Hutton, 'Appreciation of the 4th Earl of Minto', 217.

⁷⁵ Letter, Minto to Hutton, 25 August 1898, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50080, 31.

⁷⁶ Hutton, 'Memoirs', Period V, 9.

But I firmly believe a few years will see a change for the better here, but it will be very necessary to ensure the continuance of any re-organization on sound lines. There will always be political attempts to gain patronage in the force, and it will always take much tact and strength to keep things straight.⁷⁷

The militia was the only area of Canadian politics in which Minto deeply involved himself.⁷⁸ For Minto, patronage had long been the *bête noire* of militia efficiency. He had served as Military Secretary to the Canadian Governor General in the 1880s and had noted it even then.⁷⁹ Minto determined to combat this evil in his own tenure as Governor General. He wrote to Seymour suggesting that the ‘two great difficulties’ with which Hutton must contest were the ‘abominable custom of political patronage which has so shamefully influenced the Militia Department – and the attempt on the Civil side of the Dept. to assume military control in questions with which the G.O.C. should deal at any rate in the first place.’⁸⁰ A month later he spoke publicly on the issue, encouraging the public to get behind his old friend Hutton, ‘It rests with the people of Canada to support him in his command. It rests with the people of Canada to insist upon the fact that to obtain military efficiency military machinery must be entirely unhampered by political interference.’⁸¹

Patronage had been for many years endemic in the militia. Promotions and appointments were made along party lines and supply and building contracts were awarded to party members. This was the case for all the government departments and was so established that each possessed a ‘patronage list’: a register of politically friendly businessmen to be given important contracts. According to Gordon,

⁷⁷ Letter, Minto to Wolseley, 21 April 99, *Lord Minto's Canadian Papers*, 58.

⁷⁸ Stevens and Saywell, *Lord Minto's Canadian Papers*, xxvi.

⁷⁹ Durrans, ‘Imperial Defence’, 28.

⁸⁰ Letter, Minto to Seymour, 22 November 1898, *Lord Minto's Canadian Papers*, Vol. 1, 18.

⁸¹ *Toronto Globe*, 15 December 1898.

patronage in the militia was a necessary evil, to ensure parliamentary support 'from the legislators of an overwhelmingly unmilitary people.'⁸² It was pervasive during Borden's time in office but it was not shameless. Borden practiced a sort of enlightened patronage. When he took office he announced a policy of giving all contracts to the lowest tenderer, regardless of their party affiliation.⁸³ This left him some wriggle room, as he put it to one MP in mid-1899, 'We always give our contracts to the lowest tenderer unless there is some good reason for the contrary, such as the inability of the lowest tenderer to perform the work & c. However, sometimes there are equal tenders and in this case we exercise the option in favour of our friends.'⁸⁴ Borden was sometimes forced to defend this mild approach against liberal colleagues demanding a greater preference:

One sentence of your letter I do not understand. It is that in which you refer to the fact that it is better to retain old friends than to seem to favour Tories, etc. I must say that I do not think this applies to me, nor do I believe it applies to the Government generally. I am not aware of having appointed any Tories to office. It is true Tories still remain in office just as ... Liberals remained in office during the Tory regime.⁸⁵

Borden was initially willing to meet Hutton's desire to further minimise political influence. On one early occasion, for instance, he allowed Hutton his way over a dispute as to the rank of Major Cartwright, the son of his cabinet colleague.⁸⁶

⁸² Gordon, 'The Colonial Defence Committee and Imperial Collaboration', 537.

⁸³ Miller, 'The Public Life of Sir Frederick Borden', 56.

⁸⁴ Letter, Borden to Campbell, 22 May 1899, PANS, Borden Collection, Borden Letter Book 9, MG 2 90, 82.

⁸⁵ Letter, Borden to Foster, 6 March 1899, PANS, Borden Collection, Borden Letter Book 9, MG 2 90, 8.

⁸⁶ Letter, Borden to Hutton, 30 January 1899, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50083, 50.

It was in his efforts to combat political influence that Hutton received the one major check in the early phase of his command. The case involved the forced retirement of a Liberal politician, Colonel Domville, from command of the 8th Hussars. The incident peaked mid-way through 1899 and generated much tension between Hutton and Borden, with Hutton at one point threatening resignation.⁸⁷ Domville had passed the limit of time allowed a senior officer in command but refused to retire, unwilling to hand his command over to a political opponent, Major Markham. Hutton attempted to force Domville out by handing over the regimental stores to Markham but Borden intervened on Domville's behalf. Eventually a compromise was reached whereby Domville was allowed to retain his command for some months. Hutton, convinced that 'immoral political pressure' was at work, forced a crisis in late May 1899 by unilaterally placing Domville on leave pending his retirement.⁸⁸ He felt secure in doing so, having Minto's promise that, 'If the matter does not solve itself as I think it will, it must come before me, and I am sure you know you will have my most thorough support. If the militia is to exist at all as an efficient armed force, it is absolutely necessary that political rule of the force must cease, and I believe the Canadian public thoroughly realizes this.'⁸⁹ Borden and Laurier met with Minto and eventually new terms for Domville's retirement were agreed upon. The whole incident generated acrimony between Hutton and Borden, somewhat compromised Minto's position and had little real effect on Domville's actual retirement. Hutton, however, saw it as a great moral victory against political influence in the militia, describing it to one friend as his 'Battle of Waterloo'.⁹⁰ He wrote triumphantly to Minto in late June claiming Minto's 'firm stand has done more to restore discipline &

⁸⁷ Letter, Hutton to Borden, 31 May 1899, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50083, 93.

⁸⁸ Letter, Hutton to Minto, 1 June 1899, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50079, 77.

⁸⁹ Letter, Minto to Hutton, 3 June 1899, *Lord Minto's Canadian Papers*, Vol. 1, 74.

⁹⁰ Letter, Hutton to Coleridge Grove, 16 July 1899, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50096, 117.

real efficiency into the Canadian Army than all the humble efforts of myself and others. This political interference & wire-pulling is a very Upas-Tree⁹¹ which must inevitably wither up all that is good sound and really valuable in an Army. As regards the Cabinet I fully realize the delicacy of my position. Each month will render it less likely that I shall be troubled with their interference as regards discipline. I must however have about me those whom I can trust, & who are loyal.⁹² Minto saw it in a similar light. His military secretary described Minto's determination to use his office to 'purify officialdom,' especially in the militia, and wrote, 'There is no shadow of doubt that this is the first time Ministers have had to fight a battle of "right & principle" against "wrong & corruption" with a man strong & determined to have the Right done, & no less, and it has surprised & shaken them.'⁹³

The almost religious fervour with which both Hutton and Minto tackled the problems of political influence and patronage is significant. Why were they both prepared to go so far in their opposition? Partly it was a matter of professionalism. Hutton believed it impossible to instil discipline and a professional ethic in the militia when politics corrupted promotions and patronage distorted the functioning of his departments.⁹⁴ Political influence disrupted his reform program. These were valid concerns but do not explain why the issue became so heated. Hutton and Minto became passionate because, essentially, they were fighting for control of the militia. Hutton envisaged a

⁹¹ A tropical Asian tree, the milky sap of which has been used as arrow poison and for ritual purposes; also, in folklore, a Javanese tree alleged to poison its surroundings and said to be fatal to approach. [O.E.D.]

⁹² Letter, Hutton to Minto, 18 June 1899, *Lord Minto's Canadian Papers*, Vol. 1, 82.

⁹³ Letter, Drummond to Hutton, 9 June 1899, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50079, 102 [Drummond's emphases].

⁹⁴ Letter, Hutton to Minto, 11 June 1899, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50079, 110; Letter, Hutton to Minto, 30 June 1899, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50079, 136.

National Army in service not to the government but to the nation, beyond political interference:

To create such an army [Hutton's National Army] however under any form of British Constitution would only be justified upon the understanding that while strictly under control of parliament it should be maintained & jealously kept on a plane above all party politics & apart from all those political influences which must necessarily wreck discipline, destroy the feeling of comradeship & render any real military efficiency impossible.

Under any other circumstances it is easy to conceive that such an army would be liable to be made use of by any party in power to the detriment of the liberty of the people.⁹⁵

Of course, as Morton points out, to remove politics from the army would be to leave it in the hands of its British commander, a constitutional problem Hutton never solved (just as he never had satisfactory answers regarding control of his Australian Federal Force or imperial Cooperative Force).⁹⁶ Hutton was not dismayed by these constitutional quibbles, as he put it to Minto, the important thing was to defeat the corrupt colonial politicians:

You are one of the few men who are imbued with the same anxious and earnest determination to do good and to raise the instinct of military service to the highest plane which a Nation or an Individual is capable of. You and I know and feel that we are working with a purely disinterested object, but the Canadian politician cannot understand such motives.⁹⁷

In taking this line Hutton and Minto challenged a fundamental Canadian interest, the government's right to control its own militia.

⁹⁵ Letter, Hutton to Foster, 12 February 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50096, 212.

⁹⁶ Morton, *A Military History of Canada*, 112.

⁹⁷ Letter, Hutton to Minto, 18 August 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50080, 252.

The Domville controversy demonstrates the naivety in their approach. Hutton and Minto were convinced that the Borden and the Laurier ministry tried to keep Domville in command for sheer partisanship. The situation was in reality more complex. Borden was as convinced as anybody of the need to be rid of Domville.⁹⁸ He was just forced by the exigencies of politics to take a diplomatic approach. Domville should 'undoubtedly retire', he wrote to a colleague, but unfortunately he had, 'declined to do so and you can very well understand that it would have been an unpleasant thing for me to force a brother Member and supporter of the Government to do that which he was disinclined to do.'⁹⁹ Borden also favoured Markham, a political opponent, taking over the command, arguing that if he did not, 'the Militia and the public could never be persuaded that politics was not at the bottom of it; and it is our duty I think as prudent men to take this into account.'¹⁰⁰ Borden attempted to navigate the minefield of political influence in a moderate way never appreciated by Hutton or Minto. Before blundering into the affair Hutton actually flaunted his ignorance of the case, 'The whole situation is so complicated by the personal and political considerations at issue between Colonels Domville and Markham that I am unable to differentiate.'¹⁰¹ Hutton was very lucky that on this occasion his resignation was not accepted – subsequent battles for control over the militia would lead to his recall.

This early phase of Hutton's command in Canada was therefore marked overall by a surprising degree of success. He succeeded in implementing important professional

⁹⁸ C. Miller, *The Canadian Career of the Fourth Earl of Minto: The Education of a Viceroy*, Wilfrid Laurier University Press, Waterloo, 1980, 68.

⁹⁹ Letter, Borden to Ellis, 26 January 1899, PANS, Borden Collection, MG 2 89, 590.

¹⁰⁰ Letter, Borden to Ellis, 9 February 1899, PANS, Borden Collection, MG 2 89, 790.

¹⁰¹ Letter, Hutton to Borden, 15 March 1899, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50108, 272.

reforms, he publicly announced national and imperial policies, and he had struck what he felt was a decisive blow against political influence in the militia. He was able to achieve such success largely because his government had little interest in the militia or the issues surrounding it. Imperial rhetoric was tolerated because in a Canada heavily dependent on a sound relationship with Britain it was not especially controversial. Even his ham-fisted attempts at cleansing the militia of political influence were finally permitted because of the relatively progressive attitude Borden himself took towards patronage. Circumstances changed dramatically at the end of 1899, however, with the outbreak of the Second South African War and Canadian involvement. Suddenly the militia became one of the most important departments, with Laurier himself taking a direct interest. As Laurier struggled to maintain harmony between the French Canadian population and the violently pro-war British Canadian population, questions of imperial commitments became highly charged. Additionally, with all the new money, contracts, and appointments to distribute, demands for patronage became overwhelming and Hutton's insistence on challenging them became all the more trying for Borden. Hutton's honeymoon was over and his relations with Borden and the ministry soon simmered towards boiling point.

Tremors of an approaching war touched Canadian shores in July 1899. Chamberlain wrote Minto describing the deteriorating relations between the British Government and the Transvaal Boers over the rights of the *Uitlanders*, who were predominately British subjects. Spurred on by offers from Australia, he sought offers of military assistance from the other self-governing colonies as a demonstration of the Empire's solidarity and to enhance the moral force of any ultimatum that might be given.¹⁰²

¹⁰² Letter, Chamberlain to Minto, 3 July 1899, *Lord Minto's Canadian Papers*, Vol. 1, 92.

Minto duly sounded out his government and was forced to reply that, though he believed the public favoured involvement, he was doubtful of the government's approval.¹⁰³ Laurier was happy to allow volunteers to raise their own contingents yet balked at the expense of an official government contingent and the risk of alienating key French Canadian electorates.¹⁰⁴

Hutton was tremendously excited by the possibility of war. He believed that 'such a war would meet his [Chamberlain's] views of unifying and consolidating the Empire more than any scheme of federation for co-operative movement that could be devised.'¹⁰⁵ The despatch of contingents from the self-governing colonies, he hoped, would prove the viability of his cooperative system for the defence of the Empire. Despite the Canadian government's unwillingness to cooperate, Hutton, at Minto's private request, drew up secret plans outlining the form a Canadian contingent might take. These plans were quite elaborate, outlining not just the size of the contingent (a partly mounted force of 1209 men) but the units that might go, the names of officers, and the cost. It was important to Hutton that the contingent should form a complete field force, representative of Canada as a young British nation, fulfilling the role he had set out in his cooperative system, and demonstrating the full value of colonial defence assistance. Hutton duly wrote to Chamberlain and Wolseley describing his force; only in September, however, did he finally disclose these plans to his minister.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰³ Letter, Minto to Chamberlain, 20 July 1899, BUL, Chamberlain Collection, JC 29/2/2/137.

¹⁰⁴ Paraphrase of telegram, from Minto, 20 July 1899, TNA, PRO, WO 32/8208.

¹⁰⁵ Hutton, 'Memoirs', Period V, 19.

¹⁰⁶ Morton, *The Canadian General*, 162.

Hutton was not the only one in Canada to plan a contingent. Several of his militia officers volunteered to serve and to raise their own volunteer forces. The most prominent of these was the offer Colonel Sam Hughes sent on 24 July to Hutton, to Borden, and to Chamberlain, and publicly aired in the newspapers.¹⁰⁷ Hutton was incensed at what to him was a breach of the chain of command; he was, moreover, threatened by an offer that, if accepted, might dampen calls for an official contingent; and he was adamant that, to be of any use, colonial troops must be well organised, trained, and properly led. Hughes's volunteer contingent represented Canada's 'militia myth', something both Miller and Gordon describe as the idea that Canadian irregulars were natural fighters, better even than the British regular.¹⁰⁸ After his dispute with Hutton, Hughes gave voice to this myth: 'History shows that the Yankees, whom Canadians could always defeat, though with great odds against us, repeatedly dressed and combed down British troops, led by British officers;' and he related it to South Africa: 'Imagine the Boers catching Canadians as the British were bagged at Bronkhurst Spruit, Laing's Nek, Ingogo or Majuba Hill. A few Canadians would have seen the traps laid, and would have endeavoured to catch the enemy instead of being caught.'¹⁰⁹ Such sentiments were professionally offensive to Hutton, they challenged his plans to create a self-contained and efficient militia army, and – by threatening to replace an official contingent with a volunteer one – they undermined his hopes of proving the viability of his cooperative system. Hutton did everything he could to oppose Hughes's scheme, launching a feud that lasted for months. He compared it to the Domville affair: 'No one but Your Excellency and I

¹⁰⁷ Letter, Minto to Hutton, 10 August 1899, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50079, 178.

¹⁰⁸ D. Gordon, *The Dominion Partnership in Imperial Defense, 1870-1914*, Johns Hopkins Press, Maryland, 1965, 41; C. Miller, *Painting the Map Red: Canada and the South African War, 1899-1902*, Canadian War Museum and McGill-Queen's University Press, Montreal, 1993, 9.

¹⁰⁹ Speech, Lt-Col Sam Hughes, 'Exposing the Tyrannical and Illegal Actions of Major-Gen. Hutton while G.O.C. in Canada', House of Commons, Ottawa, 25 February 1901, 9 & 10, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50097, 14-29.

will ever realize the magnitude of what has been achieved by the over-throw of first Domville, the Liberal Military Rebel, and second Hughes, the Conservative Insurgent.¹¹⁰ This was apt, for, like that earlier incident, the dispute achieved little of substance but contributed to the souring of Hutton's relations with his government.¹¹¹

The situation in South Africa became increasingly tense and by September war seemed likely. In Canada the issue had become highly politicised: Tupper, the leader of the Opposition, took charge of the movement to send a contingent, strongly backed by an impassioned Conservative press.¹¹² Chamberlain continued to enquire about the possibility of Canadian aid but Minto continued to report in the negative.¹¹³ When war finally broke out much of the English speaking population clamoured to assist Britain.¹¹⁴ Laurier continued to resist these calls but matters came to a head when Chamberlain cabled Canada on 3 October with thanks for a contingent that had not yet been offered. This caused a furore in Ottawa. Minto and Hutton were in turn suspected by an angry cabinet of making secret offers home. Hutton was touring the West at the time and was interrogated by cable. The situation was exacerbated by a leak to the press, at almost the same time, of Hutton's contingency plan for a Canadian contingent. Hutton was likely innocent on both counts. Morton demonstrates that Chamberlain's cable was probably the result of a mix up between the British Colonial and War Offices and that no secret offer was ever made.¹¹⁵ It is harder to account for the press leak though it is possible that it actually came from a

¹¹⁰ Letter, Hutton to Minto, 27 October 1899, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50079, 268.

¹¹¹ Miller, *The Canadian Career of the Fourth Earl of Minto*, 70-72.

¹¹² W. Sanford Evans, *The Canadian Contingents and Canadian Imperialism: A Story and a Study*, T. Fisher Unwin, London, 1901, 13.

¹¹³ Letter, Minto to Chamberlain, 23 September 1899, BUL, Chamberlain Collection, JC 29/2/2/143.

¹¹⁴ Miller notes that there were some English speaking Canadians opposed – especially the farming community. Miller, *Painting the Map Red*, 16 & 22.

¹¹⁵ D. Morton, 'Authority and Policy in the Canadian Militia, 1874-1904', PhD thesis, University of London, 1968, 409.

member of Borden's personal staff.¹¹⁶ The wave of public enthusiasm for the war was fuelled by the Chamberlain cable and by the press leaks and the Laurier ministry was finally forced to offer a contingent of 1000 men, the last of the self-governing colonies to do so.

Preston contends that the reason Hutton was dismissed from Canada in February 1900 was the lingering resentment felt by cabinet for his role in forcing their hands in sending a contingent. Undeniably, Hutton's popularity with the cabinet suffered during this episode. Laurier suspected 'military men' of orchestrating a campaign to force his hand and his deputy, Scott, vigorously disapproved of Hutton.¹¹⁷ This cannot in itself, however, explain the dismissal. An explanation of that must account also for Borden's falling out with Hutton and at this stage their relationship, if not friendly, was at least a working one. Borden was one of the members of cabinet who did actively favour Canadian involvement and for over a month he had been privately encouraging Laurier to send troops.¹¹⁸ Borden was pleased with the eventual Canadian decision and even, to an extent, with Hutton's role, as is evident in a letter he drafted to Lansdowne a month later:

There was not a serious hitch from beginning to end in carrying out our arrangement and our system, imperfect as it is claimed by some to be, responded admirably to the severe test applied to it.

Of course we had to some extent anticipated the event & had taken care to have clothing & equipment in readiness. Moreover General Hutton had taken steps to inform himself as to the capabilities & character of officers who might be

¹¹⁶ Stevens and Saywell, *Lord Minto's Canadian Papers*, Volume One, xlii.

¹¹⁷ J. Colvin, 'Sir Wilfrid Laurier and the Imperial Problem, 1896-1906', PhD thesis, University of London, 1954, 192; Hutton, 'Memoirs', Period V, 22.

¹¹⁸ Letter, Borden to Laurier, 4 September 1899, NAC, Laurier Papers, Vol 124, 37194.

required to serve. So well had this work been begun that, although General Hutton was absent from Head Quarters on a tour of inspection in the West & British Columbia, the acting Chief Staff Officer Lt Col Foster (Quarter Master General) was able to complete it in a most satisfactory manner.¹¹⁹

Nevertheless, if Hutton's supposed role in the decision to send troops did not disturb Borden, Hutton's role in the actual raising of the troops did increasingly frustrate him. Hutton became increasingly vociferous in his imperial sentiments and he became increasingly truculent in his opposition to patronage at a time when Borden was becoming increasingly involved in the running of his department, and therefore decreasingly tolerant of his subordinate's excesses.

Hutton's recklessness in this period was exaggerated by his own desire to go and fight in South Africa. Even before the war's outbreak he had prevailed on Minto to transmit his offer of service to Chamberlain. Hutton eagerly desired the command of all the colonial troops that might be sent, believing it the perfect opportunity to prove the value of his cooperative system.¹²⁰ He wrote to Wolseley in September pressing his case.¹²¹ The British favourably considered the offer, though the Canadian contingent was deemed too small a command for an officer of his rank, and Wolseley advised that if other colonial units were grouped with it into one command Hutton might be the man to lead it.¹²² Minto had misgivings about losing his general, however, fearing that in his absence the Canadian militia would backslide.¹²³ On balance, the Colonial and War Offices agreed, feeling that Hutton was too valuable in Canada to be sent. This caused Hutton great anguish and he confided in Ardagh his,

¹¹⁹ Letter, Borden to Lansdowne, 10 November 1899, PANS, Borden Collection, MG2/151 6014/F1.

¹²⁰ Letter, Minto to Chamberlain, 23 September 1899, BUL, Chamberlain Collection, JC 29/2/2/143.

¹²¹ Letter, Hutton to Wolseley, 4 September 1899, BL, Hutton Papers ADD 50085, 130.

¹²² Note, Harvey to Arundle, 23 September 1899, BUL, Chamberlain Collection, JC 29/2/2/169.

¹²³ Letter, Minto to Chamberlain, 23 September 1899, BUL, Chamberlain Collection, JC 29/2/2/143.

'intense disappointment & disgust at being tied hand & foot here, while this campaign is being carried on.'¹²⁴ The Canadian government, interestingly, enthusiastically endorsed Hutton's offer of service. By December Borden was practically urging Hutton out the door, suggesting that, 'In view of the grave crisis to which you have referred I can only repeat that the Government cannot think of placing any obstacle in the way of Her Majesty's Government receiving the benefit of your skill and experience.'¹²⁵

This was because, by December, Hutton's relationship with Borden had deteriorated significantly. In October the two clashed over the disciplining of an officer of the Field Battery discovered embezzling funds. The offending officer had strong political connections and Borden overruled Hutton's attempts to set up a Court of Inquiry, resulting in a sharp correspondence.¹²⁶ Just a few days later, on October 26, Hutton was called before cabinet to explain his refusal to countenance Sam Hughes receiving a place in the first contingent. It was a particularly heated meeting, during which Scott called Hutton a 'martinet', and it added to the growing antipathy between Hutton and his government.¹²⁷ Hutton finally consented to allow Hughes to travel with the contingent but in a non-official capacity.

Hutton's propensity to speech also contributed to the souring of his relationship with Borden and the Canadian government. His imperial rhetoric, tolerated in the early phase of his command, now riled a government struggling to maintain harmony

¹²⁴ Letter, Hutton to Ardagh, 2 November 1899, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50096, 160.

¹²⁵ Letter, Borden to Hutton, 18 December 1899, PANS, Borden Collection, MG 2 92, Borden Letter Book 11, 834.

¹²⁶ E. Hutton, 'Circumstances in Connection with Resignation of Command of Militia of Canada', BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50080, Pt I, 86.

¹²⁷ Hutton, 'Circumstances in Connection,' Pt I, 88-90.

between the French and English speaking populations. Hutton, excited by the war, had also ratcheted it up, something he admitted to Parkin, writing in November, 'I have moved forward another step which frightens some of the Govt I believe.'¹²⁸ Hutton viewed the participation of colonial troops as both culmination and vindication of his, and Chamberlain's, imperial policies. He was eager to boost the Empire in public forums. In October Borden attempted to curb Hutton's public profile, ordering that all his department's communications with the press go through the Deputy Minister's office.¹²⁹ Minto informed Chamberlain of Hutton's problems with the government, sounding an ominous note:

One of the most annoying symptoms of recent transactions has been the bitter feeling of some members of the Govt against General Hutton. His position is a strong one and they are jealous of it, and I am constantly expecting serious difficulties as to which I may have to write to you.¹³⁰

Hutton could not restrain himself. Just days after that note, in a speech to farewell the first contingent, he proclaimed that the thousand men Canada was despatching were too few and that Canada must be prepared some day to send 50,000 or even 100,000. 'Canada,' he urged, 'lives, moves and has her being in maintaining the British Empire.'¹³¹ Hutton used the platform to demand that all remaining suggestions from his last annual report be implemented. Soon after, moved by Hutton's speech, and his attacks on political interference, Borden drunkenly abused his general and brawled with a militia officer who intervened on his behalf.¹³² Laurier expressed his displeasure in a more restrained fashion. On reading press reports of the speech he

¹²⁸ Letter, Hutton to Parkin, 1 November 1899, NAC, Parkin Fonds, 3997.

¹²⁹ Letter, Borden to Foster, 24 October 1899, PANS, Borden Collection, MG 2 92, Borden Letter Book 11, 311.

¹³⁰ Letter, Minto to Chamberlain, 27 October 1899, BUL, Chamberlain Collection, JC 29/2/2/149.

¹³¹ Hutton speech 28 October 1899, in Hutton, 'Memoirs', Period V, 29.

¹³² Morton, *The Canadian General*, 168.

protested strongly to Minto a week after, urging him to bring Hutton into line and warning that Hutton was verging onto political territory.¹³³ Minto again warned Hutton, but confessed his fears to Lansdowne that Hutton may soon get into trouble:

The govt. here would I feel sure be most anxious to get rid of him... Hutton has done a great deal of good here – he is full of energy, & most popular with the general public, but the reverse with my Minister, due very much to two causes – his public speaking, & the use he has made, undoubtedly I think, of the press. He has spoken far too much, speaks very well, but too often... & I have told him so more than once & Sir Wilfrid has spoken to me very strongly about it, on the grounds that he has touched on political questions.¹³⁴

Another of Hutton's close friends in Canada, Kitson, shared these fears and years later he urged Hutton not to make the same mistake in Australia:

It was your public speaking that first of all put your Govt against you in Canada. Your ambition led you away, your ideas were too great and you talked of them too much: you wanted to be a great power in the country; you wanted to make a corrupt government honest and naturally they did not like it.¹³⁵

Patronage was not a large issue with the first Canadian contingent. As it was composed of infantry, and prepared in just 17 days, not many new contracts were put up for tender. Borden wrote to a colleague in late November that he felt it 'outrageous' that Departments in the past had paid inflated prices for goods to political friends and he claimed, 'I accordingly instituted a very much stricter method of purchase and shall regret very much if our Liberal friends are going to suffer in

¹³³ Letter, Laurier to Minto, 7 November 1899, *Lord Minto's Canadian Papers*, Vol. 1, 183.

¹³⁴ Letter, Minto to Lansdowne, 17 December 1899, NLS, Minto Collection, MS 12566, *Canadian Letter Book*, 255.

¹³⁵ Letter, Kitson to Hutton, 6 December 1901, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50088, 187.

their loyalty to the party because they are not allowed to take out of the Government more than they can get from ordinary purchasers.¹³⁶ The force was composed largely of the officers whom Hutton had picked as suitable in his contingency plan. This meant that there was only limited scope for giving appointments to party friends. Borden faced criticism from, among others, the Toronto Liberals who felt underrepresented, and he argued:

I have already explained that the selection was practically made by Colonel Otter, but I may add our good friend James Sutherland was present with me in Toronto when the matter was discussed and agreed to what was done. Whatever may be the case in Toronto I am satisfied that almost everywhere else throughout the Dominion the selections made have given satisfaction not only to the public but to our political friends. So far as politics are concerned we have tried to put them to one side when questions of fitness were involved but I believe it will be found that the Liberal Party has not been neglected in the selections which have been made.¹³⁷

Borden therefore seems to have attempted to apply his enlightened version of patronage to the selection of men for the first contingent. Minto boasted to his wife that he and Hutton had played a role in restraining political appointments to the first contingent by warning Borden of the disaster that might result from unfit men being sent to war. 'The General came back and we have got every single officer we want,' he noted triumphantly.¹³⁸ This statement is interesting for it belies the fact that though Minto and Hutton both railed against personal or political influences bearing on appointments, both were in differing measures guilty of it themselves. Minto

¹³⁶ Letter, Borden to Gibson, 21 October 1899, PANS, Borden Collection, MG 2 92, 285.

¹³⁷ Letter, Borden to Kerr, 3 November 1899, PANS, Borden Collection, MG 2 92, Borden Letter Book 11, 407.

¹³⁸ Letter, Minto to wife, 28 October 1899, *Lord Minto's Canadian Papers*, Vol. 1, 175.

conspired with Hutton to ensure his friend Buchan got a berth on the first contingent and Hutton secured a place for a nominee of his friend, Parkin.¹³⁹

In mid-December, following the dramatic British reversals of Black Week, the British Government accepted a Canadian offer to send a second contingent. This one caused more problems of patronage than the first. It was only slightly larger than the first but, because it had not been decided in advance who should go, appointments were more of an issue. Hutton did eventually have his own way again but his stern refusal of Borden's nominees must have further widened the breach between them.¹⁴⁰

Supplies proved even more divisive. Opportunities for patronage were more diverse for the second contingent. It was mounted and hundreds of horses had to be purchased. It also spent greater time in Canada awaiting embarkation than the first and therefore needed much more provisioning (the British army took over the bills once the units arrived in South Africa).

Hutton and Borden increasingly clashed over patronage for the second contingent. Boots for the contingents were manufactured by the militia department's existing supplier and, like all stores, their selection and inspection was controlled by the department's civil branch. Hutton received complaints about these boots from the commander of the first contingent, Colonel Otter. He brought this to Borden's attention on New Year's Day, 1900.¹⁴¹ Borden refused to change manufacturers and the bad boots were also sent with the second contingent. Hutton continued to harass the civil department over this issue, however, and he later warned the banker in

¹³⁹ Letter, Hutton to Parkin, 1 November 1899, NAC, Parkin Fonds, 3991.

¹⁴⁰ Letter, Hutton to Buller, 28 December 1899, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50086, 102; Letter, Hutton to Drury, 29 December 1899, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50109, 122.

¹⁴¹ Letter, Hutton to Borden, 1 January 1900, NAC, Department of Militia and Defence Fonds, 1523.

charge of purchases of Strathcona's contingent of horses about the problems. Borden tried in vain to forestall this stating 'most positively' that the boots were 'entirely satisfactory' and that 'I would prefer if you approve to take the boots for the Strathcona Force from our Manufacturer in as much as we are doing this with regard to all other articles of equipment.'¹⁴² Hutton did not last in Canada long enough to see the end of this issue, but, on this one question, he seems finally to have prevailed. Strathcona received a letter in February from his banker proudly stating that his contingent would be as well supplied as the first two, and in the matter of footwear 'very much better... This seems to have created some difficulty in the Department, and they have since admitted that the boots supplied to the second Contingent were also very defective.'¹⁴³ Vindication for Hutton, finally, but he had no opportunity to savour it – he was already on a boat bound for England.

It is clear that by this time Hutton's relations with Borden had deteriorated, but how did they get so bad that on 17 January Laurier approached Minto to ask for his recall?

¹⁴⁴ Hutton's relations with his government had foundered during the course of the war. They worsened dramatically with the New Year. Writing to Chamberlain in early January of the growing strains between Hutton and Borden, Minto feared that 'matters may come to a head any day.' He attributed this to Hutton's public speaking: 'it has given offence as he has been accused of treading too much on political subjects... there is extremely great friction now in the Militia Department.'¹⁴⁵ Laurier visited Minto on 10 January to discuss the tension in the militia department.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴² Letter, Borden to Clouston, 31 January 1900, PANS, Borden Collection, MG2 93 Letter Book 12, 546.

¹⁴³ Letter, Clouston to Strathcona, NAC, Lord Strathcona's Horse fonds, 16/2/00, MG 30 E 166.

¹⁴⁴ Memorandum, 18 January 1900, *Lord Minto's Canadian Papers*, Vol. 1, 233.

¹⁴⁵ Letter, Minto to Chamberlain, 7 January 1900, BUL, Chamberlain Collection, JC 29/2/2/173.

¹⁴⁶ Minto Diary, 10 January 1900, NLS, Minto Collection, MS 12498, 100.

Hutton's propensity to speech and his tactless opposition to patronage had fuelled this rising tension. Extraordinary pressures on Borden, both from his ministerial duties and his private business interests, only increased the strain. One of the reasons Hutton had had such a free hand during his early period in office was Borden's loose supervision. Borden spent much of his time in conducting his private business affairs. Until October 1899, and the outbreak of war, his ministerial duties were slight. Suddenly his workload exploded. Reflecting this, monthly totals of Borden's official correspondence for the last three months of the year averaged seven times greater than for the first nine months. Borden was thrown into the work of the department, struggling to organise the contingents; and at that very moment, as he found himself under an immense amount of pressure, his private business interests collapsed, threatening his livelihood and his career. In late December Borden, in severe debt and facing legal action from creditors, secretly arranged to have his Nova Scotia-based company supply meat contracts for the second and Strathcona contingents.¹⁴⁷ This subterfuge, his parlous finances, and over-work all contributed to Borden's impatience with his high-strung general.

Clearly Hutton and Borden were at odds. Hutton was continually testing an already over-burdened Borden. But what precipitated the crisis that resulted in Hutton's dismissal? It was no light thing to sack a general in wartime, with a parliament only weeks from reconvening, and a second contingent in the throes of departure. It is a curly question and most secondary material is quite vague on the point. Yet it is very important to set right: this was, undoubtedly, the most dramatic incident of Hutton's

¹⁴⁷ See Appendix, 'Borden's business and the later contingents'.

colonial career and has been used by historians as an instance of Canadian nationalism resisting British imperialism. Is this what Hutton's recall really represents?

In the absence of a compelling immediate cause most have fallen back on general explanations. Some contend that a lingering resentment with Hutton for his (imagined) role in forcing the sending of the first contingent was the reason; but this is inadequate, it might explain the antagonism much of the cabinet felt for Hutton but not why Borden, who favoured involvement, turned on Hutton.¹⁴⁸ Others correctly suggest that Hutton's outspokenness during the war angered his hosts; this is insufficient, however, as it does not explain the timing of the government's decision.¹⁴⁹ Morton provides a very good account, demonstrating the course of Hutton's relationship with the government, giving the correct timing of the government's decision to rid itself of Hutton, and raising the issue of control of the Strathcona Horse.¹⁵⁰ Morton's trigger, the horse purchases, however, does not fully account for Hutton's dismissal.

The horse purchases were divisive. It was a large order and a large prize for any Liberal friend that might secure it and Hutton, by insisting on military protocol, threatened to upset the political apple cart. Militia Order No 265 of 20 December left it to boards of officers to purchase the horses necessary for their own units.¹⁵¹ This was the usual practice in the British Army and Hutton attempted to insist that it be

¹⁴⁸ R. Aubrey, 'Major-General E.T.H. Hutton: A Study of his Relations with the Canadian Government', BA Thesis, Carleton University, 1957, 42; Preston, *Canada and 'Imperial Defense'*, 252.

¹⁴⁹ R. Page, 'Canada and the Empire during Joseph Chamberlain's Tenure as Colonial Secretary, 1895-1903', DPhil Thesis, St John's College, Oxford, 1971, 235; Durrans, 'Imperial Defence', 121.

¹⁵⁰ Morton, 'Authority and Policy in the Canadian Militia', 419; Morton, *Ministers and Generals*, 159.

¹⁵¹ Memorandum, Hutton to Deputy Minister, 30 December 1899, NAC, Department of Militia and Defence Fonds, 1516.

followed in Canada.¹⁵² Hutton left in early January for Toronto to supervise one of these boards and lend a hand in choosing horses fit for purchase. Borden's political friends were furious at what they perceived to be a Conservative bias in the choosing of horse tenderers by the boards and Borden was compelled to intervene. He therefore sent one of his colleagues, Liberal M.P. Robert Beith, a horse dealer who had unsuccessfully bid for the contract, to ensure that Liberals were represented.¹⁵³ Hutton initially refused Beith unfettered access to the horses. This angered Borden, prompting a curt telegram and Hutton's backdown. Hutton returned to Ottawa on 12 January and, after talking it over with Borden, it seemed that all was well – Borden even apologised for the tone of his cable.¹⁵⁴ The next day, however, Borden abruptly about turned and sent six questions on the horse purchases to Hutton who, mildly offended, replied that most of the answers resided in Borden's own office. Borden, apparently even more offended, returned Hutton's reply on 15 January as 'most unsatisfactory, if not inestimably rude.'¹⁵⁵

Could this dispute have truly triggered Hutton's egress? Hutton was quite astonished when he was called before Laurier on 16 January and told of an irreparable breakdown in his relations with his minister.¹⁵⁶ He was not aware of it; he had certainly been a bit truculent, but not insubordinate: he had immediately deferred to his minister on receipt of the Beith telegram and his reply to the memo was at worst short. Hutton had had a friendly appointment with Laurier the day before and been

¹⁵² Letter, Hutton to the Deputy Minister, 12 January 1900, NAC, Department of Militia and Defence Fonds, 1935.

¹⁵³ Letter, Hutton to Kitson, 11 January 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50109, 163.

¹⁵⁴ Morton, *Ministers and Generals*, 157.

¹⁵⁵ Hutton, 'Circumstances in Connection', Pt I, 99-109.

¹⁵⁶ Letter, Hutton to Laurier, 16 January 1900, NAC, Laurier Fonds, 41163.

assured that Laurier would talk to his minister.¹⁵⁷ Laurier admitted to Minto that the situation would be 'easily adjustable' were Hutton and Borden on better speaking terms.¹⁵⁸ Borden, months later in a memo explaining his actions to Chamberlain and Lansdowne, never even referred to the horse purchases, preferring to justify himself by citing claimed indiscretions of Hutton's that were only discovered after it had been determined to dismiss him.¹⁵⁹ Minto's précis of the situation for Chamberlain seems accurate:

The statement against General Hutton is based on accusations of want of tact, on repetitions of remarks made in private conversations, and on the assumption he has been too self-assertive in his relations with his Minister. He is charged with no particular mistakes, except of the most trivial nature, and even admitting to some extent the charges of want of tact there would appear to me to be nothing to justify the summary action of my Ministers.¹⁶⁰

Laurier later explained the reasons for his government's difference with Hutton to parliament, 'General Hutton was insubordinate and indiscreet, and deliberately ignored the authority of the Minister in the administration of the department... [the GOC] is to be regarded as the adviser, but not as entitled to control the Department of Militia.'¹⁶¹ If Hutton was indeed dismissed because it was feared he sought to control the Department of Militia then the raising of the third Canadian contingent to South Africa, the Strathcona Horse, seems a much more likely trigger. Penlington raises this

¹⁵⁷ Hutton, 'Circumstances in Connection', Pt I, 105.

¹⁵⁸ Letter, Minto to Chamberlain, 18 January 1900, *Lord Minto's Canadian Papers*, Vol 1, 234.

¹⁵⁹ Despatch, Minto to Chamberlain, 13 June 1900, TNA, PRO, CO 42/876 Canada 1900 Vol. II.

¹⁶⁰ Letter, Minto to Chamberlain, 8 February 1900, *Lord Minto's Canadian Papers*, Vol 1, 294.

¹⁶¹ Laurier in parliament, February 19 1900, quoted in Evans, *The Canadian Contingents and Canadian Imperialism*, 53.

issue as one of the incidents that led to Hutton's recall but he does not give it the full emphasis it deserves.¹⁶²

At the end of 1899 the Canadian High Commissioner in London, the wealthy Lord Strathcona, had signalled his intention to the Canadian government to raise at his own expense a squadron of mounted men to be sent to South Africa.¹⁶³ Laurier presumed that his government would be given the responsibility of raising these men (and the privilege of distributing another large chunk of patronage).¹⁶⁴ However, it was Strathcona's money and presumably he could raise the contingent in whatever way he liked. Strathcona did have other ideas. On 12 January his agent in Canada, a Montreal banker named Clouston, cabled him privately: 'Rumoured here you are to equip a squadron of cavalry would suggest all arrangements be left in hands of His Excellency and Gen Hutton in order to prevent political appointments.'¹⁶⁵ Strathcona shared Clouston's anxiety that, if left to the government, patronage would compromise his contingent. He cabled back in full agreement.¹⁶⁶ On 13 January Strathcona cabled Laurier with plans for his contingent. While he could not reasonably employ Minto without undermining his vice regal position he did attempt to ensure that Hutton had a discretionary control over the constitution of his force. He warned Laurier that his contingent must be 'entirely non-political; only qualifications being thorough fitness and suitability of officers and men for services required.' He continued:

¹⁶² Penlington, 'General Hutton and the Problem of Military Imperialism in Canada', 56.

¹⁶³ Cable, Strathcona to Laurier, 31 December 1899, NAC, Laurier Fonds, 215135.

¹⁶⁴ Cable, Laurier to Strathcona, 5 January 1900, NAC, Laurier Fonds, 215140.

¹⁶⁵ Cable, Clouston to Strathcona, 12 January 1900, NAC, Lord Strathcona's Horse Fonds, MG 30 E 166.

¹⁶⁶ Cable, Strathcona to Clouston, 14 January 1900, NAC, Lord Strathcona's Horse Fonds, MG 30 E 166.

Will appreciate if can have benefit of experience of Gen. Hutton in the selection of men and purchase of horses, arms and equipment; officers to be nominated by him and names and particulars submitted my approval. All accounts connected with the Force till its embarkation endorsed by Gen. Hutton, will be paid by Edward S. Clouston, General Managaer, Bank of Montreal.¹⁶⁷

The suggestions contained in Strathcona's cable were in several ways offensive to Laurier and Borden. Firstly, the thinly veiled accusation of patronage operating in the organization of the first two contingents galled Laurier. In his reply to Strathcona, Laurier was adamant that, 'There has been no politics in raising of two contingents, and even Conservative Press admits it.'¹⁶⁸ Strathcona's suggestion that Hutton authorise accounts and select men was just as offensive. If permitted, it would have subverted Borden's position in the department, giving to Hutton what had been hitherto been ministerial prerogatives. It would have also given Hutton a new public authority, and a perch from which he might well have further embarrassed the government. And it would have prevented the government exercising patronage in distributing among tenderers what in the end amounted to around \$265,000 (excluding shipping contracts).¹⁶⁹ Incidentally, part of that money went straight into Borden's hip pocket: he arranged for his own company to supply provisions to the Strathcona contingent.¹⁷⁰

Clearly, neither Laurier nor Borden would have cared to entertain the possibility of Hutton exercising the role that Strathcona envisaged. The difficulty, however, was in

¹⁶⁷ Cable, Strathcona to Laurier, 13 January 1900, NAC, Laurier Fonds, 215148.

¹⁶⁸ Cable, Laurier to Strathcona, 15 January 1900, NAC, Laurier Fonds, 251510.

¹⁶⁹ Letter, Clouston to Strathcona, 8 May 1900, NAC, Lord Strathcona's Horse Fonds, MG 30 E 166.

¹⁷⁰ See Appendix, 'Borden's business and the later contingents'.

preventing it since it was, after all, Strathcona's money and Strathcona's own contingent. The contingent was not covered by Canada's Militia Act but was raised as a temporary unit of the British Army.¹⁷¹ The solution lay in exploiting the tension that already existed between Hutton and Borden. Therefore, in his reply to Strathcona's cable Laurier wrote on 15 January (the very same day that Borden sent his 'inestimably rude' memo) that, if the Militia Department were to be involved at all, then the minister should have control and, 'Government think you should be informed that Hutton's relations with them are so unsatisfactory that his co-operation with Minister of Militia cannot be relied upon.'¹⁷²

Hutton's recall from Canada stretched over the following three weeks. Minto resisted Laurier's entreaties that Hutton be quietly removed for service in South Africa, insisting that if his friend were to be dismissed then it must be done publicly so that Hutton could defend himself and so that the problems facing British General Officers Commanding in Canada be exposed. Unable to justify sacking Hutton on the basis of the horse dispute Borden spent the three weeks in accruing a scatter shot of charges against Hutton. Finally, the British government consented to Laurier's wish that Hutton be recalled, and on February 10 Hutton was selected for special service in South Africa.¹⁷³

Hutton's command in Canada was characterised by his quixotic attempts to impose on the Canadian militia his ideal of a professional, modern and independent force able to assist the Empire within his grand scheme of a Cooperative Defence System.

Initially, he was remarkably successful, thanks to the happy confluence of a Canadian

¹⁷¹ Miller, *Painting the Map Red*, 297.

¹⁷² Cable, Laurier to Strathcona, 15 January 1900, NAC, Laurier Fonds, 251510.

¹⁷³ Cable, Chamberlain to Minto, 10/2/00, G1/34, *Lord Minto's Canadian Papers*, Vol. 1, 297.

government more interested in economics than in defence, a Canadian people reliant on British power to assert themselves against their southern neighbour, and a minister determined to limit patronage to reasonable levels. But essentially he was playing in an empty sand box and when the Second South African war broke suddenly everyone became interested in the militia. His minister became more intimately involved in the department, patronage became more of an issue, and the government became increasingly sensitive about the imperial relationship. This was not the resistance of a local Canadian nationalism but of a harried government, jealous of its control over the militia department, vying with a zealous and erratic commander. As in New South Wales, it was the issue of control –local versus imperial and parliamentary versus military – that determined the Canadian response to Hutton. Hutton's dismissal is an excellent example of this; Strathcona's intention to give Hutton control over his contingent's formation threatened the precarious balance and the Laurier Government finally resolved to rid themselves of him.

6. A Dream Brigade: the Second South African War 1900

The Second South African war shook the confidence of the British Empire. In late 1899 General Redvers Buller had landed in South Africa with an army of British regulars. Anticipating an easy victory over the *ad hoc* armies of the Orange Free State and the Transvaal, Buller launched a triple offensive – in Natal, the eastern Cape, and in the west. Over six days in December, Boer commandos defeated all three of those thrusts in victories at Colenso, Stormberg and Magersfontein. This was Britain's 'Black week' and it pricked the bubble of her military prestige. She now seemed more vulnerable than ever to the conscript armies of Europe, especially given the general European hostility to British policy in South Africa.¹ Colonial loyalty was the silver lining on the cloud of South Africa. Offers of assistance from the self-governing colonies helped bolster British prestige and many hoped that a more closely-knit Empire might hold its own against rising powers like Germany, Russia and America.² While the crisis in South Africa therefore sapped Britain's confidence, and heightened her fears, at the same time it offered the solace of imperial solidarity, and the hope that the Empire could be fashioned into a true source of security.

The war caused British politicians and soldiers to rethink their defensive and imperial arrangements. Some envisaged a mobile field army, prepared during peacetime, and ready to meet Britain's next crisis.³ Plans for an imperial federation were mooted. Imperial defence arrangements were examined and many hoped to capitalise on

¹ J. Dunlop, *The Development of the British Army 1899-1914*, Methuen, London, 1938, 81.

² A. Thompson, 'The Language of Imperialism and the Meanings of Empire: Imperial Discourse in British Politics, 1895-1914', *Journal of British Studies*, 36, 1997, 151 and C. Wilcox, *Australia's Boer War: The War in South Africa 1899-1902*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 2002, xiii.

³ Dunlop, *The Development of the British Army*, 123.

colonial support by forming some kind of imperial reserve from colonial militiamen.⁴

Wolseley expressed a widespread sentiment when he said that, 'This war has federated the Empire of which we have talked for years and hoped for but never exactly saw our way to.'⁵

The British made several overtures to the colonies with these schemes in mind. In March 1900 Chamberlain made one of the first of these attempts at formalising the imperial sentiment that had arisen during the war. In a letter to Lord Minto, he suggested that something 'practical might be done towards that closer union which we have constantly kept in view', offered to consult the colonies on the post-war settlement, and made the weightier suggestion that they be permanently included in imperial decision-making through the formation of an Imperial Council, to sit in London.⁶ He asked Minto to sound out Canadian opinion on these questions. This proposal arose from Chamberlain's belief that the war in South Africa provided the opportunity to unite that region into a single nation, as the first stage in the process of consolidating the whole Empire.⁷

Chamberlain proceeded no further than Canada with his proposal. Minto's reply in April threw cold water on it. He advised 'great caution' and forwarded a memorandum from Laurier that assured Chamberlain of Canada's loyal assistance but insisted that it must be given voluntarily and at the time of need.⁸ Nevertheless, it was a significant step forward in British efforts at more closely knitting together the

⁴ A. Thompson, *Imperial Britain: The Empire in British Politics c. 1880-1932*, Pearson Education, Essex, 2000, 127 and Wilcox, *Australia's Boer War*, 310.

⁵ Letter, Wolseley to brother, 23 March 1900, Hove, Garnet Wolseley Papers, W/W.4/122.

⁶ Letter, Chamberlain to Minto, 2 March 1900, quoted in R. Wilde, 'Chamberlain's Proposal of an Imperial Council in March, 1900', *Canadian Historical Review*, 37, 1956, 227.

⁷ R. Hyam and G. Martin, *Reappraisals in British Imperial History*, Macmillan, London, 1975, 132.

⁸ Wilde, 'Chamberlain's Proposal of an Imperial Council in March, 1900', 230.

Empire and, interestingly, Hutton was centrally involved. Wilde has studied this question and he argues that the immediate trigger for Chamberlain's proposal was an interview he had had the day before with Hutton.⁹ On his return home from Canada Hutton met with Lansdowne and Chamberlain to discuss Canadian military affairs and he took the opportunity to outline his plans for a Canadian militia army complete in all its parts and ready to take the field as an independent field force participating in a cooperative defence of the Empire.¹⁰ Chamberlain asked Hutton whether the British army might be reformed in a similar way, with the creation of its own field artillery and cavalry, and Hutton had assured Chamberlain that 'the only possible method of ensuring a satisfactory military defence for the old country and for the Empire would by [sic] the creation of a Militia Army System.'¹¹ Chamberlain was so impressed that he took Hutton to see Arthur Balfour, the First Lord of the Treasury and Leader of the Commons, and Hutton again explained his plans for British and colonial militia and his system of cooperative defence for the Empire.¹² Hutton wrote excitedly to Minto the next day describing the meetings, 'It is very evident that the Imperial Government are quite determined to have a consistent and properly organized military system in which the Colonies shall be invited to take part at the end of the present war.'¹³ It was a momentous occasion for Hutton – he had succeeded in impressing his imperial dreams on British policymakers – and the fact of Chamberlain's failure did not diminish that achievement.

⁹ Wilde, 'Chamberlain's Proposal of an Imperial Council in March, 1900', 241.

¹⁰ Record of interview, Hutton and Chamberlain, 1 March 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50078, 156.

¹¹ Record of interview, Hutton and Chamberlain, 1 March 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50078, 157.

¹² Record of interview, Hutton and Chamberlain, 1 March 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50078, 157-8.

¹³ Letter, Hutton to Minto, 2 March 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50080, 180.

This episode was an important precursor to Hutton's South African campaign, the subject of this chapter. His experiences in the war brought together the main threads of his career: mounted infantry, militia and colonial armies. They now formed a single idea, his 'Militia Army System' for the cooperative defence of the Empire, which he had successfully pitched to the highest levels of the British government. It was a scheme which, by the creation of a field force able to operate anywhere against the modern conscript armies of Europe, would secure Britain and the Empire against the ever more perilous threat of war. In South Africa Hutton was given the opportunity to test such a force, to prove its worth, and in the process to help solidify imperial sentiment.

The outbreak of the Second South African war had fuelled the flames of Hutton's imperial ambitions. In Canada he had worked himself into a frenzy in his desire to go to the front. He was drawn not only by a soldier's desire to campaign, but, more importantly, he sensed that this was a moment of great importance for colonial defence participation and for the Empire generally. It seemed a ratification of the imperial agenda that he had pursued in Canada and New South Wales.¹⁴ And it promised to further greatly that agenda. As he wrote to Wood:

I look upon this war, sad as it has been in losses of so many of our best Officers and men, unfortunate as it has proved in success to our arms, as one of the most valuable events in the future of the Empire. The fact of all our Colonies with responsible Government having identified themselves in such a practical form with the common interests of the old country will be more pregnant of great results than any event in the last half-century. Again each great Colony itself

¹⁴ Letter, Bridge to Hutton, 1 March 1901, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50097, 13.

will be welded together with one great sub-division of our Empire by having that community of interest and of sympathy which our active part in this present campaign must promote.¹⁵

He felt that the experience of having colonial troops fight alongside imperial ones would greatly enhance imperial unity, vowing to Wolseley that he would 'leave no stone unturned to make successful a step so important in the future development of the Empire.'¹⁶ Hutton's success in bringing his ideas to Chamberlain and Balfour had encouraged him further – he had been heard at the highest level of government and he now intended to prove the validity of his theories. South Africa, to Hutton, was the ideal proving ground.

Shortly after his arrival in South Africa Hutton was presented with an opportunity to fulfil his promise to Wolseley and establish the value of colonial military cooperation. He had arrived in Cape Town at the end of March 1900 to take command of a brigade of British militia at Kimberley. After just a week in that post he was transferred to Bloemfontein, the recently conquered capital of the Orange Free State, where he assumed command of a brigade of mounted infantry. Lord Roberts was planning to march on Pretoria, the capital of the Transvaal, and had decided to form a division of mounted infantry units to assist the cavalry in that march. Hutton's brigade, nominally a part of that division, combined a core of British mounted infantry regulars with an assemblage of mounted volunteers from the British and colonial militias.

¹⁵ Letter, Hutton to Wood, 30 January 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50086, 213.

¹⁶ Letter, Hutton to Wolseley, 4 September 1899, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50085, 134.

Hutton was ecstatic at receiving his new command. He enthused that his brigade was really a division in number – having between 5 and 6000 men.¹⁷ Most importantly, his vision of imperial troops fighting together side by side was fulfilled: ‘It realizes my dream of the last 10 years. I wish that the chance had come 10 or even 5 years ago, but if God grants me health and strength I trust under Providence to make my command a success. The responsibility is very great, quite as much political and imperial, as it is military.’¹⁸ Hutton’s brigade contained mounted troops from Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and Britain – it was the ideal force for proving the value of his imperial ideas and the perfect vehicle for further cementing imperial sentiment.

This was a post that Hutton had desired for many months. Before the outbreak of hostilities he had written to Wolseley from Canada suggesting he be placed in charge of colonial horsemen in the event of war.¹⁹ Wolseley was receptive to the request and favoured Hutton, ‘a man accustomed to Colonists, their ways and their susceptibilities,’ as the ideal candidate for such a command.²⁰ Lansdowne, the Secretary of State for War, had intimated to Hutton in March that he would get a command of colonial mounted troops.²¹ Hutton himself suspected that Chamberlain had had a hand in the appointment.²² That these three men had influenced Hutton’s appointment (or at least that he imagined that they had) is significant because these three men were the very same British leaders before whom Hutton was striving to

¹⁷ Letter No. 6, Hutton to wife, 2 April 1900, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 1, 22.

¹⁸ Letter No. 6, Hutton to wife, 2 April 1900, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 1, 23.

¹⁹ Letter, Hutton to Wolseley, 4 September 1899, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50085, 130.

²⁰ Note, Harvey to Arundle, 23 September 1899, BUL, Chamberlain Collection, JC 29/2/2/169 [Wolseley note 19 September 1899].

²¹ Record of interview, Hutton and Marquis of Lansdowne, 2 March 1899, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50078, 154.

²² Letter, Hutton to wife, 17 April 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50091, 31.

establish the value of colonial and British militia mounted units operating together. In London, a month earlier, he had promised these three something that in South Africa he desperately tried to deliver. He saw himself as their agent, sending Chamberlain periodic reports about his command such as this message:

The importance, which you, Sir, have attached to the association together in one single campaign, & to the service under similar conditions of so many representative corps from our various Colonies, will be more than proved. I feel certain that this will will [sic] be an element of vital importance in moulding colonial military opinion to accept before long a consolidated military system for the whole empire. The Colonial Corps out here are not merely soldiers, they are citizens of every social, and political grade – many of them men of great influence and importance in the communities from which they come.²³

This sense of an imperial mission shaped Hutton's command in South Africa.

It was a mission made more urgent by Hutton's sense that British racial prestige was at stake in South Africa. His use of racial language during the war became ever more agitated and frustrated, almost desperate. Initially, the British were quite lenient in their treatment of surrendered Boers – amnesty was offered to any who would surrender their arms.²⁴ For a time Hutton favoured the policy, and he wrote ingratiatingly to Chamberlain praising Roberts's generosity.²⁵ As the war dragged on, however, he increasingly viewed that policy with scorn, wanting to force an early end to the conflict after long and frustrating marches: 'As it is French & I make wide & powerful strategical marches & turn the enemy from one position after another, but

²³ Letter, Hutton to Chamberlain, 2 June 1900, BUL, Chamberlain Collection, JC 29/4/8/24.

²⁴ Wilcox, *Australia's Boer War*, 74.

²⁵ Letter, Hutton to Chamberlain, 2 June 1900, BUL, Chamberlain Collection, JC 29/4/8/24.

we have only the annoyance of seeing our mobile foe retiring in front of us – bag & baggage.²⁶ Enemies laid down their arms, taking the oath of neutrality, only to rise in the rear and attack British convoys and isolated posts. Hutton became exasperated with Roberts, describing him to his wife as a ‘Military Gladstone’, and longed for a ‘younger and a stronger, harder Com. in Chief. One who will do and dare, and who will exercise the rod of the Conqueror over the conquered in such a manner as to cause the ignorant Boers to know and feel that their cause is a lost one, and that success is hopeless.’ The British, he continued, ‘must kill and destroy, if we are soon to really settle the question the supremacy of the Anglo-Saxon Race over the Dutch.’²⁷ Hutton became ever harder in his stance, bemoaning the legal constraints that Roberts imposed on him.²⁸ When British policy became tougher – in August Roberts proclaimed that the British would no longer provide for the hungry wives and children of Boer fighters – Hutton wholeheartedly approved, believing it would do much to bring the war to a quick end.²⁹

Hutton was eager for a quick end to the war. He feared a protracted war might undermine British prestige:

Shameful I call it! What will military critics say. Here we have some 30 000 men with quite 5 000 Mounted Men held up by some 4 or 5000 wretched farmers – Dutchmen – for whom in old days we had so profound a contempt. We at last drive off our enemy, but never succeed in taking a gun or in seriously harassing his retreat... It is too shameful! Please God this war may soon end, as

²⁶ Letter, Hutton to wife, 30 July 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50091, 212.

²⁷ Letter, Hutton to wife, 30 July 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50091, 212.

²⁸ Letter No. 33, Hutton to wife, 28 July 1900, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 3, 38.

²⁹ Letter, Hutton to wife, 14 August 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50091, 241.

there is nothing but discredit to be gained to us in a military point of view, and little credit indeed in the political outlook.³⁰

Hutton repeatedly referred to the necessity of harshly punishing the Boers in order to bolster British prestige: 'Our enemy must be made to feel the effect of fire and sword – we must kill and slay if our superiority as a race is to be established over that of the Dutch in South Africa.'³¹

This conception of the Boers was radically different to the opinion he had formed during the first South African war, twenty years earlier, when he had admired the Boers, likening them to 'the best class of yeoman farmers at home.'³² He now viewed them with almost no sympathy at all, likening them to 'savages and uncivilized races.'³³ Harsh tactics were a necessary recourse because, to Hutton, a 'moral effect' was the only means of making an impression on such an enemy. The Boers, he decided, were 'as stubborn as they are ignorant and fanatical. They are moreover intensely proud,' he added, 'and having posed as patriots are ready to make any sacrifices for their opinions.'³⁴ The Boers had become, for Hutton, an alien race – to whom it was unnecessary to extend any sympathy, pity or mercy.

This dramatic shift in Hutton's racial view of the Boers owed something to the frustration of a drawn out war against an enemy using guerrilla tactics. More important, though, was his fear that any loss of prestige would affect British power. This is witnessed in the fact that at the start of his South African tour, before he had

³⁰ Letter, Hutton to wife, 31 August 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50091, 258.

³¹ Letter No. 33, Hutton to wife, 28 July 1900, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 3, 38.

³² Letter, Hutton to father, 19 May 1881, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50090.

³³ Letter, Hutton to wife, 2 August 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50091, 218.

³⁴ Letter, Hutton to wife, 18 August 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50091, 252.

encountered even a single Boer, he was already impressed with the need to crush any resistance. He put this opinion to Chamberlain, 'we soldiers do not for one moment believe that the spirit of the Boers is broken, and it is generally recognised that to terminate hostilities before the moral and physical supremacy of the British race is asserted would be merely to perpetuate the recent and the present general feeling of unrest which permeates the whole community of South Africa – white and black.'³⁵ Victory was vital to ensure the predominance of the British race. This was primarily to bolster the Empire against its external enemies, but it was also of importance in quelling internal dissent: after serving in South Africa he wrote to Parkin in Canada suggesting that the British would prevail over the Boers and that the French Canadians should 'read a lesson... [that] British institutions, British justice & the Anglo-Saxon tongue are to be the ruling principles of all portions of the British Empire.'³⁶ Hutton suggested to Parkin that the war had been mainly fought to consolidate such ideas and principles.³⁷ The Boers, then, hardly existed at all in Hutton's world view: they were only of importance in that they were an obstacle to British progress and a blemish on British prestige.

Hutton's brigade was assigned to John French's Cavalry Division for the march from Bloemfontein to Pretoria. French had been one of the few British commanders to avoid disgrace during the early months of the war and his string of victories – Elandslaagte, Colesburg, Klip Drift – had made him a hero at home.³⁸ Presciently, Hutton had written to French in January expressing the 'wish that I were with you at the head of 5000 Mounted Infantry, the dream of my last 20 years, and never, I fear to

³⁵ Letter, Hutton to Chamberlain, 25 April 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50078, 219.

³⁶ Letter, Hutton to Parkin, 24 October 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50083, 219.

³⁷ Letter, Hutton to Parkin, 24 October 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50083, 219.

³⁸ R. Holmes, *The Little Field Marshal: A Life of Sir John French*, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London, 2004, 67 & 80.

be realized.³⁹ It was the fulfilment of his life's ambition and he was glad to be accompanying an old friend, and newly minted hero, who respected the qualities of his mounted infantry and was familiar with their strategy and tactics.⁴⁰ He saw fate's hand at work in the fact that he and French now had, 'a golden opportunity before us of putting into practice before a worthy foe those very principles of tactics for which we had both contended twelve years ago at Aldershot in the teeth of bitter opposition.'⁴¹

The march commenced at the beginning of May. Hutton's task was to gallop around and behind Boer commandos to prevent their escape and so pin them against Roberts's main force of infantry. A number of skirmishes were fought, but the Boers largely eluded the invading force, preferring to harass the British than to stand and fight.⁴² Hutton's brigade met its first significant resistance crossing the Vet river at Coetzee's Drift on 5 May. For Hutton, the victory confirmed the qualities of colonial troops and justified the existence of mounted infantry, writing that, 'In fact it was a typical Mounted Infantry Fight.'⁴³ During the battle Hutton ordered the New South Wales Mounted Rifles to charge the Boers. He described the scene in a letter to his wife:

[I] told them the situation, reminded them that we (they and I) were comrades and then pointed out to them that they must take the Drift and make good the Northern Bank of the River. They did not want a second word, I can tell you. The glint of battle was in their eyes – we

³⁹ Letter, Hutton to French, 20 January 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50086, 316.

⁴⁰ Letter, Hutton to wife, 13 May 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50091, 66.

⁴¹ Letter No. 17, Hutton to wife, 13 May 1900, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 1, 74.

⁴² Wilcox, *Australia's Boer War*, 80.

⁴³ Letter No. 15, Hutton to wife, 6 May 1900, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 1, 60.

understood one another, they and I, and I never had a doubt but that what brave men could do, they would do... Eager and determined the New South Wales men, Queenslanders and New Zealanders, vied with one another in their efforts if possible to reach and close with their foe.⁴⁴

As early as his first battle, therefore, Hutton was already convinced of the success of his mounted infantry and imperial projects.

Hutton believed that the success of his force would prove the value of his first major contribution to British military reform: the mounted infantry. He confided to Minto that, 'if God wills it, our fine force of 11,000 Mounted Infantry should be able to make such an impression on the campaign as to establish the value of Mounted Troops, armed and equipped as are ours, above all cavil or argument.'⁴⁵ A mere month's campaigning under his belt and he was already convinced of his success in that aim, suggesting to Minto that the advance from Bloemfontein had revealed the power of mounted troops and that, 'in fact the whole campaign is corroborative of the facts which Your Excellency and I have been preaching for the last 20 years.'⁴⁶ The great expanse of the South African veldt hampered the effectiveness of infantry and highlighted the value of mobile troops. Hutton thought that in such an environment 'men on foot are perfectly helpless' and fit only for stationary duties.⁴⁷ He also believed that shortcomings in the British cavalry system had been exposed and that consequently, 'the absolute necessity of a Mounted Infantry has been established.'⁴⁸ Badsey disputes this, arguing that the British cavalry only performed badly because

⁴⁴ Letter No. 15, Hutton to wife, 6 May 1900, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 1, 58-9 [Hutton's emphasis].

⁴⁵ Letter, Hutton to Minto, 14 April 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50080, 204.

⁴⁶ Letter, Hutton to Minto, 14 May 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50080, 222.

⁴⁷ Letter, Hutton to wife, 22 June 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50091, 148.

⁴⁸ Letter, Hutton to Minto, 23 September 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50080, 262.

they had to compete for forage and remounts with masses of improvised horsemen, insufficiently trained for such work.⁴⁹ Nevertheless, Hutton concluded, with French's concurrence, that at least six new regiments of mounted rifles should be raised as a part of the British cavalry.⁵⁰ These regiments would cooperate with the cavalry in much the same way Hutton had cooperated with French – acting as a support, a pivot, and a reserve.⁵¹ They imagined that British Yeomanry and colonial mounted forces would copy the training and equipment of that force, and be trained and staffed by officers from those regiments.⁵²

It was not feasible to expect the British exchequer to pay for six new regiments and Hutton believed that the only way to get that number of mounted infantry would be to train parts of the British militia in that role. It is not surprising, then, that another conclusion Hutton drew from the Second South African war was the effectiveness of militia. In an interview with Chamberlain in December 1900 he suggested that South Africa had proved the success of his reorganisation of the militias of Canada and New South Wales and he advocated the introduction of the same system in Britain.⁵³ He believed that an Empire-wide defence system based on the Militia Act was the logical conclusion to be drawn from the Second South African war.⁵⁴

For Hutton, the essence of his brigade was its imperial nature. When he marched he told his troops that their actions would determine not only the honour and credit

⁴⁹ S. Badsey, 'Fire and Sword: The British Army and the Arme Blanche Controversy 1871-1921', DPhil Thesis, University of Cambridge, 1981, 140 & 141.

⁵⁰ Letter, Hutton to Minto, 23 September 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50080, 262.

⁵¹ Letter No. 17, Hutton to wife, 13 May 1900, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 1, 76.

⁵² Letter, Hutton to Minto, 23 September 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50080, 262.

⁵³ Record of interview, Hutton and Chamberlain, 6 December 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50078, 227 [memorandum of interview held 5 December 1900].

⁵⁴ Letter, Hutton to Minto, 14 April 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50080, 203.

accorded them as individuals, but also that accorded to the colonies they represented, and 'that the future of the Empire in a large measure was at stake.'⁵⁵ He imagined that this was reciprocated. For example, he noted that when he congratulated a mortally wounded Canadian soldier on his gallantry, the dying man pluckily replied, 'I came here to confirm the principle of the Unity of the Empire, and I have laid down my life in a Great Cause.'⁵⁶ Hutton hoped to use the brigade to strengthen imperial sentiment and therefore strongly felt the importance of his command. Convinced of its imperial significance, he assured Chamberlain that, 'I feel very heavily the responsibility entailed, as if successful this happy association of selected representatives from the self-governing Colonies of Canada and Australia will exercise no small effect upon the future military consolidation of the defences of England.'⁵⁷ He promised to leave 'no stone un-turned in order to take advantage of the opportunity thus afforded.'⁵⁸

One way that Hutton sought to take advantage of this opportunity was in the structuring of his brigade. This organisation reflected his dream of Greater Britain. In New South Wales and Canada – in his speeches, in his federal defence plans, and in his idea of a 'national militia army' – Hutton had attempted to strengthen Canadian and Australian local identity, as individual members of a larger nation, Greater Britain, whose strength would enhance that greater nation. Organising his brigade, he took a similar approach, highlighting both local and imperial identity, and ultimately seeking to fuse them together. Visually, Hutton achieved this in the insignia he had his troops wear. Months earlier, in Canada, he had designed the badge worn by

⁵⁵ Letter No. 19, Hutton to wife, 27 May 1900, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 2, 27.

⁵⁶ Letter, Hutton to Parkin, 24 October 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50083, 218.

⁵⁷ Letter, Hutton to Chamberlain, 25 April 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50078, 219.

⁵⁸ Letter, Hutton to Chamberlain, 25 April 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50078, 219.

Canadians in South Africa: an imperial crown on a maple leaf with the word 'Canada' beneath.⁵⁹ Two years later, when serving as General Officer Commanding in Australia, Hutton would design a very similar emblem for the First Commonwealth Contingent to South Africa, the Rising Sun Badge.⁶⁰ Again, this fused an imperial crown with a local symbol – the rising sun, a contemporary symbol used to represent the new Commonwealth – and the word 'Australia.'⁶¹ During the war, Hutton improvised and he had the Australians in his brigade wear an 'A' on their helmets.⁶²

Hutton similarly arranged his unit in ways intended to highlight and strengthen its Greater Britishness. He assembled a staff of officers representative of the different colonies.⁶³ Four members of that staff were Australians.⁶⁴ Hutton was unique among British commanders in his willingness to use colonials in these roles.⁶⁵ In each corps he joined the colonial troops to a battalion of picked mounted infantry men from the regular British infantry so that, 'each corps, and consequently the Brigade, becomes Imperial, and not merely Colonial in character.'⁶⁶ He felt that this excited a healthy competition and in his despatches to the War Office he portrays this: 'Nothing could exceed the excellent behaviour of the troops generally: Canadians, New South Welshmen, Queenslanders and New Zealanders vied with one another, and with the two veteran battalions of Imperial Mounted Infantry, in their efforts to be the first to

⁵⁹ C. Miller, *Painting the Map Red: Canada and the South African War, 1899-1902*, Canadian War Museum and McGill-Queen's University Press, Montreal, 1993, 54.

⁶⁰ R. Grebert, *The Australian Army Slouch Hat and Rising Sun Badge*, The New South Wales Military Historical Society, Sydney, 2002, 97-99.

⁶¹ C. Wilcox, *For Hearths and Homes: Citizen Soldiering in Australia, 1854-1945*, Allen and Unwin, St Leonards, 1998, 51.

⁶² Wilcox, *Australia's Boer War*, 78.

⁶³ Letter No. 8, Hutton to wife, 8 April 1900, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 1, 32

⁶⁴ L. Field, *The Forgotten War: Australian Involvement in the South African Conflict of 1899-1902*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1979, 111.

⁶⁵ A. Hill, *Chauvel of the Light Horse: A Biography of General Sir Harry Chauvel*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1978, 22.

⁶⁶ Letter, Hutton to Chamberlain, 25 April 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50078, 219.

close with the enemy.’⁶⁷ At the same time, he hoped that, if his Brigade met with success, the commingling might help eradicate ‘the old jealousies between regular British troops and colonial levies.’⁶⁸

This mixture of soldiers from a variety of colonies and from the regular British army threatened friction, jealousies, and discord and Hutton imagined he would need a ‘delicacy in handling’ and infinite tact.⁶⁹ At the end of his campaign Hutton was pleased to have witnessed little of this in his brigade, something quite remarkable given the disparities in pay between these troops, and he hoped that such unity would, ‘now permeate into every corner of our Empire and find a sympathetic echo in every backwood homestead of Canada and of the North West, in every station & farm of Australia and in every portion of New Zealand, where the chances & vicissitudes of this abnormally difficult campaign are discussed.’⁷⁰

As a result of these imperial intentions Hutton really felt the importance of military success for his brigade. He suggested to Minto that, ‘Upon the success which it achieves will to a very great extent depend the feeling of the Australian and Canadian Troops and through them the Colonies whom they represent towards a Military Co-operative System of Defence for the Empire.’⁷¹ On another occasion, he remarked that, ‘I am so glad that our Canadians have behaved so well – the loss is sad – but the good which it will do in cementing the Empire is the great compensation.’⁷² It is

⁶⁷ Despatch, Hutton to Roberts, ‘Report on operations 1st Mounted Infantry from 1/5 to 9/5’, 9 July 1900, TNA, PRO, WO 105/9.

⁶⁸ Letter, Hutton to Parkin, 24 October 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50083, 214.

⁶⁹ Letter No. 19, Hutton to wife, 27 May 1900, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 2, 27.

⁷⁰ Letter, Hutton to Parkin, 24 October 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50083, 216.

⁷¹ Letter, Hutton to Minto, 14 April 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50080, 203.

⁷² Letter, Hutton to Minto, 27 February 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50080, 172.

therefore not surprising that Hutton expressed delight in the fighting qualities of the Australian, New Zealand, and Canadian soldiers within his command. He boasted to Chamberlain of the 'fine material' of these men who 'fairly revel in fighting' and suggested there was 'positively nothing of which these troops are not capable.'⁷³ His letters home to his wife are full of praise for these troops.⁷⁴ Summing up the work of his brigade he assured Chamberlain, 'It is impossible to speak in too high terms of the manner in which the troops representing the various Colonies of Canada, New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, New Zealand, South Australia, Western Australia and Tasmania have behaved. The Colonial Troops have shown an eagerness to close with the Boers, a steady gallantry under heavy artillery fire, and a silent ever cheerful endurance of hardship and cold, which has won the highest admiration of all the regular Troops with whom they have been associated.'⁷⁵

Hutton was not the only British general to sing the praises of the colonial troops. Wilcox argues that it became a common perception that colonial horsemen were the troops best suited to conditions in South Africa.⁷⁶ Their hardiness and skill in the saddle were highly regarded, as was their independence of mind and spirit. Lord Roberts wished that British regulars shared this same quality.⁷⁷ Hutton also valued this independence – he brought his men into his confidence on campaign, sometimes risking the secrecy of the operations, in order that he had the 'intelligent cooperation of everyone,' he was convinced that in modern war 'the days of automata are gone.'⁷⁸

⁷³ Letter, Hutton to Chamberlain, 25 April 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50078, 219.

⁷⁴ Letter No. 6, Hutton to wife, 2 April 1900, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 1, 23 (4 April); Letter No. 12, Hutton to wife, 29 April 1900, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 1, 42; Letter No. 13, Hutton to wife, 30 April 1900, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 1, 43.

⁷⁵ Letter, Hutton to Chamberlain, 2 June 1900, BUL, Chamberlain Collection, JC 29/4/8/24.

⁷⁶ Wilcox, *Australia's Boer War*, 188.

⁷⁷ Wilcox, *Australia's Boer War*, 299.

⁷⁸ Letter, Hutton to wife, 26 May 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50091, 84.

The colonial officers within Hutton's command, however, did not perform as well as he had hoped. He found them deficient in professional attainments and education and unable to fill positions of high or independent command.⁷⁹ The Canadian officers proved even worse than those from Australia.⁸⁰ Hutton confided to his wife that his staff of picked colonial officers had been a failure – an opinion echoed by one of his corps commanders who felt that Hutton's incompetent staff had hampered the functioning of his brigade.⁸¹ This deficiency of colonial leadership impressed on Hutton the importance of British command and organisation of these forces. He concluded that the Canadians proved the most effective colonial troops in South Africa despite being man for man inferior soldiers because they were 'so well organized and administered.'⁸² Of course it was Hutton himself who had been responsible for that organisation.

This high estimation of colonial troops and correspondingly low estimation of their officers reflects Hutton's professional prejudices. His attempts to assert that perspective in the colonies – especially in the retirements of officers such as Spalding, Airey and Domville – had been the source of much of the conflict in those commands. It generated tension in South Africa as well; Miller reports that Hutton was 'intensely disliked' by the members of the Canadian Mounted Rifles.⁸³ 'Banjo' Paterson, in South Africa as a war correspondent, described resentment of Hutton's fondness for

⁷⁹ Letter, Hutton to Minto, 27 March 1901, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50081, 21.

⁸⁰ Letter, Hutton to Minto, 18 August 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50080, 255.

⁸¹ Letter, Hutton to wife, 17 August 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50091, 245; De Lisle, 'Memoirs of the Great Boer War', KCL, GB99 De Lisle Item 2, Vol. 1, f. 49.

⁸² Letter, Hutton to Minto, 27 March 1901, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50081, 23.

⁸³ Miller, *Painting the Map Red*, 231.

‘drill and pipeclay.’⁸⁴ Harry Chauvel, one of Hutton’s Australian officers (and afterwards one of his firmest supporters), was similarly repelled by Hutton’s officiousness, ‘we absolutely hate him already and we don’t care how soon it’s over.’⁸⁵

Hutton did not measure the success of his brigade merely in the quality of his mounted and colonial troops. He measured it also in providence, in the divine favour with which he imagined God held his personal, and his country’s, mission. Hutton’s letters home during the war were full of references to God. He prayed for ‘the discrimination and insight’ to know how best to use his marvellous force.⁸⁶ Hutton courted divine favour through prayer and by organising church services for his men on the march. He likened his men to Cromwell’s Roundheads – attending services mounted and ready to ride off – ‘We shall be the better for marching on our way to the final phase of the Campaign with God’s blessing on our heads, and with prayer to God still on our lips.’⁸⁷ According to his own testimony, however, it was not a prayer left on their lips as they rode to battle, but the national anthem, ‘God Save the Queen’, for this was how he ended his services.⁸⁸ This says something about the nature of his religious belief at this stage. He *was* devoutly religious; but his Christian faith supported his faith in the British nation. For example, on the very same page that he urged the necessity to ‘kill and slay’ the Boers he warmly approved of a Chaplain

⁸⁴ A. Paterson, Press Despatch, 18 April 1900, A. Paterson, *From the Front: Being the Observations of Mr A.B. (Banjo) Paterson*, ed. R. Drooglever, Macmillan, Sydney, 2000, 296.

⁸⁵ Hill, *Chauvel of the Light Horse*, 23.

⁸⁶ Letter No. 16, Hutton to wife, 9 May 1900, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 1, 69.

⁸⁷ Letter, Hutton to wife, 18 May 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50091, 83.

⁸⁸ Letter, Hutton to wife, 18 May 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50091, 83.

reminding the troops 'that we represented the cause of Christianity, of liberty and of justice.'⁸⁹ To his mind there was no contradiction.

God did seem to watch out for Hutton's brigade – they enjoyed an almost miraculously low rate of casualties. In a series of sharp encounters Hutton's men survived heavy enemy fire with little ill effect. Wilcox describes the brigade's first action – the crossing at Coetzee's Drift – and the men's mystification at prevailing with very light injury.⁹⁰ In another episode, Hutton avoided a potentially ruinous engagement with a far larger Boer force when a chance messenger brought word not to march – the official notification arriving too late to have prevented disaster. Hutton mused after the incident, 'how much depends upon chance or upon Providence in war.'⁹¹ In over 30 actions Hutton's brigade lost only four officers and seventeen men killed and Hutton attributed this to 'a kind Providence.'⁹² He came to believe that God was watching over him and his troops in South Africa, enabling him to be of service to Great Britain, and facilitating the success of his work.⁹³ He wrote in June of the minimal casualties in his brigade: 'This has been an extraordinary result for so much valuable & important work, and I can only account for it by the fact that Providence has especially blessed the tactical dispositions made and enabled me to carry out the orders given me in such a satisfactory manner as I have minimized the loss to my Troops. The fire of the enemy has been frequently very heavy and well directed, and I never save the men when there is a definite object to be gained.'⁹⁴

⁸⁹ Letter No. 33, Hutton to wife, 28 July 1900, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 3, 38.

⁹⁰ Wilcox, *Australia's Boer War*, 81.

⁹¹ Letter, Hutton to wife, 6 May 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50091, 52.

⁹² Letter, Hutton to wife, 20 September 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50091, 275.

⁹³ Letter No. 40, Hutton to wife, 14 September 1900, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 3, 84; Letter, Hutton to wife, 5 October 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50091, 288.

⁹⁴ Letter, Hutton to wife, 6 June 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50091, 122.

Hutton conceived of this apparent mercy as more than a reward for his brigade's benedictions. He saw it as divine favour for the British cause in South Africa and for his own efforts at more closely binding the Empire. 'I fully believe that God is with us,' he wrote to his wife, continuing, 'Our cause is a sacred one and I dare to feel assured of victory.'⁹⁵ He connected his miraculously low rate of casualties to divine approval of his imperial mission in a letter to Parkin:

You will understand therefore with what a profound feeling of gratitude toward God I am leaving South Africa. I feel that if as a very humble instrument of an All-Wise Providence I have been enabled to act the very difficult part allotted to me with some measure of success it has been that the same Providence has decreed that the destiny of the World shall be controlled ere long by the Unity and solidarity of our Empire in spite of the many opposing influences at work.

I can believe in nothing else, and nor indeed would you, had you been a spectator with me of the heavy fire to which my Troops have been continually exposed, the risks run with impunity, and dangers successfully mastered. [This] has over again been a matter of the utmost astonishment to my Staff & myself! There has been a very general comment among our Troops that some especial Providence seemed to be always present to save us from serious loss, and to bring us unvarying success.⁹⁶

These notions about God and divine approval demonstrate three things. They show how far Hutton had travelled from his stepfather's evangelical faith – how whole-

⁹⁵ Letter, Hutton to wife, 5 July 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50091, 178.

⁹⁶ Letter, Hutton to Parkin, 24 October 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50083, 214.

heartedly he had adopted the broad church position – and how firmly he was embraced within the grip of nationalism. They also show how strongly he was attached to his plans for the Empire.

Hutton really felt the imperial significance of his command. He imagined that what he was doing, that the success which his brigade attained, would strengthen the Empire and might save the British nation. He was therefore indignant at any obstacles placed in his path. A letter of his to Parkin illustrates this:

No British Commander now living has had the privileges which have fallen to my lot of commanding every variety of our Colonial Troops, and I unhesitatingly aver that there are in the Empire no stronger arms and no nobler, braver hearts than are to be found among the Canadians, the Australians and the New Zealanders. Is it to be wondered at therefore that I feel deeply moved at the indignity of such men being made the sport of parti-political wire-pullers and intriguers.⁹⁷

In his commands in Canada and New South Wales, Hutton's imperial aspirations clashed with the exigencies of colonial politics and the intractable problem of control. In South Africa the 'intriguers' came from a new quarter.

Generally speaking, the colonies were happy for Hutton to have command of their troops. Hutton felt very much at home in his brigade, remarking at how pleased the Australians were to see him – many of whom he took to be old friends.⁹⁸ He described shaking hands with a Canadian sergeant and feeling compelled to shake a second time, 'with such a look of sympathy between us as only we soldiers

⁹⁷ Letter, Hutton to Parkin, 19 July 1900, NAC, George Parkin fonds, MG 30 D 44, Volume 14, 4269.

⁹⁸ Letter, Hutton to wife, 7 April 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50091, 25; Letter No. 6, Hutton to wife, 2 April 1900, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 1, 23 (Wed. April 4).

understand, and which we shall probably both remember to our dying day.'⁹⁹ He felt he shared an intimate connection with these men, many of whom he had led before. Despite the examples given earlier of resentment at Hutton's leadership style, many did remember him and were happy to serve under him again.¹⁰⁰ He received congratulatory cables from Australian and New Zealand premiers. Lewis, the Tasmanian premier, had been in Sydney at the time and remarked on the general delight there at Hutton's having been selected for the command.¹⁰¹ Seddon wrote from New Zealand on a couple of occasions to express how glad he was that the Australian and Canadian troops were led by an officer familiar with their peculiarities (particularly their resistance to strict discipline) and who had imperial service experience.¹⁰² Seddon shared Hutton's hope in the imperial benefits flowing from his command: 'Their rubbing shoulders together will result in taking off corners, and is bound to bring about a lasting good-fellowship. This will help to improve the Imperialistic feeling and bind the Empire together in an indissoluble whole.'¹⁰³

By the beginning of June the capitals of the two Boer republics were under British control but several Boer commandos and their leaders remained at large. On 16 July Botha launched an attack, hoping to break through to Pretoria. Johannesburg was to have risen at the same time.¹⁰⁴ The Boers attacked along the length of British front held by Hutton at Wittport, trying to dislodge him and clear the path to Pretoria. Hutton weathered the assault, victorious but suffering 58 casualties – including the

⁹⁹ Letter No. 8, Hutton to wife, 8 April 1900, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 1, 33

¹⁰⁰ Diary, James Cripps, 19 April 1900, AWM, Papers of Private James Cripps, PR 00971, 95.

¹⁰¹ Letter, Lewis (Premier Tasmania) to Hutton, 4 June 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50084, 223.

¹⁰² Letter, Seddon to Hutton, 18 July 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50084, 307; Letter, Seddon to Hutton, 29 August 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50084, 312.

¹⁰³ Letter, Seddon to Hutton, 29 August 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50084, 312.

¹⁰⁴ Letter, Hutton to wife, 18 July 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50091, 206.

death of Frederick Borden's son (who had joined the second Canadian contingent).¹⁰⁵

Hutton buried the younger Borden by torchlight in a little cemetery he established near his head quarters. He telegraphed his sympathy to Dr Borden and then wrote to Parkin of 'the irony of fate that while the father should be indicting me behind my back in Canada, the son should be fighting to victory at my side here in South Africa!'¹⁰⁶

Laurier's government in Canada was indeed Hutton's one colonial opponent. Laurier and his ministers were furious at Hutton's appointment in command of Canadian troops, considering it a slap-in-the-face, and they contemplated sending a formal complaint to the British government.¹⁰⁷ This opposition hardly affected Hutton, though. He believed he had the support of the Canadian troops themselves and, as his response to the younger Borden's death shows, that was what mattered to him.

It was a delightful situation for Hutton – he had the benefit of leading colonial troops without having to contend with any colonial politicians. He expressed a great relief at this to Minto:

Thank God we have no party politics here, that fatal Upas Tree, which withers up all discipline, comradeship, and military efficiency, is at any rate not indigenous to the military soil here, but its dark shade is well known to exist at Ottawa, and in a less degree in some of the other Colonial Capitals.¹⁰⁸

In his early letters home to his wife Hutton seems buoyed by the freedom of campaigning: 'Darling one! I feel as happy as I ever did in my life – the fresh brisk

¹⁰⁵ Miller suggests that had Hutton deployed more of his reserves many of those casualties would have been saved. Miller, *Painting the Map Red*, 248.

¹⁰⁶ Letter, Hutton to Parkin, 19 July 1900, NAC, George Parkin fonds, MG 30 D 44, Volume 14, 4280.

¹⁰⁷ Letter, Minto to Chamberlain, 12 May 1900, BUL, Chamberlain Collection, JC 29/2/2/184.

¹⁰⁸ Letter, Hutton to Minto, 14 April 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50080, 203.

air, all my troops & officers about me whom I like, the responsibility & the interest of the Campaign.¹⁰⁹ However, the tone of his letters changed as Hutton realised that he had a new set of obstacles to contend with in South Africa. There was a new gang of 'intriguers.' His imperial ambitions – heightened by colonial participation in the war – were frustrated by the political infighting of the British army.

The disastrous beginning to the Second South African war shook Wolseley's ring of officers from their perch atop the leadership of the British army. Buller, Wolseley's protégé and now rival for the position of British Commander in Chief, a long-time friend and patron to Hutton, was disgraced by the series of defeats that befell his army in the Black Week of 1899. After Black Week, Lord Frederick Roberts was sent with reinforcements and orders to take command in South Africa.¹¹⁰ Roberts had vied with Wolseley for decades over the direction of the British army and he had built up his own gang of officers loyal to him. He had famously attacked the Cardwell reforms, and by implication Wolseley, at a dinner at Mansion House in February 1881, given in his honour after Afghanistan. This launched twenty years of hostility between the rival camps. Wolseley's military thinking, his emphasis on the creation of mobile field forces, had been shaped by the experience of fighting colonial wars in Africa; Roberts, on the other hand, had had his career in India, he believed in the paramount importance of maintaining the Northwest Frontier, and wanted a large army based in India.¹¹¹ The contest between these two rings of officers was complicated further by Lieutenant-General Horatio Kitchener – a rising power in the army, not aligned to either group, who had built a public reputation based on his own success in North

¹⁰⁹ Letter, Hutton to wife, 9 May 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50091, 65.

¹¹⁰ Wilcox, *Australia's Boer War*, 36.

¹¹¹ H. Strachan, *The Politics of the British Army*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1997, 96.

Africa. Kitchener served as Roberts's chief of staff in South Africa and he wielded his own influence.

Arriving in South Africa, finding the Wolseley ring in tatters, Hutton felt politically isolated: 'I am not too well pleased at my command [the brigade of British militia at Kimberley], but I am not in the Roberts gang – nor am I in the Egyptian circle of Kitchener's men. I must with God's help make the most of my chances as they are, hoping for the best.'¹¹² He was happy to serve with French, an independent minded man and a fellow admirer of Lord Wolseley, but Roberts blamed French for his failure to capture Boer leaders at the battle of Poplar Grove, and Hutton feared that their role in the advance would be minimized.¹¹³

Hutton found constant irritation in Roberts and his band. He resented the fact that those officers, men who had opposed the mounted infantry movement, who had 'always scoffed at our efforts to create a mobile infantry from our regular infantry Battalions, are the very men who are now profiting by our determination and foresight.'¹¹⁴ Roberts became very keen on mounted infantry and encouraged the colonies to send their contingents in that form.¹¹⁵ Years after the war Hutton attributed the success of the whole war to his own mounted infantry reforms: 'It has been said that the successful issue of the South African War was largely due to the principles and practice of Mounted Infantry which had been introduced into the

¹¹² Letter, Hutton to wife, 24 March 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50091, 11.

¹¹³ Letter, Hutton to wife, 1 July 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50091, 173; Badsey, *Fire and Sword*, 153.

¹¹⁴ Letter, Hutton to Minto, 14 May 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50080, 222.

¹¹⁵ Wilcox, *Australia's Boer War*, 65.

training of the Army twelve years before.¹¹⁶ Hutton saw the success of mounted infantry in South Africa as a personal victory and it angered him that that success was not rewarded: 'The creation of Mounted Infantry which has alone enabled our Troops to succeed in this Campaign was solely and entirely mine, yet my Mtd Inf Command has been allowed to dwindle away to some 800 men.'¹¹⁷

Hutton was also critical of the way Roberts prosecuted the campaign, accusing him of 'a want of energy and directness of plan which is very conspicuous and differs from Lord Wolseley.'¹¹⁸ He felt that Roberts's patronage of his friends, particularly Lieutenant-General Ian Hamilton and Major-General Reginald Pole Carew, extended to jealously denying Hutton any credit for his own successes and those of his brigade. When it was mooted that a colonial detachment should travel to London for a public parade Hutton hoped for the command but doubted that, 'the Field Marshal [Roberts] will give me any prominence, or recognize my connection with them. To do so would be to bring some notoriety which he is always so careful to reserve for his immediate clique.'¹¹⁹ Of his work with French, Hutton complained:

I feel certain that our combined work therefore will be ignored as much as is possible. Everything is sacrificed to Ian Hamilton & Pole Carew. The Commander in Chief seems to believe that there are no other Generals to whom he owes anything but his old personal staff. At any rate I am quite prepared to find that all allusion to French and his column has been reduced in the official telegrams to the smallest dimensions, & with this silence will of course be included all allusion to my splendid fighting brigade with its magnificent

¹¹⁶ E. Hutton, 'Notes upon the evolution of Mounted Infantry', 23 May 1907, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50111, 132.

¹¹⁷ Letter, Hutton to wife, 31 August 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50091, 255.

¹¹⁸ Letter, Hutton to wife, 9 May 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50091, 60.

¹¹⁹ Letter, Hutton to wife, 28 September 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50091, 281.

representative troops from all our self governing colonies & the Imperial interests thus entailed.¹²⁰

The immediate source of Hutton's irritation with the Roberts gang was Ian Hamilton. Hutton's mounted infantry brigade was nominally part of Hamilton's mounted infantry division. It was a large division, and Hutton was generally permitted to operate independently, but Hamilton commandeered many of Hutton's units (he took control of two of Hutton's four corps) and Hutton chafed constantly against his command. He resented Hamilton, a man with little experience of mounted infantry, for getting a command that he felt was rightfully his.¹²¹ Hamilton was very close to Roberts (his former ADC and Military Secretary) and Hutton saw him as the Field Marshal's 'left hand man' – acting for him behind the scenes.¹²² He felt that Hamilton was intriguing to keep him in the background, deliberately preventing him from having access to either Kitchener or Roberts.¹²³ Hutton found his force repeatedly plundered to strengthen Hamilton's column.¹²⁴ He tried to resist Hamilton by unsuccessfully appealing to Kitchener, asking that his brigade be given back a mounted infantry corps, arguing that French needed his assistance and that, 'There is again the importance of the Colonial representatives being associated together during the present campaign which is I know one of the most valuable factors in the organisation of the Brigade in its relation to the future defence of the Empire and the Imperial policy of the British Government.' The association of colonial military

¹²⁰ Letter, Hutton to wife, 1 July 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50091, 173.

¹²¹ Letter, Hutton to wife, 26 June 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50091, 160.

¹²² Letter, Hutton to wife, 17 April 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50091, 31.

¹²³ Letter, Hutton to wife, 22 April 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50091, 36.

¹²⁴ Letter, Hutton to wife, 31 August 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50091, 259.

forces would contribute, he argued, 'more than anything else to the consolidation of the military forces of the Empire.'¹²⁵

This was the most galling aspect of the problem for Hutton. He believed that his attempts at fostering greater imperial defence cooperation were being obstructed by the intrigues of a self-interested gang of officers. In his appointments in New South Wales and Canada Hutton had directly appealed to the press in order to reach the public and push his reforms. Hutton shared this strategy with many of his fellow officers: his direct superior in South Africa, French, wrote him: 'I quite agree with you that the only way to get real Reforms is to work the People for all they're worth.'¹²⁶ Roberts and his gang hogged the limelight in South Africa. Hutton repeatedly complained of this, writing, 'As for my Brigade and myself the very least possible has been said as to our part in the triumphant advance.'¹²⁷ No correspondents travelled with Hutton's forces and he believed this the result of a 'determination of someone at Head Quarters to under-rate, and minimize all my work.'¹²⁸ Hutton scoured the papers looking for a report of this victory at Riet Vlei, which he thought the 'greatest coup of this phase of the War', and discovered that, 'so far as the Public is concerned, my part in the Campaign is kept studiously in the background.'¹²⁹ In Hutton's scheme, Roberts pandered to the popularity of the colonial regiments without understanding their true importance, 'Of course the little man made some pretty remarks to the Canadians; meant for the Press, but kindly in

¹²⁵ Letter, Hutton to Kitchener, 31 May 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50086, 312.

¹²⁶ Letter, French to Hutton, 22 May 1901, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50086.

¹²⁷ Letter, Hutton to wife, 13 July 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50091, 185.

¹²⁸ Letter, Hutton to wife, 23 August 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50091, 250.

¹²⁹ Letter, Hutton to wife, 2 August 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50091, 216.

manner as he is I never feel that he has any real sympathy in me or in anything I do.'¹³⁰ Hutton despaired that it seemed from the papers that he had done nothing.¹³¹

Hutton was not just interested in the publicity of imperial issues. He was also concerned that, without public exposure, he would not gain professional advancement and personal recognition from the campaign.¹³² He felt under appreciated, 'I do not seem to possess the knack of getting rewards & recognition for all that I have done for the Army, for Australia, for Canada & for the Empire. I have made so many sacrifices, have taken distinct lines so frequently, & have carried great & useful measures so often – yet others are preferred to me. So it is here!'¹³³ He hoped to be promoted to major-general at the end of the campaign and also longed for a K.C.M.G., in recognition of his work in New South Wales; and he asked his wife to wield her social influence to that end: 'Between ourselves I shd rather have a K.C.M.G. than anything else after this campaign as it would be some small recognition of the part I played in Australia in bringing on Federation, & be some compensation for the treatment I received in Canada for compelling a reluctant French-Canadian Govt to send Troops to South Africa.'¹³⁴ Hutton suspected that the 'jealousy of me by the Roberts set' would prevent any official recognition of his services, '& only a very scanty appreciation shown for the splendid troops which I have had under me.'¹³⁵ In the end he was proved right – missing out on the major-general's list and being passed over by many of his contemporaries.¹³⁶ French, on the other hand, thanks to the publicity surrounding his early successes, returned to

¹³⁰ Letter, Hutton to wife, 22 April 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50091, 38.

¹³¹ Letter, Hutton to wife, 2 August 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50091, 216.

¹³² Letter, Hutton to wife, 5 May 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50091, 286.

¹³³ Letter, Hutton to wife, 31 August 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50091, 255.

¹³⁴ Letter, Hutton to wife, 10 August 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50091, 230.

¹³⁵ Letter, Hutton to wife, 20 September 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50091, 275.

¹³⁶ Letter, French to Hutton, 22 May 1901, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50086.

London a hero, receiving two knighthoods in as many years and honorary doctorates from Oxford and Cambridge.¹³⁷

Hutton, discouraged by these intrigues and set backs, looked to escape to an appointment as commandant of the post-federation Australian army: 'I want to be quit of it all, and would gladly go to Australia if asked, and shake the S.A. dust and discredit off.'¹³⁸ He believed he was very popular in Australia and would be welcomed as commander of the new federal army.¹³⁹ In July he dined with Major Lee and the officers of the NSW Lancers who pressed him to return to Australia.¹⁴⁰ In the same month he received a missive from Colonel Waddell in Sydney encouraging him in such a hope. Waddell wrote that all in New South Wales longed for his return to an Australian command: 'With Federation and a good man at the head the Australian Army can be made something of a credit to the Empire, and we all hope that it will fall to your lot to command it.'¹⁴¹ Hutton imagined that Australia would be the next step in furthering his cooperative scheme for the defence of the Empire.

The last conventional campaign of the Second South African war was fought in August and September around Middelburg – against Boer forces led by Louis Botha. Hutton's last action was at Kaapsche Hoof in September. His brigade's advance forced the Boers to abandon their position there and (according to Hutton), 'with it all hope of preventing the further advance of our Troops, and the collapse of the

¹³⁷ Holmes, *The Little Field Marshal*, 118.

¹³⁸ Letter, Hutton to wife, 31 August 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50091, 255.

¹³⁹ Letter, Hutton to wife, 1 July 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50091, 171.

¹⁴⁰ Letter No. 33, Hutton to wife, 28 July 1900, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 3, 38.

¹⁴¹ Letter, Waddell to Hutton, 5 July 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50096, 255.

Transvaal Republic.’¹⁴² After the campaign there were no armies left to fight in South Africa – the war became one of occupation and counter-insurgency. Hutton’s force was broken up in October and he was allowed to return home. Hutton was relieved, ‘Everyone is very complimentary, & I verily believe that French and I are about the only two Generals, who have not come in for hostile criticism – based upon some shortcomings or pseudo disasters!’¹⁴³

Despite the personal professional frustrations of South Africa Hutton believed that he had achieved something for the Empire by his South African service. He had led the brigade of his dreams – a mounted force representing ‘the vast range of the world wide British Empire’ – on a successful campaign, ‘consistent with the just aspirations of our self governing colonies,’ to ensure that:

Among all these [military setbacks] will always remain the feeling that, whatever the ebb and flow of war, this at least is certain viz that where the Union Jack flies, and British hearts beat there Britons mean to stand – shoulder to shoulder – back to back – and if necessary fight the world at large.¹⁴⁴

He had come to South Africa with the imperial purpose of proving the value of his plans to reform the British and colonial militias, in order to provide a mobile field force capable of defending the Empire against the new threats arising in Europe.

Hutton was driven by fears for British security that he conceptualised in racial terms – he demonised the Boer and sought to re-establish British racial prestige. He felt it his duty to prove the value of mounted infantry, of militia, and of the colonial soldiery,

¹⁴² Letter No. 40, Hutton to wife, 14 September 1900, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 3, 98.

¹⁴³ Letter, Hutton to wife, 5 October 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50091, 286.

¹⁴⁴ Letter, Hutton to Parkin, 24 October 1900, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50083, 214.

and he believed it vital that his brigade be conspicuously successful. The extent of his adherence to his imperial mission is witnessed in its association in his mind with the will of Providence. God might have been on his side, but the hierarchy of the British army was not and Hutton suffered for his loyalty to Wolseley. In New South Wales and in Canada Hutton's imperial dreams had met the political reality of the colonies; in South Africa those dreams foundered upon the political rocks of the British army.

7. Australia's General Officer Commanding: 1902 to 1904

I was on the point of saying that I had been with the Australian troops since their genesis, but to this I can hardly lay claim, for the foundation of the forces which gained such fame on the fields of Gallipoli, Palestine and France was laid a very long time ago; and in this connection I feel there is no name which deserves to be more remembered and honoured than that of General Hutton, to whom I am sure you will be glad to pay tribute this evening... I know with what an unremitting attention, energy, and great ability he applied himself to his work until he had seen the foundation thoroughly well laid, the results of which we see in the Australian Imperial Force.¹

Lieutenant-General Birdwood, 1920

General Birdwood, commander of the ANZAC and Australian Corps in the Great War, was perhaps overgenerous in his praise of Edward Hutton's work in establishing an Australian army after federation. His description chimes with Hutton's own estimation of his legacy but perhaps that is reason enough to doubt it. Inflated though it may be, it nevertheless highlights the important work Hutton did do and the great influence he wielded over many leading Australian officers, including William Bridges and Brudenell White. It is, moreover, notable in the way it points to Hutton's great hopes for his command in Australia. This was the end he had hoped to achieve. *En route* to Australia in January 1902 Hutton confessed these aspirations to the famous imperial propagandist, George Parkin, 'No one except Mr Chamberlain & a few behind the scenes knows as you know the enormous responsibilities, present and future, which are involved by the success or otherwise of my undertaking. To have a distinct & determining influence in the destinies of a young & vigorous Nation, such as the Commonwealth of Australia, is a grave and serious issue indeed!'²

The Australian command was the summit of Hutton's colonial career. Fighting in South Africa, he had yearned for the post, longing for a blank slate upon which he could inscribe his cooperative system for imperial defence. In attempting to apply his

¹ Address, W. Birdwood, 21 February 1920, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50089, 34.

² Letter, Hutton to Parkin, 8 January 1902, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50083, 236.

scheme, Hutton connected and conflicted with the agendas of both the British and Australian governments. As in his previous commands, it was largely on the issue of control that Hutton differed from his hosts. However, this conflict took a new form in Australia. Hutton became embroiled in a battle for control over the shaping of the new Australian army.

On 1 March 1901 the Commonwealth Government assumed control over the previously distinct defence forces of the former colonies. John Forrest, the Defence Minister, became de-facto Commander in Chief. Defence had been an important spur to federation but it was no priority for the new government. Forrest had actually swapped to defence hoping that it would prove less taxing than his previous role as postmaster-general.³ The Barton Protectionist government had a majority in the House of Representatives but only a third or so of the Senate seats; Reid's Free Trade party sat in opposition and the Labor party, split on the fiscal question, was vital to the passage of Barton's bills. This political environment limited the government's program: it avoided controversial policy and spent most of its political energies on the passage of the White Australia legislation. The government was also hamstrung financially: the Braddon clause returned three quarters of commonwealth tariff revenue to the states and a prolonged drought was depressing the economy. In its early administration of defence the government was therefore conservative. Atkinson terms it the 'Federalist' phase of Australian defence policy: careful, unimaginative, inexpensive and firmly based on colonial experience.⁴

³ F. Crowley, *Big John Forrest*, University of West Australia Press, Nedlands, 2000, 303.

⁴ L. Atkinson, 'Australian Defence Policy: A Study of Empire and Nation (1897-1910)', PhD Thesis, ANU, 1964, 81.

Forrest did set about drafting a Defence Bill for the Commonwealth but it was largely just an amalgam of the views of the various states' General Officers Commanding. When introducing this bill to the House on 9 July 1901 Forrest sounded embarrassed, confessing to a lack of expertise in military matters and admitting that he had taken the portfolio expecting it to be a sinecure. He announced his intention to keep a tight grip on his department's spending and to favour the development of a citizen-style defence force, believing it the most economical and publicly acceptable model, and one proven by Australia's experience of the war in South Africa.⁵ This first Defence Bill floated about parliament for some months and was eventually allowed to lapse.

A defence task that the government did pursue with vigour was the appointment of a commander for its forces. One of Forrest's first actions as minister was to send a request to the British government for a suitable officer. The Australians were quite specific in the type of man they wanted: one with experience in the Second South African War, sympathy for civilian military forces, and a workmanlike attitude. They disdained the frills and expense of a society general. Hopetoun, the Governor General, had contacted Chamberlain privately with a further request: he asked that the new general not be one 'who would go in for speech making, or have any sort of truck with the press.'⁶

This requirement seems to have ruled Hutton out of the early running. At this stage, Hutton's career was in trouble. He had missed out on promotion after South Africa and Wolseley, his mentor and patron, was one of the war's political casualties. Wolseley had publicly challenged Lansdowne's position as Secretary of State for

⁵ Speech, Forrest to House of Representatives, 9 July 1901, *CPD*, Volume 2, 2159-61.

⁶ Letter, Hamilton to Hutton, 13 January 1902, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50086, 376.

War, arguing that, as the Commander in Chief, he should not be overruled on matters of grave importance and he had asserted his right to make his case directly to the public in such an event.⁷ Wolseley's position had resonated with Hutton who wrote to him and claimed to have fought for the very same principles in his own conflicts with ministers in New South Wales and Canada. Hutton congratulated Wolseley on insisting that the military chief control training, discipline and appointments. These matters were vital, Hutton insisted, 'to the future of the Army as a Profession, and with them are bound up the security nay! the very existence of the British Empire.'⁸ In fact, Wolseley's disgrace demonstrates how out of step Hutton's ideas on military-civilian relations had now become. Having witnessed the effects of this in Hutton's tumultuous command in Canada, Chamberlain now resisted his appointment to Australia.⁹ It seemed that Hutton's only chance of gaining the post was if all the other contenders declined.¹⁰

And luckily for him most did. A succession of British generals followed Major-General Pole Carew, favoured for the post by Lord Roberts (Wolseley's replacement as British Commander in Chief), in refusing the meagre salary on offer. An exasperated Chamberlain confessed to Hopetoun that, 'I do not believe a good man can be obtained for less than £3500 or £3000 at least.'¹¹ The Australians in their turn also became frustrated: 'The War Office has treated us most [word obscured] in the matter of the New Commandant & appears,' Alfred Deakin complained to Charles Dilke, 'only anxious to find a well paid officer for some of their privileges instead of

⁷ H. Strachan, *The Politics of the British Army*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1997, 104.

⁸ Letter, Hutton to Wolseley, 6 March 1901, BL, Hutton Papers, AD 50085.

⁹ Letter, Chamberlain to Hopetoun, 15 January 1902, SLNSW, Joint Copying Project, Hopetoun Papers, TD 73/91/9.

¹⁰ Letter, Kitson to Minto, 2 December 1901, NLS, Lord Minto Papers, MS 12579, 276.

¹¹ Letter, Chamberlain to Hopetoun, 1 August 1901, BUL, Chamberlain Papers, JC 11/28/5 and Roberts Minute, 7 August 1901, JC 11/28/12.

seeking to give us the most efficient man to organise our raw material.'¹² When his name finally came up Hutton fairly jumped at the opportunity. His sense of mission overrode qualms about the poor pay and conditions. Even when his attempts to include a British staff officer or two, or even just his choice of an aide de camp (which was customary), with his appointment were rebuffed and the Australian government insisted he come alone, he assented.

These circumstances surrounding Hutton's appointment were significant. The Australian government was restricted by its budget; however, it was not simply a case of forced economy: parliament did not *want* to pay any more. They refused to pay for the social life of a 'gold-lace soldier.'¹³ The government simply wanted a capable soldier with experience of the recent war.¹⁴ They also insisted that an entirely local staff should assist their commander and, most importantly, they wanted someone who appreciated citizen soldiers.¹⁵ Underlying these attitudes was a distrust of the War Office and distaste for its bureaucracy. In a large measure these attitudes arose from Australian perceptions of the South African campaign. Understanding the Australian response to the Second South African War goes a long way in explaining their relationship with Hutton during his tenure as General Officer Commanding.

The Australian response to the British crisis in South Africa in 1899 had been one of overwhelming support. This continued through the campaign and was surer than support even in Britain itself. Hutton remarked to the Duke of Connaught in April

¹² Letter, Deakin to Dilke, 16 October 1901, BL, Dilke Papers, MSS 43877, 166.

¹³ 'A Risky Experiment', *The Sunrise*, 7 December 1901, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 1900-4, 32.

¹⁴ *Daily Telegraph*, 11 September 1901, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 1900-4.

¹⁵ *Daily Telegraph* 10 September 1901, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 1900-4.

1902 that: 'The Military Enthusiasm and patriotic feeling throughout Australia is positively refreshing after reading the pro-Boer speeches in the English papers and the traitorous effervescence of the Irish M.P. in the House of Commons.'¹⁶ This near unqualified endorsement of the British position did not, however, mean an uncritical attitude to the actual conduct of the British campaign. British defeats at the hands of Boer commandos tarnished Australian perceptions of the War Office, which to them became a sort of bungling, over-bureaucratized joke.¹⁷ The British officer was seen as all frills, good on the parade ground but a liability in actual war.

Juxtaposed against the failures of the British professional system were the perceived successes of the Boer guerrillas, and the Australian, New Zealander and Canadian amateur citizen soldiers.¹⁸ Australia developed a belief in the native fighting quality of its men that was very similar to the Canadian militia myth voiced by Sam Hughes. They concluded that in any future war Australia could usefully contribute a low cost, volunteer, amateur contingent, paid for from Imperial coffers, and that this would be more than sufficient to fulfil her imperial obligations. This engendered a belief that excessive spending on an Australian military was wasteful and showy. It removed much of the urgency from the early defence debates.¹⁹ It created tension between Australia's professional and civilian officers. And it led to calls for a more democratic army, with a contracted staff and headquarters, and a smaller officer corps.

¹⁶ Letter, Hutton to Duke of Connaught, 29 April 1902, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50078, 63.

¹⁷ Letter, Clarke to Hutton 5 August 1902, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50082, 293.

¹⁸ R. Norris, *The Emergent Commonwealth; Australian Federation: Expectations and Fulfilment 1889-1910*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1975, 123.

¹⁹ N. Meaney, *A History of Australian Defence and Foreign Policy 1901-23, v. 1: The Search for Security in the Pacific, 1901-14*, Sydney University Press, Sydney, 1976, 40.

This citizen army model was particularly popular with the Labor party who, according to Sydenham Clarke (now Governor of Victoria), favoured, 'rifle clubs as the Australian military ideal, & they regard the elements of discipline with abhorrence.'²⁰ Democratic defensive ideals were well suited to this party and they took the 'lessons' of the South African campaign further than most. The first federal Labor caucus added a commitment to a citizen army to its platform.²¹ Tennyson (Australia's second Governor General) feared that the 'the Labour party, who are the real dictators of policy to this Government, view with no favour any permanent force whatever.'²² Labor's powerful position in the parliament caused these prejudices to limit the kind of defence policy Barton's government could hope to achieve.²³

The British authorities, for their part, drew quite different conclusions from the Second South African War.

An idea held by the British in common with the Australians was a respect for the Australian soldier, particularly in a mounted role. This respect was coloured by views on race. The white citizens of the Empire were deemed intellectually and morally suited to the conditions modern warfare. Lord Brassey, for example, suggested to the Colonial Defence Committee that Australians were better equipped than the Indian army for 'irregular warfare, where all would depend on individual energy, resources, and courage.'²⁴ British fears about an impending war on the continent made these

²⁰ Letter, Clarke to Chisol, 27 August 1903, BL, Clarke papers, ADD 50831, 170-80.

²¹ R. McMullin, *So Monstrous a Travesty: Chris Watson and the world's first national labour government*, Scribe, Melbourne, 2004, 60.

²² Private Despatch, Tennyson to Chamberlain, 25 February 1903, NLA, Tennyson Papers, MS 479, Series 3, 41.

²³ Letter, Barton to Tennyson, 26 May 1903, NLA, Tennyson Papers, MS 479/5/97.

²⁴ Letter, Brassey to Colonial Defence Committee, 8 August 1898, TNA, PRO, CAB 11/121, Colonial Troops for Imperial Service in War 1898-1900.

racially-based assessments of Australian soldiery all the more important because of a widespread belief that only white troops could successfully face the professional armies of Europe. This was made clear in a number of Colonial Defence Committee memoranda, for example:

For such purposes, troops despatched by the self-governing Colonies would be of special value: no European Power other than Great Britain is in a position to draw on large communities of white subjects outside Europe for military assistance, and the action of expeditionary forces based on Australasian and Canadian ports might be of great importance during the early stages of a war.²⁵

The British assessment of the value of Australian troops was qualified, however, by the belief that training, equipment and leadership were all still essential to their military success. Colonial irregulars had been sufficient to fight Boers, but the well-trained armies of Europe were quite a different foe. By 1902, many in Britain had come to regret the attitudes that their enthusiastic praise of the colonial contingents had helped to foster. Clarke's remark was typical: 'By the by, the silly despatches of the early days from S.Africa which gave us to understand that only the Colonial Imperial Volunteers and such like did anything played its mischief here. The Australians, many of them, believe that they were the only real soldiers, and the belief is not good for them. They are quite unfit, in training, & discipline to meet good regular troops.'²⁶ Hutton was warned before he came to Australia that this praise of the inherent soldierly qualities of the Australian troops had generated a belief that all that was necessary for an Australian defence policy was a body of riflemen and that

²⁵ Confidential Memorandum, 'Colonial Troops for Imperial Service in War', 13 June 1902, No. 293 M, TNA, PRO, CAB 8/3.

²⁶ Letter, Clarke to Bridge, 8 August 1903, NMM, Bridge Papers, BRI/18.

the rifle clubs could furnish a sufficient force.²⁷ Convincing the Australians to seriously undertake the equipment and organisation of their forces threatened to be a difficult task.

Nevertheless, the ready response of the colonies to British calls for help had been heartening. It encouraged the home authorities to believe that such help would always be forthcoming:

The present war in South Africa has demonstrated the fact that the defence of the British Empire in the future is not a question to be left wholly to the people of the British Isles, but that the English-speaking people throughout the Empire are willing to take their share in its defence, and provide the men, and possibly the money, therefore.²⁸

Wolseley put it to Hutton in 1902 that, 'We cannot do too much to foster a love for England in every part of our Empire, as long as we, like a bundle of sticks, keep together, we can afford to laugh at all combinations of nations that may be made with hostile intentions towards this country.'²⁹

Believing that colonial help would be ready to hand, several British officers and politicians drew up schemes to coordinate that assistance. The War Office received a range of different schemes relating to Australia, from, among others, Lord Brassey (then Governor of Victoria), Colonel Gordon (the South Australian Commandant), Colonel Mackey (of the NSW Lancers), and Major-General French (Hutton's

²⁷ Letter, Downes to Hutton, 21 December 1901, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50097, 105.

²⁸ Letter, Brassey to Colonial Defence Committee, 8 August 1898, TNA, PRO, CAB 11/121, Colonial Troops for Imperial Service in War 1898-1900.

²⁹ Letter, Wolseley to Hutton, 9 January 1902, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50085, 184.

successor to the New South Wales command).³⁰ Many overtures were made to Hutton – after he arrived in Australia – highlighting the importance of solid commitments. General Nicholson, Head of the Intelligence Branch of the War Office, for example, remarked on the fact that the Australian Government still left the decision to send troops to the moment of crisis and noted:

Our view here is that it is desirable that that authority should be able to rely for certainty on Colonial contingents of definite strength being available for defensive or offensive operations in any part of the world as soon as the Navy has acquired such command of the sea as will permit of the transmarine movement of troops.³¹

Lord Roberts wrote to Hutton the following year regretting the fact that Britain lacked formal guarantees of Australian assistance and must therefore leave her out of its general contingency planning.³² And the British government's Royal Commission into the Second South African War, impressed by the colonial contingents, sought information from Hutton as to the likely support Britain would receive in the future.³³ It complained that more formal arrangements for colonial military contributions were not forthcoming.³⁴ British authorities therefore desired formal commitments of troops that they could include in their war plans and figure into defence spending. In trying to formalise colonial assistance, however, these plans went against one of the main conclusions the Australians had drawn from South Africa, that assistance for imperial defence should be voluntary and tendered at the time of actual need.

³⁰ Confidential Memorandum, 'Australia: Defence Forces and Defences', 30 March 1901, No. 254 M, TNA, PRO, CAB 8/3.

³¹ Letter, Nicholson to Hutton, 10 June 1902, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50086.

³² Letter, Roberts to Hutton, 12 December 1903, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50085.

³³ Despatch, Onslow to Tennyson, 16 January 1903, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50082, 55; and Letter, Darley to Hutton, 4 December 1902, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50082, 222.

³⁴ Letter, Brodrick to Hutton, 12 November 1903, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50085, 46.

Hutton was aware of these contrasting approaches to the recent war. Like the Australians, he was enthused by the success of colonial mounted units in South Africa and, like the War Office and the home authorities, he felt that such units must be properly trained, equipped and organised to be of use in a continental war. He suggested this in strong terms to his minister, Forrest: 'The utter fallacy of the argument as regards land militia has been proved over & over again in history, & recently in South Africa the value of Militia Troops, when led by trained & experienced officers, has been proved beyond all cavil.'³⁵ In his first Australian annual report Hutton declared:

The strong leavening of officers and men who have served well and with distinction in the campaign in South Africa affords a valuable element towards insuring success in a national emergency. It would be wrong, however, to suppose that a few individuals, however excellent, can in themselves make an efficient military organization, or form a substitute for a sound system of military training and instruction.³⁶

On the other hand, Hutton had come to believe, unlike many in the British administration, that a formal assurance of Australian assistance was not necessary. He had faced this problem in New South Wales and in Canada and he realised that such a cession of control ran against the constitutional grain:

I am absolutely convinced that given a National Emergency involving a menace to the unity and solidarity of the Empire that Australia would be found determined at all hazards to take a foremost part, and that any Government which advocated any other policy would not last a week... It is however idle to

³⁵ Letter, Hutton to Forrest, 11 April 1902, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50084 [Hutton's emphasis].

³⁶ 'Annual Report upon the Military Forces of the Commonwealth of Australia: January 1902 to 30 April 1903', Printed by order of the Government of Australia, 1 May 1903, 30.

imagine that any self-governing Colonies whether it be Canada or whether it be Australia will for a moment admit the right of the Imperial Government to bind them to defined military assistance without representation in the Imperial Councils which may make such assistance necessary. In other words the Military assistance to be rendered in time of National Emergency by either Canada or Australia must be purely one of sentiment and self-interest so long as the existing condition of non-representation continues.³⁷

Hutton's solution was to circumvent the problem. He envisaged an Australian army organised along such lines that, although it was not committed in advance, should war break out it would be ready to immediately come to the assistance of the Empire. As in New South Wales and Canada, he planned an Australian field force capable of overseas service. In a letter to Brodrick he summarised his intentions:

Military instinct and sentiment is at its height and there is no question now as in 1893-96 of endeavouring to create interest in defence matters. There is however a generally accepted idea that the Australian Military Forces should be utilized only for the defence of Australia and that in the event of assistance being required in any National Emergency outside Australia that volunteer forces should be raised to meet the occasion. This was done as you know in the later phases of the war with the result that the Australian Troops necessarily partook more or less of Irregulars. Under such conditions military assistance given from Australia in any War involving a Campaign against European or similarly trained and organised troops would be of comparatively small value.

³⁷ Letter, Hutton to Darley, 20 January 1903, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50082 [Hutton's emphasis].

I need hardly say that you may rely on me to do my utmost to induce the Commonwealth Government and public opinion generally to take a broad view of military defence and that I will leave no stone unturned to compass that end. I will further do my best to develop the mounted troops in Australia and to have the forces trained and available here for such services as the Australian Government may allot, and organised on such a system that the whole or part may be available for rendering valuable assistance to the Empire in the hour of need.³⁸

In taking this approach Hutton did not believe he was entirely hoodwinking his government. His proposed army was perfectly suited to participating in imperial defence but it also had a legitimate local defensive function. Balancing promises to officers and politicians back home to furnish a sizeable Australian field force (such as: 'I can promise you 10000 Australians who shall, please God, in 18 months be available to do good service... What did you think of the German cavalry? I should like to have a turn at them with one good Cavalry Brigade and 10,000 Colonials, but led by Imperial Officers!'³⁹) was a genuine belief that an Australian field force would also be a worthwhile local asset. Hutton was both an ambitious officer, seeking to impress his masters and to build a field force to fight the armies of Europe; and he was a believer in Greater Britain, and in the development of Australia as a portion of that greater imperial nation. Hutton spoke frequently of the rising threat posed by Japan and the likelihood of future conflict in the Pacific: 'I look upon Australia,' he wrote, 'if strong in a military sense as she should be, as the necessary counterpoise to

³⁸ Letter, Hutton to Brodrick, 30 July 1902, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50085.

³⁹ Letter, Hutton to French, 25 September 1902, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50086, 346.

Japan in the course of the next Century.’⁴⁰ In 1902 he confided to Minto privately his concerns about ‘the East’: that the Japanese ascension, the opening up of China, and the new Panama Canal combined ‘to make this particular epoch a very critical & fateful period. The power & influence of Australia must necessarily be in direct ratio to its military power as well as its commercial influence.’⁴¹ Hutton’s proposed field force was not simply a Trojan horse designed to unwittingly send Australian soldiers off to a continental war. It also had the local purpose, related to Hutton’s vision of Greater Britain, of enabling Australia to defend her corner of the Empire.⁴²

Australia, Britain and Hutton, therefore, took contrasting views on the form that colonial military assistance to the Empire should take. These views were informed by differing perspectives on the success of the colonial forces in South Africa. The Australians believed that in a campaign of British blunders their volunteer forces had been singularly successful and were not willing, ahead of time, to allow the British government, or the War Office, a free hand in disposing of their military resources. They took the success of their militiamen and bushmen as justification for an economical approach to the construction of their new army, based on a citizen army model. Britain was grateful for colonial assistance, hoped it might be forthcoming again, and sought to build on that success by formalising the arrangement. They believed that, to be effective, colonial forces must be properly trained and disciplined. Hutton also hoped to establish a professional militia army. However, he was willing to accept that colonial assistance could be tendered voluntarily, at the time of need. Once again he endeavoured to implement his cooperative scheme of defence. These were different approaches, not to the question of *whether* Australia would come to the

⁴⁰ Letter, Hutton to Minto, 27 March 1901, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50081, 29.

⁴¹ Letter, Hutton to Minto, 10 January 1902, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50081, 75.

⁴² Letter, Hutton to Parkin, 8 January 1902, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50083, 237.

Empire's aid, but *how* it would do so. These three different answers would exercise a profound influence on Hutton's Australian command.

Hutton arrived in Melbourne on 29 January 1902 and for the first few months of his command he enjoyed remarkably clear sailing. A fortnight before his arrival, Chamberlain had requested additional Australian contingents for South Africa and the Barton government had responded with two Commonwealth contingents, and was shortly to announce a third. Imperial sentiment was high and Hutton enjoyed a warm reception from the public, the troops and his government.⁴³ Hutton was particularly pleased with the Australian press. Already friendly with Sydney newsmen, he now became connected, through Sydenham Clarke, to David Syme, the influential Melbourne press baron. 'I have a difficult job enough,' he confided to Buller, 'but have one great advantage over Canada in that public life is clear and honourable here, and that there exists an excellent and honest press.'⁴⁴ Hutton was delighted by his initial contact with Barton and Forrest who, he claimed to Minto, assured him they would give him ample control and would act on his recommendations.⁴⁵ Clarke summed up the optimistic mood on Hutton's arrival, 'Australia is displaying a very fine spirit just now & I think the time is most propitious for laying the foundations of a great organization for Australian defence.'⁴⁶

Hutton had two staunch allies assisting him in his work in Australia. Sydenham Clarke, Governor of Victoria, was one of Britain's most influential writers on imperial defence. He had been important in the development of Hutton's own thinking on the

⁴³ Letter, Hutton to Ommaney, 3 February 1902, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50078, 259.

⁴⁴ Letter, Hutton to Buller, 2 October 1902, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50086.

⁴⁵ Letter, Hutton to Minto, 8 March 1902, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50081.

⁴⁶ Letter, Clarke to Hutton, 17 January 1902, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50082.

subject. His presence in Australia during the first two years of Hutton's command was a great moral and intellectual support. Hutton visited Clarke most Sundays at Shelbrooke to discuss his defence reorganisation and Australian politics. Australia's second Governor General, Tennyson, was Hutton's other main ally. Tennyson filled a role similar to Minto's in Canada, advising Hutton of the government's mood and occasionally mediating between Hutton and his ministers. In his memoir Hutton recalled that, 'my constant intercourse with the Governor General gave me an insight into the attitude and ideas of the Cabinet Ministers which proved of the greatest assistance' and 'it was largely due to him that I owed the measure of success which I had achieved in face of almost insuperable difficulties.'⁴⁷ Tennyson was particularly active in encouraging Forrest to adopt Hutton's suggestions for the 1903 Defence Bill.⁴⁸

Everything therefore augured well for Hutton's command and he became hopeful of success. Most significantly, the Barton government initially seemed prepared to go along with Hutton's program. After his first official meetings he wrote to the Colonial Office assuring them that 'the Government here are prepared to approach the Defence System of Australia upon a broad basis.'⁴⁹ And he had some grounds for this claim. The government decided to postpone its Defence Bill to allow Hutton to redraft it and to remove clauses restricting the use of Australian forces to home waters.⁵⁰ Edmund Barton borrowed Hutton's writings on imperial defence and used them extensively in a speech to welcome Hutton at a banquet on 15 February 1902. Barton ensured that the press received the speech and he informed Hutton privately

⁴⁷ E. Hutton, 'Memoirs of Lieutenant-General Sir Edward Hutton', BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50113, Period VIII, 10 & 18.

⁴⁸ Letter, Tennyson to Forrest, 1 July 1903, NLA, Forrest papers, MFM G660.

⁴⁹ Letter, Hutton to Ommaney, 24 February 1902, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50078.

⁵⁰ Letter, Hutton to Brodrick, 24 February 1902, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50085.

that he intended that it announce the policy of his government.⁵¹ In that speech Barton declared his determination to make Australia, 'the headquarters of the Empire in these southern seas'; he echoed Hutton's insistence on a properly trained militia, 'we could not make a nation of soldiers by rifle shooting alone'; and, referring to South Africa, he claimed that Australia, though it would not enter every small war, must be ready to send troops to defend the Empire again.⁵² Hutton wrote to Brodrick, the Secretary of State for Defence, sending press extracts of the speech and indicated that the government had already acquiesced to his proposal for a force of 20,000 mounted men 'equipped and organised for service wherever Australian interests are threatened.'⁵³ At the beginning of March, Hutton enthused, 'The change in public opinion here in Australia, which this War has brought about, is truly remarkable. It will moreover develop still more.'⁵⁴

For the next few months it appeared as though it just might. Hutton was very lucky to have as his minister one of the staunchest imperialists in the government. In 1902, John Forrest was developing his minute on Naval Defence. This led to the restructuring of Australia's naval agreement with Britain. Forrest sought out the advice of Sydenham Clarke on the question.⁵⁵ He also approached Hutton and in April Hutton assisted with the drafting of the minute. Hutton was impressed with it and likened it to his own views on defence: '[it] is based upon a System of Co-operation.'⁵⁶ Forrest's naval minute was very imperial and in its sentiments it nicely matched the military changes Hutton hoped to make:

⁵¹ Letter, Hutton to Ommoney, 24 February 1902, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50078.

⁵² *Argus*, 19 February 1902, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 1900-4.

⁵³ Letter, Hutton to Brodrick, 24 February 1902, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50085 [Hutton's emphasis].

⁵⁴ Letter, Hutton to Minto, 8 March 1902, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50081.

⁵⁵ Letter, Clarke to Chirol, May 1902, BL, Clarke papers, ADD 50831, ff. 87-94.

⁵⁶ Letter, Hutton to Ommoney, 8 April 1902, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50078.

In regard to Defence we must altogether get rid of the idea that we have different interests to those of the rest of the Empire, and we must look at the matter from a broad common standpoint. If the British nation is at war, so are we; if it gains victories or suffers disasters, so do we, and therefore it is of the same vital interest to us as to the rest of the Empire that our supremacy on the ocean shall be maintained... That this is the sentiment deep-rooted in the hearts of the Australian people, has, I am proud to say, been shown during the South African war, which we have made our own, proving unmistakably to the world that our interests in war as well as in peace, are indissolubly bound up with the Country from which our fathers came, and to which we are all proud to belong.⁵⁷

On 7 April 1902 Hutton delivered his own statement of policy to the government, his *Minute upon the Defence of Australia*. This minute drew from his earlier Canadian and New South Wales policies. He warned that defence could only ever be assured by a capacity to take the offence and argued that:

The defence of Australia cannot, moreover, be considered apart from the defence of Australian interests. Australia depends for its commercial success and its future development firstly upon its seaborne trade; and secondly upon the existence, maintenance, and extension of fixed and certain markets for its produce outside Australian waters.

It is hardly consistent with the present development of Australia as a young and vigorous nation to neglect her responsibility for defence outside Australian

⁵⁷ Letter, Forrest to Hutton, 10 April 1902, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50084.

waters, and in the robust period of her youth thus to rely upon the strong arm of the Mother Country.

It may be assumed, therefore, that Australia will determine not only to defend her own soil, but to take steps also to defend those vast interests beyond her shores upon maintenance of which her present existence and her future prosperity must so largely depend.⁵⁸

Hutton proposed that a large portion of the Australian army be mounted. He suggested that this accorded with the natural aptitudes of Australians and moreover it, 'provides exactly that description of fighting man which has proved so valuable in South Africa, and which, without doubt, would constitute a most powerful, if not controlling, factor in any campaign in which Australian troops might be engaged.'⁵⁹ Hutton did not baldly state that this force would be available for imperial service but the subtext of his minute was clear. He explained the line he was trying to follow to the British Secretary of State for War: 'I have been careful to avoid any direct reference to assistance to the Empire in time of war except inferentially. There is a certain section in Australia who are little Englanders & who would restrict the use of Australian troops to Australian soil. My minute was written to prove the utter fallacy of such principles but I have preferred to allow this inference to be drawn rather than to actually state it.'⁶⁰

Hutton's April minute received a positive response from his government and Barton and Forrest both congratulated him on it.⁶¹ For Hutton, the publication of his April

⁵⁸ E. Hutton, 'Minute upon the Defence of Australia', 7 April 1902, TNA, PRO, CAB 11/24 1902-1913.

⁵⁹ Hutton, 'Minute upon the Defence of Australia'.

⁶⁰ Letter, Hutton to Brodrick, 7 April 1902, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50085.

⁶¹ Letter, Barton to Hutton, 6 April 1902, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50084; Letter, Forrest to Hutton, 10 April 1902, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50084.

minute was a milestone. He had now introduced his cooperative system of military defence into the two key self-governing colonies. He wrote at the time of this achievement in Biblical terms, 'The idea therefore of a Co-operative System of Military Defence has been officially presented to both the Canadian and Australian Governments! The good seed has taken into good ground in the Australian Government, & if the Canadian soil in 1899 proved to be barren & stony until forced along by the demonstration of public opinion... the representatives of both Governments will have had the principles of Co-operation plainly before them.'⁶² Barton and Forrest were both preparing to leave for the colonial conference and Hutton believed that with these minutes on naval and military defence they were well equipped to discuss Imperial cooperation.⁶³

Unfortunately for Hutton, events in London would threaten these early hopes. The British Secretary of State for War, St John Brodrick, had decided, on the basis of the Second South African War, that arrangements for colonial military assistance ought to be formalised. For the last few years he had been considering the problems of imperial defence and had actually approached Hutton in early 1901 for advice on the question.⁶⁴ Hutton had suggested the calling of a colonial conference to discuss a general scheme for the defence of the Empire.⁶⁵ Brodrick evidently decided that the June 1902 colonial conference, held in conjunction with the Royal coronation, would be a suitable forum. At that conference, he asked the assembled leaders of the colonies for a formal contribution to imperial defence. He based his proposal on a paper by Lieutenant-Colonel Altham, a British intelligence officer, which put the case

⁶² Letter, Hutton to Ommaney, 8 April 1902, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50078.

⁶³ Letter, Hutton to Ommaney, 8 April 1902, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50078.

⁶⁴ Letter, Hutton to Minto, 27 March 1901, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50081.

⁶⁵ Letter, Hutton to Brodrick, 30 January 1901, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50085.

for definite colonial peacetime military commitments. Altham had discovered in Hutton's proposed Australian field force the ideal unit for such a purpose and had suggested renaming it the 'Imperial Australian Force' and making it available for defensive or offensive operations in any part of the world.⁶⁶ Brodrick encouraged Barton and Forrest to establish this 'Imperial Australian Force', consisting of 9,000 men ready to be handed over to War Office control in emergency.⁶⁷

Barton was embarrassed by this direct request. He wrote privately and apologetically to Chamberlain requesting a private conversation before the conference to explain, 'the reasons why we hold certain views,' and he continued, 'We should all understand the limitations which may at the present moment hold back the completion of some things we all want to see achieved.'⁶⁸ Believing that he could never get the Australian parliament to acquiesce to the cession, during peacetime, of control over forces for which it was paying, Barton ultimately rejected Brodrick's proposal. Brodrick was bitterly disappointed and complained to Chamberlain that, 'from a military point of view it is the wreckage of the scheme which would have saved us heavy expenditure.'⁶⁹

Hutton was also disappointed by the conference but for different reasons. He was angry that Brodrick pushed for a guarantee of Australian defence assistance. As he confided to a fellow general, 'I fondly hoped that I had persuaded Mr Brodrick of the absurd supposition that our Colonies would accept any definite military contribution

⁶⁶ Lt-Col Altham, 'The Organization of Colonial Troops for Imperial Service', appendix to Memorandum No 293M, 13 June 1902, TNA, PRO, CAB 8/3.

⁶⁷ Meaney, *A History of Australian Defence and Foreign Policy 1901-23*, 62.

⁶⁸ Letter, Barton to Chamberlain, 9 June 1902, BUL, Chamberlain Collection, JC 17/2/4.

⁶⁹ Letter, Brodrick to Chamberlain, 11 August 1902, BUL, Chamberlain Collection, JC 17/1/9.

to the Military strength of the Empire without due representation.⁷⁰ He realised that Australian public opinion would never stomach such a scheme and that there were constitutional issues at stake, 'The cost of the system which I propose to create would naturally fall on the Commonwealth Government, and it would equally rest with that Government to employ their troops how or where they might decide.'⁷¹ This was why Hutton insisted that, although he was preparing colonial troops for imperial service, the eventual offer of such service must be voluntary. Barton mirrored Hutton's position when rejecting Brodrick's proposal at the conference: 'Our people are like their countrymen here, they will do much in time of warlike emergency which in time of peace they would decline to bind themselves beforehand to accomplish.'⁷²

Hutton was fairly certain that, without a prior formal commitment, Australian support could still be relied upon in emergency:

Co-operation in the Defence of the Empire under the circumstances that exist would be solely a matter of sentiment, and in the present condition of public feeling it would be unwise to press anything more. The strongest possible feeling of sympathy with, and determination to be considered a part of the Empire exists in every part of Australia. This feeling has been intensified a hundred fold by the recent Campaign and nothing has struck me so much since my return to Australia as the extraordinary development of public feeling in this respect.⁷³

Unfortunately for Hutton, Brodrick's overt attempts at securing colonial military assistance impacted on his own schemes in Australia. He admitted as much to

⁷⁰ Letter, Hutton to Kelly Kenny, 4 August 1902, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50097, 163.

⁷¹ Letter, Hutton to Nicholson, 23 July 1902, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50086.

⁷² Speech, Barton at Colonial Conference, 30 June 1902, BUL, Chamberlain Papers, JC 17/1/1.

⁷³ Letter, Hutton to Nicholson, 23 July 1902, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50086.

Brodrick himself, 'It is not too much to say that a serious apprehension that the Imperial Government means to force Australia into some defined form of defensive action in case of the Empire being threatened has been raised. This will I fear be followed by outspoken criticism of even the indirect efforts which I have been making to induce the Australian Parliament and public opinion to accept the fact that the defence of Australian interests cannot be compassed by the defence of Australian soil.'⁷⁴ He put it in even plainer terms to his old friend, Minto, describing the 'immense harm' the proposal had had on his attempts at introducing, 'a sound military and political system of defence in Australia.'⁷⁵

Brodrick's failed proposal at the colonial conference was not the only British attempt at securing definite commitments from Australia. The British authorities continued to press for formal defence commitments from the Australian government. For Hutton, the most egregious of these requests arrived in early 1903. In February, Tennyson received, for the advice of the Australian government, the remarks that the Colonial Defence Committee had made on Hutton's April 1902 minute. All Hutton's efforts at subtlety – at keeping imperial intentions as subtext – were quashed by the Colonial Defence Committee's blunt remarks. They challenged Hutton's assertions of possible threats to Australian security (rejecting the possibility of invasion on the grounds of the preponderant power of the British navy) and thereby undermined the local defensive purpose of the Australian field force. The Colonial Defence Committee nevertheless agreed that Hutton's field force was valuable: not for Australia's own defence, but as an addition to imperial power. Like Brodrick, the Committee drew from the conclusions of Altham's paper when they suggested:

⁷⁴ Letter, Hutton to Brodrick, 30 July 1902, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50085.

⁷⁵ Letter, Hutton to Minto, 24 August 1902, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50081.

If it were the settled policy of the Commonwealth to maintain the effective nucleus of a force (say two mounted brigades and one infantry brigade according to the organization discussed above) ready to be directed in the event of war to any point which the Commonwealth Government might decide, this force would form a real accession to the military strength of the Empire. In such a case it would be possible for the Imperial authorities to assign to this Australian Contingent a definite role in those initial strategic dispositions on which success in war so largely depends.⁷⁶

On receiving this cable Hutton, and his vice regal friend Tennyson, were alarmed. Just three months earlier, Hutton had submitted a scheme of reorganisation based on his April minute. In it he had provided for the establishment of a garrison force, a field army (containing the mounted troops of the six states amalgamated into eighteen Light Horse regiments), and a permanent cadre of instructors, experts and administrators.⁷⁷ Publication of the cable's contents threatened to disrupt those plans.

Hutton and Tennyson tried in vain to have the correspondence suppressed, fearful of its effect on the Australian government. Tennyson cabled immediately deprecating 'most strongly' the distribution of the minute to the government, fearing 'harm to Imperial interests.'⁷⁸ Tennyson wrote to Chamberlain and described the difficulties Hutton was already having with a parliament heavily influenced by the Labor party. He urged that 'no impediment ought to be thrown in the way of General Hutton, who informs me that he has received a general authority from the Minister of Defence for

⁷⁶ Remark No 301, 'Australia: Minute upon Defence by General Officer Commanding the Military Forces', TNA, PRO, CAB 5/1 R 22/10/02.

⁷⁷ 'Annual Report upon the Military Forces of the Commonwealth of Australia: January 1902 to 30 April 1903', Printed by order of the Government of Australia, 1 May 1903, 17.

⁷⁸ Despatch, Tennyson to Colonial Office, 16 February 1903, TNA, PRO, CO 418/26.

his plan of reconstruction of the Military Forces.⁷⁹ Tennyson feared that 'unreliable' members of Barton's cabinet, such as Lyne, would leak the cable to the Press and use the opportunity to push for 'further & excessive retrenchments' in defence.⁸⁰ The Colonial Office insisted that Tennyson pass the minute on, believing that Australian ministers should have unfettered access to the opinions of its experts.⁸¹ Tennyson then resolved, on his own authority, to present the cable only to the two most imperial-minded members of cabinet, Barton and Forrest. He and Hutton then both prevailed on those two to keep the matter quiet. Tennyson did this despite being reprimanded by the Colonial Office for getting involved.⁸² Hutton warned Forrest that, 'Without intending to do so the C.D.C. provide a weapon for argument on the part of those who would abolish out Military Forces altogether, which might be used in a manner that would most seriously embarrass you & those members of the Cabinet who realise the necessity of Military Defence.'⁸³ As a sweetener, a pleading Hutton even suggested to Forrest that he might be able to lower his defence estimates for the following year by £20,000.⁸⁴ On April 1 1903 Hutton wrote with relief to the Colonial office to say that thanks to Tennyson's influence Barton and Forrest would keep the Colonial Defence Committee memorandum confidential.⁸⁵

This relief proved premature. The remarks of the Colonial Defence Committee did eventually get out. Forrest himself used the remarks to force economies from Hutton

⁷⁹ Private Despatch, Tennyson to Chamberlain, 25 February 1903, NLA, Tennyson Papers, MS 479, Series 3, 41.

⁸⁰ Private Despatch, Tennyson to Chamberlain, 25 February 1903, NLA, Tennyson Papers, MS 479, Series 3, 41.

⁸¹ Despatch, Colonial Office to Tennyson, 27 February 1903, TNA, PRO, CO 418/26.

⁸² Letter, Tennyson to Hutton, 9 March 1903, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50082: 'I got rather a curt telegram from the C.O. in consequence of my taking up the cudgels for you - but my shoulders are broad enough.'

⁸³ Letter, Hutton to Forrest, 20 March 1903, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50084, 281.

⁸⁴ Letter, Hutton to Forrest, 20 March 1903, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50084, 281.

⁸⁵ Letter, Hutton to Ommaney, 1 April 1903, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50078, 300.

when, in June, he questioned the size of Hutton's proposed field force.⁸⁶ Hutton became convinced that the embodiment of Altham's proposal in the Colonial Defence Committee memorandum hampered all his subsequent efforts at implementing his own scheme. He wrote despairingly to the Colonial Office four months later, 'I have done all that was possible under the circumstances to induce the Government and to persuade the public to [adopt] a broader policy, both officially and unofficially – both publicly and privately. Whatever hopes I may have had were, however, shattered by Lieut. Col. Altham's proposals of 25th November 1901 which were published in full in the Australian Press.'⁸⁷

The British attempts to secure a formal military contribution from Australia therefore affected Hutton's plans; however, suspicions about the expeditionary motives underlying Hutton's schemes were not the only impediment to Australian acceptance of his reform proposals. Finance and Australia's own response to the Second South African War proved just as important. The Australian government was constrained in the funds it could spend, budgets were very tight, and retrenchment was the order of the day. In addition, the type of army that the Australians hoped to build with those limited funds conflicted with Hutton's professional agenda.

Even during Hutton's 'honeymoon' period the government's purse strings were being progressively drawn tighter. Less than a fortnight after Hutton triumphantly submitted his April 1902 *Minute upon the Defence of Australia*, he sent another minute to his minister, concerning the government's intention to cut the salaries of his headquarters staff. Hutton argued that staff positions were the summit of military

⁸⁶ Atkinson, 'Australian Defence Policy', 168.

⁸⁷ Letter, Hutton to Ommaney, 19 August 1903, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50078.

ambition and must be rewarded accordingly, so as to attract educated and worthy young gentlemen. 'It is incumbent on Officers of the Head Quarters Staff,' he insisted, 'to maintain the dignity of their high positions and responsibility which involves considerable outlay of money on uniforms and on their personal style of living.'⁸⁸ Hutton was attempting to apply his idea of a professional officer corps in Australia.

Huntington describes military professionalism as the middle ground between aristocratic and democratic ideals: noble birth was no longer necessary to be an officer but one still had to be 'respectable.'⁸⁹ Australian politicians, representatives of one of the most advanced democracies of its day, were suspicious of Hutton's professional model. It was imperative that they contain costs; but, in doing so, they deliberately directed their economies at Hutton's headquarters staff and at the permanent forces. These cuts reflected the Australian impression, borne of lessons they drew from the Second South African War, that officers represented frills and that staff meant red tape. Permanent forces, such as the Royal Australian Artillery, were unnecessary when Australia's citizen soldier could provide the defence.

This perspective pervaded the 1902 estimates debates. When Forrest left for the colonial conference in 1902 he was aware of parliament's mood and he left instructions to cut £130,000 from the defence estimates. Sydenham Clarke, furious at this parsimony, frothed that the government was, 'humbly subservient to the Labour

⁸⁸ Minute, Hutton to Forrest, 18 April 1902, included with Letter, Hutton to Hopetoun, SLNSW (JCP), Hopetoun papers, TD 73/91/11.

⁸⁹ S. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations*, Harvard University Press, Massachusetts, 1957, 34.

Tail.’⁹⁰ The Acting Minister, William Lyne, exceeded Forrest’s target when he submitted estimates with a reduction of £175,000 to parliament. Mr Page’s statement is indicative of the debate that followed, ‘We do not want a staff of curled darlings to perform society functions, but men who will act as practical instructors to the military forces.’⁹¹ Members cited the experience of South Africa to demonstrate that only a very short period was needed to ‘lick men into shape [to take to the field]’; opposed money spent on the permanent force while the citizen soldiers suffered cuts; deplored the British army’s ‘smartness for the sake of being smart’; and accused Hutton’s staff of creating mounds of useless paper work.⁹² As a result of the debate Lyne agreed to a further reduction of £35,000 and promised to direct it mainly at the administrative staff.⁹³

Hutton, angry at these heavy cuts, stonewalled Lyne until Forrest’s return. In late 1902, when Forrest arrived back in Australia, he and Hutton at once came into conflict over the estimates. Forrest was now left with just £520,000 to fund his department for the remainder of the financial year.⁹⁴ He insisted that Hutton reduce his staff and retire some of his clerks.⁹⁵ Hutton, for his part, claimed that there was ‘no possibility’ that he could further reduce his staff, or clerks, and continue to fulfil his functions as GOC. He threatened retirement (referring to the government’s difficulty in appointing a GOC in 1901), ‘If the Government think that a lower tender than my present one is possible and advisable I will gladly meet their views and make

⁹⁰ Letter, Clarke to Chisol, 15 June 1902, BL, Clarke papers, ADD 50831, ff. 107-12.

⁹¹ Speech, Page to House of Representatives, 2 October 1902, *CPD*, Volume 12, 16394.

⁹² Speeches, Wilkinson – South Africa (16389); McCay – permanent vs civilian (16370); Higgins – English army (16378); Watson – paper work (16381); to House of Representatives, 2 October 1902, *CPD*, Volume 12.

⁹³ Speech, Lyne to House of Representatives, 2 October 1902, *CPD*, Volume 12, 16424.

⁹⁴ Letter, Forrest to Hutton, 24 November 1902, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50084.

⁹⁵ Letter, Forrest to Hutton, 13 November 1902, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50084.

room for another Contractor.'⁹⁶ Forrest, however, stood firm and Hutton was eventually forced to relent. Forrest explained his reasons to Hutton thus:

It is not a personal matter at all but I know what the country wants & it is

1. Permanent Garrison support to maintain in good order the forts & armaments & c.
2. A sufficient staff of well-qualified officers & men for instructional purposes in the various branches.
3. All the rest citizen forces.'⁹⁷

In his reply Hutton, while reluctantly conceding, revealed his own priorities:

I fully recognise the value of Citizen Forces such as Militia and Volunteer[s] but the defence system of Australia can never be satisfactory or effective without a nucleus of permanent troops which shall include the specialists, the instructional Corps, and the basis for your Field Force if ever it is required to engage in active service. Experience of the recent war, and history generally if correctly read, proves conclusively and without a shadow of doubt that a Militia or Volunteer System such as we have here in Australia could not for one moment hold its own in the Field as Military body against any Force which was organised, trained and disciplined upon the lines common to all European and Europeanized Armies.⁹⁸

Hutton resisted Australian attempts at economy in order to ensure that his field force would be properly trained and equipped, in line with his professional ideals, and therefore capable of assisting Britain in a European war.

⁹⁶ Letter, Hutton to Forrest, 14 November 1902, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50084.

⁹⁷ Letter, Forrest to Hutton, 24 November 1902, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50084 [Forrest's emphasis].

⁹⁸ Letter, Hutton to Forrest, 25 November 1902, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50084.

The budgetary belt was drawn even tighter around Hutton in 1903. In May he was again ordered to reduce his headquarters staff. Once again Hutton threatened to resign.⁹⁹ When his Deputy Quarter Master General retired in June Hutton was not permitted to appoint a replacement.¹⁰⁰ In his annual report of that year Hutton voiced his complaints about reductions in his staff, their meagre salaries, and general government parsimony. He declared, 'the plan adopted of reducing the Staff and Permanent Forces, and at the same time retaining the numbers of and expenditure upon the Citizen Forces, cannot but be viewed with the gravest apprehension.'¹⁰¹ Embarrassed, Forrest refused to publish the report, and urged Hutton to alter it. This provoked renewed disputes over money and Hutton accused the civil staff of his department, particularly Captain Collins, the Secretary, of needless penny-pinching.¹⁰²

Hutton clashed with his minister in 1903 over appointments, too. At the Victorian Easter Camp in March, Hutton promoted a permanent officer from New South Wales, Colonel Lee, over the head of a more senior civilian, Lieutenant-Colonel Braithwaite. Hutton did this without consulting his government, Braithwaite complained, and on 26 March the matter came before cabinet. Once again there were rumours that Hutton would retire.¹⁰³ The different attitudes held by Hutton and the Australians, as to the worth of citizen soldiers, were responsible for this dispute. Hutton valued the Australian militiaman, but only when led by a well-trained officer. For the Australians, the worth of British professional officers had been clearly demonstrated –

⁹⁹ Letter, Tennyson to Hutton, 6 May 1903, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50082.

¹⁰⁰ C. Coulthard-Clark, *A Heritage of Spirit: A biography of Major-General Sir William Throsby Bridges*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1979, 44.

¹⁰¹ 'Annual Report upon the Military Forces of the Commonwealth of Australia: January 1902 to 30 April 1903', Printed by order of the Government of Australia, 1 May 1903, 17.

¹⁰² Papers, Regarding allegations by Hutton concerning financial administration of Department, 11 June 1903 to 7 November 1903, NLA, MS 2553, Folder 1, 2.

¹⁰³ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 24 March 1903, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 1900-4.

and negatively – in South Africa. Forrest made this quite clear in a letter to Hutton. He explained that, though cabinet would probably feel bound to stand by its general, such a decision would be ‘against the grain & if it comes to a decision tomorrow it will perhaps not be in favour of appointing Col Lee...The difficulty is ‘the citizen soldier’ being overlooked or passed over.’¹⁰⁴

A further point of contention between Hutton and his government in 1903 was the new Defence Bill. Hutton lobbied vigorously for a provision allowing the sending of the field force overseas. He defended this position on the grounds of local security – pointing to the rise of Japan and Russia, and the presence of continental powers in New Guinea and the New Hebrides – and argued that Australia must be prepared to operate offensively in its region.¹⁰⁵ Hutton’s main concern, however, was to enable the field force to participate more readily in his cooperative scheme for Imperial Defence. ‘It can, moreover,’ Hutton argued in his annual report, ‘hardly be supposed that Australians desire to repudiate their responsibilities as a partner of the British Empire in regard to co-operation for defence.’¹⁰⁶

Forrest disagreed. He decided that only the permanent forces should be liable to compulsory overseas service.¹⁰⁷ This position was not anti-imperialist. Forrest was simply determined to retain Australian control of its forces and to preserve the voluntary character of the Australian militia. When he launched the bill in parliament, he did so with a hearty, imperial-minded speech: ‘I am proud to say I am

¹⁰⁴ Letter, Forrest to Hutton, 25 March 1903, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50084 [Forrest’s emphasis].

¹⁰⁵ ‘Annual Report upon the Military Forces of the Commonwealth of Australia: January 1902 to 30 April 1903’, Printed by order of the Government of Australia, 1 May 1903, 30.

¹⁰⁶ ‘Annual Report upon the Military Forces of the Commonwealth of Australia: January 1902 to 30 April 1903’, Printed by order of the Government of Australia, 1 May 1903, 30.

¹⁰⁷ Crowley, *Big John Forrest*, 332.

Imperialistic, in the sense that I believe in binding Australia as closely as possible to the mother country;’ but in the same breath, ‘I am not prepared, however, to do anything that would in the slightest degree limit our freedom, or interfere with our Constitutional rights, nor would I give up anything to which we are fairly entitled.’¹⁰⁸

Forrest envisaged Australian assistance in the defence of the Empire when he described the objects of its army, but on Australia’s terms, with a citizen army and with freedom of action:

In my opinion, they are to train our citizens in the use of arms, so as to enable us to protect and defend Australia from invasion or from hostile attack; and secondly, that we may be able, in case of need, of our own free will to assist in maintaining the integrity and the power of our Empire. It is our Empire and not the Empire of other people, and we are under an obligation to assist in maintaining it, not in the interests of others, but in our own interests, which I hold, are identical with the interests of the British race.¹⁰⁹

The Defence Bill was amended even further during its readings to prevent any Australian forces whatsoever being compelled to serve overseas. McCay voiced the mood of the House when he declared that any compulsion would be a departure from the ‘public sentiment of Australia’ and that, when they were needed, Australia would have no shortage of volunteers.¹¹⁰ Again, this was consistent with the Australian understanding of the lessons of the Second South African War. They believed that the volunteer contingents they had raised had proved as successful as any other and that compulsion was unnecessary. ‘The Minister’, declared another member of the House, ‘has before him undisputed evidence, from our experiences of the South

¹⁰⁸ Speech, Forrest to House of Representatives, 16 July 1903, *CPD*, Volume 7, 2265.

¹⁰⁹ Speech, Forrest to House of Representatives, 16 July 1903, *CPD*, Volume 7, 2277.

¹¹⁰ Speech, McCay to House of Representatives, 23 July 1903, *CPD*, Volume 7, 2539.

African War, as to the desire of the men to volunteer, and I do not think it is necessary to provide a compulsory clause [for the permanents] of this description.’¹¹¹

Despite all of the problems Hutton had faced he did still achieve substantial reforms in his first two years in Australia. He organised central and district staff headquarters, formed the Royal Australian Artillery Regiment, introduced a general system of military instruction, and in December 1902 his Peace and War establishments had been approved. In July 1903 his scheme for the reorganisation of the State troops according to the principles of his April 1902 minute was finally accepted by the Barton government. Hutton had amalgamated the state rifle clubs into a single national organization, had published a Military Forces list for the Commonwealth with a gradation of officers, and in March 1904 the Defence Bill was passed with amendments.

Hutton’s final year in Australia, 1904, was far less satisfactory. The problems he encountered in that year were essentially the same as those he had faced in his first two but they took a more extreme form. It was a particularly unstable year in Australian politics. After a federal election and subsequent by-elections there was an almost equal split in the house between the Protectionists, Labor and the Free Traders. Three different governments were formed over the course of the year and Hutton had to deal with a variety of different ministers, some hostile. Furthermore, his two great aids and confidants – Clarke and Tennyson – had returned home to England. Meanwhile, the financial restrictions on him had grown even worse: by mid-1904

¹¹¹ Speech, Crouch to House of Representatives, 23 July 1903, *CPD*, Volume 7, 2549.

Hutton faced losing two more members from his already heavily depleted Headquarters Staff and more than a third of his permanent artillery.¹¹²

In February 1904 Hutton was humiliated when large numbers of the Hobart militia absented themselves from their annual inspection. The new minister (Chapman), the Admiral, and all their wives were present. Word of the mass insubordination reached London and the King himself was concerned; he pressed Arnold-Forster, the new Secretary of State for Defence, to recall Hutton and find him a post at home.¹¹³ The Tasmanians were aggrieved that their government had insisted they be retained on levels of pay lower than that received by the rest of the Commonwealth army.¹¹⁴

Hutton was furious. He declared that no matter how poorly they had been treated by the Commonwealth, as soldiers it was their duty to attend and he announced that all those absent without excuse would be dismissed. This mass abstention highlighted the great drawback of a voluntary force. Hutton attempted to surmount this by appealing to a shared British nationality and the common traditions of the British army: 'We are all alike British troops,' he declared, 'serving one King and one country... The principle upon which the great traditions of the British Army are based is that military service is voluntary, and that the soldier's pay has always been a matter of relative insignificance to the discharge of his duty, and to the sacrifice (if need be) of his life.'¹¹⁵

The coming of the Labor party to office in mid-1904 marked the nadir of Hutton's Australian command. Labor took the 'lessons' of South Africa further than any other

¹¹² 'Military Forces of the Commonwealth of Australia, Second Annual Report', Published for Government of Commonwealth of Australia, 5 July 1904, 5 & 9.

¹¹³ Diary, Arnold-Forster, 27 February 1904, BL, Arnold-Forster papers, ADD 50336, f. 183.

¹¹⁴ Letter, Hutton to Roberts, 14 February 1904, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50085.

¹¹⁵ *Mercury*, 8 February 1904, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 1900-4.

party. They strictly adhered to the idea of a citizen army and stoutly opposed Hutton's professional pretensions. Hutton fought incessantly with his Labor minister, Senator Dawson. They knocked heads over all manner of things, including payment for the trial of a new type of revolver, the civil administration of the department, and over a ciphered message Hutton had billed to the department.¹¹⁶ Hutton particularly deplored the Labor government's reinstatement of Major Lenehan to Australia's permanent force. Dawson did this by a special executive order when Hutton refused to give his agreement.¹¹⁷ Lenehan, the former leader of the Bushveldt Carbineers, had been found guilty of culpable neglect for failing to report the murders for which Morant and Handcock were executed. When Lenehan returned to Australia, Hutton had insisted he retire. The conduct of Lenehan's unit had confirmed Hutton in his belief that colonial units must be trained, disciplined, and properly led. Hutton thought the episode had brought, 'contempt upon the name of Australia, and Australian soldiers.'¹¹⁸ In an article he later wrote for the imperial anthology, *The Empire and the Century*, Hutton was careful to distinguish the irregular colonial units (such as the Bushveldt Carbineers) from what he believed to be the true representatives of the colonies in South Africa: the official contingents composed largely of militia.¹¹⁹ The Labor party, on the other hand, saw this as another example of shabby War Office treatment of the Australian volunteer soldier. Once again, Hutton's professional ideas clashed with the Australian idea of a citizen army.

¹¹⁶ Minute, 'A Minute of 18th August 1904 by Senator Dawson', NAA, A5954 1185/21.

¹¹⁷ McMullin, *So Monstrous a Travesty*, 108.

¹¹⁸ Letter, Hutton to McCay, 23 September 1904, included with Despatch, Governor General to Colonial Office, 12 October 1904, TNA, PRO, CO 418/31.

¹¹⁹ E. Hutton, 'The Bond of Military Unity' in *The Empire and the Century*, John Murray, London, 1905, 242.

Hutton's term of office expired a few months later. He proved to be Australia's only General Officer Commanding. Reid's Free Trade government (Labor lost office in August 1904) replaced the position with an army board, defence council and an inspecting officer. In doing so, they followed the advice of a committee headed by Senator Dawson that had examined the problems of control that resulted from having a General Officer Commanding who was at once responsible for the efficiency of the force and who, as the sole responsible adviser to the minister, was also responsible for reporting on the state of that force.¹²⁰ This problem – the anomalous position of the General Officer Commanding – had been a source of tension in each of Hutton's colonial commands. In abolishing the position, the Australians mirrored the restructuring of the British army's administration that followed from the Esher Committee's report. Dr Borden, Hutton's minister in Canada, introduced similar reforms there.

For all the disappointments of Hutton's command – battles with his governments over expenditure, staff cuts, the limitation of military service to Australian waters – he did also have his share of success. Hutton succeeded in establishing, on paper at least, his field force and, even though the government could not send it overseas, it was his firm (and probably not unjustified) belief that it would volunteer itself for such service. In fact, he endeavoured to make such a sentiment the, 'guiding principle of at least all the Troops comprising the Field Force.'¹²¹ As he told the *West Australian* shortly before leaving the country, 'he was absolutely certain that in the future, when she was

¹²⁰ Memorandum, 'Command and Administration of the Military and Naval Forces of the Commonwealth', with Letter, Dawson to Hutton, 16 August 1904, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD50084, 371.

¹²¹ Letter, Hutton to Ommanney, 19 August 1903, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50078, 304.

called upon to take her share of the Imperial burdens of defence, Australia would be found in the proud position of excellence which was her due.¹²²

Later events would prove that Hutton had succeeded in that ambition. Senior Australian army officers, such as William Bridges, Harry Chauvel, and Brudenell White, remained faithful to their old leader.¹²³ White wrote to Hutton shortly before the outbreak of the First World War: 'You are never forgotten by the Australian soldier. The mention of your name always arouses enthusiasm,' he assured Hutton, who was to him, 'the founder of the military spirit of Australia & its patron saint. Some day you must give me the material that you have & let me write your life so that the young soldier in Aust may have a high ideal.'¹²⁴ On campaign, in 1916, he wrote: 'The achievements of the Australian troops is your achievement for their military organization & military spirit were founded by you.'¹²⁵ John Antill wrote at about the same time describing the Light Horse memories of Hutton, 'they [Light Horse] look upon you, especially we older hands, as the 'father' of our arms. To you it must be particularly gratifying to see the fruits of your great foresight and labours – would that you had been able to come out and lead us.'¹²⁶ Bridges tried to have Hutton appointed in his place as commander of the Australian Imperial Force.¹²⁷

On the basis of these achievements, therefore, Birdwood's praise of Hutton's role in Australia was not entirely misplaced. Hutton understood, like nearly no other British

¹²² *West Australian*, 9 August 1904, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 1900-4.

¹²³ C. Coulthard-Clark, *A Heritage of Spirit: A biography of Major-General Sir William Throsby Bridges*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1979, 45; G. Verney, 'General Sir Brudenell White: The Staff Officer as Commander' in *The Commanders: Australian Military Leadership in the Twentieth Century*, ed. D. Horner, Allen and Unwin, Sydney, 1984, 32.

¹²⁴ Letter, White to Hutton, 4 March 1913, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50089.

¹²⁵ Letter, White to Hutton, 30 January 1916, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50089.

¹²⁶ Letter, Antill to Hutton, 2 October 1916, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50089.

¹²⁷ Address, W. Birdwood, 21 February 1920, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50089, 34.

figure, the strength of Australian imperial sentiment balanced against its reluctance to be formally bound to imperial defence. Aware of these limitations, Hutton developed a model for colonial defence that took account of local concerns for their autonomy but nevertheless prepared their forces for voluntary service in defence of the Empire. In attempting to implement this model Hutton met with opposition motivated, not by a local nationalism, but by a determination to retain control over the shape of the new Australian army. Hutton's governments, strictly limited in what they could hope to achieve because of limited funds, sought to apply what they believed to be the lessons of the recent campaign in South Africa. They attempted to apply a citizen model to their new army, a model that conflicted with Hutton's professional ideas.

In his years in Australia Hutton nevertheless managed to implement the basic elements of his system. He summarised his own achievement thus:

My reward was, and always will be, in the happy retrospect of great and lasting work for Australia and for the Empire. I leave to History and to future generations the real estimate of the work done, and of the result achieved. I am at least satisfied that the military system, and the military spirit of the Australian Army created during 1893-96, and more recently in 1902-04 will continue, and will year by year develop, proving to the world that a Race of British birth and origin has sprung into existence at the Antipodes which shall carry to fruition the great principles for which the British Empire stands with the same consistent courage and unwavering determination which have animated their fore-bears.¹²⁸

¹²⁸ Hutton, 'Memoirs', Period VIII, 23.

With some prescience he suggested to the King's secretary at the end of his Australian tenure that 'The Light Horse Regiments are a splendid success and some day will play a prominent part in the Defence of the Empire.'¹²⁹ Ten years later they did.

¹²⁹ Letter, Hutton to Bigge, 5 October 1904, BL, Hutton Papers, ADD 50078.

8. Conclusion

The last two decades of Lieutenant-General Edward Hutton's (1848-1923) life were spent, but for a short stint of service in World War One, in quiet retirement on his estate in West Sussex.¹ Even in these declining years his thoughts stretched to the furthest reaches of the Empire. Chairing a West Sussex branch meeting of the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children he compared the problems of parenting with those of managing imperial relations:

Certainly, his experience in dealing with Anglo-Saxons overseas was that if you tried to drive them, the Australian or Canadian would set his back up against the wall and call you names. If, on the contrary, you endeavoured to meet his ideas and idiosyncrasies in a broad, general way and allow yourself to lead rather than to coerce or drive, you would go to greater lengths in carrying forward any work for the public betterment.²

On his return from his post as commandant of the first federal Australian army, Hutton's career had collapsed. He had struggled to find a new command and a dispute with his old friend and comrade from South Africa, John French, following a training exercise at Aldershot, effectively put an end to his career.³ In 1907 he was retired, with the new rank of lieutenant-general, and was reduced to expending his expertise on informal gatherings like the one above. This, despite the fact that his extensive service in the colonies in the last decade of the Victorian era had given him an unparalleled experience of colonial political and military matters. 'Few British

¹ In 1915 Hutton commanded the 21st Division and supervised their training in England. Heart trouble forced his resignation from this final command.

² *West Sussex Gazette*, 14 February 1907, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 1904-1907, 196.

³ Report, Adjutant General to Secretary of State for War, TNA, PRO, WO 138/31 7/2/07.

officers have had greater opportunities than Sir Edward Hutton of estimating the value of the fighting material of our colonies,' opined one journal.⁴

It is from those colonies that Hutton's career derives its significance. He had been driven to them by his own peculiar sense of mission. It was a mission born in the British army, in his relationships with Warre and Wolseley, it was given a direction by Seeley; but, ultimately, it was his own mission. At times it intersected with British policy, and sometimes with colonial; often it conflicted with colonial policies and annoyed his British superiors. Though distinct, it nevertheless reflected trends in imperial thought: Hutton's ideas struck chords with Wolseley and with Chamberlain, with Reid, Barton, and Forrest, even with Borden in Canada. In his carrying of that mission to the colonies, in their responses, and in his adjustments, manoeuvres and political ploys Hutton's colonial career illuminates the relationships between Britain, the self-governing colonies, and the idea of Greater Britain.

Greater Britain was not a fixed star from whose orbit the British self-governing colonies slowly, but inexorably, made their escape. Greater Britain, like most forms of Western nationalism, was an idea that flowered in the late nineteenth century and would slowly wither in the twentieth. Hutton's early life illustrates this: he was not born the imperialist that he became; he was certainly schooled in militarism, manliness and professionalism at Eton, a schooling that continued through his early career in the army, and these ideas influenced his developing imperialism; but he was initially beholden to a different vision of the Empire, the just and Christian Empire of his stepfather. Over the course of his early career this changed as he became ever

⁴ 'Australian Soldier: Sir Ed. Hutton thinks him a Model for Britain', *Daily Chronicle*, 14 February 1905, NLA, Hutton Letters and Press Cuttings, MS 1215, Vol. 1904-1907, 87.

more attuned to the threats facing British power and as his religious views drifted from his stepfather's doctrinal faith.

It was only in the decade before Hutton's first colonial command that his idea of the Empire was fixed in its final form. In a series of lectures Hutton consolidated his thinking on the Empire, incorporating all of those ideas from his early life. With the setting up of a mounted infantry school at Aldershot Hutton found a practical outlet for his professionalism. The system Hutton developed fitted into Wolseley's broader program of working around chronic under-funding to attempt to scrape together a field army that might be able to do battle with the new continental armies. Hutton's work organising the mounted infantry was essential training for his later efforts at organising colonial field forces for overseas service. In this period Hutton also became acquainted with the work of Seeley whose vision of Greater Britain, it might be argued, Hutton had been working towards throughout his life; a vision that he surely served for the remainder of his career.

New South Wales afforded Hutton his first opportunity of putting that vision into action.

He brought with him both Wolseley's determination to form a field army to fight in Europe and Seeley's vision of Greater Britain: the idea that the self-governing colonies and Great Britain already formed a single imperial nation, that schemes and plans were unnecessary, and that civic education could more tightly knit the Empire together. In Hutton's military reforms, in his plans for Australian federal defence, and in his imperial rhetoric both of those influences were at work. Hutton endeavoured to secure colonial defence assistance but he also valued the sentiment that bound the

Empire together. Just as Hutton's agenda had more than one dimension, so too had the colonial response, which was more complex than many historians allow: there was resistance to aspects of Hutton's plans, but it was a resistance based on a determination to retain local and parliamentary control over their defence forces – not on a colonial nationalism.

Hutton summarised those first colonial experiences in his 'Co-operative System for the Defence of the Empire', a remarkable scheme that married Wolseley's expediency to Seeley's more sentimental and consensual approach to the self-governing Empire. Hutton brought this scheme to Canada where he implemented professional reforms, promoted a national army, and discussed the imperial connection. He went further in suggesting a Canadian contribution to imperial defence than he had dared in Australia and was surprised at the result. The tolerance of the Canadian government did not last. With the outbreak of the Second South African War, the imperial connection became a source of tension between the French and English speaking populations and the militia became one of the most important departments. At the same time, Hutton became even more vociferous in boosting the Empire and in his resistance to political interference. The interests of the Canadian government now clashed with Hutton's agenda and he was eventually forced to resign his command.

Hutton bounced back from his embarrassing exit from Canada to lead a mixed brigade of mounted troops from Britain, Canada, the Australian colonies and New Zealand on campaign in South Africa. This was his dream command. He now had the opportunity to establish the value of mounted infantry, a unit he had helped design, and to prove the worth of his cooperative plans for imperial defence. This agenda

coloured his approach to the war: his structuring of his brigade, his view of the fighting quality of the colonial troops, and his sense of a providential mission all reflect that central ambition. In New South Wales and in Canada his imperial ambitions had conflicted with colonial interests – in South Africa he met opposition from a new quarter, from Lord Roberts and his gang of officers, and yet again his aims were stymied.

Australia was the last colonial command that Hutton coveted. He was very happy – and very lucky – to receive that appointment. In his April 1902 *Minute upon the Defence of Australia*, Hutton announced a policy very similar to the one he had pursued in New South Wales and Canada. The continuing war in South Africa, now one of counter-insurgency and concentration camps, formed the backdrop to this command. The Australians, proud at the praise garnered by their militia and bushmen contingents, believed that the war had revealed their native fighting quality and proved the sufficiency of an *ad hoc* response to imperial crisis. The British, on the other hand, hoped to harness the success of those contingents by formalising colonial commitments to imperial defence. These two positions created havoc for Hutton's plans: he contended both with British schemes and Australian economies, ideas of a citizen army, and refusals to commit Australian soldiers to service overseas. These factors limited Hutton's success in Australia and they point to the main source of resistance he had met in all his colonial commands: the Australians, like the Canadians, and the New South Welsh before them, shared Hutton's general imperial sentiments. They differed only in their vision of how the Empire should function: they resisted British efforts at control, at formalising the Empire, at demanding fixed quantities of troops, because they valued their autonomy; they resisted Hutton's

efforts at control, at determining the shape of their forces, at establishing an independent sphere of military command, because they viewed these as their own parliamentary prerogatives.

Seeley's Greater Britain consisted of three communities: one of interest, one of race, and one of religion. Lieutenant-General Edward Hutton's colonial career demonstrates that those communities were not always aligned with each other.

Hutton took Seeley's vision to the colonies, but he also brought with him Wolseley's style of command and desire to build a British force capable of meeting mass European armies in the field. He found that, though Australians and Canadians were receptive to the idea of Greater Britain, they were not ready to cede control of their forces to the Empire or to their General Officer Commanding.

Appendix – Borden's business and the later Canadian contingents

Frederick Borden ended his career a wealthy man, having been involved in a range of enterprises.¹ At the time of the Second South African war, however, his businesses were doing very badly and he used his ministerial influence to direct contracts for the Canadian contingents to prop them up. This occurred at the same time his relationship with Hutton collapsed.

In 1899 Borden had lumber, farming, property, mining, newspaper distribution, and shipping interests all centred in Canning, Nova Scotia. As a minister he was not supposed to be active in business and so he had turned over control of his company to an associate, Kinsman, and by letters patent the F.W. Borden Co Ltd became the R.W. Kinsman Co Ltd. Yet he remained intimately involved in the company, the assets and liabilities were his, and Kinsman was essentially his manager. Kinsman did a terrible job. By the middle of 1899 the company was faltering, debts were accruing and Borden sent in an accountant. Borden wrote to Kinsman with irritation:

I am anxious to go on, and in fact can hardly afford to turn back, but things cannot go on as they have been going for the last year. You must manage in some way to get some money out of the business. It is no use to buy goods simply for the purpose of scattering them among the impecunious. We have been running a benevolent institution about long enough.²

Go on they did, and they went from bad to worse. By the end of the year Borden was in overdraft to the Temperance and General Life Company, indebted to the Halifax Banking Company, and owed heavily on a mortgage for lands purchased from a firm

¹ C. Miller, 'Sir Frederick William Borden and Military Reform, 1896-1911', *Canadian Historical Review*, 50, 1969, 270.

² Letter, Borden to Kinsman, 19 June 1899, PANS, Borden Collection, MG2 64 Borden PLB 2, 970.

of Nova Scotian lawyers, Wickwire and Cogswell. In November 1899 Borden began planning for a sale of bonds in his company. Two directors of the Temperance and General Life Company, one a Liberal Senator, and the other, a Liberal M.P.P, assisted him. The company had exhausted its credit and these bonds would be vital in paying off debts. By the end of year Borden was being threatened with legal action from his various creditors. Despite his influence with the board, the Temperance and General Life Company demanded payment within thirty days. The Managing Director wrote Borden on 30 December:

I got word from you that you would decline the draft and most assuredly had it not been for the influence of Senator Cox and our President, the Hon. G. W. Ross, I should have placed the matter in the hands of our Solicitors at once. With their assurance that I need have no fears of a 30 days' draft being met, I issued such a draft today and had it placed to our credit in the bank.³

Kinsman had cabled two days before mentioning that he had been forced to sell their schooner, the *Harold Borden*, and ominously warning, 'Having hard time to get through this month.'⁴

Given the parlous state of his finances it is not surprising that Borden grasped at the illicit opportunity suggested by his lawyer (and creditor) on 27 December 1899.

Wickwire telegraphed Borden that day with the question, 'Cannot you arrange supplies forage beef and vegetables for competition to limited number of firms here say C.L. Dodge and R.W. Kinsman reply immediately.'⁵ This wasn't patronage so much as graft. In fact, by giving the beef contract to himself, Borden short-changed the local Liberal patronage network and upset the Local Liberal MP in charge of local

³ Letter, Sutherland to Borden, 30 December 1899, PANS, Borden Collection, MG2/153 6837/F3.

⁴ Cable, Kinsman to Borden, 28 December 1899, PANS, Borden Collection, MG2/153 6738/F3.

⁵ Cable, Wickwire to Borden, 27 December 1899, PANS, Borden Collection, MG2/153 6772/F2.

tenders. Technically it was the shipping companies, rather than the militia department, who were responsible for feeding the troops until their arrival in South Africa. However, because Borden awarded the shipping contracts he was able to lean on the shipping agents themselves and instruct them where to tender for supplies. He installed Wickwire as his local representative and instructed the agents from the Allan and Elder Dempster Lines to contact him before tendering for supplies.⁶ The second contingent sailed from Halifax, Nova Scotia, perfectly placed for Borden to finagle the contingent's meat contract on behalf of the R.W. Kinsman Co Ltd. In early January Borden cabled Kinsman instructing him to make a cash offer of £1300 for a large quantity of cattle about to go to auction.⁷ On that initial investment he hoped to turn a tidy profit. Borden and Wickwire began encrypting their cables in January, 1900 (these are the only Borden cables for the period which are encrypted) and it is impossible to follow their deals precisely. However, that they went ahead as planned is indicated in a series of messages sent by Kinsman to Borden. On the 15th Kinsman cabled, 'We will sell to Wickwire probably all the Beef he will want for the next Boats – which will let us up somewhat.'⁸ On the 20th, he wrote:

We have got to pay some more or we will be sued and we have had all we can stand of that for one year, I shipped nearly all the Hardwood deal we had left over to St. John but we have not heard of its arrival in St. John that should give us \$200 in cash when it arrives. I hope you will be able to place the Bonds and Stock at once and that Wickwire will soon be wanting the Beef so we can get clear of some or all of these old notes and drafts.⁹

And, finally, on 25 January:

⁶ Letter, Borden to Sinclair, 2 February 1900, PANS, Borden Collection, MG2 93 Letter Book 127, 17.

⁷ Cable, Borden to Kinsman, 9 January 1900, PANS, Borden Collection, MG2/154 7077/F2.

⁸ Cable, Kinsman to Borden, 15 January 1900, PANS, Borden Collection, MG2/154 7077/F2.

⁹ Cable, Kinsman to Borden, 20 January 1900, PANS, Borden Collection, MG2/155 7331/F1.

I hope I will not be compelled to make any more [drafts on Borden] for some time but cannot tell – as when Wickwire gets the Beef we will be getting some back. If you can arrange for the 100 lbs per quarter we can fill his whole order and get a very good thing out of it. Instead of 7.5⁴ as he said the other day it will be 8.25⁴ so he tells me now.¹⁰

Borden's boodling is significant in understanding the end of Hutton's command in Canada. His business troubles, shady dealings, and alcoholism formed a backdrop to his deteriorating relationship with Hutton. The meat contracts are doubly important because Borden was supplying not just the second contingent but also the third, the Strathcona Horse. It was a crisis over control of this Strathcona contingent that triggered Hutton's egress from office.

¹⁰ Cable, Kinsman to Borden, 25 January 1900, PANS, Borden Collection, MG2/155 7286/F1.

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