

The 4th Earl of Carnarvon (1831-1890) and freemasonry in the British Empire

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Abstract

Historians who have considered the role of freemasonry in the British Empire have pointed out that some of the more prominent players on the imperial stage in the latter half of the nineteenth century were freemasons and have assumed that their freemasonry was significantly relevant to their political lives. Moreover, in the case of the 4th Earl of Carnarvon, a leading English freemason and twice Britain's Colonial Secretary, it has been claimed that his 'imperialist and Masonic agendas merged' and that he used freemasonry to promote the realisation of his imperial vision. This thesis tests that claim by examining in greater detail Carnarvon's two careers and the relationship between them. In case studies of Carnarvon's involvement with Canada, South Africa and Australia the extent to which the establishment of independent masonic Grand Lodges in those territories between 1850 and 1890 was consistent with or ran counter to Carnarvon's imperial philosophy is explored. It is contended that while freemasonry was much more than a passing episode in Carnarvon's life, its relevance to his imperial interests has recently been overestimated, and that his careers as a politician and statesman on the one hand and as a freemason on the other ran parallel to each other rather than merged. The thesis also argues that rather than consolidating the British Empire the formation of independent masonic Grand Lodges in Canada and Australia in the latter half of the nineteenth century presaged by many decades the dissolution of Britain's imperial power.

This study suggests that a more nuanced view of Carnarvon the freemason and of freemasonry as an institution in the Empire between 1850 and 1890 is needed, along with further re-thinking of the relationship between freemasonry and the Empire.

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Preface

I first came across the 4th Earl of Carnarvon when in 1989 I was head-hunted away from the British Council and the British Embassy in Washington to take up a senior administrative position in English freemasonry. I quickly realised that I needed to find out more about freemasonry in Britain and the British Empire in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries than was available in any published works. The then Prince of Wales (later King Edward VII), Lord Carnarvon and the Rev Canon George Raymond Portal soon emerged as the relatively unexplored but key figures in the development of English freemasonry as it is practised today, and I began my new career as an amateur historian.

The formation of the Centre for Research into Freemasonry [CRF] at the University of Sheffield just as I was retiring from my final employment as Grand Secretary of the United Grand Lodge of England in 2002, and the fact that my Italian daughter-in-law had already gained a doctorate at an English university, prompted me to register for a higher degree at Sheffield as a part-time, long-distance student. My first thanks are therefore due to founding director of the CRF, Professor Andrew Prescott, for immediately taking me under his supervision. He provided me with the encouragement and guidance so obviously needed at that time by a modern linguist with no training as an academic historian and whose only academic post had been as a part-time lecturer in linguistics at the Université Royale Khmer in Phnom Penh in the late 1960s while serving there as Cultural Attaché. I am also very grateful to Dr Tim Baycroft of Sheffield's History Department for his supervision after Andrew Prescott removed to Lampeter and thence to Glasgow; to the University of Sheffield itself for financial support; and to my examiners, Professor Andrew Porter and Dr Andreas Onnerfors, for their constructive criticism of the thesis when it was first submitted in 2009.

My research was greatly assisted by the staff of the Library and Museum of Freemasonry (especially Diane Clements, Martin Cherry, Susan Snell and their predecessor, John Hamill), the Manuscripts Reading Room at the British Library, and (in Washington DC) the Library of Congress and the House of the Temple (Scottish Rite);

Tony Pope and Neil Morse of the Australian and New Zealand Masonic Research Council; the 8th Earl of Carnarvon who, through his archivist, Jennifer Thorp, granted me access to materials at Highclere Castle; Melanie Geustyn of the National Library of South Africa; Dr Boisfeuillet Jones, who permitted me to use his unpublished DPhil (Oxon) thesis; Geoffrey Bourne-Taylor for arranging access to the archives of the Apollo University Lodge, Oxford; the staff at Mark Masons' Hall, London, for facilitating my research into the early records of Mark Grand Lodge; and the Hampshire and Somersetshire Record Offices. I sincerely apologise to anyone whose name I have inadvertently omitted.

Finally, this project would not have been possible without the patient support, understanding and encouragement of my family, and especially of Jenny, my long-suffering wife, to whom this thesis is dedicated. They are, I hope, well aware of the debt I owe them – unlike J Mordaunt Crook, Dr Carole Bourne-Taylor and Professors John Vincent, Paul Rich, Aubrey Newman and Roger Burt whose words of encouragement and advice at critical moments along the lonely path that led to the completion of my thesis they may not remember but I shall not forget.

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Chapter 1: Introduction; historiography; sources; structure

Introduction

(a) Freemasonry: a cultural bond of the British Empire?

The role of freemasonry in the British Empire, and especially in Britain's colonies of white settlement, was generally neglected by historians until the latter half of the twentieth century. Since then, it has been noticed that in the period from the 1850s to the 1890s freemasonry significantly increased its membership and its visibility in Britain and in her colonies, that there were masonic links throughout the empire, and that some of the leading players on the Victorian imperial stage were freemasons, including colonial governors (such as Sir Hercules Robinson and Lord Carrington), Secretaries of State for the Colonies (such as Sir Michael Hicks Beach and his immediate predecessor, the 4th Earl of Carnarvon), and even the Prince of Wales. As a result of the work of scholars such as Ronald Hyam and Jessica Harland-Jacobs, the extent and significance of those masonic links, and the levels at which they operated, is now a recognised theme in the study of the cultural bonds underpinning the British Empire. Henry Howard Molyneux Herbert, the 4th Earl of Carnarvon, has already been identified and privileged by such scholars as a man whose parallel careers as a distinguished politician and imperial statesman on the one hand and as a prominent freemason on the other epitomise or exemplify the personal and institutional components of an imperial network, and whose straddling of both worlds merits further investigation.

However, the relationship between Carnarvon's two careers has not yet been explored in any great detail, nor have the claims made for it been thoroughly tested. More especially, there has been no detailed examination of the extent to which the establishment of independent masonic Grand Lodges in some of the settler colonies between 1850 and 1890 was consistent with or ran counter to Carnarvon's imperial philosophy, an essential element of which required ties between Britain and her settler colonies to be maintained and even strengthened. This thesis is intended to define and test that relationship and, in so doing, to re-examine Carnarvon's attitude towards self-government (masonic and non-masonic) in the colonies at a time of imperial consolidation. It will contend that while freemasonry was much more than a passing episode in Carnarvon's life, its relevance to his imperial interests has recently been overestimated. Indeed, it will argue that whereas Carnarvon foresaw the eventual metamorphosis into the British Commonwealth of at least Britain's settler colonies, the

formation of independent masonic Grand Lodges in Canada and Australia in the latter half of the nineteenth century (and thus the disintegration of what might be termed England's masonic empire) presaged by many decades the dissolution of Britain's imperial power. It will also demonstrate that Carnarvon's initial wish (in 1856) 'to see all the allegiance due to the Grand Lodge [of England] preserved' in lodges in Canada, and even the Prince of Wales' condition (in 1887) for the recognition of an Australian Grand Lodge (that it 'should be affiliated with the Grand Lodge of England and that it should not be independent such as Ireland and Scotland'), were unrealistic once the Canadian and Australian freemasons had determined to have their own Grand Lodges.¹ Their complete independence will be contrasted with the 'self-government' of the still British colonies in which they were situated and with the links that still tied the disestablished colonial churches there to the Church of England.

This examination of Carnarvon's masonic career alongside key moments in his more public lives in what was for English freemasonry and the British Empire the crucial half of Victoria's reign will also help to shed new light on other aspects of Carnarvon's personality and the importance of freemasonry in his life. Carnarvon's reasons for becoming a freemason, and what he derived from it, will be considered alongside the benefits his membership brought to English freemasonry. The thesis will also identify the networks involved in bringing Carnarvon into English freemasonry and advancing him to some of its highest offices, and indicate the points at which those networks touched or overlaid Carnarvon's other networks – family, political, intellectual, religious or imperial. It will also consider the extent to which Carnarvon used freemasonry to further his political or imperial interests and objectives, and whether the United Grand Lodge of England ('UGLE') had a party-political or even an imperialist agenda. The extent to which Carnarvon's relationship with freemasonry was analogous to his activities as a member of the established Church of England will also be explored. And by concentrating its focus on Canada, South Africa and Australia – the three major colonies Carnarvon visited – this thesis will assist in giving 'the white dominions greater visibility in the continuing story of British overseas expansion and imperialism'.²

¹ Carnarvon's speech at a meeting of the United Grand Lodge of England on 1 October 1856 (as quoted in the *Masonic Observer* of 1 November 1856, no. 1, p. 5). The Prince's Private Secretary, Sir Francis Knollys, to Col. Shadwell Clerke, on 15 August 1887, as relayed to Carnarvon in Clerke's second letter to him of the same date (CP BL Add 60807, f. 153)..

² P.G. Cain and A.G. Hopkins, *British Imperialism, 1688-2000* (Second Edition, 2001), pp. 14, 59-60.

(b) Why Carnarvon?

John Roberts argued in 1969 that ‘the preliminary to any historical construction must be the establishment of firm sociological knowledge about English freemasonry’ and that the ‘first and most important facts to establish are who became freemasons, and why.’³ A few years later Ronald Hyam began to investigate the connection between freemasonry and empire and decided that ‘The connection is best attested in the case of colonial secretary Lord Carnarvon...for whom it seems to have been part of the “living spirit breathing from the innermost centre to the utmost extremity”.’⁴ In this century Edward Beasley wrote that ‘If we are to understand this Victorian world of thinking and writing we must look...at the stories of individuals, looking at their lives in the round’, and then selected Carnarvon in his study of ‘mid-Victorian imperialists’.⁵ And, in her recent major work on freemasonry in the British Empire, Jessica Harland-Jacobs demonstrates that ‘it is instructive to look...at the imperial/Masonic careers of prominent individuals, such as the Earl of Carnarvon.’ She mentions him in her introduction along with other ‘men in the highest echelons of the British imperial world’ who were freemasons, and Carnarvon is the first of the ‘Proconsuls and Brothers’ whose imperial and masonic careers she then examines in some detail.⁶ Thus, Carnarvon has already been privileged in the discourse about freemasonry’s role in the British Empire, and this thesis will test that privileging and the conclusions that have been drawn from it.

Clearly, however, one individual freemason cannot be regarded as a representative sample of any majority of English freemasons. Indeed, it could be argued that Carnarvon – a senior, wealthy, and well-educated member of the British aristocracy, a cabinet minister and a viceroy, and the appointee of the Prince of Wales as his Pro Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of England – was not representative of any sizeable group within the fraternity at all. Likewise, it is readily conceded that the role of freemasonry in the British Empire cannot be fully viewed through the prism of just one man’s career. But this thesis does not pretend to set out a general

³ John M. Roberts, ‘Freemasonry: Possibilities of a Neglected Topic’, *The English Historical Review*, vol. 84, no. 331 (April, 1969), p.335.

⁴ Ronald Hyam, *Britain’s Imperial Century 1815-1914: A Study of Empire and Expansion* (1st edition, 1976), p. 154.

⁵ Edward Beasley, ‘Generalizing about humanity: Lord Carnarvon’ in his *Mid-Victorian Imperialists: British gentlemen and the empire of the mind* (2005), pp. 120-37.

⁶ J. Harland-Jacobs, *Builders of Empire: Freemasons and British Imperialism, 1717-1927* (The University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 2007), p. 4 and pp. 259-60.

theory of that role. Nor can such a theory be developed until much more has been unearthed about the membership of the fraternity (along the lines of Roger Burt's work on freemasonry and Cornish miners), the reasons why men joined, and the actual benefits they obtained from it.⁷ Although this thesis accepts that the membership of men of such high and visible social and political status as Carnarvon (and, for example, the Lords Dalhousie and Ripon) probably enhanced the perceived respectability of English freemasonry at the time, it argues that until recently it has not been thought necessary to investigate whether they made any significant contribution to freemasonry, or whether freemasonry had any impact at all on their political philosophies. It has been assumed by scholars such as Hyam and Harland-Jacobs that freemasonry materially affected their political lives and, presumably, vice versa. However, no extended analysis has been undertaken to investigate whether this hypothesis holds true, and this assumption will be tested at length in this case study of Carnarvon.

While Carnarvon was not representative of English freemasonry as a whole, he was uniquely placed to view, comment on and affect it as an institution for most of the period 1860-1890, and it is his view of the value of the fraternity as a whole to society in general and to the empire in particular that has begun to attract historians, and which will also be examined in this thesis. Indeed, although Carnarvon is the principal figure here, the emphasis will be on freemasonry as an institution and cultural phenomenon within the British Empire, for Carnarvon left little or no evidence of any effect that freemasonry may have had on him as an individual, and certainly none of his attitude to the fraternity's private ceremonies.

(c) Henry Howard Molyneux Herbert ('Carnarvon') – an overview

Henry Howard Molyneux Herbert ('Carnarvon') was the eldest son of the 3rd Earl of Carnarvon. Born in 1831, Carnarvon was educated at Eton and Oxford. In 1849, while still an undergraduate, he inherited his father's title, and the majority of his estate, including Highclere Castle, the family seat, near Newbury. As the 4th Earl of Carnarvon he became an active member of the House of Lords in 1854 and remained so until his death in 1890, by which time he had filled the offices (among others) of Colonial Secretary (twice), Viceroy of Ireland (after declining the offer of India on health grounds), Lord Lieutenant, Chairman of the Colonial

⁷ Roger Burt, 'Freemasonry and business networking during the Victorian period', *Economic History Review*, LVI, 4 (2003), pp. 657–688.

Defence Committee, High Steward of Oxford University and President of the Society of Antiquaries.

Though not ‘the quintessential insider’ as claimed by Corinne Weston, Carnarvon was closely involved with colonial and imperial affairs throughout his adult life, and especially during his periods at the British Colonial Office, as an opposition front-bench spokesman on the colonies, and as Viceroy of Ireland.⁸ He thought deeply, consulted widely and wrote frequently on imperial matters. At the inauguration of the City of London branch of the Imperial Federation League on 15 November 1888, two years before Carnarvon’s death, the Tory Carnarvon and the Liberal Lord Rosebery were introduced by the Catholic Cardinal Manning as representatives of ‘the two aspects of the great political movement of our time, met here today to promote...an Imperial Federation, if not in diplomacy or laws, at least in heart and mind’; Sir Robert Fowler MP went further and called Carnarvon ‘the Nestor of Colonial statesmen’.⁹ Yet, whereas there have been two major biographies of Rosebery, the only full-scale biography of Carnarvon, by Arthur Hardinge, was published as long ago as 1925, just thirty-five years after Carnarvon’s death, and Carnarvon rates only a passing mention in the official history of the UGLE.¹⁰

A leading lay member of the Church of England and a classical scholar, Carnarvon translated and published Aeschylus’ *Agamemnon* and the first twelve books of Homer’s *Odyssey*. He became a freemason in 1856, installed the Prince of Wales as Grand Master of the UGLE in 1875, and served as his masonic lieutenant or alter ego thereafter. The elder of his two younger brothers, Alan Herbert, became a doctor in Paris, the other, Auberon, a republican and a radical member of the House of Commons. Both were also freemasons, but neither appears to have taken an active part in the fraternity. Carnarvon married twice, and his eldest son by his first marriage, the fifth earl, is remembered today in connection with the discovery of the tomb of Tutankhamen.

⁸ Corinne C. Weston, ‘Disunity on the Opposition Front Bench, 1884’, *The English Historical Review*, vol. CVI (1991), pp. 80-96, p. 85.

⁹ *Imperial Federation*, 1 December 1889, pp 276-77. (Fowler had recently served as Lord Mayor of the City of London, was an active member of its Conservative Association – and a senior freemason.)

¹⁰ R.O.A. Crewe-Milnes, *Lord Rosebery*, (1931); R.R. James, *Rosebery: a biography of Archibald Philip, fifth earl of Rosebery*, (1963); Arthur Hardinge, *The Life of Henry Howard Molyneux Herbert, Fourth Earl of Carnarvon 1831-1890*, ed. Elisabeth Countess of Carnarvon, (Oxford, 1925); United Grand Lodge of England, *Grand Lodge 1717-1967*, (1967). See also John Hamill, *The Craft, A History of English Freemasonry* (1986).

d) Harland-Jacobs on Carnarvon as a 'masonic imperialist'¹¹

Jessica Harland-Jacobs' recent important study of the role of freemasonry in the British Empire, *Builders of Empire*, covers more than two centuries of the fraternity's history, from the early eighteenth century to the 1930s, but the parts of her work that are most relevant to this thesis are those which relate to the period 1860-90 (roughly coinciding with her period of 'high imperialism'), and, more specifically, to Carnarvon and his activities as a freemason and a statesman in connection with Australia, Canada and South Africa.

Briefly stated, Harland-Jacobs' view of what she terms 'British' freemasonry during this period is that it consolidated the British Empire, and that it was used for that purpose by such leading imperial figures as Carnarvon. Moreover, in her opinion, 'Freemasonry...was central to the building and cohesion of the empire' and, in two key passages, she claims that:

By the last third of the nineteenth century, the Masonic brotherhood had become an unquestioning ally of the British imperial state. It took part in various efforts to shore up the empire...during the age of high imperialism. Imperial proconsuls like Kitchener, Wolseley, and Connaught considered Freemasonry a valuable ally not only as they governed and defended the empire but also as they pursued the important mission of making the empire a source of national strength. In places like Canada, Australia and New Zealand, the brotherhood helped turn men into ardent citizens of the empire...¹²

and 'Like the broader imperialist movement of which they were part, Freemasons...were uniformly committed to pursuing the same strategy, namely preserving and strengthening imperial unity.'¹³ As for the establishment of Grand Lodges in the colonies during the period under review, Harland-Jacobs' comments on those in today's Canada are indicative of her assessment of them: 'The achievement of fiscal and administrative independence did in fact strengthen British North American Freemasons' sense of belonging to an extended British Masonic family.'¹⁴ This thesis will argue that the colonial Grand Lodges were completely independent (not just in fiscal and administrative matters), and it will set out the four principal factors that combined to cause the lodges in British North America and Australia to meld together and form their own Grand Lodges in each colony: metropolitan neglect; the colonial

¹¹ Harland-Jacobs' description of Carnarvon as a 'masonic imperialist' is taken from her D.Phil dissertation, "'The Essential Link': Freemasonry and British Imperialism, 1751-1918' (Duke University, 2000), p. 281.

¹² Harland-Jacobs, *Builders of Empire*, p. 6.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 241. Elsewhere in the same work Harland-Jacobs posits 'the centrality of Freemasonry's imperial role' and that 'the empire figured centrally in the considerations of metropolitan Masons': *Ibid.*, pp.253 and 246.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 213.

freemasons' wish for self-government at least commensurate with the responsibilities and authorities already granted to colonial governments; their wish to achieve greater uniformity in their practices; and the 'home' Grand Lodges' stipulation that to be recognised as regular members of the world-wide family of Grand Lodges the new Grand Lodges would have to have been formed by the 'practical unanimity' of all the lodges in the territory, whatever their original masonic allegiance.¹⁵

Harland-Jacobs also claims that Carnarvon 'presciently supported' the UGLE's recognition of those Grand Lodges as 'it would enable English and Canadian Masons to nurture a close affective connection with each other as the administrative ties dissolved.'¹⁶ In her portrait and evaluation of Carnarvon as a 'masonic imperialist', she further claims that 'He drew on his experience as a colonial administrator when confronted with concerns from country and colonial lodges' and, with examples from Canada and South Africa, she demonstrates that he 'viewed his imperial and Masonic duties as interdependent.'¹⁷ The portrait ends with a contemporary observation that Carnarvon 'was able to apply the principles inculcated by Freemasonry in all the many and various duties which devolved upon him.'¹⁸ As for Carnarvon's visits to South Africa and Australia, Harland-Jacobs argues that there his 'constructive imperialist and Masonic agendas merged', that the 'connection between Masonry and the Imperial Federation League' was particularly evident in Australia whither Carnarvon went as 'an official representative of the IFL', and where at 'Every step along the way, he rallied Freemasons to the cause', namely raising money for the Imperial Institute.'¹⁹ It is the aim of this thesis to test these various claims against a wide selection of further evidence.

Harland-Jacobs' work is significant and the results of her research, together with her conclusions, are of considerable interest – but they invite the further research and questioning undertaken for this thesis. Masonic lodges in Australia, Canada and South Africa – like churches and other voluntary associations based in Britain – did maintain for many immigrants from Britain a link with the imperial centre. Some 'proconsuls', like Carnarvon, were indeed freemasons. But this thesis will test in greater detail the extent to which Carnarvon's

¹⁵ Though the term 'practical unanimity' does not appear to have been used by the UGLE until 1890, the principle it describes was applied from 1858 onwards. See UGLE's *Proceedings*, 3 September 1890, and Daniel, 'Grand Lodges in British Colonies', *AQC* vol. 119 (2006), p. 23.

¹⁶ Harland-Jacobs, *Builders of Empire*, p. 213.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 259-60.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 260, citing the *Proceedings* of the District Grand Lodge of Bombay, 21 March 1890, 6.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 269.

‘imperialist and Masonic agendas merged’, the nature of the independence gained by colonial freemasons during the latter half of the nineteenth century, and the claim that freemasonry as an institution was used to and did indeed consolidate the British Empire at that time. It will suggest that a more nuanced view of Carnarvon the freemason and of freemasonry as an institution in the empire at that time may be justified, and that further research into the relevance of freemasonry to other ‘proconsuls’ may be required before a more general conclusion can be drawn.

Empire and imperialism are subjects of renewed and heightened interest among scholars, and Harland-Jacobs, in telling ‘the story of British imperial Freemasonry’ claims that ‘in the process, [her book] offers some new ways to think about the history of imperialism’.²⁰ As other historians seek to describe and analyse the growth and global influence of the world’s first and as yet unique hyper-power, the United States of America, they are drawn to debate whether the USA has an empire and, if it has, how that empire differs from Britain’s (its closest predecessor) and whether it will suffer a similar fate.²¹ The nature of the relationship and what Patrick O’Brien calls the ‘multiple types and degrees of interdependency’ between imperial Britain and her colonies, and their present-day results, are being analysed to see what lessons can be drawn for subsequent empires.²²

That freemasonry, and Carnarvon as a freemason, already feature in a current discourse about the British Empire, has already been demonstrated here. But O’Brien also wrote that ‘the leitmotif of our times’ is globalisation. If that is the case, then one must ask whether it is still relevant to offer the academy a thesis on a less than titanic statesman but an outstanding freemason in the British Empire in the latter half of Victoria’s reign. The answer has to be ‘yes’, for O’Brien is right to claim that:

For historians, the challenge of our time is to discover and analyse what might be out there in the records to help all of us understand the long histories of both benign and malign outcomes of multiple types and degrees of interdependency

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

²¹ See, for example, Paul Kramer and John Plotz, ‘Pairing Empires: Britain and the United States, 1857-1947’, *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History* 2:1 (2001); Craig Calhoun, Frederick Cooper and Kevin W. Moore (eds.) *Lessons of Empire: Imperial History and American Power* (The New Press, New York, 2005); and John Darwin, *After Tamerlane: the Global History of Empire since 1405* (2007); Amy Chua, *Day of Empire: How hyperpowers rise to global dominance – and why they fall* (Doubleday: New York, London, Toronto, Sydney, Auckland, 2007).

²² Patrick O’Brien, in his review of *Global History: Interactions between the Universal and the Local*, ed. A.G. Hopkins, (Basingstoke, 2006), review no. 648 in *Reviews in History* (March, 2008), <http://www.history.ac.uk/reviews/paper/obrien.html> (18 May 2008).

that are now leading at an ever accelerating rate towards an increasingly connected world.²³

Moves towards masonic independence in British settler colonies in the nineteenth century, studied alongside moves towards the colonies' internal federation and their confederation as eventual dominions within the British Empire, provide new insights, as Harland-Jacobs has shown, and Carnarvon was closely involved with both sets of moves. As a British Cabinet minister with responsibilities for the administration of territories as diverse as the Gold Coast, Nova Scotia and Ireland, Carnarvon was well aware of and commented on the 'multiple types and degrees of interdependency' within the British Empire, as the consideration of his imperial philosophy in this thesis will demonstrate. Drawing on his experience in facilitating the formation of the Dominion of Canada in 1867, Carnarvon tried in the 1870s to prepare the ground for a confederation under the British Crown of the colonies and states in South Africa, and in the 1880s to persuade his Cabinet colleagues to consider granting a greater degree of self-government to Ireland. As a freemason Carnarvon also had to face demands from the colonies for greater autonomy. He took an active part in the debates surrounding the formation of the Grand Lodge of Canada in 1855, and in 1874 he authorised the establishment of the Supreme Council for Canada – the first such independent masonic bodies to be created and recognised in the Colonial Empire. And towards the end of his life Carnarvon facilitated the formation of Grand Lodges in two of the Australian colonies. Those facts are not in dispute, but what remains to be analysed is the extent to which Carnarvon's activities as a leading freemason reflected his imperial philosophy and were consistent with his actions and aims as Colonial Secretary.

(e) Some terminological notes

A glossary of masonic terms used in this thesis is provided as Appendix B, but a few of these, and some non-masonic usages need an explanation at the outset:

The *Grand Lodges* referred to in this thesis are all independent, autonomous masonic bodies whose corporate genealogies lead back to the *Grand Lodge of England*, which claims 1717 as the year of its establishment and which, in 1813, became the *United Grand Lodge of England*. The term *Grand Lodge* is also applied both to the representative body that manages the individual lodges within a Grand Lodge and to a meeting of that governing body. Within its

²³ *Ibid.*

jurisdiction, each of these Grand Lodges controls the first three degrees in *freemasonry*, commonly referred to as '*the Craft*'.²⁴ There are masonic degrees and orders which freemasons can join (as Carnarvon did) after they have entered the Craft and, where necessary, these will be referred to by name – for example, 'The Ancient and Accepted Rite' or the (masonic) Knights Templar – to distinguish them from that part of freemasonry controlled by the (Craft) Grand Lodges.²⁵ Where grand lodges or lodges of other organisations are concerned (those of the Orange Order or of Mark Masonry, for example) this will be clear from the text.

Finally, although Carnarvon once said 'thank God, in the word England is included Scotland', in this thesis *English* and *England* are not used in that sense, let alone as synonyms of *British* and *Britain*.²⁶ However, there was and is no British Grand Lodge overarching the three Grand Lodges that control the Craft in the British Isles, namely those of England, Ireland and Scotland.²⁷ Thus, when *English* is placed in inverted commas it is not done to indicate nationality or ethnic origin but with reference to a masonic body with its headquarters in England or to membership thereof – and the same applies *pari passu* to *Irish* or *Scottish*.

Historiography

Harland-Jacob's major work, *Builders of Empire*, has already been reviewed in the preceding section. In this section the other significant literature relevant to a study of Carnarvon and freemasonry in the British Empire in the latter half of the nineteenth century will be reviewed. The review has been divided into three parts. The first considers the key works on Carnarvon (particularly those that mention his masonic career) and historians' portrayal of him since his death in 1890. After a brief summary of historians' treatment in the late 1900s of the British Empire and imperialism in the period under review, the second part highlights some of the more recent works and trends so that the thesis as a whole can be sited within the relevant current discourses in imperial

²⁴ All the Grand Lodges recognized as regular by the UGLE control the first three degrees, and some, like the Swedish one, extend their control beyond these basic degrees.

²⁵ See Appendix D.

²⁶ Carnarvon, 'Imperial Administration' *The Fortnightly Review*, vol. XXIV, N.S., no. CXLIV, 1 December 1878, p. 764. Yet Peter Marshall, in his chapter on 'Empire and Britishness' in *The Cambridge Illustrated History of the British Empire* (Cambridge, 1996), claimed on p. 319 that 'From the middle of the 18th century onwards, it was...most unusual for anyone to write about 'the English empire' or 'the empire of England' or to use any similar form of words'.

²⁷ The Grand Lodge of Ireland dates its history from 1725, and Scotland's Grand Lodge was formed in 1736.

history. The final part reviews the few significant works on the role and place of freemasonry in the British Empire between 1850 and 1890.

(a) Carnarvon

Carnarvon has been less than well served by historians. Their relative neglect of him is understandable given the titanic status of contemporaries such as Disraeli, Gladstone and Salisbury. Furthermore, of the three Conservative prime ministers under whom he held ministerial office, two used him to some extent as a scapegoat for the occasional difficulties that could ultimately be attributable to their own approaches to South Africa (Disraeli) and Ireland (Salisbury). The gap historians have left is not 'the largest historiographical gap left in modern British biography' (which Andrew Roberts claims to have filled with his biography of Salisbury), but it is large enough to merit the further investigation undertaken for this thesis.²⁸

Hardinge's three-volume *The Life of Henry Howard Molyneux Herbert, fourth Earl of Carnarvon, 1831-90* (1925) is still the only substantial biography of Carnarvon to date, but not quite what Michael Bentley calls 'all we have'.²⁹ Hardinge correctly comments that 'Freemasonry remained among the continuing activities of an exceptionally full life'. There are passing references to masonic events throughout the work, and a short chapter on Carnarvon's career as a freemason, entitled 'Freemasonry 1856-1888 "Loyalty and Charity"'.³⁰ However, that chapter does but scant justice to Carnarvon's masonic activities, and the masonic references in the work's 'Chronology' section are by no means complete or always accurate. This is not surprising: Hardinge himself was not a freemason, did not apparently use a masonic informant, and, in the days before the Library and Museum of Freemasonry in London became publicly accessible and the invention of the internet, he would not have found it easy to explore masonic sources. In any case, it was Carnarvon's widow, the editor of Hardinge's work, who wrote that chapter without checking Carnarvon's masonic records, relying instead on the efforts of an ill-informed masonic intermediary, Leo Thompson.³¹ From the correspondence between

²⁸ Andrew Roberts, *Salisbury: Victorian Titan* (1999), p. xix.

²⁹ Michael Bentley, *Lord Salisbury's World: Conservative Environments in Late-Victorian Britain*, (Cambridge, 2001) in his 'Sources and further reading'.

³⁰ Hardinge, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, pp. 222-229.

³¹ Mr O Leo Thomson of 47 Lincoln's Inn Fields, who had been asked by Carnarvon's widow to check the chapter she was writing on Carnarvon and Freemasonry, in turn wrote on 7 August 1923 to the librarian at Freemasons' Hall, London, for assistance 'as I am afraid my knowledge of the late Earl of Carnarvon, during the time he was Pro Grand Master is very vague indeed.' In her preface to the published work the Countess includes in her list of those 'to whose kindness I am indebted, and whose advice and knowledge

Hardinge and Carnarvon's widow it is clear that they approached the work from different angles: Hardinge, an academic historian and retired diplomat, wanted to write a historical biography, while the Countess – who commissioned the work – wanted a hagiography.³² The hagiographer had the last say, and may indeed have been responsible for excising from Carnarvon's diaries (now held in the British Library) those sections which did not fit the picture of her late husband that the nearly seventy year old Countess wished to leave to posterity. Nevertheless, the author of the chapter on Carnarvon and freemasonry was quick to spot that in 1856 (the very year in which Carnarvon became a freemason and, more significantly for this thesis, two years before his first ministerial appointment in the Colonial Office) the young earl had already formulated some of the broad principles of a colonial policy which he would apply across and throughout his lives as a statesman, an Anglican and a freemason:

One more word on the broad principles which I wish to see adopted in our colonial policy; it is the greatest mistake in the world to compound quantity with quality. Let us never suppose that extent of dominion is any real test of power. Extent of dominion is no test of real prosperity, unless accompanied by a living spirit, breathing from the inmost centre to the utmost extremity... I wish to see all the allegiance due to the Grand Lodge preserved; but I would utterly surrender to the Prov[incial]. Grand Lodge all the minutiae of local business.³³

The author also noted that as early as 1857 Carnarvon hinted at the importance of freemasonry to Britain's colonial interests: 'In Canada, the noblest possession of the British Crown it [freemasonry] has reflected – and I will not stop here to inquire how much it has consolidated – the English Empire.'³⁴ But neither Hardinge nor the Countess expanded on this or considered why Carnarvon became a freemason, remained an active leader for so long, and took high office in several of its branches. Moreover, the extent to which freemasonry consolidated the British Empire is only now being subjected to detailed research.

have been of great service' a 'Mr O Thomson on Freemasonry.' According to the obituary notice in *The Freemason's Chronicle* of 18 May 1940, Thomson was born in 1863 and died in May 1940. He did not become a Freemason until 11 May 1897 (seven years after Carnarvon's death), and was not a member of any lodge with which Carnarvon was associated.

³² See the letter of 16 March 1922 from the Countess to Hardinge at the Hampshire Record Office ['HRO'] (ref. 75M91/S 14/3). Hardinge (1859-1933) obtained a first-class degree in modern history at Oxford and became a Fellow of All Souls in 1881.

³³ Hardinge, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, p. 224. The source (not identified by Hardinge) was a cutting from the *Masonic Observer* of 1 November 1856 (now filed on CP BL Add. 60945, f. 33), quoting Carnarvon's speech at Grand Lodge, 1 October 1856. In this quotation one could substitute 'British Crown' for 'Grand Lodge' and 'colony' for 'Prov. Grand Lodge'.

³⁴ Hardinge, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, p. 225. Here the unidentified source appears to have been a typed transcription of an article in the *Masonic Mirror*, vol. 1 (1857), p. 126, dated 'Bath, Jan 8 1857' and entitled 'Bro The Earl of Carnarvon at Bath', filed in CP BL Add 60945 ff. 109-110.

Hardinge had access to the editions of Carnarvon's speeches on colonial affairs which Carnarvon's life-long close friend, cousin and erstwhile Colonial Office colleague, Robert Herbert, published in 1902-03.³⁵ Commenting on Carnarvon's speech at Grand Lodge on 1 October 1856 ('Before taking a direct part in the larger concerns of Colonial Government, Lord Carnarvon evinced his interest in the lesser question of Masonic Government in England and her Colonies'), Herbert briefly mentions Carnarvon's masonic career and agrees with Hardinge that 'through life Freemasonry remained a real interest for him' – but again he does not attempt to explain this. His lack of information about Carnarvon's freemasonry is illustrated by his statement that Carnarvon 'became a Mason while still at Oxford', whereas in fact Carnarvon graduated from Oxford in November 1852 and was initiated in London in February 1856. Like Hardinge, Herbert offers no adverse criticism of Carnarvon, and his approach to his subject is adulatory. Neither Herbert nor Hardinge picks up on Disraeli's nickname for Carnarvon of 'Twitters', nor do they mention the assertions in *The Times*' obituary of him that Carnarvon 'carried scrupulousness and sensitiveness in public life almost to a fault...his over-sensitiveness made him often rather an element of weakness than of strength to his allies...he was too scrupulous for political success.'³⁶ Hardinge perhaps defends Carnarvon from these charges in his epilogue, by ascribing Carnarvon's behaviour to his search for that 'political moderation' which Carnarvon himself described as:

not uncertainty of vision nor hesitancy of purpose, nor an oscillation between two extremes, nor even a philosophical desire to steer a middle course between contending factions. It is rather the fair and even temper, the generous recognition of what is wise and just in opponents, the abhorrence of injustice and abuse even in associates.³⁷

Neither Herbert nor Hardinge mentions Disraeli's or Salisbury's belated criticisms of Carnarvon's role in South African affairs during his second spell as Colonial Secretary (1874-78). They overlooked or were unaware of the fact that on 28 September 1878, some time after Carnarvon's resignation from his Cabinet, Disraeli wrote to Lady Bradford: '... if anything annoys me more than another, it is our Cape affairs, where everyday brings forth a new blunder

³⁵ Herbert, Robert (ed.), *Speeches on Canadian Affairs by Henry Howard Molyneux, Fourth Earl of Carnarvon*, (1902).

³⁶ *The Times*, 30 June 1890, p. 10.

³⁷ Hardinge in a footnote on p. 329 of vol. 3 (*op. cit.*) gives the source for this quotation as an 'Article on Lord Falkland'; I could not find this, but *The Times* of 10 Jan 1877 records Carnarvon speaking about Falkland's moderation, and stating that 'moderation is consistent with strength.'

of Twitters.’³⁸ And that in 1903 Violet Cecil claimed that her father, Lord Salisbury, thought that Carnarvon had an exaggerated view of his own importance as ‘a great colonial statesman and Empire builder’, and that he told her that Carnarvon ‘annexed the Transvaal without reflection’ and that ‘If any one man may be said to be responsible for this [the Boer] war, it is Carnarvon’ – this despite the fact that Carnarvon died several years before the war started.³⁹ Herbert was, of course, Carnarvon’s Permanent Under-Secretary when the Transvaal was annexed by Shepstone in 1877. As such, he did not believe Carnarvon’s efforts towards a South African confederation to have been premature, and in 1902 he still regretted that Carnarvon had not been able to unify South Africa before he resigned as Colonial Secretary in 1878. Perhaps Herbert and Hardinge would have agreed with Boisfeuillet Jones that ‘South African problems were too complex and intractable to be traced to isolated individuals or past events.’⁴⁰

A more critical view of Carnarvon was voiced by his former colleague in government and fellow freemason, Lord George Hamilton MP, who in his *Parliamentary Reminiscences and Reflections* (1916-22) attributed Carnarvon’s resignations from three Conservative Cabinets to ‘a microbe of incurable fidgetiness in his composition’.⁴¹ It may be relevant, however, that unlike Carnarvon, Hamilton was ‘a Disraeli favourite’ who never resigned from his party and who as ‘an Irish gentleman’ would have been opposed to Carnarvon’s attempts as Viceroy to introduce a measure of self-government for Ireland.⁴²

For some decades thereafter Carnarvon seems to have slipped below the historians’ horizon. He received some honourable mentions in the *Cambridge History of the British Empire* (1940-59) and was credited with defining ‘the Britannic question [in 1870] as being to preserve on the one hand the self-government of the colonies and on the other to add to it a

³⁸ Zetland, Marquess of (ed.), *The Letters of Disraeli to Lady Bradford and Lady Chesterfield* (1929), as cited by Robert Blake in his *Disraeli* (1966), p. 668-9.

³⁹ A. Roberts, *op. cit.*, p. 830 and chapter note no. 17.

⁴⁰ Boisfeuillet Jones, Jr., ‘The Role of Robert Herbert in the Colonial Office, with Particular Reference to his Influence on Policies Towards New Zealand and Fiji, 1871-1892’ (1980), an unpublished thesis presented for the degree of D.Phil at Oxford University, p. 43.

⁴¹ George Hamilton, *Parliamentary Reminiscences and Reflections*, (1916-22), as cited by Peter Gordon in his article on Carnarvon in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* [‘ODNB’] (on-line edition, 2004-8), pp. 697-703. Though the son of a Duke, a Privy Counsellor, the First Lord of the Admiralty from 1885 and a senior member of the English Craft from 1889 (Senior Grand Warden in 1889 and Provincial Grand Master for Middlesex from 1892 to 1924), Hamilton never became a member of what was in effect the Grand Master’s private lodge, namely Royal Alpha Lodge, no. 16.

⁴² See John Ramsden’s article on Hamilton in the *ODNB* (May 2008).

more real connection.⁴³ In 1955 Donald Schurman briefly highlighted Carnarvon's crucial and cross-party roles in the Colonial Defence Committee and the related Royal Commission in the late 1880s (though the 179 pages in the London Library's copy of the collection of Carnarvon's speeches on the subject of imperial defence published in 1897 were still uncut in 2005).⁴⁴ Then in 1964 Richard Koebner, in his semantic history of the word 'imperialism', comments on Carnarvon's attempt in 1878 'to tackle the meaning of the new word in his own way' and to differentiate between 'true' and 'false' imperialism – a passage to which this thesis will return in a later section.⁴⁵ (This forensic work should have protected Carnarvon from charges by later writers that at first he did not know what the word meant at all.) Koebner echoes the criticisms of Carnarvon by Disraeli, Hamilton and Salisbury by claiming that

Carnarvon's activities in the Colonial Office displayed his high-minded impulsiveness and the fervour of his belief in the moral excellence of Empire institutions and the maintenance of a strong Imperial tie. Whenever a widening of the Imperial domain could be trusted to serve those ends, he did not wince at the new responsibilities incurred.⁴⁶

This thesis will question the charge of impulsiveness, and point out instances where Carnarvon exercised more caution and expressed greater concern about imperial expansion than Koebner's portrait suggests.

C.F. Goodfellow and James Morris also turned a less than favourable spotlight on Carnarvon in the late 1960s and early 1970s. In his exemplary work on the British government's unsuccessful attempts to unify the polities in Southern Africa between 1870 and 1881, *Great Britain & South African Confederation*, Goodfellow devoted five of his ten chapters to Colonial Secretary Carnarvon's policy towards South Africa between 1874 and 1878, and included sections on its genesis and its legacy.⁴⁷ According to Goodfellow, whereas

⁴³ J Holland Rose, A P Newton, E A Benians (gen. eds.), *The Cambridge History of the British Empire* (Cambridge, 1940-59). See for example, vol. 2 'The Growth of the New Empire' (1940) p. 698. The quotation is from vol. 3 (E.A. Benians, Sir James Butler and CE Carrington, eds.) 'The Empire-Commonwealth 1870-1919' (1959), p. 4.

⁴⁴ Donald M. Schurman, 'Imperial Defence 1868-1887' (1955), a dissertation submitted to Cambridge University in 1955 and published (ed. John Beeler) in 2003. Carnarvon, *The defence of the Empire: a selection of the speeches of Henry Howard Molyneux, fourth Earl of Carnarvon* (1897), ed. Sir George Sydenham Clarke. Carnarvon was a trustee of the London Library.

⁴⁵ Richard Koebner and Helmut Dan Schmidt, *Imperialism: The Story and Significance of a Political Word, 1840-1960* (Cambridge, 1964), p. 153. (The first ten chapters of this book, concentrating on the word 'imperialism' in the nineteenth century, were created from Koebner's notes after his death by Schmidt; the last three are Schmidt's own and focus on its history in the first half of the twentieth century.)

⁴⁶ Koebner and Schmidt, *op. cit.*, p. 111.

⁴⁷ C.F. Goodfellow, *Great Britain and South African Confederation, 1871-84* (1966), pp. 49-150.

for Carnarvon's predecessor as Colonial Secretary, the Liberal Lord Kimberley, it was primarily the financial savings that might accrue from confederation that drove his South African policy, for Carnarvon himself the 'cardinal intention was to make more certain the future security of Great Britain and her Empire.'⁴⁸ As Carnarvon's South African policy was not the product of any events in South Africa or threatening the territory at the time, Goodfellow summarised it as 'preventative, and not curative, in intention.'⁴⁹ Goodfellow described the results of Carnarvon's efforts to unify the states and colonies in South Africa as failures, and demonstrated, in markedly architectural and almost masonic terms, that the centrepiece of his policy, the annexation of the Transvaal, was fraught from the outset:

It was as if the imperial builder, having failed to lay even a secure foundation for his federal arch, suddenly threw up the keystone, hoping that the legislative framework he was constructing at the same time would hold it in position until the rest of the arch could be built.⁵⁰

Finding no other explanation for Carnarvon's actions, Goodfellow suggested that 'the intentions behind the policy were idiosyncratic expressions of the personalities of those in power.'⁵¹ While Goodfellow did not attempt to analyse Carnarvon's personality (on the ground that this would require 'biographical and psychological researches'), it is clear from his portrayal of him that he views Carnarvon as overoptimistic, impulsive, vane, self-conscious and acutely anxious – all this in addition to 'his evident desire to add to his reputation for statesmanship and his enjoyment in holding the public eye.'⁵² The present thesis does not present the results of any psychological research into Carnarvon's personality, but in providing and analysing some of Carnarvon's biographical data that have so far been largely overlooked it will suggest that a more rounded view of Carnarvon may now be appropriate.

James Morris claimed that 'Carnarvon thought the first steps towards a super-power should be a grouping of the Empire into larger sub-units, starting with the white self-governing colonies'; he also touched on Carnarvon in the context of the Canadian Confederation of 1867 and outlined Carnarvon's South African interventions while Colonial Secretary from 1874 to

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 207-9.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 210.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 111. Goodfellow suggests 'that Disraeli's well-known nickname for Carnarvon, "Twitters", expresses the disillusionment of [Disraeli's opinion of Carnarvon] of later years.' (Goodfellow, *op. cit.*, p. 51.)

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 219.

⁵² *Ibid.*, pp. 216, 52-3, 209.

1878.⁵³ Morris, like so many other commentators, could not resist echoing the nickname 'Tweeters' but he, unusually, linked it with an allegation that Carnarvon 'at first found it difficult to understand what imperialism meant', as though by 1878 the word had one universally accepted meaning, which, as Koebner demonstrates, it had not.⁵⁴ Although Martin Walker repeated the allegation in 2002, this thesis will suggest that it was based on a misreading of the facts.⁵⁵

Bruce Knox, in a series of papers published between 1971 and 1998, analysed Carnarvon's part in 'the rise of colonial federation as an object of British policy' and then his place in the British Empire and in 'Conservative Imperialism.'⁵⁶ In 1984 Knox demonstrated that previous historians had underestimated Carnarvon's contribution to the British North America Act of 1867 and had mistaken his 'distinctly positive and optimistic approach both to the future of the self-governing colonies as part of the Empire and to Great Britain's relation to them.' He noted Carnarvon's energy and persuasiveness in the run-up to the passing of the Act, but added that Carnarvon 'combined impulsiveness and ambition, intellectuality, and highmindedness to the point of priggishness' and that 'These qualities, of course, were capable of being disadvantageous.'⁵⁷ In the last of the series Knox concentrated on Carnarvon in the South African context where, he claimed, those qualities led in part to his failure to establish a confederation: 'his own ambition and over-estimation of his political capacities had something to do with the disappointment which he suffered. Carnarvon was susceptible...to high-flying optimism.'⁵⁸ In a fleeting reference to Carnarvon's subsequent failure to persuade Salisbury's cabinet to apply to Ireland Britain's experience in the creation of the Dominion of Canada Knox again suggests that the cause lay in Carnarvon's character: 'He may again have been misled by the very virtue of his belief.'⁵⁹ Given the extent to which he must have trawled through the 'Carnarvon Papers' (deposited at the British Library in 1978) and, presumably,

⁵³ James Morris, *Heaven's Command* (1973), pp. 422-24.

⁵⁴ James Morris, *op. cit.*, p. 388. Koebner, *op. cit.*, pp. 148-49.

⁵⁵ Martin Walker, 'America's Virtual Empire', *World Policy Journal* (summer 2002), pp. 13-20.

⁵⁶ Bruce A. Knox, 'The Rise of Colonial Federation as an Object of British Policy, 1850-1870', *The Journal of British Studies*, vol. 11, no. 1 (Nov., 1971), pp. 92-112; 'Conservative Imperialism 1858-74: Bulwer Lytton, Lord Carnarvon and Canadian Confederation' *The International History Review*, VI, 3, (August 1984), pp. 333-357; 'The Earl of Carnarvon, Empire, and Imperialism, 1855-90' *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* (1998), vol. 26, 2, pp. 48-66.

⁵⁷ Knox, 'Conservative Imperialism', pp. 335 and 357.

⁵⁸ Knox, 'Carnarvon, Empire, and Imperialism', p. 55.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 63.

Hardinge's and Herbert's writings on Carnarvon, it is surprising that Knox – surely the best-read of all commentators on Carnarvon until Peter Gordon's article in 2004 (see below) – should not have discovered that Carnarvon's 'preoccupation' with the colonial empire had been aroused well before his spell as Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies (1858-59), particularly in connection with Anglican and masonic affairs in Canada and elsewhere. Indeed, Knox appears to have been unaware of Carnarvon's 'pre-occupation' with ecclesiastical matters and of the amount of time he also devoted to freemasonry, and therefore of the considerable extent to which these two interests intertwine with his more specifically political colonial interests – connections that will be demonstrated in this thesis.

Boisfeuillet Jones, in his 1980 thesis on Robert Herbert, drew on Knox's 1960 dissertation on Carnarvon and Herbert.⁶⁰ Jones points out how closely the two cousins and friends worked together in their attempt to achieve a South African confederation, and that at least Herbert's reputation does not seem to have suffered from their failure. Jones describes Carnarvon as 'a friendly person, high-minded and idealistic' and comments that he was 'widely respected by British officials in the colonies because political advancement was not more important to him than the Empire'. But he too suggests that Carnarvon's personality may have been a factor in the South African failure, at least in Cabinet where 'his expensive undertakings and "fidgetiness" over departmental concerns irked his colleagues'. He quotes both Disraeli's letter to Lady Bradford and Hamilton's description of Carnarvon to substantiate his suggestion.⁶¹

Both Knox and Jones were either unaware of or disregarded the new light which in 1976 Ronald Hyam had begun to focus on a hitherto neglected aspect of British imperial history, what he called the 'props of Empire-building'. Hyam was one of the first to look at the role of what others have called the 'informal' or 'cultural' empire and to point out 'that the British overseas were heavily dependent on their own imported inventions for keeping up morale. The club, the Anglican churches, railway refreshment rooms, mock-Tudor taverns, masonic lodges, the golf-course, the race-course – all these played their part.'⁶² Hyam's

⁶⁰ Jones, *op. cit.* B.A. Knox 'Lord Carnarvon, Robert Herbert and the Confederation Dispute with the Cape Colony, 1874-1876: Imperial Attitude and Responsible Government' (Oxford B.Phil. thesis, 1960), on deposit at Royal Commonwealth Society Library.

⁶¹ Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

⁶² Ronald Hyam, *Britain's Imperial Century 1815-1914: A Study of Empire and Expansion* (1st edition, 1976), p. 150.

contribution will be considered in more detail later in this chapter, but here it must be noted that Hyam seems to have been the first British imperial historian to have taken up John Robert's challenge to academic historians not to neglect freemasonry and to have realised that freemasonry's 'role in spreading British cultural influences [throughout the empire] has been seriously underrated'.⁶³ Hyam began to investigate the connection between freemasonry and empire and decided that 'The connection is best attested in the case of colonial secretary Lord Carnarvon...for whom it seems to have been part of the "living spirit breathing from the innermost centre to the utmost extremity".' Hyam then went further and claimed that Carnarvon's 'federal policy in South Africa involved masonic links.'⁶⁴ He did not, however, expand on or substantiate that claim but instead wrote that in South Africa 'Carnarvon pushed ahead with a ruthless and doctrinaire enthusiasm' and that:

Carnarvon had bold conceptions, but when it came to putting them into practice he was hesitant and indecisive: "Twitters", Disraeli called him. And so he failed to fulfil his aims of disengagement accompanied by the setting up of a new imperial bastion which would secure strategic interests and protect the Africans.⁶⁵

That view of Carnarvon was challenged in some respects by Cornelis de Kiewiet in 1981 when he contended that whereas the 'British annexation of the Transvaal is frequently regarded as the outcome of Carnarvon's impatient, personal response to a "crisis" on the "periphery of empire"', in fact 'it came after almost a decade of renewed imperial intervention in South Africa, which began with the annexation of Basutoland in 1868 and of Griqualand in 1871.'⁶⁶

Alan Cooper, whose dissertation was presented in South Africa seven years after Hyam's work was published, picked up on Hyam's claim when he was examining the 'effects of political, economic and social events on the Order of Freemasons in South Africa'. Noting the support of Carnarvon (as 'Pro Grand Master', the day-to-day head of the UGLE, in 1875) for a local proposal to form a District Grand Lodge under the UGLE in Griqualand, and Carnarvon's hope that 'English' freemasonry would then unite with and absorb 'Dutch' freemasonry there, Cooper concluded that this 'complements Carnarvon's political ambition as [the then] Colonial Secretary...to secure a confederation of South African states. It also

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 152. J.M. Roberts, *op. cit.*

⁶⁴ Hyam, *op. cit.* (1976), p. 154.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 303-4.

⁶⁶ C.W. de Kiewiet, 'Confederation', *The Cambridge History of South Africa* (Cambridge 1981), vol. 6, Roland Oliver and G N Sanderson (eds.), p. 379.

indicates some identification of high masonic direction with British Colonial office thinking during this period.⁶⁷ Cooper thus seems to have been the first historian since Hardinge and Herbert to identify in any detail an apparent parallel between Carnarvon the statesman and Carnarvon the freemason. It is, however, odd that by neglecting to include any mention of Carnarvon's visit to South Africa in 1887, or of the manner and contexts in which his colonial, imperial and masonic interests were then and there demonstrated, Cooper did not capitalise on his discovery.⁶⁸

Until the turn of the twentieth century no academic historian seems to have followed up the trail of Carnarvon the statesman and freemason which Hyam and Cooper had begun to flag. Andrew Adonis concentrated his attention on Carnarvon's dispositions of his estates in the late 1880s, commenting that:

Whether his premature resignation from three successive Tory cabinets reflected a tetchy instability ('Tewtters' was his nickname) [*sic*], or a character 'too conscientious for partisanship and too scrupulous for political success' is not of concern here.

While his brief biographical sketch of Carnarvon does not mention freemasonry, it does contrast Carnarvon's private sense of insecurity and his publicly-expressed confidence in Britain's future, based on the monarchy, the Church and 'a strong religious feeling which...is an immeasurable power for good.'⁶⁹ In 1991 Corinne Weston reviewed an article she had written in 1967 in the light of Carnarvon's diaries that had subsequently become accessible to researchers, and while her statement that Carnarvon was 'the quintessential insider' is an exaggeration, her description of him as 'A sensitive and gentle man with marked distaste for political strife and a proclivity for resignation in unpleasant situations' is much nearer the mark.⁷⁰ In his entertaining book on the scramble for Africa in 1991, Thomas Pakenham was not too sure whether to join with Disraeli in blaming Carnarvon for the impending Zulu war, or Disraeli himself for appointing Carnarvon in the first place and for failing to understand the full

⁶⁷ Alan A. Cooper, 'The effects of political, economic and social events on the Order of Freemasons in South Africa, with some reference to the movement for the formation of a United Grand Lodge, 1772-1961', a dissertation presented for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Stellenbosch (1983), p. 46.

⁶⁸ This apparent parallel is explored further in the case study of Carnarvon and South Africa below.

⁶⁹ Andrew Adonis. 'The Survival of the Great Estates: Henry, 4th Earl of Carnarvon and his Dispositions in the Eighteen-Eighties', *Historical Research* Vol 64 Issue 153 (February, 1991), pp. 54-62.

⁷⁰ Corinne C. Weston, 'Disunity on the Opposition Front Bench, 1884' *The English Historical Review*, vol. CVI (1991), p. 85. For Carnarvon's role in this 'disunity' see also John D. Fair, 'The Carnarvon Diaries and Royal Mediation in 1884' in the same issue of the *EHR*, pp. 97 - 106.

implications of Carnarvon's confederation policy. Pakenham was the first historian to attempt to link Carnarvon personally with Cecil Rhodes in the latter's plans for a 'Secret Society' that would bring the USA back into the British Empire and extend British rule throughout the world, thereby ensuring world peace for ever after.⁷¹ Surprisingly, Pakenham missed the fact that Rhodes was initiated into freemasonry in the Apollo University Lodge, Oxford, a lodge of which Carnarvon had been a member but which he had only visited once (in 1856) and from which he had resigned in 1870.⁷² However, no evidence has been found that their masonic paths ever crossed, and Pakenham's attempted link is based on the flimsy premise that Rhodes, in his first will in 1872, left his estate to (inter alia) the 'Secretary of State for the Colonies' – two years before Carnarvon returned to that office.

My 1993 paper drew attention to the theme of confederation running through the imperial and masonic aspects of Carnarvon's life, concluding that:

Between 1856 and 1875 a small group of powerful, enthusiastic, youthful and – in the main – aristocratic freemasons took control of Grand Lodge...[and that] Carnarvon...and a handful of others, generally from Oxford and members of the Apollo University and Westminster and Keystone Lodges, also took control of the major extra-Craft degrees at the time of their renaissance or development and structured a relationship between them and the Craft, forming a loose masonic confederation based on the complementary principles of tolerance and regularity.⁷³

The paper drew on a limited range of resources and was intended primarily for a specific audience, but it made connections and identified networks relevant to Carnarvon that until then had been overlooked or underestimated by masonic historians and chroniclers.

John Mandleberg, in his 'chronicle of the proceedings 1845-1945 of the Supreme Council' published by the 'English' Supreme Council in 1995, details Carnarvon's activities as

⁷¹ Thomas Pakenham, *The Scramble for Africa* (1991) [Abacus edition 1992], pp. 43, 57-8, 71 and 376. Pakenham overlooked Rotberg's already published proof that Rhodes never subsequently changed his will in that respect: Robert I. Rotberg, *The Founder: Cecil Rhodes and the Pursuit of Power* (Oxford, 1988), p. 74.

⁷² *Freemasons' Magazine*, 1 March 1856; Minute Book (1844-1859) of Apollo University Lodge, (entries for 26 November 1856 and 28 January 1857), recently deposited at the Bodleian Library, Oxford, file ref MS. Eng. c. 7370 (digitised copy at shelfmark MS. Digital 10); Carnarvon's biographical file at the Library and Museum of Freemasonry, London, file ref: BE 68 (CAR) BLI Fol.

⁷³ James W. Daniel, 'Pure – and Accepted – Masonry: The Craft and the Extra-Craft Degrees, 1843-1901' *AQC* 106 (1993) p. 85. In their comments on the paper, the then librarian and unofficial historian of the UGLE, John Hamill, agreed that 'Carnarvon, is one of the forgotten "greats" in English Freemasonry', and the historian and freemason Paul Rich was of the view that the paper 'should have considerable interest for historians of the British Empire' as well as for freemasons: *AQC* 106 (1993), pp. 92 and 100. The paper was re-published, with a foreword by Andrew Prescott, in my *Masonic Networks and Connections* (2007), pp. 1-33, though some of it has now been overtaken by the further research undertaken for this thesis.

a member of that body, and especially notes Carnarvon's part in both the introduction of the Prince of Wales to the order as its first Patron and in the attempt to regulate the relationships of the major masonic orders with each other. In the context of this thesis, however, it is particularly relevant to note that Mandleberg also comments on Carnarvon's role, while Colonial Secretary, in the formation of the first independent Supreme Council in a British colony (Canada) and in the international masonic conference held in 1875 in Lausanne after which the first signs of the impending great divide in world freemasonry gradually became apparent, topics to which this thesis will return.⁷⁴

In *Death in the Victorian Family* (1996) Pat Jalland adds some new information about Carnarvon's health, and his Christian faith when faced with his (first) wife's and then his own death, but the 1996 edition of the *Cambridge Illustrated History of the British Empire* does not mention Carnarvon at all. However, in his sub-chapter on 'Clubs and Associations' Thomas Metcalf does include 'masonic lodges' when he writes that 'Voluntary associations could, however, build bridges between communities as well as strengthening their sense of separateness', a paradox to which we shall return later.⁷⁵ Roger Ellis's rather slapdash potted biography of Carnarvon concentrates on his specifically colonial interests to the exclusion of his ecclesiastical and masonic ones, confuses him with his son the 5th earl by describing him as an archaeologist, and suggests that he was nicknamed Twitters either 'because of his small stature' or 'because he was an uncertain ally'.⁷⁶ Less explicable, Frederick Smyth completely omits Carnarvon from his otherwise authoritative *A Reference Book for Freemasons* (1998).⁷⁷

Carnarvon does however feature in the volume of the 1999 edition of *The Oxford History of the British Empire* that is devoted to the nineteenth century – but not as a freemason or churchman.⁷⁸ There Peter Burroughs credits Carnarvon with having chaired the Royal Commission in 1879-1882 that produced the 'first comprehensive study of Imperial defence'. On the other hand, in the same volume Colin Newbury describes Carnarvon as 'impatient to achieve a South African confederation similar to the one he had inaugurated in Canada, through

⁷⁴ C.J. Mandleberg, *Ancient and Accepted* (1995), pp. 78-9, 155, 207, 233-4, 264, and 269.

⁷⁵ Pat Jalland, *Death in the Victorian Family* (Oxford, 1996), pp. 28, 113, 226 and 260. P.J. Marshall (ed.), *The Cambridge Illustrated History of the British Empire* (Cambridge, 1996), chapter 8.

⁷⁶ Roger Ellis, *Who's Who in Victorian Britain* (1997), p. 344.

⁷⁷ Frederick Smyth, *A Reference Book for Freemasons* (1998).

⁷⁸ Andrew Porter (ed.), *The Nineteenth Century* (1999), the third volume of *The Oxford History of the British Empire*. ['OHBE']

direct Imperial action' and argues that 'Far from advancing the cause of federation, the British annexation of the Transvaal provoked an anti-Imperial reaction which helped to destroy it.'⁷⁹

At last, in the final decade of the twentieth century, an American historian, Jessica Harland-Jacobs began to devote herself to the study of freemasonry in the British Empire, taking up where Hyam had left off nearly a quarter of a century earlier.⁸⁰ Her portraits of Carnarvon contain some factual errors (as will be shown later in this thesis), and her estimation of freemasonry's role in the empire will also be challenged here, but her highlighting of Carnarvon as an important player in English freemasonry in the British Empire is noteworthy.

Meanwhile, Michael Bentley was preparing to show when and why the long-term friendship between Carnarvon and Salisbury began to fall apart.⁸¹ Bentley notes that Salisbury and Carnarvon at least saw eye-to-eye in most religious matters, but he has so little that is positive to say of Carnarvon that it is difficult to understand from this account why the two should ever have been personal and political friends.⁸² Bentley cleverly, though not too accurately, comments on the two incidents where their paths separated: Carnarvon 'became pink over Russia during the Russo-Turkish war of 1877 and once in Ireland had begun to turn green'.⁸³ In Bentley's view, Carnarvon's 'weakness' (compared with Salisbury's resolution) had already been demonstrated in 1871 when he 'bleated' [Bentley's term] to Lord Derby about the threat of communism, as had his 'impatient absolutism in face of racial difficulty in the West Indies' in 1876.⁸⁴ He 'lacked a certain weight and resolution as a political figure'.⁸⁵ By 1877, according to Bentley, Salisbury's 'tiresome friend', 'Titters Carnarvon lost his [head] so frequently that colleagues tired of his tantrums and threats or resignation' and, as the tension with Russia increased, the 'dithering Carnarvon' was one of those 'tired, vain and

⁷⁹ Peter Burroughs, 'Defence and Imperial Disunity', *OHBE* vol. 3, p. 334. Colin Newbury, 'Great Britain and the Partition of Africa, 1870-1914', *ibid.*, pp. 606-7.

⁸⁰ Jessica Harland-Jacobs, "'Hands across the Sea': The Masonic Network, British Imperialism, and the North Atlantic World", *Geographical Review*, vol. 89, no. 2 (April 1999) pp. 237-253; "'The Essential Link": Freemasonry and British Imperialism, 1751-1918', D.Phil. dissertation, Duke University (2000); 'All in the family: Freemasonry and the British Empire in the Mid-Nineteenth Century', *Journal of British Studies*, 42 (October 2003), pp. 448-482; *Builders of Empire: Freemasons and British Imperialism, 1717-1927*, (University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, 2007). Harland-Jacob's main conclusions on freemasonry in the British Empire in the latter half of the 19th century, and on Carnarvon, are set out in section (4) above, 'Harland-Jacobs on Carnarvon as a "masonic imperialist"'.
⁸¹ Michael Bentley, *Lord Salisbury's World: Conservative Environments in Late-Victorian Britain*

(Cambridge, 2001).

⁸² *Ibid.*, pp. 188-89, 197.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 58.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 128, 154 and 225.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 262.

overworked men' who, unlike Salisbury, 'became little boys' and resigned from Disraeli's government.⁸⁶ Yet in 1885 Salisbury persuaded Carnarvon to serve in his cabinet as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. Why? Although he does not actually say so, it seems clear from Bentley's research into the rupture between Carnarvon and Salisbury in early 1886 that Salisbury used his erstwhile friend as bait to encourage Liberal Home Rulers to expose their hand, and Liberal unionists to transfer their allegiance to the Conservatives.⁸⁷ Whereas Carnarvon never revealed – even after his resignation – that Salisbury had had prior notice of his meeting with Parnell, Salisbury let his friend's reputation dangle in the winds that blew through Whitehall and Windsor, thereby labelling him as one who was willing to fracture the integrity of the empire.⁸⁸ So much for Salisbury's praise for Carnarvon on his retirement as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland: 'It is impossible to exaggerate the care, the benevolence, the tact, the skill which my noble friend brought to bear on the task of conciliation which he announced to the House. He displayed very high qualities of statesmanship in the task which he had undertaken...'⁸⁹

The next work in which Carnarvon features to any extent is one of essentially economic history, namely *British Imperialism, 1688-2000* by P.J. Cain and A.G. Hopkins.⁹⁰ However, the authors' arguments that Carnarvon's drive for confederation in Southern Africa was designed 'to turn central Africa and Mozambique into labour reserves for the mines and the farms of the south' and that 'independence had to be restored to the Transvaal in 1881' because, *inter alia*, 'diamonds were unable to generate the resources needed to carry Confederation through', are unconvincing.⁹¹ Nor is their potted biography of the 'grandee' Carnarvon entirely accurate (he was not Colonial Secretary in 1886-87), and it underestimates his overriding sense of public duty.⁹² Simon Schama then makes his contribution to the story of Parnell's meeting with Carnarvon by claiming that Parnell had been 'heavily (and irresponsibly) wooed by the Tory magnate Lord Carnarvon.'⁹³ Angus Wilson dismisses Carnarvon as one of the 'die-hards' in Derby's government who opposed his proposed Reform

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 271.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 121, 280 *et seqq.*

⁸⁸ Hardinge, *op. cit.*, pp. 158, 175-76, 178-81

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 214.

⁹⁰ P.G. Cain, and A.G. Hopkins, *British Imperialism, 1688-2000* (Second Edition, 2001).

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 320.

⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 320, fn. 68.

⁹³ Simon Schama, *A History of Britain*, vol. 3 *The fate of Empire 1776-2000* (2002), p. 380.

Bill in 1867.⁹⁴ Then, in his 2003 paper on Charles Bradlaugh, Andrew Prescott touches on Carnarvon's Christian faith and his freemasonry, and suggests that his 'views on atheism seem to have been muddled', a subject to which this thesis will return.⁹⁵

Somewhat surprisingly, Niall Ferguson and Christopher Hibbert do not mention Carnarvon in their books on the empire and Disraeli which appeared in 2003 and 2004 respectively.⁹⁶ But their neglect is more than compensated for by the only major biographical study of Carnarvon since Hardinge's, namely Peter Gordon's six-page essay on 'Herbert, Henry Howard Molyneux, fourth earl of Carnarvon (1831-1890), *politician*' [sic] in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2004).⁹⁷ Given that Carnarvon's freemasonry had begun to attract some historians' attention by the turn of the twenty-first century, it is however surprising that in Gordon's biography the masonic component in Carnarvon's life merits but the short penultimate sentence: 'He was also a prominent freemason.' And, like most other post-Hardinge commentators, Gordon also hardly mentions Carnarvon's interests in church affairs (except his vote with the Liberals in favour of the disestablishment of the Church of Ireland). Despite these shortcomings, Gordon's otherwise well-balanced essay will remain the standard work on Carnarvon until a fuller biography and an edition of the Carnarvon papers at the British Library are published. In the meantime my own publications have included papers on

⁹⁴ A.N. Wilson, *The Victorians* (2002), p. 331.

⁹⁵ Andrew Prescott, 'The Cause of Humanity': Charles Bradlaugh and Freemasonry' *AQC* vol. 116 (2003) p. 40, endnote 45.

⁹⁶ Niall Ferguson, *Empire: How Britain Made the Modern World* (2003); Christopher Hibbert, *Disraeli: a personal history* (2004).

⁹⁷ Peter Gordon, 'Herbert, Henry Howard Molyneux, fourth earl of Carnarvon (1831-1890), *politician*', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford, 2004), pp. 697-703, accessed <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/13035>, 4 November 2006. Gordon cannot be faulted for classifying Carnarvon as a *politician* [sic], for Carnarvon remained a Conservative politician throughout his parliamentary life. On the other hand, Carnarvon was capable of acting in his own right, as a leading member of the British aristocracy and later as one who had become a significant figure on the imperial stage rather than the emissary of a particular party or government. Carnarvon himself defined 'the business of wise statesmanship' as the ability 'to put aside or attenuate...those oppositions and differences, which are necessarily latent in all parliamentary systems.' Lord Dufferin, the Governor-General of Canada and Viceroy of India and a contemporary of Carnarvon, was described in 1891 as one whose 'wide and varied training had made him not a politician but a statesman, able to take Imperial views'. Carnarvon saw himself as a statesman in those terms, and even Disraeli once described him as 'one of my ablest colleagues...a statesman...a mastermind.' Carnarvon is therefore sometimes described as a statesman in this thesis for convenience, the term being sufficient to include not just his politics, but also his view of himself and the way in which he was seen by some of his contemporaries, particularly in the settler colonies. See Carnarvon, 'The Cape in 1888', *The Fortnightly Review*, June 1888, p. 867; 'statesman' in *The Shorter Oxford Dictionary*, 3rd edition, 1967; and Disraeli to Carnarvon, 5 November 1875, quoted in Hardinge, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, p. 94. (Disraeli was at the time trying to persuade Carnarvon to take office as the Viceroy of India.)

Carnarvon's friendship with the Rev. George Raymond Portal, Carnarvon's part in the early years of the Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons, his attitude to the formation of Grand Lodges in the white settler colonies, and his visits to Canada and Australia.⁹⁸ And Edward Beasley has recently confirmed my claim that Carnarvon's interest in empire became evident several years before his first ministerial stint at the Colonial Office, and he has provided a useful analysis of Carnarvon's thinking about the organisation of human society in the late 1860s.⁹⁹

To summarise. With the honourable exceptions of Hardinge in 1923 and Gordon in 2004, no historian has published anything approaching a full biography of Carnarvon – and even Hardinge's attempt to cover Carnarvon's masonic career is inadequate, while Gordon's brief mention of it appears simply dismissive. Since the generally adulatory works of Herbert and Hardinge in the early twentieth century, any attention paid by imperial historians to Carnarvon has focussed on his interventions as Colonial Secretary in Canada in the 1860s and South Africa in the 1870s, and, in the case of the latter territory, their conclusions have generally been critical. Until Hyam and Cooper no historian in the twentieth century considered Carnarvon's masonic activities in the context of his contribution as an imperial statesman. Their work in this respect has since been eclipsed by that of Harland-Jacobs in her attempt to demonstrate the relevance of freemasonry to studies of the British Empire. This thesis will, however, argue that she has overestimated the role of freemasonry, viewed as an institution, as a cultural bond of the British Empire, and that her identification of Carnarvon as a 'masonic imperialist' strains the available evidence and inadequately considers his estimation of freemasonry in the context of his general imperial philosophy.

(b) The British Empire (1850-1890), and 'imperialism'

Despite its title, this section of the literature review is not intended as a comprehensive summary or critique of the historiography of the British Empire from Dilke's *Greater Britain* (1868) and Seeley's *Expansion of England* (1883) via Buckner's 'Whatever

⁹⁸ James W. Daniel, 'Henry, the 4th Earl of Carnarvon and the Revd Canon GR Portal: a remarkable friendship (1850-1889)', *Transactions* (2004), The Leicester Lodge of Research, pp. 40-73; 'Grand Lodges in British Colonies: Imperial consolidators or Commonwealth seedlings?' *AQC* 119 (2006) pp. 7-33; *Masonic Networks and Connections* (2007), pp. 179-224 and 225-272. These papers are not summarised here but will be referred to as and when they become relevant to this thesis.

⁹⁹ Beasley, *op. cit.*

happened to the British Empire?’ (1994) and Christopher Morris’s ‘What’s Wrong with Imperialism’ (2006), to John Darwin’s *The Empire Project: The Rise and Fall of the British World System, 1830-1970* (2009).¹⁰⁰ Nor is it intended to provide a review of the major works on the histories of Australia, Canada or South Africa within the British Empire in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Those tasks were comprehensively undertaken by the contributors to *Historiography*, the fifth volume of the *OHBE* which fully complements the historiographical and bibliographical elements of the third volume, *The Nineteenth Century*.¹⁰¹ Those two volumes, published in 1999, trace how the old ‘master narrative’ of the stately progress from colony to independence and from ‘empire’ to ‘commonwealth’ has been challenged; how a subject that was once the province of constitutionalists, political historians and economists was appropriated by those more interested in area studies of the periphery than the centre, and by postcolonialists who, according to Stephen Howe, see the history of the British Empire and its successors as a field for ‘moral instruction in the evils of racism, sexism and colonialism’.¹⁰² Moreover, in the third volume of the *OHBE*, Peter Burroughs’s chapter on ‘Imperial institutions and the Government of Empire’ plots the ‘continuous interplay between mother country and colonial communities’ (reflecting O’Brien’s ‘multiple types and degrees of interdependency’) and the changes this wrought on imperial administration.¹⁰³ And those by Ged Martin on ‘Canada from 1815’, Donald Denoon and Marivic Wyndham on ‘Australia and the Western Pacific’, and Christopher Saunders and Iain R. Smith on ‘Southern Africa, 1795-1910’ supply the historical narrative to the historiographical surveys of those imperial possessions provided in the fifth volume by D.R. Owrham,

¹⁰⁰ Christopher W. Morris, ‘What’s wrong with imperialism?’, *Social Philosophy and Policy*, vol. 23 (Cambridge, 2006), pp. 153-166.

¹⁰¹ J. Buckner, ‘Whatever happened to the British Empire’ *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association* 4 (1994), pp. 3-32; Christopher W. Morris, ‘What’s wrong with imperialism?’ *Social Philosophy and Policy* (Cambridge, 2006) vol. 23, pp. 153-166.

¹⁰² Stephen Howe, ‘The Slow Death and Strange Rebirths of Imperial History’, *Journal of Imperial and Colonial History* (2001) p. 139, as quoted in Andrew Thompson, *The Empire Strikes Back? The Impact of Imperialism on Britain from the Mid-Nineteenth Century* (2005), p. 7, fn. 54. See also Howe, ‘British Empire and American Empire’, a paper delivered at the Rise and Fall of Empires Conference at Duke University on 4 March, 2005, (www.pubpol.duke.edu/centers/tiss/programs/reports/documents/Howe.pdf) (4 July 2008). p. 3.

¹⁰³ Peter Burroughs, ‘Imperial institutions and the Government of Empire’, *OHBE*, vol. 3, pp. 170-96.

Stuart Macintyre and William H. Worger.¹⁰⁴ However, freemasonry is not mentioned in either volume, and, with one exception, Carnarvon is only mentioned – and then but briefly – in connection with South African federation, and Royal Commissions on imperial defence.¹⁰⁵ Worger is the exception, as he records that C.F. Goodfellow, ‘the main scholar of British policy in the 1870s’ in the 1960s:

disagreed with Robinson and Gallagher’s contention that there were not ‘any conscious or willing imperialists’, arguing to the contrary that British interests were pursued according to a ‘long-term imperialist plan’ of Lord Carnarvon, that was based not on humanitarian concern for the sufferings of Africans or on any ‘commercial consideration’ but was the product of ‘Carnarvon’s temperament’.

Two companion volumes to the *OHBE*, one on Australia, the other on Canada, were subsequently published in 2008 to remedy the *OHBE*’s shift of emphasis away from the two dominions towards Britain’s African and Asian colonies and the ‘informal’ empire, and we shall return to these new works in the case studies in Chapter 4.

Instead, this section of the literature review highlights some of the more recent works and trends so that the thesis as a whole can be situated within current discourses on the British Empire and on the term ‘imperialism’ between 1850 and 1890.¹⁰⁶

Peter Marshall’s 2003 criticism of the ‘new imperial historians’ of the late twentieth century is less abrasive than Howe’s:

Cultural history is...the defining concern of the new historians. For them, political and economic domination are assumed, but what interests them is cultural domination, which they see as having had a decisive effect both on the ruled and their rulers...For the new imperial historians, British history without the empire makes no sense at all...New imperial historians are concerned not only with exposing the all-pervasive influence of

¹⁰⁴ Ged Martin, ‘Canada from 1815’, *OHBE*, vol. 3, pp. 495-521; Donald Denoon and Marivic Wyndham, ‘Australia and the Western Pacific’, *ibid.*, pp. 522-45; Christopher Saunders and Iain R. Smith, ‘Southern Africa, 1795-1910’, *ibid.*, pp. 597-623. D.R. Owrarn, ‘Canada and the Empire’, *OHBE*, vol. 5, pp. 146-62; Stuart Macintyre, ‘Australia and the Empire’, *ibid.*, pp. 163-181; William H. Worger, ‘Southern and Central Africa’, *ibid.*, pp. 513-40.

¹⁰⁵ Saunders and Smith, *op. cit.*, *OHBE*, vol. 3, p. 606; Peter Burroughs, ‘Defence and Imperial Disunity’, *OHBE*, vol. 3, pp. 334-35; Colin Newbury, ‘Great Britain and the Partition of Africa’, *ibid.*, p. 626.

¹⁰⁶ For a fuller survey of the most recent historiography of the British Empire see Sarah Stockwell (ed.), *The British Empire: Themes and Perspectives* (Oxford, 2008).

empire...but also to put forward a programme for countering that influence...¹⁰⁷

In his view, the ‘practitioners of an “old” imperial history’ should actually ‘welcome the stimulus that the new imperial history has given to the study of the British Empire, while also recognising that huge areas of their subject remain largely outside its concerns’; he welcomes the debates that will continue to arise; and he concludes that ‘There seems to be abundant room for both new and old within the spacious mansion of a vibrant imperial history.’ Indeed, Linda Colley has stated that the present ‘extreme fashionability’ of empire ‘is in part attributable to the influence of post-colonial writings and theory’.¹⁰⁸ But, concentrating as it does on the struggles for independence in non-settler countries, postcolonial writing to date has proved to be of little relevance to this thesis which focuses on the British settler communities in two settler colonies (Australia and Canada) and in South Africa.¹⁰⁹

John Miller, a practitioner of an ‘old’ imperial history, had produced a valuable work on Britain and the ‘Old Dominions’ (‘Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa...an awkward but natural grouping’) in 1966. Charting how ‘the Four gained their independence by imperceptible degrees’ he highlighted the roles of the monarchy and the Christian religion ‘in building connections between Britain and the Four’ and the ‘forbearance and common sense, displayed [towards ‘the Four’] by British Governments in the latter part of the 19th century.’¹¹⁰ Hyam too had devoted much of his *Britain’s Imperial Century* to the ‘Old Dominions’ and his broadly-based cultural approach to the empire’s history broke new ground.¹¹¹ Looking back on his first edition a quarter of a century later, Hyam was able to claim that his ‘once-daring exploration of themes such as sport, masculinity, sexuality, medical practice...education and the influence of public schools, scouting, gentlemen’s clubs and freemasonry, have all been followed up in countless books, articles and research dissertations.’¹¹² But by the late 1990s British imperial historians, whether ‘old’ or ‘new’, generally seemed more interested in

¹⁰⁷ P. J. Marshall, ‘British Imperial History “New” And “Old”’, in his foreword to *History in Focus*, issue 6, ‘Empire’ (Winter, 2003).

¹⁰⁸ Linda Colley, ‘Difficulties of Empire’, *Historical Research*, vol. 79, no. 205, August 2006, p. 367.

¹⁰⁹ See Robert J. C. Young, *Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction* (Oxford, 2001), and, for some other historians’ earlier comments on postcolonialism: C.A. Bayly ‘The Second British Empire’, *OHBE* vol. 5, pp. 68-71; John Darwin, ‘Decolonization and the End of Empire’, *ibid.*, p. 544; and Stuart Macintyre, ‘Australia and the Empire’, *ibid.*, pp. 163-64.

¹¹⁰ J.D.B. Miller, *Britain and the Old Dominions* (1966), pp. 11, 13, 26, 32, 34.

¹¹¹ Hyam, *op. cit.* (1976).

¹¹² Hyam, *op. cit.*, 3rd edition (2002, Palgrave Macmillan, New York), p. xii.

Britain's imperial connections with the rest of Africa and Asia than with the 'Anglo-Saxon Colonies' of Canada, Australia and New Zealand, and their colleagues in those three countries were less interested than previous generations in their nations' connections with Britain during the imperial period. This led Buckner to enquire in 1994 'Whatever happened to the British Empire?'¹¹³ Stuart Macintyre commented five years later that:

The interlocking perspective that joined an earlier generation of colonial nationalist historians to their colleagues in other parts of the Empire, a perspective that saw the Empire holistically as a reciprocal movement of energies and comparatively as part of a broader regional and global pattern, has yielded to national preoccupations. The responsibility for this shrinkage is not solely local. British Imperial historians have drawn back from the study of the White Dominions...¹¹⁴

By 2005, however, Andrew Thompson was able to note that historians had 'begun to look again at the ties that bound the "new" world to the "old".' And, answering his own question 'how far were the empire's settler societies – the neo-Britons – also an integral part of metropolitan culture?', Thompson could then reply that 'What we now know...suggests that the self-governing dominions occupied a prominent place in the British public's imperial imagination.'¹¹⁵ This thesis concentrates on the three of those territories of which Carnarvon had first-hand experience: Canada and Australia (because, as Knox put it, 'upon those colonies – in British North America and Australasia – his "imperialism" was primarily based'), and South Africa.¹¹⁶ It thus complements the work of those who are even now 'look[ing] again at the ties that bound the "new" world to the "old"'.

Thompson also commented in 2005 that 'After years of neglect, the empire is everywhere today – in novels, newspapers and museums, on the radio and on television. Indeed, the British appear to be attached to their imperial past like a mooring rope; the further they travel, the more they feel its pull.'¹¹⁷ Yet Linda Colley is concerned that 'for all this extensive coverage and highly charged controversy, public discourse about empire...remains

¹¹³ Buckner, *op. cit.*

¹¹⁴ Stuart Macintyre, 'Australia and the Empire' in *The Oxford History of the British Empire*, Volume V *Historiography*, ed. Robin W. Winks (1999) p. 181.

¹¹⁵ Andrew Thompson, *The Empire Strikes Back? The Impact of Imperialism on Britain from the Mid-Nineteenth Century* (2005) p. 3. 3.

¹¹⁶ Bruce A. Knox, 'The Earl of Carnarvon, Empire, and Imperialism, 1855-90' *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* (1998) vol. 26, 2, p. 51.

¹¹⁷ Thompson, *op. cit.*, pp. 1-2.

selective and often historically shallow’ and that it misses ‘a vital point: namely, that it is the unevenness of empire’s impact on Britain that demands precise and enquiring analysis over time.’¹¹⁸ In a later section an attempt will be made to provide this type of analysis of Camarvon’s imperial philosophy and practice over thirty years in relation to the future dominions of Canada, South Africa and Australia – territories oddly neglected in this most recent of Colley’s imperial studies. Saul David’s book on Victoria’s wars and the rise of empire does not, however, add anything new to the discourse¹¹⁹ – unlike Peter Cain’s detailed examination of ‘the arguments of what are called “ultra-imperialists”, showing how they used the language of character, stiffened by elements from earlier languages of virtue, to justify the possession of empire.’¹²⁰ (Cain counts Camarvon as an ‘ultra-imperialist’ in that study). Amy Chua rightly points out the danger of ‘selection bias’ that confronts historians, but does not altogether avoid it herself in her ‘tribute to America’s tolerance’ when she contrasts it with a Britain which ‘having alienated its colonies and fomented intolerance within them...fell from world-dominant empire to second-rate power while its former “nonwhite” colonial subjects descended into third world pathologies.’¹²¹ Chua indeed proves John Darwin’s claim that ‘it seems unlikely that we will be able to take a detached and apolitical view of Europe’s empire-building for a long time to come’ despite the fact that ‘empire (where different ethnic communities fall under a common ruler) has been the default mode of political organization throughout most of history.’¹²²

If the meaning of the term ‘empire’ is back on the agenda, so too is the meaning and use of ‘British’ and ‘Britishness’ – particularly among historians of ‘the British World’.¹²³ Indeed, John Darwin could recently point out that in its exploration of ‘the socio-cultural attachment between Britain and their “diasporic” relations’:

¹¹⁸ Linda Colley, ‘the difficulties of empire: present, past and Future’ *Historical Research*, vol. 79, no. 205 (August 2006), p. 375.

¹¹⁹ Saul David, *Victoria’s Wars: The rise of Empire* (London, 2006).

¹²⁰ Peter J. Cain, ‘Empire and the languages of character and virtue in later Victorian and Edwardian Britain’ *Modern Intellectual History*, 4, 2 (2007), pp. 249–273.

¹²¹ Amy Chua, *Day of Empire: How hyperpowers rise to global dominance – and why they fall* (Doubleday: New York, London, Toronto, Sydney, Auckland, 2007), pp. xvii and 230.

¹²² John Darwin, *After Tamerlane: the Global History of Empire since 1405* (2007), p. 23.

¹²³ See, for example, the papers in the special issue of the *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* (May, 2003), vol. 31, issue 2, *The British world: diaspora, culture and identity* (ed. Carl Bridge and Kent Fedorowich), and especially their own paper there, ‘Mapping the British World’, and its appended bibliography.

'British World' history has begun to reverse the long neglect suffered by the settler societies in the wider history of empire. It has also helped to restore a long-forgotten perspective of vital importance: the passionate identification of Canadians, New Zealanders, Newfoundlanders, and South African 'English' with an idealised 'Britishness'; and their common devotion to 'Empire' as its political form.¹²⁴

and he cites the editorial introduction to *The British World: Diaspora, Culture and Identity* (2003) by Bridge and Fedorowich as 'an excellent statement of this.'¹²⁵ Alan Lester also stated in the same year that:

In each settler colony, colonial identities were also created through communication with, and often out of antagonism towards, certain metropolitan social and political groups that concerned themselves, even if only periodically and half-heartedly, with events at the margins of empire and for that reason he considered 'not only British colonial, but also British metropolitan identities, and the discourses of colonialism connecting them' in his *Imperial Networks: Creating identities in nineteenth-century South Africa and Britain*.¹²⁶

However, concerned that 'historians have somewhat casually borrowed [the term 'national identity'] from the social sciences and then used promiscuously for their own purposes', Peter Mandler in 2006 analysed what social scientists think 'national identity' is and then considered its definitions and applications in modern British historiography.¹²⁷ Robert Young has examined the whole idea of Englishness/Britishness and shown how the earlier criteria such as race and place gradually gave way to a broader definition that included the Irish and the British diaspora throughout the world.¹²⁸ Saul Dubow has suggested 'that there are advantages in thinking of the British Empire less in the possessive sense – the empire that belonged to Britain – and more in the adjectival mode as a mode of description capable of taking into account self-declared affinities and values.'¹²⁹ Dubow argues:

that in defining the British world (particularly in the case of the dominions) we ought to distinguish between the overt projection of British

¹²⁴ John Darwin, *The Empire Project: The Rise and Fall of the British World System, 1830-1970* (2009), p. xi.

¹²⁵ C. Bridge and K. Fedorowich (eds.), *The British World: Diaspora, Culture and Identity* (2003).

¹²⁶ Alan Lester, *Imperial Networks: Creating identities in nineteenth-century South Africa and Britain* (2003), p. ix.

¹²⁷ Peter Mandler, 'What is "national identity"? Definitions and applications in modern British historiography', *Modern Intellectual History*, 3, 2 (Cambridge, 2006), pp. 271–297.

¹²⁸ Robert J.C. Young, *The Idea of English Ethnicity* (2008).

¹²⁹ Saul Dubow, 'How British was the British World? The Case of South Africa', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, vol. 37, 1, March 2009, p. 1.

power from abroad (imperialism) and the assertion of British influence by local actors whose affinities with their new countries of settlement overlapped with their sense of 'home' (colonialism).

As A.P. Thornton put it in 1959:

Australasians [*sic*]...living in a vast land surrounded by vaster seas did not want to cut themselves off spiritually from all other human companionship. To them, England was, and was to remain, an idea rather than a place: the idea of 'home'. Self-government having removed the Downing Street irritant, the natural loyalism of kinship found nothing to grate its teeth on, and so could sentimentalise about the imperial bond without feeling irked by it.¹³⁰

The relevance of this point to this thesis will be seen when, in Canada and Australia, formerly 'English' freemasons, transferring their allegiance from the UGLE to a local Grand Lodge, are shown to have protested their continuing loyalty to the British throne and their abiding affection for their 'mother' Grand Lodge.

Turning now to 'imperialism', it is evident that just as Thompson's 'self-governing dominions' have re-emerged in the discourse of empire, so too has the debate about the meaning of the term 'imperialism' – 'a very shifty word'.¹³¹ Despite Koebner's tracing of the development of the several meanings of this word in 1966, and Norman Etherington's 'attempt to chart a little bit more of the minefield by looking at theories of imperialism in their original historical context and then looking at their subsequent uses and misuses' in 1984, Andrew Porter still had to describe imperialism as a 'notoriously tricky term' in 1997.¹³² This thesis will not enter that minefield except to note Harland-Jacobs' definition of imperialism alongside Etherington's comment on the dangers of confusing imperialism with empire and colonialism, and then to mention other uses of the term in the twenty-first century.

Harland-Jacobs has defined imperialism as 'a conscious sense of membership in the empire and an awareness of imperial developments, a commitment to imperial unity and (at the very least) preservation of the empire, and a plan for making imperial relations a source of strength for Britain and the colonies', and she has accordingly described Carnarvon as a 'masonic imperialist'.¹³³ Etherington had earlier contended that:

¹³⁰ A.P. Thornton, *The Imperial Idea and its Enemies: a study in British power* (2nd edition, 1985), p. 25.

¹³¹ Norman Etherington, *Theories of Imperialism: War, Conquest and Capital*, (Beckenham, 1984), p. 4.

¹³² Koebner, *op. cit.*; Etherington, *op. cit.*, p. 4; A.N. Porter, "'Cultural Imperialism" and Protestant Missionary Enterprise, 1780-1914', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, (September 1997), vol. 25, no. 3, p. 372.

¹³³ Harland-Jacobs, *op. cit.*, p. 241.

Many...writers...have used the word imperialism to refer to two distinct processes which were going on long before that date: 1) the growth of European colonial empires, and 2) the expansion of the capitalist system. There is a good case to be made for following the practice of early-twentieth century Continental writers who used the words colonialism or colonial policy rather than the word imperialism to denote the first of these processes. An enormous amount of confusion has been generated by using empire, colonialism, and imperialism as synonyms...¹³⁴

Etherington also stated that there 'still plenty of room for research into the motives of European empire builders before the twentieth century', and this thesis will in later sections attempt to throw new light on Carnarvon's motives as one of Harland-Jacob's 'builders of Empire'.¹³⁵

We must now briefly consider the term 'imperialism' in the more recent discourse. Although it is probably fair to say that 'imperialism' when applied to the British Empire has generally been used pejoratively since the Victorian period, it is also noticeable that in several recent studies it has been used in the sense ascribed to it by Carl Berger in 2004, namely 'a resolve to strengthen the connection with Great Britain' by 'economic, political and military' means.¹³⁶ (His list of the means by which imperialism is exercised would have been more powerful if he had added to it the words 'social' and 'cultural'.) But, as already mentioned, the main debate about imperialism is now taking place in a wider context than the British Empire. Christopher Morris wrote in 2006 that 'Few people today seem to doubt that imperialism is wrong. All one usually needs to do to condemn an act or policy is to label it as imperialist.'¹³⁷ Writing at a time when America's influence throughout the world can be seen and its power in many cases felt, and when international organisations struggle to find any effective role in maintaining peace in the world, Morris nevertheless concluded that:

There is something good to be said about empire, and our automatic condemnations, although understandable, should not let us lose sight of this. Just as 'philosophical anarchists' and other skeptics of the state can admire and support decent states, so anti-imperialists may after all be able to give one cheer for empire.¹³⁸

In fact, a year earlier, Stephen Howe had shown just how far the wheel had already turned: 'Empire', 'imperial' and 'imperialist' are terms with complex and contested histories...In the political discourse of the 20th century's second half, they were almost always used pejoratively...Only the most hostile critics of United States

¹³⁴ Etherington, *op. cit.*, p. 268.

¹³⁵ Etherington, *op. cit.*, p. 268.

¹³⁶ Carl Berger, *The Oxford Companion to Canadian History*, ed. G. Hallowell, (2004) p. 305.

¹³⁷ C. Morris, *op. cit.*, p. 153.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 166.

foreign policy described it as either imperial or imperialist, or called America an empire. Today, however, the notion of an American empire is employed from a far wider range of viewpoints. It is of course still favoured by many negative critics of the phenomena concerned. But it is now used also by those who seemingly intend it in a neutral, analytical or descriptive way, and – in a more striking change – by strong supporters of a globally activist or interventionist policy. This has been accompanied by ever more vigorous debates over the relevance or otherwise to present-day US power of ‘lessons from history’¹³⁹

John Darwin, in his *Global History of Empire* (2007), introduced the useful concept of ‘demographic imperialism’ in relation to the colonies of white settlement in North America, South Africa and Australasia, and sees them in the late nineteenth century as the western and southern extensions of ‘Greater Europe’, the ‘western wing’ of the ‘liberal world’ that had evolved since the collapse of Napoleonic imperialism. For Darwin, the ‘European states were the main force that created the “globalized” world of the late nineteenth century’ in which ‘hotels...clubs and even churches formed the global grid of Europe’s commercial empire’. But in listing the reasons why the imperialists of the later Victorian period thought they ‘had broken the cycle of imperial decline’ Darwin omitted what for Carnarvon comprised the distinguishing feature of the British Empire: its ‘gift’ of self-government to the white settlements while maintaining their connection with Britain through ‘the common instincts of language, faith, laws, institutions, of allegiance to a common sovereign’.¹⁴⁰

To summarise. Though the history of the British Empire now attracts both the ‘old’ and the ‘new’ imperial historians (to use Marshall’s terminology), the history of the relationship between Britain and her white settler colonies did not receive much attention in the immediate post-colonial period. The growing power of the USA has prompted a reconsideration of ‘imperialism’, the means used to achieve and maintain global influence, and of the meaning and nature of ‘empire’, and the multi-faceted forms of dependency and domination. This has in turn begun to reawaken historians’ interest in the ties that bound Britain, Canada, Australia, New Zealand – and South Africa – together for so long.

¹³⁹ Howe, ‘British Empire and American Empire’, p. 1.

¹⁴⁰ Darwin, *op. cit.*, pp. 16, 225, 234, 495. Carnarvon, ‘Imperial Administration’, p. 763.

(c) Freemasonry and the British Empire

In 2007 Jan Snoek gave an overview of the progress scholars world-wide have recently made in 'researching freemasonry' as a global phenomenon, and he attempted to draw up an inventory of what still needs to be done.¹⁴¹ He does not specifically mention the field of imperial history in his inventory, but historians – whether imperial, political, religious, economic or social – have usually failed to explore the relevance of freemasonry to Britain's imperial past. Ronald Hyam, Paul Rich, Jessica Harland-Jacobs and Roger Burt are the main exceptions to this rule.

Hyam called freemasonry one of the 'props' of empire building, and wrote that for 'overseas society in the nineteenth century' freemasonry 'acted as a set of enlightened, liberal-minded, tolerant, but authoritarian and disciplined, values among soldiers as well as traders, and acted as a central focus of social activity for Britons overseas, often bringing together groups with no other common interest.' Its adherents 'believed freemasonry...to be...a handmaiden to the Church, to education and to social order.' Hyam's identification of freemasonry as one of the links in the imperial network is important, as is his distinction between freemasonry and the Orange Order. However, he weakens his assertion of the importance of freemasonry 'in building up the empire' by adding that like 'its doctrines of brotherhood sustaining the world-wide activities of traders and empire builders' the role of freemasonry in this respect 'is not easy to document'. Nor does his listing of 'notable freemasons', such as Carnarvon, justify his conclusion that freemasonry's 'role in spreading British cultural influences has been seriously underrated.' And he seriously overestimates the membership of 'English' freemasonry in Australia and Canada at the turn of the twentieth century by including the members of the by then entirely independent Grand Lodges in those territories.¹⁴²

Paul Rich spotted some links in the imperial context between the ritualism inculcated in Britain's private schools and in freemasonry, but he failed to substantiate his claims that 'Public school boys became the dominant force in the lodges', that 'Imperial leaders climbed the Masonic and government ladders at the same time', and that freemasonry was 'the ultimate old

¹⁴¹ J.A.M Snoek, 'Researching Freemasonry: Where are we now?', a paper delivered at the first International Conference on the History of Freemasonry, in Edinburgh in 2007 (available on 8 July 2008 at <http://www/freemasonry.dept.shef.ac.uk:80/workingpapers.htm>).

¹⁴² Hyam, *op. cit.* (1976), pp. 150-56.

boy network.¹⁴³ More recently still, Roger Burt has unearthed some useful data about Freemasonry and the networks used by Cornish miners throughout the empire during the Victorian period, though his claim that ‘Masonic connections at home and abroad clearly worked to the considerable professional benefit of the Cornish mining interest’ is not completely conclusive.¹⁴⁴ (Zoë Laidlaw is another who has examined several such imperial networks in some detail, but has thus far omitted the masonic networks.)¹⁴⁵

The member of the academy who to date has dug most widely and deeply into freemasonry in the British Empire is Jessica Harland-Jacobs, from her article ‘Hands across the Sea’ in 1999, through her doctorate thesis “‘The essential link’: Freemasonry and British Imperialism, 1751-1918’ (2000), the subsequent article ‘All in the Family: Freemasonry and the British Empire in the Mid Nineteenth Century’ (2003) and most recently her *Builders of Empire* (2007). Her argument that freemasonry played a central role in the empire has already been outlined in this thesis, as have the claims on which it will be tested here. This section will therefore conclude with a welcome to Andrew Prescott’s well-argued case for applying a new ‘chronological framework’ to the ‘history of British Freemasonry’, particularly his recognition that a ‘cataclysmic change occurred with the secession of a group of Canadian lodges from the United Grand Lodge [of England] in 1855 and the formation of the Mark Grand Lodge in 1856’ and that following the ‘eventual emergence of a late Victorian consensus...marked by the appointment of Edward Prince of Wales as Grand Master in 1874’ [‘English’] freemasonry ‘remained in essence unchanged right the way through until the 1960s’.¹⁴⁶

Prescott has also hit the nail on the head with his claim that ‘from at least the 1870s Freemasonry became a very effective expression of the wider moral, cultural and political consensus which underpinned the British Empire’ and that whatever the subject’s faith ‘there was a strong understanding of what constituted proper behaviour for a loyal British subject, and

¹⁴³ PJ Rich, *The Elixir of Empire: The English Public Schools, Ritualism, Freemasonry and Imperialism* (1989), pp. 82-3.

¹⁴⁴ Roger Burt, ‘Freemasonry and business networking during the Victorian period’, *Economic History Review*, LVI, 4 (2003), pp. 657–688.

¹⁴⁵ See Zoë Laidlaw, *Colonial Connections 1815-45: patronage, the information revolution and colonial government* (Manchester, 2005), and her essay ‘Closing the Gap: colonial governors and unofficial communications in the 1830s’ in Simon Potter (ed.), *Imperial Communication: Australia, Britain, and the British Empire c. 1830-50* (2005).

¹⁴⁶ Andrew Prescott, ‘A History of British Freemasonry 1425-2000. Farewell lecture to the Centre for Research into Freemasonry, 20 February 2006’, <http://freemasonry.dept.shef.ac.uk/pdf/workingpapers.htm> (actually presented in February 2007) inspected 23 July 2008. See also my 1993 paper ‘Pure – and Accepted – Masonry’, p. 85.

this was underpinned by a kind of instinctive religious and moral discourse of precisely the kind that Callum Brown argues characterised the religiosity of British society through the 1960s.¹⁴⁷ This thesis will argue that this view of freemasonry partly explains its attraction to Carnarvon, and it will thus join its voice to those who, like Richard Shannon, have learnt that one cannot understand what made statesmen like Gladstone, Salisbury – and Carnarvon – ‘tick’ without considering their personal religion, their attitudes to religions and atheism, and the parts they played in the religious debates of their day.¹⁴⁸

Notes on key sources

The majority of the evidence relevant to this thesis is to be found in Carnarvon’s private (rather than his official) papers, in the colonial and metropolitan press, and in the archives of the major masonic organisations based in England. The main collections of Carnarvon’s papers are to be found in the (British) National Archives at Kew, the British Library in London, and the Hampshire Record Office at Winchester.

(a) Non-masonic sources

Nothing directly relevant to freemasonry in the British Empire has been found in the extensive collection of Carnarvon material (in the series PRO 30/6) at the National Archives (Kew), or in the Colonial Office correspondence files there – relevant to Canada, South Africa and Australia – for the periods when Carnarvon was a Colonial Office minister (in the series CO 42 for Canada, CO 48 for the Cape, and, for the Australian colonies, the series CO 13, 201, 234, 280 and 309). Only one letter has been found there in which Carnarvon is addressed both as a minister and as a freemason, and none from Carnarvon to colonial officials that suggests that he was aware or thinking of any of them as fellow freemasons.¹⁴⁹ These largely official papers show how Carnarvon’s official mind was working during his four ministerial stints – on such

¹⁴⁷ Callum G. Brown, *The Death of Christian Britain: Understanding Secularisation* (2001).

¹⁴⁸ Richard Shannon, *Gladstone: God and Politics* (2008).

¹⁴⁹ PRO 30/6/43 (C-F), f. 218: f. 218: a letter dated 11 September 1874 from a barrister, seeking letters of introduction for his next visit to Canada, as issued to him by Carnarvon’s predecessors, beginning ‘My Lord – and Brother!’. Carnarvon’s correspondence with Sir Hercules Robinson (the colonial governor with whom he had the longest and closest contact) does not give any indication they knew of each other as freemasons: see, for example, Carnarvon’s first letter to him (PRO 30/6/154, ‘Correspondence as Colonial Secretary, 1866-67, Correspondents R’), f. 50, dated 9 October 1866, and their correspondence while Robinson was governor of New South Wales (CO 201/583 New South Wales Jan-Aug 1877 Sir H. Robinson).

subjects as confederation and annexation – and reference is made to them in this thesis where they complement or differ from the record left in the main collection of his private papers, namely those in the British Library. However, among the official files, in the series PRO 30/6, there is one (PRO 30/6/4) which contains several letters from the years 1874-78 between Carnarvon and the Prince of Wales as freemasons and on such masonic matters as the Prince's appointments as Patron of the Ancient and Accepted Rite and Grand Master of the UGLE, Lord Ripon's resignation as Grand Master, Carnarvon's appointment as Pro Grand-Master, the refusal of a German Grand Lodge to admit Jews, and the rupture with the Grand Orient of France. This correspondence seems until now to have eluded even masonic historians.

The 'Carnarvon Papers' in the British Library cover the whole of his life-time; they include his personal diaries (some of which have been redacted, unfortunately), much of his personal correspondence, and press-cuttings.¹⁵⁰ These proved to be the major source of material on Carnarvon the freemason and on his view of freemasonry in the British Empire, though the relevant papers have generally been overlooked by previous researchers.

A smaller collection of Carnarvon's private papers was found in the Hampshire Record Office, but this revealed nothing directly relevant to this thesis.¹⁵¹ The private archives at Highclere Castle contain little of masonic interest – apart from papers confirming Carnarvon's installation in Malta as a masonic Knight Templar, and several of the illustrated addresses presented to him by freemasons while Carnarvon was in Australia.

(b) Masonic sources

In the period under review (1850-90), freemasonry and its leading figures received far more coverage in the colonial and metropolitan press than it did in the latter half of the next century. There were several specifically masonic periodicals for sale at the principal public outlets or by subscription, and this thesis draws on them for articles relevant to Carnarvon and to freemasonry in the colonies. The main collection of masonic records and of publications by or about freemasons (including complete runs of English masonic periodicals) is archived in the Library and Museum of Freemasonry ['LMF'], an independent, charitable and publicly accessible body within Freemasons' Hall, London, where it is supported by the UGLE. It

¹⁵⁰ The Carnarvon Papers ('CP') at the British Library are catalogued in the series BL Add. 60757-61100.

¹⁵¹ Hampshire Record Office ('HRO') has filed the papers in its series 75M91.

houses the records of the proceedings of the 'English' Grand Lodge since its inception in 1717, as well as copies of those of other masonic bodies such as the Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons (founded in 1856). The records of the other masonic body with which Carnarvon was actively associated, the Supreme Council for the Ancient and Accepted Rite, are held at its London headquarters; they are less easily accessible, but those for its first 150 years (1845-1995) are described in considerable detail in John Mandleberg's *Ancient and Accepted*.¹⁵²

The structure of the thesis

The thesis proper begins with two chapters in which Carnarvon's masonic career and then his philosophy of empire are presented and analysed. The next chapter comprises three case studies, based on Carnarvon's visits to Canada in 1883 and to South Africa and Australia in 1887. In each of these the extent to which his masonic and political activities ran in parallel, merged or diverged are examined. The concluding chapter draws together the main points of the thesis and ends with a brief epilogue in which the fates of 'English' freemasonry overseas and of the British Empire as a whole in the 120 years since Carnarvon's death are compared and considered with reference to Carnarvon's 'noble dream...of a great English-speaking community, united together in a peaceful confederation'.¹⁵³ There are also three appendices besides the masonic glossary: key dates and events in Carnarvon's life, an organisation chart of the UGLE, and a brief explanation of the other masonic bodies mentioned in the thesis and of their relationship with the UGLE.

Through the presentation of Carnarvon's thinking across these two significant areas of his life, this thesis will advance two conclusions. First, the Grand Lodges formed in British colonies between 1855 and 1890 were not part of a broader imperial or even imperialist movement or institution dedicated to the preservation of the British Empire, but their formation was on the contrary one of the earliest harbingers of its eventual dissolution. And, secondly, that our understanding of the British Empire, how it functioned, its relationship to freemasonry and, in particular, of Carnarvon's role in both is not well served by the simplistic portrayal of

¹⁵² C.J. Mandleberg, *Ancient and Accepted* (1995).

¹⁵³ Carnarvon, 'Imperial Administration', *The Fortnightly Review*, vol. XXIV, N.S., no. CXLIV, 1 December 1878, p. 764.

him as a blundering, impulsive and fidgety ultra-imperialist who used freemasonry to further his imperial vision.¹⁵⁴

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¹⁵⁴ This is a composite portrait based on the descriptions of Carnarvon by Harland-Jacobs, Disraeli and Hamilton as outlined in (5.1) above.

Chapter 2: Carnarvon the freemason

Introduction

At his death in June 1890 Carnarvon was still the Prince of Wales's Pro Grand Master of the UGLE and his Provincial Grand Master for the masonic province of Somerset, posts which he had held since 1868 and 1874 respectively.¹ Nominally, he was also still the Prince's Pro First Grand Principal in the Royal Arch, though it would appear that after his appointment as such he took no further part in Royal Arch affairs. By that time, however, and with the exception of the Grand Master's private lodge (Royal Alpha Lodge, No. 16), Carnarvon had resigned his memberships of all the other masonic units to which he had belonged (and in which he had held the highest offices in the period from 1856 to 1878), whether in the Craft, the Royal Arch, Mark Masonry, the Knights Templar or the Ancient and Accepted Rite [henceforth 'the A&R Rite']. Carnarvon's health, never robust since his childhood illness in Constantinople, had been deteriorating for some time. He had managed to preside over his Provincial Grand Lodge at its annual meeting in Weston-super-Mare in August 1889, but in early 1890, knowing that he was dying from liver cancer, and having had influenza since Christmas (as had his wife), he had nevertheless decided to travel once more to his villa in Portofino in the hope that the climate there would be beneficial. Given these circumstances, and Carnarvon's distaste for masonic dining (see below), it is remarkable that after attending his daughter's wedding in Brighton on 4 March 1890 he accepted a last-minute invitation to put in an appearance that evening at a lodge dinner that was being held in the hotel in Folkestone in which he and his wife were spending the night before crossing the Channel. In an understandably short speech, Carnarvon:

first alluded to the unexampled benefits of masonry...The manner in which masonry had grown and developed in this country and other countries besides England showed that it was for the benefit of the community, more especially when they looked at the vast amount of public respect which they had acquired, and which was no doubt due to their motto 'Acts rather than Words'.²

¹ In 'English' freemasonry the office of Pro Grand Master can be filled only when the Grand Master is a prince of the blood royal, and, until 1976, its holder had to be a peer of the realm. The office is second only to the Grand Master's, and its occupant is the royal Grand Master's right-hand man, a masonic elder statesman to whom he can leave the oversight of the Craft's internal and external affairs, and who represents him when he is unable to preside over meetings of Grand Lodge or to carry out public ceremonies, such as laying the foundation-stone of a cathedral with the appropriate masonic ritual. See Appendices B and C.

² *Folkestone Express*, 8 March 1890, p. 5.



RIGHT HONOURABLE THE EARL OF CARNARVON.
PRO GRAND MASTER OF THE UNITED GRAND LODGE OF ENGLAND.

Thomas G. Agnew, London & Edinburgh.

In what proved to be the last masonic function he attended, and speaking off-the-cuff, Carnarvon concentrated on the social benefit of freemasonry and a reason for its reputation as a respectable association.³ For a tired and dying Carnarvon this was an impromptu distillation of the essence of freemasonry as he saw it in 1890 – and that in speaking in those terms he was not just polishing the egos of his audience.⁴ Carnarvon had recently published in the *Fortnightly Review* an article in which he expanded on his ‘testimony to the organization of Freemasonry as a powerful influence for good’:

Those who do not belong to the Order are accustomed to think of...English Masons as members only of a great friendly society or as mainly interested in convivial meetings. Such a notion is very far from the fact...The principle on which it ignores the varieties and opposition of nationalities, and invites men of different races* to a community of action for excellent and practical objects, has a direct and beneficent application...⁵

For Carnarvon, therefore, one of the advantages of freemasonry was that it provided a ‘common ground’ where its members could meet and ‘forget many of the divisions which public affairs have sometimes tended to exacerbate.’ He continued: ‘I have had perhaps unusual facilities for watching and measuring the strength of such an influence, and I am satisfied that I do not overrate its power or value.’⁶ True, the article addressed the situation in South Africa, which Carnarvon had visited a year or so earlier, but its paragraph on freemasonry reflects Carnarvon’s mature view of freemasonry as an oasis of toleration and moderation that could support men in their respectable public and private avocations to the benefit of society as a whole. However, as this thesis will now argue, that was not what had attracted Carnarvon into freemasonry some three decades earlier, though it became part of the

³ His last meeting with any of the hierarchy at the UGLE appears to have been with the Grand Secretary, ‘Major Clerke’, who attended a small dinner party the Carnarvons gave in London on 4 May 1890. (Diary entry for 4 May, CP BL Add. 60934.)

⁴ The audience included the mayor of Dover, and the deputy mayor of Folkestone (who happened to be the Master of the lodge and the lessee of the hotel).

⁵ Carnarvon, ‘The Cape in 1888’, *The Fortnightly Review*, June 1888, p. 880. *According to Daniel Gorman, ‘In the era preceding the First World War, Britons began to use the term “race” as a close synonym of “culture,” denoting the values and pedigree of a “national” people.’ (Daniel Gorman, ‘Wider and Wider Still?: Racial Politics, Intra-Imperial Immigration and the Absence of an Imperial Citizenship in the British Empire’, *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History* 3.3, 2002). However, Carnarvon’s usages of the word, as detailed later in this thesis, include: ‘the Dutch and English race’, ‘the British race’, ‘the human race’, ‘the Anglo-Saxon race’, ‘the pride of race and Empire’, ‘a native race’, and the ‘Imperial race’, and were thus cultural rather than national or biological.

⁶ Carnarvon, ‘The Cape in 1888’, p. 880.

reason that Carnarvon remained an active member of the Craft for so long, despite its being what he called in 1869 'an odd sort of affair'.⁷

The background to his masonic initiation in London in 1856

John Roberts rightly emphasised in 1969 that 'the preliminary to any historical construction must be the establishment of firm sociological knowledge about English freemasonry' and that the 'first and most important facts to establish are who became freemasons, and why.'⁸ Why, then, at the age of 24 did the rich 4th Earl of Carnarvon, of Highclere Castle near Newbury and the Constable of Carnarvon Castle in Wales, a Deputy Lieutenant for the county of Southampton, and a rising star on the opposition benches in the House of Lords, choose to become a freemason? Presumably he did not expect (or need) the pecuniary, social or career advantages that freemasonry's critics had long suggested were the advantages of membership. None of his immediate family or recent ancestors was or had been a freemason. Five of his close friends and contemporaries were not then and would never become freemasons: Lord Robert Cecil, later the 3rd Marquis of Salisbury and Prime Minister (though his father, the second Marquis, had been the UGLE's Deputy Grand Master from 1840 until 1844); Dudley Francis Stuart, Lord Sandon, later the 3rd Earl of Harrowby; Henry Parry Liddon (later Canon Liddon); Lord Lothian; and (later Sir) Robert George Wyndham Herbert, Carnarvon's cousin and life-long adviser on colonial matters.⁹ Nor were any of the senior clergy of the Church of England, any officers of Queen Victoria's household, or any prominent English politicians active in freemasonry 1855/56. Moreover, it was alleged that the upper echelons of the UGLE were occupied by Whigs, whereas Carnarvon and his coeval friends were Tories. Neither of Carnarvon's guardians, the MPs Sir Thomas Acland and Sir William Heathcote, was a freemason.¹⁰ However, in about 1855, Heathcote (who had been and was to remain a substitute father-figure for Carnarvon since the death of his father, the third earl, in 1849) introduced his protégé Carnarvon to the distinguished lawyer and probable freemason Robert Joseph

⁷ CP BL 60901, f. 171 (30 November 1869).

⁸ J. M. Roberts, *op. cit.*, p. 334-35.

⁹ Does one hear a note of regret in the comment of the 3rd marquis of Salisbury on the Primrose League (of which he was a 'Grand Master') that he believed 'it was set on foot by those who are familiar with the mysteries of another craft to which, unhappily, I do not belong'? (A. Roberts, *op. cit.*, p. 277).

¹⁰ 'Thomas Dyke Acland' is recorded in the *Minutes* of the Apollo University Lodge for February 1830 as having been proposed for initiation, but not as having been initiated.

Phillimore, with whom Carnarvon maintained close, friendly and frequent contact until his death in 1885.¹¹

More significantly, among Carnarvon's friends at the time was a group of neighbouring gentlemen who were slightly older than the nobleman Carnarvon, generally shared his social, political and religious views, had matriculated at the same Oxford college (Christ Church) just before Carnarvon, were still visiting Oxford while Carnarvon was 'up' – and who were active freemasons in Oxford and London. The most enthusiastic freemasons of these were the brothers-in-law William Wither Bramston Beach MA of Oakley Hall, near Basingstoke, and the Rev. George Raymond Portal MA, a curate in London at St. Barnabas', Pimlico, the youngest son of John Portal Esq, JP DL, of Freefolk House and Laverstoke.¹² Both Beach and George Portal had been initiated in the Apollo University Lodge [hereafter 'the Apollo'], Oxford, in 1848 (the year in which Portal became President of the Oxford Union, with Lord Robert Cecil as its Secretary) while both were undergraduates at Christ Church. Both had risen quickly through the ranks in the lodge and had already served as its master while Carnarvon was reading for his degree. In fact, by the time Carnarvon gained his BA, his friends and neighbours, Beach and Portal, had been promoted to senior offices within the Craft and the Royal Arch in the masonic province of Oxfordshire by its (Whig) head, the former professor of Anglo-Saxon, the Rev. Charles John Ridley of University College.¹³ Together they had resuscitated another Oxford lodge ('Churchill') and had been among the founders of the Coeur de Lion Encampment, Oxford, in the masonic order of Knights Templar. There they had quickly been joined by several other Christ Church men, including the Rev. William H. Lyall, Sir Edmund Lechmere, and Lord Lincoln (later the 6th Duke of Newcastle). Indeed, by the time Carnarvon was initiated into the Craft, Beach and Portal had already been office-bearers in the English Grand Conclave of (masonic) Knights Templar, under which Beach and Lord Lincoln

¹¹ It has so far been impossible to prove Phillimore's membership satisfactorily, but a 'Bro. Phillimore' attended the initiation of Alan Herbert, Carnarvon's brother, on 30 January 1856 (see the entry in the *Minute Book* of the Apollo University Lodge, now deposited in the Bodleian Library, Oxford); and Carnarvon wrote to Phillimore on 26 May 1883: 'My dear Phillimore... I cannot unfortunately give you any votes as I have already given them to my own Prov Gd. Lodge.' (CP BL Add 60862). The evidence of the introduction is to be found in Carnarvon's letter of 20 August 1861 (CP BL Add 60861 f. 13).

¹² Beach's sister had married George Portal's blood and masonic brother, the self-confessed 'liberal-Conservative' Wyndham Spencer Portal, whose initiation George himself had proposed. Beach had proposed the eldest of the four Portal brothers, Melville Portal MP DL, as a candidate for initiation into freemasonry in 1848 but Melville apparently chose not to become a member. (See the *Minute Books* of the Apollo University Lodge, Oxford, for 20 February and 11 June 1849.)

¹³ *The Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. XLII (New Series), vol. July-December 1854, p. 519.

already occupied the office of Provincial Grand Commander (the one in Hampshire, the other in Nottinghamshire) and in which they were to remain until their deaths in 1879 and 1901 respectively.

Clearly, therefore, there were enough enthusiastic freemasons of sufficient social standing in and around the circle of Carnarvon the undergraduate for him to have known about their masonic interests and to have become a freemason himself while he was at Oxford, had he so wished. If any overtures were made to him at the time (as seems likely) Carnarvon probably turned them down because he was determined to concentrate on obtaining a first-class degree within less than three years from matriculation, which he achieved in November 1852.¹⁴ Then, in the following year, he and Sandon made a long expedition to the major classical sites of the Middle East. There Carnarvon was 'expecting to hear a great deal' about 'the question of magic respecting the building of Baalbec', and there are entries in his diary that indicate his growing interest in the earliest stonemasons, the Templars, and the esoteric.¹⁵ His romantic view of the crusades period was encouraged by one of his favourite authors, Sir Walter Scott, whom Carnarvon mentions in his description of the scenes he witnessed at Said Bey's castle that 'might well recall the union of Christian and Saracenic chivalry which, perhaps, is most familiar to us in the descriptions of Sir W. Scott, and which even if somewhat idealised, is yet no very great departure from history'. Carnarvon even thought that the charges against the Templars of Gnosticism, fire-baptisms and worse 'though not sufficient in themselves to establish the connection of Christian and Druse, might yet perhaps open a plausible field of speculation'.¹⁶ In early January 1856 he attested his growing interest in such associations as the Illuminati, the Templars, the Rosicrucians, and in the stonemasons who built Europe's cathedrals. After asking his audience the rhetorical question 'In religion, after our duty to God, what is our duty to man but one universal brotherhood?' Carnarvon emphasised such associations' 'clear recognition of the union of the principles of religion and knowledge'. He went on to explain that:

the men of the greatest learning and ability of that age lived and moved within the limited sphere of their own secret associations; they condensed their

¹⁴ Hardinge, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, pp. 40-41.

¹⁵ CP BL Add 60889, 16 February, 1859. See also his notes on his visit to the hall of the Grand Masters in Malta (18 and 24 January), to Baalbec (2 March), and his entries for 21-23 April and 12 May.

¹⁶ Carnarvon, *Recollections of the Druses of the Lebanon and notes on their religion* (1860), pp. 36 and 95. In re Carnarvon and Scott, see also Hardinge, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, pp. 53 and 63, and vol 3, p.306.

thoughts into pithy and dense sayings, they spoke in myths and allegory, and what they dared to commit to perishable parchment, they inscribed under the form of mystic symbol and quaint device upon the granite walls of many of the old cathedrals in Europe. Secrecy, however, was not only the bond of union. They were connected and consolidated by a strange fabric of knowledge, built in part on chemistry and natural science, in part upon a mystical interpretation of scripture.¹⁷

There were, however, other interests which Carnarvon developed between 1852 and 1856 that also predisposed him to accept an invitation to be initiated into freemasonry in London in 1856, namely Britain's relationship with its colonies (especially those in British North America), and Tory politics (especially the Tories' determination to remove the Whig gerontocracy that was generally held to be responsible for the disasters of the Crimean War).¹⁸

Who or what provoked Carnarvon's initial interest in the colonies remains unclear – unless it was the influence of his colonially well connected headmaster at Eton, Edmund Coleridge, or his friend Robert Cecil's report of his visit to South Africa and Australasia between July 1851 and May 1853. The fact remains that in his maiden speech in the House of Lords in January 1854 Carnarvon, as a 22 year-old, drew attention to the prospects of progress attributable to 'Anglo-Saxon energy and enterprise' in China and 'those ill-starred colonies' in the West Indies, to the 'hope of internal improvement and a more general diffusion of knowledge among the subject millions entrusted to our rule' in India, to the ever greater prosperity of British North America, and to 'Australia and New Zealand [where] the abundant resources...have been so rapidly developed under the system of colonial self-government, that they will shortly play no unimportant part in the world's history.' These, he declared, were 'the results of the moral predominance of the Government of Great Britain over distant countries – results which may, I am convinced, in no small degree be attributed to the sway which the commercial policy of this country has exercised.'¹⁹ Then, in 1855, in the middle of the Crimean War, Carnarvon made his first speech devoted solely to colonial affairs when he asked the government whether it intended 'to propose a vote of thanks or some other public acknowledgment to those colonies or dependencies of the British Crown who...have evinced

¹⁷ Carnarvon's address on 'voluntary associations' delivered to the Reading Literary, Scientific, and Mechanics' Institution (*CP BL Add 60945*, ff. 23-24).

¹⁸ For a good summary of the general effect of the Crimean War on British society (including freemasonry), and for pointers to other relevant texts, see Andrew Prescott's essay 'Well Marked? Approaches to the History of Mark Masonry' in *Marking Well* (2006), ed. A. Prescott, pp. 19-24.

¹⁹ Hansard's *Debates* vol. 130 p. 5 (31 January 1854), of which there is a typed copy in *CP BL Add. 60945* and a version in Herbert, *op. cit.*

their sympathy with the mother country by moral or pecuniary proffers of assistance'. Carnarvon could not 'help referring to the peculiar strength of the feelings manifested by the Canadians on this occasion ...' and he concluded that 'Such a vote would tend to strengthen the attachment to the mother country which exists in the Colonies'.²⁰ When he attended the 154th anniversary meeting of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel with Cecil in the summer of 1855 he met, among others, the Bishop of Colombo and the Chief Justice of Upper Canada.²¹ And on 11 January 1856, when he presided over a banquet in honour of Captain Robert Portal (George Portal's brother and 'a Crimean hero'), Carnarvon was sufficiently knowledgeable and concerned about the colonies to say:

He, for one, could never forget the way in which the distant dependencies and colonies of this country, dependencies and colonies which had been treated with too little attention, too little thought, and too little tenderness manifesting in a way the most striking he had ever heard of in history, their forgetfulness and forgiveness of past injuries, and their devotion to their mother country.²²

Carnarvon's early interest in Tory politics is, of course, less puzzling. Only his determination to win first-class honours in record time prevented him from rushing to support Lord Derby and being 'dragged into the midst of London life' in 1852.²³ Carnarvon's father had been an active member of the House of Lords. Both Carnarvon's guardians (Acland and Heathcote) were or had been MPs of a conservative persuasion. He had been surrounded by young Tory friends such as Cecil, Sandon, Beach and George Portal while at Oxford, and it was possibly only his widowed mother's warning against becoming 'too much of a Tory' that restrained his active participation in party politics (such as they were at the time) between graduation and his return from the Middle East.²⁴ However, in January 1854 the leader of the Opposition in the House of Lords, Lord Derby, selected him to move an address in answer to the Queen's Speech, and by the end of 1855 Carnarvon had also spoken impressively in the Lords against a clause in the Oxford University Bill partially admitting dissenters, for the recognition of the colonies' contribution to the Crimean war effort, and against the Religious

²⁰ Hansard, *op. cit.*, vol 136, p. 2071 (1 March 1855).

²¹ *Manchester Guardian*. 27 June 1855, in CP BL Add 60945.

²² A cutting from a local newspaper for 11 January 1856 in CP BL Add. 60945.

²³ See Carnarvon's undated letter of February/March 1852 to his mother, quoted by Hardinge, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, p. 42.

²⁴ Hardinge, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, p. 43.

Worship Bill, the 'essence and intention' of which in his view 'was the mutilation of the Prayer Book'.²⁵

Meanwhile, party politics, Canadian freemasonry, and the Catholic church had unusually become topics of conversation and debate in Freemasons' Hall in London and in the masonic press, and these matters were being stirred into members' increasing dissatisfaction with the UGLE's management of its jurisdiction in England and in the colonies. What Carnarvon was later to describe as the masonic 'kingdom' was showing signs of breaking up: in October 1855 some of the UGLE's lodges in Canada seceded from their parent Grand Lodge and jointly with 'Irish' and 'Scottish' lodges formed there the first independent Grand Lodge in any British colony. George Portal asked 'to be furnished with any authentic information on the subject' about the Canadians in preparation for the next meeting of Grand Lodge, claiming that 'either there has been a most unMasonic precipitation on the part of the Canadians, or else the most culpable neglect and dereliction of duty on the part of the authorities of Grand Lodge.'²⁶ From this we can see that, like Carnarvon as quoted above, Portal too was worried that the Canadian colonists may have been 'treated with too little attention, too little thought, and too little tenderness', and it is reasonable to assume that Portal – wishing to demonstrate to Carnarvon the relevance of freemasonry to his other public interests – discussed this worrying colonial development with his friend. Carnarvon's attention may also have been drawn to the article on the 'Severance of the Canadian Lodges' that appeared in the masonic press on 1 December 1855 and which encapsulated the views that Beach and Portal shared about their Grand Lodge: it accused Lord Zetland of attending only when 'the nomination of some Whig *protégé* is mooted'; it blamed the loss of Canada on 'the dullness' of 'the incapables, Lord Zetland, Bro. White [the Grand Secretary] and Co.'; and it urged action to prevent any further losses such as that of 'the attachment to our interests in our American colonies.'²⁷ On the religious front, Carnarvon was undoubtedly aware of his friend Portal's campaign for 'religious liberty' in the practices of the Anglican church (and probably of Zetland's opposition to the alleged 'romish' practices at Portal's church in Pimlico) and of the current 'papal aggression'

²⁵ *Hansard*, vol 138, p. 1852, 12 June 1855.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 99.

²⁷ *The Freemasons' Magazine and Masonic Mirror*, 1 December 1855, pp. 725-726.

scare.²⁸ He would therefore have been interested to hear that in December 1855 Portal proposed a vote of sympathy for those 'French' and 'Belgian' freemasons who were suffering persecution at the hands of intolerant Roman Catholic priests in Mauritius and Belgium.²⁹ That Portal brought this matter to Carnarvon's attention is indicated by the documentation to which they both referred in their speeches on the subject, Portal's on 1 December 1855 and Carnarvon's on 11 February 1857.

But the efforts of Portal and Beach and their ilk to stir the executive ('the dais') of Grand Lodge out of its torpor and to address these concerns made little or no advance against the entrenched position of the Grand Master (the 2nd Earl of Zetland, a Knight of the Garter and a former Whig MP) whom some were beginning to suspect of favouring fellow Whigs in his appointments, the most obvious example for the conspiracy-theorists being his choice of the 2nd Earl of Yarborough (also a former Whig MP) as his deputy. Beach and Portal calculated that they needed a masonic base in London from which they and their fellows could launch concerted attacks upon the positions occupied by the hierarchy in Grand Lodge. In 1855 they and other similarly-minded members of the Apollo in Oxford therefore took over an old and bankrupt lodge in London, Westminster and Keystone Lodge No. 10, 'as a means of reuniting them in London...of gaining an influence in the G. Lodge, the management of which was not so satisfactory as could be wished [and where]...a most extensive system of jobbing existed.' In short, 'they were determined to put a stop to it, and have the right men in the right places.'³⁰ Carnarvon must have appeared to George and Wyndham Portal and to Beach as one of the 'right men' – if he could be persuaded to join: he knew them well, he shared their interests, his curiosity about freemasonry had been aroused; he had time on his hands, he was gaining a reputation for his debating skills in the House of Lords, and he had the social standing to address and challenge the likes of Zetland as an equal. Beach and George Portal had indeed prepared the ground well, even to the extent of arranging to have Carnarvon's favourite brother, Alan, initiated in the Apollo on 16 January 1856. Carnarvon accepted their invitation and on 5 February 1856 he was initiated in Westminster and Keystone Lodge, along with the Hon. W.A.

²⁸ James W. Daniel, 'Henry, the 4th Earl of Carnarvon and the Revd Canon GR Portal: a remarkable friendship (1850-1889)', *Transactions* (2004), The Leicester Lodge of Research, pp. 44-45. *The Times*, 19 July 1854, 'The Religious Feud at Pimlico' p. 12.

²⁹ *The Freemasons [sic] Magazine and Masonic Mirror for 1856*, pp. 44-45.

³⁰ George Portal, speaking at an Apollo University Lodge dinner on 21 February 1856, which Carnarvon attended as a visitor (*Ibid.*, pp. 211-13).

Amherst (the future Tory MP and Viscount Holmesdale). The following day Carnarvon wrote to his brother Alan: 'Last night I was also initiated, so that we are now both brothers of the craft'.³¹ To complete the circle, as it were, Beach and Portal arranged for Beach's cousin, Sir Michael Hicks Beach (later to succeed Carnarvon as Colonial Secretary) to be initiated in the Apollo two weeks later, and Alan Herbert and Hicks Beach then did the same for Auberon, the youngest of the three Herbert brothers, on 20 May 1856.

Carnarvon himself does not seem to have recorded his reasons for becoming a freemason, but the essential background and the most likely factors contributing to his decision that have been set out in this section comprise the best that can be done with the surviving records to answer John Roberts' questions 'who' and 'why'. Indeed, there would appear to be no previous such study of any individual's reasons for joining the Craft. But we must now consider what Carnarvon actually did as a freemason, to what extent freemasonry met his expectations, whether his view of freemasonry changed between 1856 and 1890, and why and in what capacity he remained an active member of the Craft.

Carnarvon's early masonic activities (1856-69)

(a) Carnarvon and the Craft, 1856-59³²

Carnarvon's early supporters were not the only freemasons who foresaw an outstanding career for him within freemasonry. The *Masonic Mirror* wrote:

It is a matter of sincere congratulation to the Craft, that so talented a nobleman and practised debater as the Earl of Carnarvon should have joined the Masonic body. His advent may be looked upon as giving hope of a new era in the conduct of the business of the G.L.³³

And both Lord Zetland (who had long known Carnarvon's family) and his new deputy, Lord Panmure (the Secretary of State for War during and since the Crimean War), marked their appreciation of him by attending his installation as Master of Westminster and Keystone Lodge in 1857, where they were presumably pleased to hear him say: 'Each fresh step I take in the study of our great science...convincing me still further of its incalculable ramifications, and

³¹ Carnarvon to Alan Herbert, 6 February 1856, in a file marked 'Carnarvon's letters to Alan 1848-1860' at the Hampshire Record Office (75 M 91 V3 1-10).

³² The first part of this section concentrates on Carnarvon in Craft freemasonry between 1856-59 because although he joined two other branches of freemasonry (the Royal Arch and the Mark) soon after his initiation into the Craft, he did not take an active part in them until after 1859.

³³ *The Freemasons [sic] Magazine and Masonic Mirror for 1856* (1 March 1856) p. 192.

makes me gaze with wonder and awe on the boundless horizon of its influence'.³⁴ However, by that early stage of his masonic career Carnarvon had already started or been pushed along a path that would soon put him out of the running for a senior appointment in Grand Lodge until 1868. Carnarvon's inexperience of the parameters of debates within Grand Lodge, his excessive reliance on the more confrontational George Portal, and possibly his overestimation of his own abilities led to his falling out of favour not only with the Grand Master and the executive of Grand Lodge, but eventually with the majority of those who attended Grand Lodge meetings, several provincial leaders and most of the masonic press – in a manner which in some respects presaged his failure as Colonial Secretary in the 1870s to persuade the Dutch in South Africa to support his plans for confederation.

Between 1856 and 1859 George Portal and Carnarvon, supported by Beach and several others, regularly challenged 'the dais' at the UGLE's Quarterly Communications on the way in which the Provinces in general and the Province of Canada West in particular were being administered, and tried to assert the supremacy of Grand Lodge over its elected and appointed leaders.³⁵ In 1856 the 62 year-old Grand Master, Lord Zetland, had been in office since 1843. Soon after Zetland reappointed the ailing and aged Yarborough as his deputy and promoted the 30 year-old Viscount Goderich (another Whig MP and the later Marquis of Ripon) as his Senior Grand Warden in April that year, the young Rev George Portal had his first heated exchange in Grand Lodge with his Grand Master – over Zetland's high-handed treatment of the UGLE's remaining lodges in Canada, the unbusinesslike conduct of the UGLE's business in general, and the inefficiency of the Grand Secretary in particular. Carnarvon entered the fray just as soon as he was qualified to attend Grand Lodge, addressing it and meetings of lodges in Somerset, Devon and Hampshire on the same subjects. After almost riotous scenes at the Quarterly Communication on 3 September 1856, at which Carnarvon clashed with the presiding officer, a majority voted late in the evening to adjourn the meeting until 1 October 1856, when it would complete its stated business. That 'Emergency Meeting' was accordingly summoned and held in the Grand Master's absence and against protests from 'the dais'. During the somewhat heated debate Carnarvon set out his personal view of how the British colonies,

³⁴ *Masonic Observer*, no. 6 (20 June 1857), p12.

³⁵ For a fuller documentation of Carnarvon's interventions in Grand Lodge (and their results) between 1856 and 1859 see James W. Daniel, 'Henry, the 4th Earl of Carnarvon and the Revd Canon GR Portal: a remarkable friendship (1850-1889)', *Transactions* (2004), The Leicester Lodge of Research, pp. 40-73.

and the 'English' lodges therein, should be administered, including his principle of the application of what the European Union terms 'subsidiarity' (quoted extensively earlier in this thesis). In his view the day-to-day administration of 'local business' should be left to the people on the spot, but their allegiance to the UGLE should be maintained and the UGLE should continue to exercise its functions as their court of final appeal.³⁶

Portal's and Carnarvon's criticisms of 'the dais' were at first supported by the masonic press but, to ensure that their views on the need for masonic reform were properly aired, they and their fellow Tories and Oxford graduates Beach and Wyndham Portal secretly financed the *Masonic Observer* when it was launched in late 1856.³⁷ We know from Carnarvon's diary that he also contributed (anonymous) articles to the *Masonic Observer*, and that Portal was even more intimately involved with it: 'During the winter [1856/57] I gave Portal the use of my pen occasionally for the *Masonic Observer*...Some of my articles were very successful and in some cases were reported in American Masonic newspapers – wh. is a fair criterion.'³⁸ The periodical's tone and approach are demonstrated in its first number where it compares the appearance of an exceptionally large number of provincial masons to hear Carnarvon speak (at the emergency meeting of Grand Lodge in London on 1 October 1856) with 'Macaulay's description of the successful stand made by the Tories in the reign of William III against an attack of their opponents, when "the country squires came up booted and spurred, cursing the badness of the roads and the rascally Whigs.' Indeed, the Crimean War having only recently ended, the language of warfare was not uncommon in the *Masonic Observer's* campaign against 'the talented oligarchy who do us the honour to mismanage our affairs', as for example when another contributor to its first issue hoped that the 'despots of the dais' would be quickly vanquished:

Like foes in whose unguarded rear
The British bayonet sticks,
They vanished at the battle cry
Of true Masonic liberty
In eighteen fifty-six.³⁹

³⁶ *Masonic Observer*, November 1856, vol. 1, filed on CP BL Add 60945 as f. 33.

³⁷ The *Masonic Observer* was published by a Bro. R E M Peach, a bookseller and a Tory party worker in Bath, whom Portal had met at a lodge meeting in Bath and who subsequently visited Westminster and Keystone Lodge in London. See Daniel, 'Carnarvon and Portal', p. 51. On Peach see 'Death of Mr R.E. Peach' as reported in the *Bath Chronicle* of 2 March 1899.

³⁸ CP BL Add 60892, f. 3.

³⁹ *Masonic Observer*, November 1856, vol. 1, p. 7.

'What a radical you are,' Sir William Heathcote wrote to Carnarvon, 'at least in Masonic matters.'⁴⁰

Bolstered by the encouragement he received from 'country' masons, Carnarvon got well into his stride as an up-and-coming statesman when he addressed a masonic assembly in Bath in January 1857, where, according to the *Bath Chronicle* (for which Mr Peach, the publisher of the *Masonic Observer*, occasionally wrote) he claimed that 'Masonic Society' could be 'found in every clime', that freemasonry 'still inculcates the same principles, as in the days of its remote foundation', and that 'it has been weighed in the balance of many thousand years, and not found wanting.' He wanted the 'country lodges' to help him bring 'strength and vigour' back into Grand Lodge, 'the Parliament of the order'. More 'especially he was desirous of 'preserving Canada as an affiliation of the order in England' by conceding 'her just and reasonable claims' to be 'admitted to a proper share in the management of her local affairs, and a concurrent voice', with Grand Master Lord Zetland's, in the election of the Provincial Grand Master.⁴¹ According to fuller versions of the speech in the masonic press and in Carnarvon's papers, Carnarvon also said that that he would 'be always willing' to serve freemasonry; that its members had a duty 'to make G[rand].L[odge]. the centre of action, the Parliament, if I may so term it, of our federation'; and that 'the supremacy of G.L' should be asserted while 'any infraction of the just prerogative of the G[rand].M[aster]. should be resisted, thereby preserving 'the constitutional relationship between the two great powers' of the Craft. Turning his focus on to the colonies Carnarvon is then reported to have said words that have since been mistranscribed by both Hyam and Harland-Jacobs: 'Following closely in the wake of Colonisation, wherever the hut of the settler has been built, or the flag of conquest waved, there Masonry has soon an equal dominion', by which Carnarvon simply meant that masonic lodges followed upon the heels of British settlers and soldiers.⁴² In Canada, Carnarvon continued, freemasonry had 'reflected...the English Empire' and he suggested that it might even have 'consolidated' it. As such, it too deserved a greater degree of self-government, and Grand Lodge would therefore have to make concessions to its remaining members in Canada 'For no

⁴⁰ Hardinge, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, p. 223. (Unfortunately Hardinge does not give the source for this quotation.)

⁴¹ *Bath Chronicle*, 15 January 1857, a typed version of which is filed in CP BL Add 60945, f. 38.

⁴² Hyam, *op. cit.*, (1976), p. 154, and Harland-Jacobs, *Builders of Empire*, p. 4, both omit 'an'. And, contrary to Harland-Jacobs' claim (*ibid.*, p. 213) that Carnarvon 'drew on his experience as a colonial administrator when confronted with concerns from country and colonial lodges', he had no colonial administrative experience on which to draw before his first ministerial appointment in February 1858.

community can continue to cohere except upon the universal principle of human institutions – that of mutual advantage; and this can only be secured by a system of reciprocal concessions’.⁴³ This speech has been dwelt on in some detail here as it shows key elements that were to remain constant in Carnarvon’s view of England’s kingdoms, both masonic and politic, as a federation of units, enjoying the mutual benefits of the maximum degree of self-government but recognising the ultimate supremacy of England as represented by its ruler.

Carnarvon was soon to return to this at another meeting of provincial freemasons in March 1857, but in the meantime he suffered his first setback in Grand Lodge. Carnarvon and the other critics of the dais welcomed the appointment of a Colonial Board (to ensure the more efficient handling of colonial correspondence) and the replacement of the ancient Grand Secretary. Moreover, Zetland had indicated a more conciliatory approach to the Canadian lodges. But the parliamentary tactics that the ‘Oxford party’ attempted to use in Grand Lodge were soon deprecated as inappropriate by some of its senior members, and Carnarvon was personally rebuked when in February he spoke to his motion in Grand Lodge ‘That in consequence of the persecution of Roman Catholic Brethren, a succinct account of the objects and laws of Freemasonry be drawn up for distribution amongst Lodges in Roman Catholic countries.’ The motion was seconded by a Jewish member from Hampshire, and Carnarvon won applause when he expressed the hope that the ‘succinct account’ he requested would ‘clearly show, that if there be one great principle which has been the mainspring of our Order, that principle has been religion. And that if there be any practice which has been rigidly adhered to, it has been that of non-intervention in political and religious matters.’⁴⁴ Beach and Portal supported the motion, but it was ‘put and negatived without a division’ after a claim that it was unmasonic to ‘vilify the religion of any one of our Brethren’ and after Lord Panmure’s advice that as the UGLE had no ‘authority over the persecutor’, and the ‘Romish priests’ had ‘access to our deepest and most sacred secrets’, the motion would ‘give the persecutors the opportunity of offering a direct and open insult to Grand Lodge.’⁴⁵

⁴³ The typed version of the speech filed on CP BL Add 60945, ff. 109-110, (which I think must be the Urtext), purports to be (but actually differs considerably from) a transcription of the version printed in the *Freemasons’ Magazine and Masonic Mirror*, vol. 1, 1 February 1857, pp.126-27.

⁴⁴ See the report of the Emergency Meeting of Grand Lodge on 11 February 1857 in the *Freemason’s Magazine* of 1 March 1857, p. 196.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 196-201.

Nevertheless, Carnarvon then took his reforming campaign to a joint meeting of lodges on 26 March 1857 at Stonehouse, Devonshire, which he attended with another of his friends at Eton and Christchurch, and fellow member of Westminster and Keystone Lodge, Viscount Valletort, the future Earl of Mount Edgumbe.⁴⁶ There, having told his audience that 'English Freemasonry might be viewed as a kingdom; and its policy like that of a kingdom, had three great relations – foreign, colonial and domestic', he criticised Grand Lodge for its handling of all three. His proposal ('conceived in a moderate spirit, and expressed in temperate language') for a 'succinct account of the objects and laws of Freemasonry [to] be drawn up for distribution amongst Lodges in Roman Catholic countries' had been rejected by Grand Lodge not on any matter of principle but because 'he had stated in the course of the debate little creditable to Masonic administration'. Correspondence from France had been left unacknowledged for months. The Grand Master's concessions to Canada were welcome, but Carnarvon feared that they:

came tardily, that the feelings in Canada in favour of independence had grown very strong, and that it was more than doubtful if their colonial supremacy could now be preserved. He was afraid that in this matter they had gone too near that fatal rock "Too Late", which had shipwrecked so many empires, dynasties and governments.⁴⁷

His efforts to involve provincial freemasons in Grand Lodge's deliberations had been thwarted, and he had been charged with 'innovation' while all he was trying to do was restore the 'constitutional relationship between the Grand Master and Grand Lodge, between Grand Lodge and its component parts, between English and Colonial Lodges.'

Carnarvon's continuing criticism of Grand Lodge must have been well known to Lord Panmure, recently appointed as Zetland's Deputy Grand Master, when in May 1857 he presided at a dinner on behalf of the 'Royal Freemasons' Girls' School' for which Carnarvon and his fellow 'stewards' had been fund-raising. But Panmure brushed this aside when he proposed Carnarvon's health, calling him 'but a young Mason and a young man' but one who 'promised to be distinguished both as a Mason and a man'.⁴⁸ All was also sweetness and light when Zetland and Panmure (along with 200 or so others) attended the dinner following

⁴⁶ *The Freemasons' Magazine*, 1 May 1857, p. 389.

⁴⁷ From a typed transcript of an article in the *Masonic Mirror*, vol. 1, 1 May 1857, p. 389, datelined 'Stonehouse, March 1857', and filed on CP BL Add 60945, ff. 111-112.

⁴⁸ From a typed transcript of an article dated 13 May 1857 in the *Masonic Mirror*, vol. 1, 1 June 1857, p. 448, filed on CP BL Add 60945.

Carnarvon's installation as Master of Westminster and Keystone Lodge on 20 May 1857. Panmure called Carnarvon 'one of the young and rising statesmen of the day'; Zetland said that Carnarvon was 'one for whose family and connections I feel a great interest and affection' and that he held 'the dignity which he has this night attained to be but an instalment of the honours to be hereafter conferred upon him', and Carnarvon said of the Grand Master's office that 'Out of the sphere of public life there is, in my opinion, no position in society which carries with it so high an honour, and at the same time so high a responsibility.'⁴⁹ At about that time the Grand Master even authorised the formation of the first of several lodges to be named 'Carnarvon'.⁵⁰ All this was as if Beach, after his return from a short visit to Canada and his election as an MP, had not written to Zetland on 5 May 1857 (and surely told Portal and Carnarvon) that the Grand Master's concessions to Canada were indeed too late and that the English masonic province of Canada (West) was bent on seceding and forming another independent Grand Lodge in the territory.⁵¹

Carnarvon did not attend Grand Lodge for twelve months thereafter. True, he addressed a local lodge in Newbury, and attended the Provincial Grand Lodge of Hampshire to receive the high office of Provincial Senior Grand Warden, but, judging from the tone of his speech to a 'grand demonstration' chaired by the mayor of Bath in the city's Guildhall on 10 February 1858, his approach was now more conciliatory, despite the loss of most of the remaining 'English' lodges in Canada:

It would be an easy task for him to show that every prediction he had made had been miserably but literally carried out. ... Those Canadian Lodges which owed allegiance to us twelve months since did so no longer. The old time-honoured connection between the two countries had been severed for a day and for ever. [However] He wished to say nothing to revive latent animosities; he would rather say, 'Let bygones be bygones; let the dead past bury its dead, and let us act in the living present'.⁵²

A few days later, Carnarvon, still only 27, was appointed as the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies in the incoming Tory government. In that new capacity, Carnarvon then wrote

⁴⁹ From a typed transcript of an article dated 20 May 1857 in the *Masonic Observer*, no. VI, 20 June 1857, pp. 7-8, filed on CP BL Add 60945.

⁵⁰ Carnarvon himself was one of the petitioners and attended the lodge's consecration on 16 July 1857 when Beach installed Portal as its first Master, and Portal appointed Valletort, Amherst (now Holmesdale), Lyall and Beach to the principal offices.

⁵¹ *The Freemasons' Magazine* 1 October 1857, pp. 814-15.

⁵² Typed extract from *The Freemasons' Magazine* vol 4, p. 310, 'Grand Demonstration at Bath' (10 February 1858), filed in CP BL Add 60945 ff. 116-17.

under the Colonial Office's letterhead to a Canadian masonic correspondent, explaining his attitude to the latest breakaway of 'English' lodges there:

I would have wished much that the old connexion between the Craft in England & Canada had not been broken off...

Whilst indeed, I cannot concur fully in the view which was generally adopted, & acted upon in Canada, I perfectly appreciate both the difficulties by which the Craft there was beset, and those which even now stand in the way of a unity of action & organisation. I hope that, in the course of time, temper & right feeling on both sides will put these obstacles aside, & will effect a more complete union...

I, for one, have abstained in Grand Lodge from advocating that recognition of Canadian Masonry as an independent body, not from any doubt that such a recognition would be an expedient measure, and one likely to restore a kindly feeling between the members of the Craft here & in Canada, but because I feel that, at this moment, it would be refused, or acceded to in an unsatisfactory manner. Whenever the opportunity offers itself for urging this measure, I shall certainly not fail to do so in the manner in which I then think to be most effective.⁵³

It was most unusual for Carnarvon to write on masonic matters in his ministerial capacity (and today his use of the official letterhead would probably be considered a misuse of public property), but the letter does echo the imperial concerns he voiced before he became a freemason: the dangers of neglecting distant colonies and the value of maintaining the empire's integrity.⁵⁴ It also foreshadows his preferences for 'complete union' within a colony before granting or acknowledging its independence and for maintaining 'a kindly feeling' between the colonies and the imperial metropolis.

But during Carnarvon's year-long absence from the masonic 'parliament' after June 1857 the atmosphere between the more visible members of the 'Oxford' party and 'the dais' had become embittered, and the articles in the *Masonic Observer* ever more strident. In June 1858 the magazine again accused Zetland of prostituting his office by promoting yet another Whig (the inexperienced Lord Durham) to the office of Senior Grand Warden rather than someone like Carnarvon, Beach or Lechmere, who were (in the article's estimation) better qualified for the office – and Tories. The as always anonymous writer asked whether the Craft was 'content that this state of things should continue' and that it should 'submit to the mere bauble of an effete oligarchy, and have all those excluded from their offices who might interfere with the perpetuity of Whig Grand Mastership?' This was too much of an insult

⁵³ Carnarvon to Harington, 8 April 1858, of which there is a copy in CP BL Add 60786, ff. 49-52.

⁵⁴ 'Most unusual' as evinced by a trawl through his papers in the National Archives and the British Library.

against the honour of the Grand Master's office and of its holder, Lord Zetland, for him and the majority in Grand Lodge and in the provinces to bear. The administration of Grand Lodge had improved; the Grand Master had admitted his mistakes over Canada and had tried to make amends; he had refuted the charge of appointing only Whigs to senior office (after all, he had recently made Wyndham Portal his other Grand Warden); and the general post-Crimean mood in the country (and not just in Grand Lodge) was indeed in favour of letting bygones be bygones – yet here was the organ of the 'Oxford' party still disturbing the harmony of Grand Lodge, and still trying to make party political capital out of its affairs. In the masonic press these and other criticisms were increasingly levelled against the 'Oxford' or 'Observer' party: 'We much fear that some of our younger Brethren take a wrong view of Freemasonry and of the duties of Grand Lodge, and that they look upon the latter as a sort of House of Commons' and 'It does not conduce to the good of the Order that every proposition of the executive, whether good, bad, or indifferent, shall be opposed, and every act criticised in a party spirit by the opposition'.⁵⁵ George Portal and Carnarvon were now openly suspected of being behind the *Masonic Observer*, and Portal was believed to have led Carnarvon astray in that connection and in Grand Lodge, as this letter from a 'country mason' to the editor of *The Freemasons' Magazine* shows:

Deeply, sir, must his true friends regret – and lamentable is it for the Craft in general to see – that a young nobleman of such fair pretensions and natural abilities as my Lord Carnarvon should have allowed himself to be entrapped by that unquiet spirit at his elbow into a connection with a publication which descends to so vile a course of proceeding...It cannot, of course, Sir, be wondered at, nor is it other than a laudable ambition on his part, that the Earl of Carnarvon should look forward, at some future day, to occupy the proud, and hitherto nobly filled, position of chief of the Masonic body; but, blindly led by his reverend and litigious prompter, he fails to perceive that he can never win his way to such a position by proposing or in any way countenancing acts which must tend to subvert the peace and good order of our society, and that in so great a degree as to call down the well merited indignation of the whole Craft.⁵⁶

Zetland threw himself on the mercy of Grand Lodge, and the Craft rallied to his call. The debts of the *Freemason's Magazine* were covered by some of 'the dais' and its fire was turned on the dissidents in Grand Lodge, where by the end of 1858 Panmure had cleverly and finally turned the tables on the 'Oxford' party, and on Portal and Carnarvon in particular. Portal then

⁵⁵ p. 434

⁵⁶ P. 462

exacerbated a spat between Carnarvon and the president of the Board of General Purposes (the surgeon, John Havers), and the letters between them were published in the masonic press, somewhat embarrassing for a young man in his first ministerial appointment.⁵⁷ Derby's government fell shortly afterwards, in February 1859, and Carnarvon moved back on to the opposition's benches.

Carnarvon did not attend Grand Lodge again for several years. He had misjudged the field, and had relied too heavily – and often at a distance – on a friend of more determined views. He had allowed his distinguished name to be attached to a project that he could not control and whose supporters stood accused of bringing (Tory) party politics into Grand Lodge. Carnarvon had been aware of Portal's reputation in Grand Lodge:

in some respects I lost ground not I think from being worsted in reasoning or speaking but from a strong combination on the part of all the Executive against me – as they were now thoroughly alarmed for the security of their own power – and from a certain distrust wh. had arisen of Portal in the mind of G.L.⁵⁸

but he had not sufficiently distanced himself from Portal in Grand Lodge or from the *Masonic Observer* to avoid being damaged himself in the cross-fire their actions provoked in 1858. Whereas the twenty-seven year old Lord Hartington (the future Liberal leader and Duke of Devonshire) was made the Craft's Provincial Grand Master for Derbyshire in 1858, Carnarvon and Beach were passed over for similar appointments in Somerset and Hampshire until a decade later, and George Portal remained excluded from office in Grand Lodge until 1885.⁵⁹ Given Carnarvon's disappointment in the Craft Grand Lodge at the end of 1858, why and to what extent did he remain active in freemasonry between 1858 and 1869? And does that activity explain why in 1870 he accepted appointment as Deputy Grand Master of the UGLE at the invitation of the Earl de Grey, by then a minister of cabinet rank in Gladstone's first (Liberal) government, but who as Viscount Goderich MP had been one of Zetland's alleged 'Whig' appointments in Grand Lodge in 1856/57?

As far as can be seen from the extant records, the only Craft meeting Carnarvon attended between the rout of the 'Observer party' in December 1858 and early 1869 was the

⁵⁷ *The Freemasons' Magazine*, 22 December 1858, p. 1167. See also Daniel, 'Carnarvon and Portal', pp. 60-61.

⁵⁸ CP BL Add 60892, f. 3, dated 'Aug 18 1857'.

⁵⁹ Carnarvon had unsuccessfully pressed Portal's claims to Grand Master Ripon in 1871 (*Ripon Papers*, BL Add. 43623, ff. 22 and 76, 3 and 21 March 1871) and Grand Master the Prince of Wales in 1877 (Carnarvon to Prince of Wales, 22 December 1877, PRO 30/6/4, f. 108).

annual installation meeting of Westminster and Keystone Lodge in April 1859. Carnarvon, completing his second and last year as Master of the lodge, presided and should have installed his elected successor, but he delegated the work to his more expert friend, William Wither Bramston Beach. Carnarvon did not attend his 'mother' lodge again, and he also dropped out of the Craft lodges he had joined in Oxford (the Apollo) – which he had visited only once – and Winchester (the Lodge of Economy), which he appears never to have visited. What seem to have kept his interest in freemasonry alive during this period were three of the Craft's offshoots or branches: Mark Masonry, the Knights Templar (though very briefly), and the A & A Rite.

(b) Carnarvon and Mark Masonry – 'a type of society in general', 1856-63

Although the degrees of Mark Masonry had already been practised by some members of the Craft for about a century before Carnarvon even became a freemason, they were without a controlling body in England until Lord Leigh (a personal friend of Zetland's, the Provincial Grand Master for Warwickshire, and the Queen's Lord Lieutenant for the county) and the other members of the London Bon Accord Mark Lodge formed the masonic world's first Grand Lodge of Mark Masters on 23 June 1856. Portal had joined Bon Accord two months earlier and Carnarvon just a week before the establishment of the Mark Grand Lodge.

Portal quickly exploited Carnarvon's membership of the order by arranging that one of the earliest acts of the new Grand Lodge was to warrant the Carnarvon (Mark) Lodge as number seven on its register, of which Carnarvon was to be the founding Master and the first Senior Warden at its consecration in September 1857. Although no documentary proof has been found, Portal's past form, Carnarvon's relatively junior masonic status, and the fact that a number of men from Westminster and Keystone joined the Carnarvon (Mark) Lodge strongly suggest that Portal and other members of the Oxford/Observer party set up the Carnarvon (Mark) Lodge for the same purpose as they had taken over the Westminster and Keystone Lodge in the Craft, namely to get 'the right men in the right places'. The Mark Grand Lodge was, however, still struggling for membership and recognition; Carnarvon had not yet fallen out of favour in the Craft and Lord Leigh must have hoped that Carnarvon would add lustre and attract membership to the new Grand Lodge when in June 1858 he made him his Deputy Grand Master and his Provincial Grand Master for Somerset (a county in which Carnarvon was

a significant landowner). The more experienced and enthusiastic Beach and Portal received other senior appointments at the same meeting and they were to become the most influential members of the order for the next thirty years. When Leigh retired as Grand Master in June 1860 his nominee, Carnarvon, was elected in his place. Carnarvon appointed Beach and Portal on to his executive, while reserving the two most senior (though less influential) positions for two noblemen: the viscounts Holmesdale MP (Deputy Grand Master) and Powerscourt (Grand Senior Warden) – all being members of Westminster and Keystone (Craft) Lodge, and now ‘the right men in the right places’.

As Carnarvon had no need to join this nascent off-shoot of the Craft his reasons may have been a combination of curiosity and the persuasion of his closest masonic friends (Portal and Beach) and of a respected young nobleman (Leigh).⁶⁰ Carnarvon’s election as Grand Master indicates that his electorate in the Mark saw both the potential of his name and the advantage of having at their head someone who would make sure that the Mark Grand Lodge did not replicate the faults of the Craft Grand Lodge which he had so clearly identified and articulated: neglect of the provinces at home and in the colonies, autocratic management by an entrenched executive, the perception of cronyism in the Grand Master’s appointments to the senior offices, and the inefficient handling of Grand Lodge business.

At his installation on 23 June 1860 Carnarvon recognised ‘that much was required in the way of organisation to put the working of the degree on a proper footing’ but he also admitted that as he was speaking ‘without full knowledge of their real position’ he would first have to ‘consult those with more knowledge of the Degree than himself’ and then proceed ‘with the greatest caution.’ In fact he (and his successors) would have to and did rely on the administrative skills of Portal and the expertise of Beach in matters of ritual to sort out the order’s problems. Carnarvon’s personal experience of some lodge meetings can be gathered from his attempt to impress on his (other) officers ‘the necessity of punctual attendance to, and a strict performance of, their duties... [as] nothing would produce a worse effect upon a visitor to a Lodge than to hear the ceremonies – as was too often the case – bungled and spluttered over by officers ignorant of their duty.’ He also made it quite clear that in the appointment of

⁶⁰ As an example of Carnarvon’s continuing curiosity I quote from his speech on 20 June 1860 in which he is reported to have said that he ‘had lately been reading a Masonic book in which he found an account, he would not call it a legend, of how Freemasonry flourished in Britain under a truly British Queen, Boadicea; history had further informed them how it flourished in the time of good Queen Bess’. *The Freemasons’ Magazine*, vol. 2 (New series), no. 51, 23 June 1860, p. 495, a copy of which is filed on CP BL Add 60945.

Provincial Grand Masters he, as Grand Master, 'claimed as his privilege the most perfect independence', though he 'would always be prepared to give full weight and consideration to any recommendation conveyed to him by the Lodges.'

Here, then, was an aristocrat accepting election to a social position which he thought he was entitled to hold (despite his relative inexperience), still demanding and obtaining the acceptance of his 'most perfect independence' in one respect, but stating his willingness to pay more attention to the wishes of the institution's wider membership.⁶¹ As Carnarvon reminded his audience, 'on mutual confidence alone could be based a system of government for mutual advantage'; after all, 'Mark Masonry, like Craft Masonry, was a type of society in general' and the 'two great principles in the constitution of society' were that its members 'were bound to submit to all just and lawful authority, whilst on the other hand justice should be equally and impartially administered and to those seeking protection from authority.'⁶² As shown above, Carnarvon had already stated these two themes – freemasonry as a microcosm of society and 'government for mutual advantage' – in the speech the *Bath Chronicle* reported in January 1857. He would develop them as his public and masonic careers progressed.

In fact, however, Carnarvon was not a particularly active Grand Master: he consecrated one Mark Lodge (in Winchester, with Beach and Portal again in the leading offices) and attended the three annual meetings during his 'reign'. Meanwhile, Beach and Portal pulled the order into such good shape that in June 1862, after congratulating 'Grand Lodge on the satisfactory position the degree now occupied' Carnarvon was able regretfully to announce that he would resign a year later for two reasons: 'the inroad upon his time, occasioned by the increase in his public duties, deprived him of that leisure he would have gladly devoted to their service' (which explained why he had made no progress in setting up the Mark province of Somerset) and 'his sentiments and opinions with regard to a lengthened tenure of high office were well known to many of those whom he now addressed'.⁶³ His last acts as Grand Master were in June 1863 when, before installing Holmesdale as his successor, he backed two proposals for Mark Grand Lodge's consideration (both of which were, however, ultimately

⁶¹ This observation accords with David Cannadine's view of the position of England's patricians up to the 1870s as summarized in the 'Prologue' to his *The Decline and Fall of the British Aristocracy* (1990), pp.1-15.

⁶² These quotations are taken from the report of the meeting printed in *The Freemasons' Magazine*, vol. 2 (New series), 23 June 1860, p. 495 *et seq.*, and filed on CP BL Add 60945.

⁶³ *The Freemasons' Magazine* vol. 6 (New series), no. 156, 28 June 1862, p. 508 *et seq.*, and filed on CP BL Add 60945.

rejected): to limit to three years the tenure of Grand and Provincial Grand Masters; and to introduce postal voting as this 'would widen the election franchise, not by extending the suffrage, but by facilitating its exercise by those already possessing it'.⁶⁴ (Carnarvon was to resign from Disraeli's government a few years later over its plans to extend the suffrage, in his view excessively.)

The 'increase in public duties' to which Carnarvon referred in his resignation speech in June 1862 included those associated with his election as High Steward of Oxford University in 1859 (an office which he then occupied until his death), his activities in the House of Lords (where he was already chairing committees), and his concern for the preservation of the Book of Common Prayer.⁶⁵ Apart from their contribution to his decision to resign as Mark Grand Master they, like his marriage in 1861, are not at this stage relevant to this thesis. However, his appointment as Secretary of State for the Colonies in 1866 is relevant, and it will be considered in the following sections on Carnarvon's imperial philosophy and on Canada. Carnarvon took no further part in Mark Masonry until 1870 (see below).

(c) Carnarvon and the Ancient & Accepted Rite and the (masonic) Knights Templar, 1860-62

The 'Ancient and Accepted Rite' for England, with its thirty-three degrees and headed by a 'Supreme Council' of nine members of the 33rd degree, was constituted in London in 1845. The Rite in England was from the outset restricted to Trinitarian Christians, and it soon established a reputation for exclusiveness – social standing and respectability were key membership considerations. Nevertheless, although by 1860 its Supreme Council consisted of members of the patrician or upper professional classes, it still lacked a grandee – and the Earl of Carnarvon, already the Mark's Grand Master and destined (according to the Lords Zetland and Panmure) for high office in the Craft, definitely attracted its attention: three of its nine members attended the special meetings called on 8 and 9 October 1860 to receive him into the rite and quickly promote him to the 30th degree.

Once again we can only surmise why Carnarvon joined the rite, but on this occasion it would appear that Portal and Beach played no direct part in his recruitment: Portal seems to have attended only two meetings (his own 'perfection' in the Rite sometime between 1848 and

⁶⁴ Minute Book of the Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons.

⁶⁵ By the 1850s the office of High Steward had become decorative rather than active. Over time the importance of the office seems to have decreased in inverse proportion to the social status of the occupant.

1851, and Carnarvon's about ten years later), and Beach seems not to have been a member at all. It would appear likely that Carnarvon's curiosity and possibly even his ambition had been aroused by like-minded freemasons who were either fellow members of Westminster and Keystone (Craft) Lodge (by then the most socially distinguished lodge in the UGLE besides Royal Alpha, the Grand Master's private lodge) or senior members of the Mark Grand Lodge, or both. Taking the names at the top of the list of those present at Carnarvon's 'perfection' we see that the presiding officer, Dr W D Jones, was Carnarvon's Treasurer in Mark Grand Lodge; and the three members of the Supreme Council were George Beauchamp Cole (Mark Provincial Grand Master, Surrey), J A D Cox (a member of Westminster and Keystone since 1841) and Col H A Bowyer (the Craft's Provincial Grand Master for Oxfordshire, a Grand Steward of the Mark Grand Lodge at its formation in 1856, and also a member of Westminster and Keystone).⁶⁶ The Rev George Portal and the Grand Chaplain of the UGLE, the Rev W H Bowyer (Col Bowyer's brother), also attended. No evidence has been found that Carnarvon attended another meeting of the rite until February 1871.

In November 1860, a month after his entry into the A & A Rite, Carnarvon was made a member of Melita Encampment of (masonic) Knights Templar (under the Grand Conclave of England) in Valetta, Malta, while awaiting Lord Sandon's arrival there before their onward passage to Egypt.⁶⁷ No direct connection has been found between Carnarvon's masonic or private contacts at that time and the outpost of the Knights Templar in Malta, and we therefore have no explanation as to why or how he joined the order then or there. As already mentioned, his interest in the Knights Templar predated his masonic initiation, and it therefore seems probable that in Malta in 1860 he acted independently. However, Carnarvon's subsequent interest in the (masonic) Knights Templar seems to have been almost as short-lived as his

⁶⁶ Minute Book of Grand Metropolitan Chapter, No. 1, normally held at the Supreme Council's offices at 10 Duke Street, St. James', London. It is also possible that Carnarvon already knew and had received a favourable report of the rite from Capt A W Adair, like him a significant landowner in Somerset, a contemporary of his at Oxford (where he had been initiated in the Apollo), a member of Westminster and Keystone, and soon (in 1863) to be preferred to Carnarvon as the next (Craft) Provincial Grand Master for Somerset. Captain Adair had already received his 30th degree in 1854 (when he was only 25 years of age), at the same meeting of Colonel Bowyer (see above) and Michael Costa, the most famous conductor in England at the time.

⁶⁷ There is no mention of this in his diary (*CP BL Add 60894*), but at Highclere I recently found a manuscript certificate from the Melita Encampment, Valetta, Malta, dated 15 November 1860 (signed by 'Bertram Mitford, 1st Captain' and 'Wm Winthrop, E. Commander') to the effect that Carnarvon was installed there on 13 November 1860.

activity within the Royal Arch.⁶⁸ Although he was listed as the 'Great Seneschal' of the Grand Conclave in London for 1861 and 1862, no evidence has been found that he took any active interest in this chivalric order after leaving Malta in 1860.

Carnarvon's return to high masonic office 1869 – 1871

(a) Background to the return

Carnarvon appears to have taken a complete break from freemasonry, or at least from attending masonic meetings, between his resignation as Grand Master of the Mark in June 1863 and early 1869. This may be attributable to the facts that he was not appointed to any executive masonic office during that time, that he was becoming ever more involved politically – and that in 1866, when the Tories returned to government, he was promoted to Cabinet rank as Colonial Secretary and 'embarked on the sea of Colonial Administration.'⁶⁹ Carnarvon was immediately thrown into Canadian, South African, and colonial church affairs.

His greatest political achievement at this time was to steer through the House of Lords the Bill for the Confederation of the British North American Provinces in February 1867, and thereby to enable the formation of the first 'Dominion' (meaning a domestically self-governing white settlement colony) of the British Empire. Here it suffices to note that Carnarvon did not attempt to force confederation on the Canadian colonies, but encouraged them along the path towards a 'perfect union' that would be to their and Britain's advantage, and to accept a greater degree of domestic self-government while remaining subjects of the British Crown. While it is possible that in his careful handling of the birth of this new relationship between the metropolis and its remaining colonies in North America in the 1860s Carnarvon still had in mind the calamitous example set by Zetland in his initial handling of the Canadian lodges' desire for more self-government in the 1850s (see above), it is more likely that Carnarvon was determined to avoid the Whigs' errors to which some still attributed the American declaration of independence in the previous century. There is certainly no evidence that in 1866/67 either John A. Macdonald, the leading Canadian negotiator, or Carnarvon was aware or took any notice of the fact that they were both freemasons. Indeed, there is no evidence at all in these negotiations to bear out Harland-Jacobs' unsubstantiated allegations of freemasonry's

⁶⁸ Carnarvon was 'exalted' in Alfred Royal Arch Chapter in Oxford in May 1857 – but he never attended again, and his unsigned membership certificate still lies in the archive at Highclere Castle.

⁶⁹ Carnarvon to Phillimore, 4 July 1866, CP BL Add 60861, f. 23.

'infiltration of the colonial service' and that it 'helped lubricate the wheels of imperial administration.'⁷⁰

The Colonial Secretary's main South African interest centred upon the Bishop Colenso affair which in turn led him to consider the constitutional position of 'the colonial church' – by which he meant the Anglican churches in colonies with 'responsible government' – and, in particular the extent of their independence from the ecclesiastical and imperial controls of London and Canterbury.⁷¹ By February 1867 Carnarvon was able to state in the House of Lords that 'he regarded it as settled that the Colonial Churches in all temporal matters were completely independent, although there existed a strong desire on their part to maintain the same standards of faith as were recognized by the Church of England.'⁷² However, *The Times* was to warn him against making the separation of Colonial Churches from the Church of England 'a part of Imperial policy' and to urge him to 'limit our legislation to removing every technical obstacle which may prevent them [the Colonial Churches] or others from dissolving it [the last tie to England] deliberately of their own accord.'⁷³ *The Times* need not have worried. Carnarvon did not make the separation a part of his imperial policy. Colonial bishops attended the first Lambeth Conference a few months later. And, as will be demonstrated in the examination of his visits to Canada in 1883 and South Africa in 1887, Carnarvon's acceptance (rather than any promotion on his part) of the independence of colonial churches was conditional upon their retention of the essential features of Anglicanism and of their loyal membership of the loose family that was headed by the British monarch and the Archbishop of Canterbury. This tolerant and pragmatic approach, and the application of the principle of subsidiarity in imperial matters, was consistent with Carnarvon's attitude towards movements for masonic independence in Canada, South Africa and Australia.

Carnarvon's resignation from Derby's administration in February 1867 isolated him from his party and caused him to despair of party politics. He was opposed to widening the suffrage too far and too fast, and he was disgusted by Disraeli's eleventh hour fiddling with the

⁷⁰ Harland-Jacobs 'The Essential Link', p. 25.

⁷¹ 'Responsible government': 'local self-government, operating under Cabinet conventions' (Burroughs, *op. cit.*, p. 187), and under the British Crown, represented by a Governor appointed by the sovereign, advised by the British Cabinet.

⁷² *The Times*, 16 February 1867, p. 8.

⁷³ *The Times*, 18 February 1867, p. 8.

proposed bill.⁷⁴ To his mentor, Phillimore, he expressed the vain wish that the Liberal Gladstone would call into being 'that moderate Conservative Liberal party in the Country' and admitted 'I feel alternately humiliated, indignant, thankful to be personally safe from the shipwreck of political & almost honour wh[ich] I see about me... I am sadly out of heart both at the present condition of things & at the prospect of that wh. is coming'.⁷⁵ He involved himself more closely with university and church matters, but in October 1867 he recorded 'I have nothing in the nature of professional duty except the H of Lords that induces me to go on' and some months later he wrote: 'I sometimes wish that I could look at matters more as a partisan : but I cannot, and the foolishness and violence of both parties whenever I come in contact with them, repel me.'⁷⁶ Then, between April and July 1868, he openly fell out in the House of Lords with the Tory government in general (over his siding with the Liberal opposition in the Irish Church bill debate) and with the Lords Derby and Cairns in particular: 'The Govt very angry... and when I attempted to make a personal explanation at the end the Govt and the back benches were so furious that they positively shouted me down.'⁷⁷

(b) Carnarvon's appointment to high masonic office in the Craft (1868-70)

All this, together with a sense of duty as a local patrician, may explain why, despite his disappointment in the Craft ten years earlier, Carnarvon in August 1868 accepted Zetland's invitation to accept the office of Provincial Grand Master for Somerset when Captain Adair's military duties took him away from the county. Carnarvon probably welcomed this appointment to a prominent but not very demanding position in a traditionally conservative association where party politics and ecclesiastical debates had no place.⁷⁸ However, Carnarvon's subsequent career in the Craft leads me to believe that his political rival, the Earl de Grey and Ripon, had already selected him as his eventual successor as Deputy Grand

⁷⁴ Carnarvon's resignation speech, *Annual Register* (1867), p. 33.

⁷⁵ Carnarvon to Phillimore 29 March and 4 April 1857, CP BL Add 60861, ff f.26 and 27.

⁷⁶ Carnarvon to Phillimore 24 October 1867, CP BL Add 60861; Carnarvon to his mother 4 February 1868, quoted by Hardinge, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, p. 8.

⁷⁷ Carnarvon's diary entries for 27 and 29 June 1868 (CP BL Add 60900).

⁷⁸ As was normal in the nineteenth century, the Provincial Grand Master left the day-to-day management of his masonic province to his deputy, and Carnarvon inherited a very experienced deputy in Capt. H. Bridges. Between his installation (by Beach) in January 1869 and his death in 1890 Carnarvon presided over fifteen of the (normally uneventful) annual meetings of his Provincial Grand Lodge, and, in his capacity as Provincial Grand Master, publicly laid the foundation stone of the West of England Sanatorium at Weston-super-Mare in May 1871 and dedicated the new masonic hall at Taunton in 1879.

Master. Zetland, already in his seventies, was likely to retire soon. De Grey had been the popular Provincial Grand Master for the West Riding of Yorkshire and Zetland's Deputy Grand Master since Panmure (by then the 11th Earl of Dalhousie) had retired in 1861. He had also succeeded Panmure as Secretary of State for War, and had served two short spells as Secretary of State for India. At the time of Carnarvon's appointment De Grey was the Lord President of the Council in Gladstone's first government. No evidence has been found that Carnarvon and De Grey had spent any social time together even within freemasonry up to that point, though a tragic circumstance was to throw them more closely together three years later (see below). Politically they appear to have disagreed most recently over Canadian Confederation while Carnarvon was seeing the bill through the Lords: 'In going down to the C.O. today I met & talked to De Grey. He expressed himself very anxiously on the question of Confedn.'⁷⁹ They were, however, both members of Grillion's, the cross-party dining club known for 'its generous and courteous comprehension of diversities of political views' and on whose 'neutral ground' there were 'occasions afforded of recognising the intellectual and moral merits of antagonists in the great arena of our national life.'⁸⁰

At this stage, in mid-1868, none of the actual or future leaders of the UGLE had any inkling of an event later that year which would in due course significantly raise the profile and heighten the attractiveness of freemasonry in Britain and throughout the empire: the initiation and immediate rapid promotion of the Prince of Wales in the Swedish Grand Lodge at the instigation and hands of the King and Crown Prince of Sweden in late December 1868.⁸¹ The news began to break in the British press (the *Daily News* and then *The Freemasons' Magazine*) in mid-January 1869, but it was not confirmed until after Carnarvon's installation (by Beach) in Somerset on 12 January ('Innumerable speeches & finally I made my escape with Beach').⁸² Indeed, Zetland, the English Grand Master, was not certain enough of the regularity of the Prince's initiation or of his seniority within the Swedish order until 3 June 1869 when he announced to the English Grand Lodge his intention to make the Prince a 'Past' [i.e. honorary] Grand Master of the UGLE (just as Carnarvon was speaking in the House of Lords to his idea

⁷⁹ CP BL Add 60899, Carnarvon's entry for 31 January 1867.

⁸⁰ Lord Houghton (1880), quoted in the preface to *The Annals of Grillion's Club: A Chronicle, 1812-1913* (Oxford, 1914).

⁸¹ For further details see my paper, 'Anglo-Swedish Relations', most recently published in my *Masonic Networks and Connections*, (2007) pp. 34-64.

⁸² *Ibid.*, pp. 47 and 48; CP BL Add 60901, 12 January 1869.

of life peerages in the House of Lords).⁸³ Whether or not the Prince discussed freemasonry with Carnarvon at their two dinners together at Wildbad in August 1869, Carnarvon, who had until then not had a very high opinion of the Prince, subsequently wrote in his diary that the Prince ‘quite won my heart’ (by his kindness to H. Acland’s sick daughter).⁸⁴

On his return to England, Carnarvon held his first Provincial Grand Lodge (‘where I made many speeches & eat [*sic*] as little as possible’). He then installed his friend Beach in Southampton as the Provincial Grand Master for Hampshire where:

they gave me a greater ovation than I think I have ever received anywhere before. It is an odd sort of affair – how much the professors of Masonry believe of it, it is difficult to say, but they certainly do act upon it in a considerable measure.⁸⁵

From this comment one can add to the possible reasons why Carnarvon remained active in freemasonry that he quite naturally appreciated the warmth of his reception at masonic events (compared with the Tory party’s official cold shoulder), and that he admired the way in which members of the Craft tried to live up to the principles they professed.⁸⁶ Despite Carnarvon’s return to the masonic fold, however, and although the Prince of Wales was about to arrive on the English masonic stage, Carnarvon did not attend the Prince’s reception and investiture in Grand Lodge in December (though his diary does not indicate any more pressing engagement that day). His absence from De Grey’s installation as Grand Master on 14 May 1870, following Zetland’s resignation, is, however, easily explainable: he was at Highclere to receive the body of his favourite cousin, Edward Herbert, on its return from Greece. (De Grey’s installation had already been delayed by the abduction and murders of Herbert and of De Grey’s brother-in-law by Greek brigands in April, a tragedy which certainly brought Carnarvon and De Grey more closely together.)⁸⁷ De Grey, for his part, was not present at Grand Lodge on 1 June 1870 to invest Carnarvon as his deputy, and it was left to Zetland to perform that task. A further strengthening of fraternal ties can however be seen from the fact that both Carnarvon and the

⁸³ *Ibid.*, pp. 50 and 51.

⁸⁴ CP BL Add 60901, 6 and 11 August 1867. ‘H. Acland’ is likely to have been Sir Henry Wentworth Acland, the Regius Professor of Medicine at Oxford since 1857.

⁸⁵ CP BL Add 60901, 30 November 1869.

⁸⁶ These principles are set out in some detail in the ‘Charge after Initiation’, delivered to a new member of the fraternity under the UGLE, and published on <http://www.lodgeofcharity.org.uk> [2 September 2009]; and in the ‘Summary of the Ancient Charges and Regulations’ and ‘Aims and Relationships of the Craft’ published in the *Constitutions* of the UGLE (2009), pp. vii-xv.

⁸⁷ In his diary (CP BL Add 60901) Carnarvon records meetings with De Grey on 25, 26, 30 April, 5 and 6 May 1870.

Prince of Wales accepted De Grey's invitations to join him (and thereby Zetland and some of those who had surrounded him on 'the dais' in the 1850s) in the Grand Master's private lodge, Royal Alpha Lodge, in the course of that masonically eventful year. These events suggest that another reason for Carnarvon's continuing attachment to freemasonry was its deliberate avoidance of party politics. Even if the younger Carnarvon had been misled into allowing his name to be associated with the more overtly political aspects of the Oxford/Observer campaigns against 'the dais' in the 1850s, 'the dais' now recognised his ability to rise above or step outside party politics, welcomed him back and made him the deputy leader of the 'English' Craft.

Carnarvon took his new masonic responsibilities seriously. On 8 August 1870 he presided over the Somerset (Craft) Provincial Grand Lodge when it opened a subscription for the restoration of the west front of Wells Cathedral and set up a Benevolent Committee to collect and distribute funds for the poor and distressed Freemasons in the province – but the needs of the poor and distressed in France, freemasons or not, soon caused Carnarvon to call the charitable instincts of Grand Lodge itself into action. The Franco-Prussian War, which had broken out on 19 July, was reaching its climax and Carnarvon became increasingly concerned for the safety of his two brothers (Alan, working as a doctor in Paris, and Auberon, following the Prussian army as a journalist), the plight of British refugees from France, and the perils to which the old order throughout Europe was exposed by the rising tides of revolution and republicanism. Moreover, Lady Carnarvon was in the final stages of pregnancy. The stress appears to have affected Carnarvon's health, but on 4 September he nevertheless attended (and perhaps chaired) a meeting of the Grand Master's advisers, presided at Grand Lodge on 6 September in De Grey's absence on 6 September, and then summoned and presided at a 'Grand Lodge of Emergency' on 16 September, when his proposal that UGLE should donate £500 to the Prince of Wales' Fund for the sick and wounded of the Franco-Prussian War was approved. And later that year he again stood in for De Grey to install Col. Le Gendre N. Starkie as the new Provincial Grand Master for East Lancashire in Manchester's Free Trade Hall, in the presence of some 700 freemasons.

Carnarvon's speeches in Manchester on 9 November 1870 are significant as they set out his view of 'English' freemasonry as a social phenomenon, and are a clear indication of his

wish to maintain its traditions rather than to emulate the practices of some foreign Grand Lodges. They are therefore worth quoting at some length here. Addressing Starkie he said that:

Masonry embraced all classes. Masonry comprised the charities and virtues of private life; it comprised also the duties and the high qualities of social, public, and of civil life; it taught them on the one hand how to rule wisely, and on the other hand subordination to just and constituted authority, because they knew well in Masonry that those who could not properly obey were never fit to command. Masonry had a higher and a lower side, and he entreated him to take the higher and better side of Masonry, and so to live that his reign over this province might be long remembered, and that he as a Mason might be an example not only to the brethren as a Mason, but to the whole outer world beyond.⁸⁸

At the subsequent dinner Carnarvon developed this theme:

he often heard Freemasonry misrepresented and misunderstood by those who stood without the charmed circle. Of those sceptics he asked this question – Was it likely that any system would have endured so long and in such strength had it been founded on imposture? A great writer had said that the great public buildings of Europe, built long since by their Masonic forefathers, owed their decline to three causes: to the effects of time, to the revolutions of political or religious thought, and to passions and bad taste. It was a perfectly true indictment, but he asked – Had Masonry, which had been subjected to all these three influences – had Masonry succumbed in the way and degree that the handiworks of Masonry succumbed throughout Europe? Their works had felt the effects of time and passion, but the spirit of masonry, the inner essence and life, had remained untouched and unassailable.

...Those truths which had come through so many generations could not be without value, and it was for this that Masonry had received so much care and reverence in this country.

...We were said to be a practical nation, and Masonry had shown its true value in this, that it had manifested a wonderful adaptation to all the modern requirements and all the wants of our time. It was a law under which we lived that every institution in this country must show cause for its being, and must be prepared to stand its trial; and he was satisfied that all good, true, and genuine institutions would stand the test, and would come out, like gold, more and more refined from the ordeal.

...They could never tire of the great cardinal principle of Masonry – charity – and should never forget that great bond that united them together.

Lastly, they should never forget how Masonry represented the principle of good citizenship and social order. In other countries Masonry had too often lent herself to other societies, who had taken advantage of her, and under the shadow of her great name had dared to foist upon society their own miserable doctrines and theories. They had allied themselves with political parties, they

⁸⁸ Unfortunately for the historian, Carnarvon did not explain the 'lower side', though I suspect that he was referring to 'knife and fork masons' – those freemasons whose interest in the association centres upon its wining and dining.

had mixed themselves up with revolution; but when they saw Freemasons abroad too often degrading and prostituting the principles of Freemasonry, let them be grateful for the forbearance and wisdom of those in this country who had clung to its ancient landmarks, and [to] Masonry [as] the representative of private and civil virtues, and made her in this ancient royal commonwealth one of the great pillars of order and liberty...⁸⁹

Carnarvon also mentioned how freemasons who travelled abroad knew that freemasonry was now to be found in 'lands civilised, in lands barbarous, in lands near, in lands distant' and how in 'war men owed their lives to it, in sickness they received attendance and care, in desolate countries they were rescued.'⁹⁰ But from this speech it is clear that for Carnarvon at this time, when he feared for the future of civilisation as he knew it, the main value of freemasonry lay in its role as 'one of the great pillars of order and liberty' in a 'royal commonwealth.' (The other 'great pillars' for Carnarvon were the monarchy and the Christian church.)

The *Daily News* commented on Carnarvon's speeches under its heading 'Freemasonry and Politics':

After all, Freemasonry is as little to be blamed for its occasional revolutionary tendencies as the Church of England for the socialism which some ingenious English Tories and clergymen, in unconscious emulation of some foreign Republicans, not unsuccessfully tried to engraft upon it a few years ago. And if the spread of Freemasonry, like more powerful and sacred influences, has not yet made war impossible, Lord Carnarvon no doubt has good reason for believing that it has at length mitigated its miseries and alleviated its calamities.⁹¹

As it happened, Carnarvon had chosen to stay while in Manchester with Col Starkie's nominated deputy, someone who epitomised Carnarvon's attitude to the church, to freemasonry and to politics: William Romaine Callender. Carnarvon described Callender in his diary as 'a superior man of cultivated mind & manners, an unusually good speaker & the heart

⁸⁹ All these quotations are taken from the report of Carnarvon's visit in *The Freemason* of 19 November 1870, pp. 588 *et seq.*

⁹⁰ While there are documented instances to support these claims, I have been unable to find any factual background to Carnarvon's further claim that 'he knew of an instance where a mission of high importance to the north of India attempted to pass in vain, until at last the officer in command of it gave certain signs and symbols known only to them as Masons, which at once secured his free passage to the country' – a story which could of course be turned against freemasonry.

⁹¹ *Daily News*, 14 November 1870.

& soul of the Conservative Party – a good churchman & a keen Mason.’⁹² Carnarvon obviously preferred Callender as a host to Starkie whom he marked down as ‘devoted to horses & dogs & is certainly not brilliant intellectually’ – and Callender was the Mark’s Provincial Grand Master for Lancashire.

(c) Carnarvon, Mark Masonry, and the Ancient & Accepted Rite (1870)

George Portal had played no part in Carnarvon’s rise to the heights of the ‘English’ Craft at the end of the 1860s, but in 1870 he was now himself Grand Master of the Mark Grand Lodge, and still a close enough friend of Carnarvon to persuade him, at last, to set up the Mark province of Somerset and preside over it as the Provincial Grand Master, an office to which Carnarvon had been appointed as long ago as 1858.⁹³ In fact Portal himself pulled most of the strings in the province’s creation, and Carnarvon left the day-to-day management to a deputy. Carnarvon resigned from the office in 1879 and thereafter took no further part in Mark Masonry. But by then the Mark lodges in Somerset had been welded into a provincial organisation – and Carnarvon, in his roles as Provincial Grand Master in both the Craft and the Mark, had symbolised and advanced the increasing proximity of the orders within the ‘English’ masonic family.

In May 1870 the Supreme Council of the A & A Rite, the Grand Conclave of the Knights Templar and the Mark Grand Lodge had begun to explore the possibility of entering into a treaty of mutual recognition and of gathering all the ‘English’ masonic orders and degrees beyond the Craft under one convention, and Portal had recruited Carnarvon as a commissioner for those discussions.⁹⁴ No evidence has been found that Carnarvon played a significant part in the negotiations, but as one who had recently brought about the confederation of the British North American colonies he would surely have taken at least a passing interest in this attempt to confederate various masonic bodies under the nominal leadership of the Prince

⁹² CP BL Add 60902, 8 November 1870. For further references to Callender in this context see Andrew Prescott in *Marking Well*, pp. 30 and 31, and the entry on Callender in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* by A.A.C. Howe.

⁹³ As patron, Carnarvon was to have the Rev George Portal appointed in 1871 as the Rector of Burghclere, the parish in which Carnarvon’s principal residence, Highclere Castle, was situated, and from at least then onwards Portal was Carnarvon’s personal chaplain.

⁹⁴ See Portal’s address to Mark Grand Lodge on 2 August 1870 as quoted by John A. Grantham in his *History of the Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons* (1960), pp. 183-84.

of Wales.⁹⁵ With the Prince's arrival on the masonic scene, royal courtiers who were freemasons, such as the Lords Skelmersdale, Valletort and Glentworth (later Lathom, Mount Edgcumbe and Limerick) now begin to become more evident in the upper echelons of 'English' freemasonry and may have encouraged a masonic confederation under the Prince.⁹⁶ Captain Nathaniel Phillips, a member of the Supreme Council of the A & A Rite, was also a courtier – not a nobleman, but a member of the Royal Body Guard and a Groom of the Privy Chamber – and he it was who in late 1870 proposed Carnarvon for promotion to the 33rd degree of the Rite and membership of the Supreme Council itself, which was effected early in 1871.⁹⁷ Again, Carnarvon did not need to accept this offer, and he appears not to have recorded his feelings about this additional masonic involvement. One may therefore assume that he was attracted by the degrees and teachings of the Rite and/or by the chance of taking high office in this Christian and socially exclusive masonic order.

1871-74: In high masonic offices, and back in office as Colonial Secretary

The Franco-Prussian War had ended in January 1871. France's future was uncertain, and Carnarvon doubted 'if for 50 years England has been in more anxious circumstances.'⁹⁸ When Carnarvon became a member of the nine-man Supreme Council of the A & A Rite in February that year, he was still De Grey's Deputy Grand Master in the Craft but he had been out of political office, and out of favour with the Tory party, since his resignation as Colonial Secretary in March 1867, and there was for him no certainty of a return to government office. Gladstone was back in power, with De Grey, Carnarvon's masonic chief, as Lord President of the Council.

Carnarvon dutifully substituted for De Grey as Grand Master during the cabinet minister's visit to the USA to negotiate the settlement of the *Alabama* claims (though his tentative suggestion of Portal for the office of Grand Chaplain in the UGLE to De Grey while

⁹⁵ For details of this and other contemporaneous moves towards masonic confederation see James W. Daniel, 'Pure – and Accepted – Masonry: The Craft and the Extra-Craft Degrees, 1843-1901' *AQC* 106 (1993), pp. 82-3.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷ Little more is known about Captain N. G. Phillips (1827-1905) of the 47th Regiment, but he obviously impressed Carnarvon and was impressed by him. A masonic historian wrote that Phillips was severely wounded at the Battle of Alma, had 'An appearance of imposing dignity' and was 'A kind and good-natured man' who 'made an excellent figurehead.' See *The Friends in Council Lodge No. 1383: An Account of the first hundred years, 1872-1972* (1972) by H.F. Chambers and J R Wynter Bee, p. 55.

⁹⁸ *CP BL Add 60861*, 3 February 1871.

De Grey was in Washington did not find favour). When Carnarvon laid the foundation stone of the new sanatorium at Weston-super-Mare in June 1871 he contrasted the condition of Britain with that of France, where, during the recent Commune and according to another speaker, Archdeacon Browne, ‘they saw the Venerable Archbishop of Paris carried to execution as a common criminal, surrounded by his own zealous brethren – thus persecuted...from diabolical hatred of that Great Architect of the Universe of whom he was the minister.’ Carnarvon characterised the proceedings of the insurgents as ‘the most horrible and detestable’ conspiracy against law and order and everything that made human society good and noble and generous.’ He thought that the events in France taught ‘the melancholy lesson that however great our civilisation, unless there were morals and religion all that civilisation failed’. He therefore advised his audience ‘to cling to all our old institutions, and foremost among them all, the ancient and hereditary monarchy – the Queen and Crown.’⁹⁹ This was a rousing speech and one which again shows Carnarvon’s fear of civilisation’s failure unless supported by ‘our old institutions’ (including freemasonry) – but Carnarvon’s health was failing and once again he dropped out of active freemasonry, with one brief reappearance in June 1872, until the summer of 1873.¹⁰⁰ Carnarvon returned to the lessons that could be learnt from cross-Channel events and to the dangers of democratic rule in a book review he wrote (‘Lessons of the French Revolution’) for the July 1873 issue of the *Quarterly Review*, shortly after he recommenced attending meetings of the Supreme Council and of Grand Lodge. Carnarvon recognised ‘an essential identity between the spirit of 1789 and 1870’ in France, and he pointed out that ‘within less than a century, almost every political buttress and institution in France has gone, and that Frenchmen stand on the naked howling plain of pure democracy’. Alarmed by this prospect, and by what he described as Gladstone’s attempt ‘to form an alliance with the mob in Britain’, the British electorate, in Carnarvon’s view, was turning to the Conservative party.¹⁰¹ These published opinions of Carnarvon are highlighted here to indicate Carnarvon’s

⁹⁹ *The Freemason*, 3 June 1871, pp. 348-49.

¹⁰⁰ To cement the closer relationship between the ‘rulers’ of the Craft and those of the A & A Rite, Carnarvon and the other members of the Supreme Council obtained the Craft’s permission to have their own Craft lodge – ‘Friends in Council’ – and Carnarvon, the Deputy Grand Master of the Craft, was installed as its first Master in June 1872, an undemanding office that he then filled for two years.

¹⁰¹ Carnarvon, ‘Lessons of the French Revolution’ in *The Quarterly Review* July, 1873), vol. 135, no. 269, pp. 265-295. (The article appears anonymously in this periodical, but it is included in *CP BL Add 60982A* ‘Pamphlets and Speeches of Lord Carnarvon’, and Hardinge also attributes it to Carnarvon in his chronology – Hardinge, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, p. 396.)

Weltanschauung at the time, and as background to his imminent return to party politics and to his (later) attitude to developments in freemasonry in France.

Remarkably, in view of the distance between them since their ‘memorable schism in [18]68’, Disraeli and Carnarvon (42) patched up their differences over two dinners *chez* Carnarvon (in July and October 1873), at about the same time that Disraeli (68) was wooing Lady Bradford (54), the sister of Carnarvon’s mother-in-law, Lady Chesterfield.¹⁰² When Gladstone’s government fell in February 1874, Carnarvon was persuaded by Disraeli to return to the cabinet and to the office of Secretary of State for the Colonies. Thus started for Carnarvon nearly four years of intensive and demanding work, especially on matters South African and work which, at the time, won general acclaim at court, in government, in parliament, and in the colonies. Yet at first Carnarvon did not withdraw from or seek to reduce his masonic commitments to the Craft or the A & A Rite. Indeed, his loads there were about to increase significantly, and at times he would have to fit his freemasonry into gaps in a tightly packed official diary. That he did so is another indication of the importance and relevance he attached to ‘English’ freemasonry as a ‘buttress and institution’ supporting the British way of life he wished to preserve and strengthen.

The former Earl de Grey and Ripon had been raised to the marquisate on his successful conclusion of the Anglo-American negotiations that had lead to the Treaty of Washington in 1871. In the spring of 1874 (by which time he was out of political office) he as the Marquis of Ripon KG was re-elected as the Craft’s Grand Master, and he re-appointed Carnarvon, now the Colonial Secretary, as his deputy. They both attended the meeting of Royal Alpha Lodge when the Prince of Wales initiated his brother the Duke of Connaught. The Prince of Wales then consented to become the (first) Royal Patron of the A & A Rite when Carnarvon became the order’s ‘Sovereign Grand Commander’ in July 1874, and Carnarvon and the Grand Patron nominate signed the authorisation for the creation of a Supreme Council for Canada and for the transfer to its jurisdiction of the ‘English’ chapters of the Rite in Canada.¹⁰³ All thus seemed set fair for Carnarvon, masonically at least: as Ripon’s deputy in the Craft his duties would be largely advisory and ceremonial, while in the much smaller Rite he was but *primus inter pares*

¹⁰² Robert Blake, *Disraeli* (1966), pp. 531-32.

¹⁰³ For correspondence between Knollys and Carnarvon in re the Prince of Wales, the Supreme Council and Canada at this juncture see PRO 30/6/4, ff. 2-6.

in the Supreme Council and his duties could be shared with his colleagues, supported by an efficient secretarial team.

No-one, however, had foreseen the bombshell that Ripon dropped on the Grand Lodge when, in late August 1874, he announced his decision to enter the Roman Catholic church. The general reaction to his decision can be seen from the comment of *The Times*, doubting his sanity, his loyalty to the Crown, and his eligibility to take any further part in national politics.¹⁰⁴ Ripon wrote to Carnarvon that he was resigning as Grand Master with immediate effect. Carnarvon regretfully accepted Ripon's decision, adding that 'As regards Freemasonry, the loss occasioned by your retirement will be very serious, and the inconvenience – it is needless to disguise – great.'¹⁰⁵ The former president of the UGLE's Board of General Purposes, John Havers, (with whom Carnarvon had fallen out in 1859) met Carnarvon at Highclere on 1 September 1874, the day before Grand Lodge was to meet. According to Carnarvon's diary: 'He urged me to accept Gd. Mastership – wh. assuming P of Wales not to desire it I agreed to. I wrote a letter to the Gd Secy convening a meeting for 10. or 11. inst. for nomination of G.M.'¹⁰⁶ However, on 2 September Havers advised Carnarvon by telegram that according to the constitutions of Grand Lodge the office of Grand Master in such circumstances 'devolves not on me as we thought but on P. of Wales as Past G.M. I had written to P. of Wales & sent up letter by early train but Evelyn [Lady Carnarvon] on receipt of this telegram – as I had gone out shooting – telegraphed to stop the letter.'¹⁰⁷ Carnarvon managed to get a letter to Freemasons' Hall, London, in time for it to be read out at that evening's meeting, to the effect that he had written to the Prince of Wales in the hope that he would accept the office of Grand Master but that he [Carnarvon] would otherwise have to act as Grand Master until he could arrange for the

¹⁰⁴ *The Times* described Ripon as 'the man who in the full strength of his powers has renounced his mental and moral freedom'. It stated that 'To become a Roman Catholic and remain a thorough Englishman are – it cannot be disguised – almost incompatible conditions'. *The Times*, 5 September 1874, p. 9, col. A.

¹⁰⁵ Carnarvon's reply (which is incorrectly quoted by Lucien Wolf in his *Life of the 1st Marquess of Ripon* (1921), pp. 349-50) can be found on CP BL Add 43625 at f. 157. So hurried was Ripon's decision that he did not inform the Prince of Wales until 15 September, when he sent an apology and an explanation (Wolf, *op. cit.*, pp 287-293). Though no evidence has been found to suggest that Ripon and Carnarvon continued to correspond as freemasons after Ripon's resignation in 1874, Ripon did write to Carnarvon on 2 December 1878 to congratulate him on his forthcoming marriage: 'My dear Carnarvon, I cannot resist troubling you with a few words of sincere congratulation on your approaching marriage. Anything which is calculated to add to your happiness must always be a cause of rejoicing to Yours sincerely Ripon.' (CP BL Add. 60867A, f. 115).

¹⁰⁶ Carnarvon's diary entries for 1 and 2 September 1874, CP BL Add 60906.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

election of a successor. The text of his letter was included in the full report of the meeting that appeared in *The Times* the next day.¹⁰⁸

It is today difficult to believe that as experienced a masonic administrator as Havers would have urged Carnarvon to accept the Grand Mastership or that Carnarvon would have acted on his prompting before the Prince's wishes were known. It also appears odd that Carnarvon did not attend Grand Lodge on 2 September to announce Ripon's resignation, but instead sent a letter to the Prince saying that he, Carnarvon, would take over as Grand Master on the assumption that the Prince did not himself wish to be Grand Master – a letter which he was luckily able to retrieve before it reached its intended recipient.¹⁰⁹ In the confusion caused by Ripon's resignation, perhaps Carnarvon's judgement let him down when he was already under the pressure of work as Colonial Secretary and a Cabinet minister. Or perhaps Carnarvon imprudently snatched at the chance of holding the office which he, Carnarvon, at the outset of his masonic career had called the most honourable and most responsible position outside public life.¹¹⁰ We do not know the answer, and Grand Lodge did not know of Carnarvon's confusion when in his absence on 2 September it appointed him to lead a deputation to the Prince of Wales to offer him the Grand Mastership.

While Carnarvon was still somewhat unsighted about Ripon's secession (as he termed it), the Prince wrote to him for advice. Carnarvon asked for time to consult his senior masonic advisers, and then wrote the following letter to the Prince:

I have lost no time in communicating with Mr Havers & Mr Hervey the Grand Secretary – the only two persons who are at hand and whose opinion is worth taking on the subject of Your Royal Highness's letter. I have written to Mr Macintyre the Grand Registrar but his address is uncertain and I may not hear from him in time.

I find in the first place a very strong anxiety that Your Royal Highness can probably be ill spared : and in the position of Past Grand Master Your Royal Highness has almost all that the Craft can give. On the other hand the additional work need not I think be very considerable, though on this point I speak with some hesitation, not knowing exactly how much it need be. I should think the presidency at some dinners and public occasions would probably meet the requirement of the case. I feel sure that the acceptance of

¹⁰⁸ *The Times*, 3 September 1874, p. 3, col. F.

¹⁰⁹ I have found neither the original nor a copy of Carnarvon's premature letter, and I have therefore had to rely on Carnarvon's diary entries for 1 and 2 September 1874. I am not aware that anyone has revealed the story before me: Hardinge does not mention it, nor does there appear to be any record of Havers' communications with Carnarvon on those days in the archives of the UGLE.

¹¹⁰ *Masonic Observer*, no. VI, 20 June 1857, pp. 7-8.

office would be a source of great satisfaction to the whole body; and whilst the position of Past Grand Master is looked upon as honorary, that of Grand Master would possess a greater reality and significance for the Craft.

There only remains the question whether there is anything in public estimation which can be said to be inconsistent with Your Royal Highness's general position and duties in the acceptance of this office. This is a matter on which I can hardly presume to express an opinion : but looking to the general character of Masonry in England and the persons who compose the body I personally do not see that any objection can be raised.

I will only add that if Your Royal Highness should, as I venture to hope will be the case, accept the Grand Mastership there will be no necessity for any immediate meeting of the Grand Lodge. You will for the time being assume the functions vacated by Lord Ripon until the time comes for the next Grand Lodge when Your Royal Highness will, if you so please, be regularly nominated and at the following meeting elected for the ensuing year.

If I can be of any service further in the matter I need not, I hope, add that I am now as always at Your Royal Highness's commands. A letter or telegram will I think reach me with least delay through the Colonial Office...¹¹¹

(The main body of the letter has been reproduced here as it throws light on Carnarvon's relationship with the Prince, his view of the office of Grand Master, and his estimation of the public reputation of the Craft.) After the prince had accepted the position, and Carnarvon had replied that he had been glad to have been 'the means of communication between Your Royal Highness and the Craft', the Prince, now the Acting Grand Master, invited Carnarvon to serve him as his Pro Grand Master, an invitation which Carnarvon somewhat hesitantly but dutifully accepted.¹¹²

Carnarvon was not to install the Prince of Wales as Grand Master until April 1875, but in the meantime he managed to combine his work on colonial and ecclesiastical matters with his masonic responsibilities. He held planning meetings with the Prince, Havers and Philips in November, and in early December, on the day that he effected a reconciliation between Theophilus Shepstone and Bishop Colenso (as regards the differences that had arisen between them in the Langlibalele affair), he was installed as the UGLE's Pro Grand Master, a post he was to occupy until his death in 1890.¹¹³ Carnarvon closed that masonically eventful year when on 12 December 1874, as Sovereign Grand Commander of the Supreme Council of the Ancient and Accepted Rite, he personally installed the Prince of Wales as its first Patron.

¹¹¹ PRO 30/6/4, ff. 7 and 8.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, ff. 9-11.

¹¹³ CP BL Add 60906, 2 December 1874.

Sovereign Grand Commander, Colonial Secretary, Pro and Provincial Grand Master

(a) 1875-78

The death of Carnarvon's wife in January 1875 shortly after giving birth to their third daughter, and the pressure of work as a cabinet minister in Disraeli's government, took their toll on Carnarvon's always fragile health. He managed to keep on top of his ministerial work, but for months he was 'in no mood to face London Society', let alone attend meetings of the Supreme Council, of which he was still the Sovereign Grand Commander, of his Provincial Grand Lodge in Somerset, or of Grand Lodge itself.¹¹⁴ Nevertheless, he presided to general acclaim over one of the most significant masonic meetings ever and the largest assembly of freemasons the world had yet seen when on 28 April 1875, in the Albert Hall and in the presence of some 10,000 freemasons, he installed the Prince of Wales as the Grand Master of the 'English' Grand Lodge. The Prince was enthusiastically received, as was Carnarvon's address to him as Grand Master.¹¹⁵ But, as *The Times* said of the prince's reception, the significance of the event 'must be measured, not by what might appear its intrinsic importance, but by the circumstances which it illustrates and interprets.'¹¹⁶ In those terms, its significance was manifold. First, a 'gathering unequalled alike in the numbers and social status of those who took part in it', representing 'the largest association of English gentlemen', the return of a senior member of the royal family to the office of Grand Master (the previous member, the Duke of Sussex, having died in office in 1843), and the favourable press 'the Craft' then received as 'a perfectly innocuous, loyal and virtuous Association', constituted a high-water mark in the public recognition of 'English' freemasonry at the outset of the last quarter of the nineteenth century.¹¹⁷ Secondly, it marked out the difference between freemasonry as practised in England, with its 'solemn protestation of its loyal, religious, and charitable principles', and continental freemasonry where it was 'quite possible that under the pressure of past tyranny Freemasonry was really used...as a means of revolutionary agitation.'¹¹⁸ Thirdly, it was seen 'in great measure [as] a national demonstration' against the 'unjustifiable prejudice' of the Roman Catholic Church, a 'hostile society' at whose 'dictate' Lord Ripon 'threw up' the office now filled by none other than the heir apparent to the British throne. And, finally, it identified Carnarvon if not as a king-maker

¹¹⁴ CP BL Add 60907, 30 April 1875.

¹¹⁵ Carnarvon did not stay for the banquet as he was still not up to grand social occasions.

¹¹⁶ *The Times*, 29 April 1875, page 9, cols. B and C.

¹¹⁷ *The Times*, 29 April 1875, page 9, cols. C and G.

¹¹⁸ *The Times*, 29 April 1875, page 9.

then as a Grand Master-maker, and established him in the public's eye as the second most important English freemason of his time.

Reading between the lines of Carnarvon's address to the Grand Master (printed in full in *The Times* the next day) one can see a significant change in his attitude to freemasonry, or at least in what he chose to say publicly about it.¹¹⁹ Whereas in 1856 he had been attracted to freemasonry by its supposed similarity or even connections with the associations of antiquity and with the stone-masons of the Middle Ages (as shown above), he now accepted that freemasonry had in fact 'changed its character in some respects' and that it was now 'content to devote itself to works of sympathy and charity' in which 'it finds its highest praise and reward.' These works had earned it 'respect even in the eyes of the outer world', and Carnarvon, who as a freemason had taken part in raising significant funds for masonic and non-masonic charities, clearly appreciated that respect. However, Carnarvon went on to emphasise what had clearly become for him the key aspect and value of 'English' freemasonry in the nineteenth century: its alliance with 'social order and the great institutions of the country, and, above all, with monarchy, the crowning institution of all.' Perhaps surprisingly, Carnarvon did not mention any role that freemasonry might have had in the empire, or its careful avoidance of party politics. Those points were left to the Prince to make (though his speech may well have been written by Carnarvon): in his reply to Carnarvon's address he said that 'as long as Freemasons do not, as Freemasons, mix themselves up in politics so long I am sure this high and noble order will flourish, and will maintain the integrity of our great empire.' No doubt the (Conservative) Colonial Secretary, and the (Liberal) Leader of the Opposition, Lord Hartington (present as the Provincial Grand Master for Derbyshire), joined in the cheers that greeted the Prince's remark.

The day after he conducted the Prince's installation, Carnarvon successfully submitted to the Queen for her approval his despatch proposing that representatives of the British colonies and Dutch states in South Africa be invited to a conference in London. In his covering memorandum he added: 'Should they [the Dutch States] accept the invitation to join this Conference, Lord Carnarvon sees a strong possibility of ultimately securing a confederation of all the Colonies and States of S. Africa and the reunion of the republics to your Majesty's

¹¹⁹ *The Times*, 29 April 1875, page 9, col. G.

possessions.'¹²⁰ Thereafter Carnarvon became immersed in South Africa affairs almost to the exclusion of other colonial matters, and his work-load caused him to keep his masonic commitments to the minimum possible. Nevertheless, events occurred within the Craft and the A & A Rite (before his resignation from the cabinet in 1878) which as the head of the one and the Prince's lieutenant in the other Carnarvon could not avoid and which are relevant to this study of him as both a statesman and a freemason.

The first event, in early December 1875, was the arrival on Carnarvon's (masonic) desk of a letter from Richard Southey, the UGLE's Provincial Grand Master for South Africa. Southey had filled that office since 1863 when he was Treasurer-General (later Colonial Secretary) of the Cape Colony. Since 1873, when the colony of Griqualand-West was created with Kimberley as its administrative and commercial centre, Southey had been the Lieutenant Governor of that increasingly important source of mineral wealth. Aware of the disadvantages of trying to continue to administer the expanding 'English' Craft for the whole of South Africa from Cape Town, spread as its lodges already were over a vast territory, and in an attempt to prevent any of those lodges from breaking away from the UGLE to form an independent Grand Lodge, Southey recommended dividing the jurisdiction into, in effect, two or more Provincial (or 'District') Grand Lodges. Carnarvon, as Pro Grand Master, and the other members of the 'Grand Master's Council' then had to advise the Grand Master, the Prince of Wales, whether to reconfigure the UGLE's administration in South Africa (since the creation of Provincial Grand Lodges was one of the Grand Master's sole prerogatives). Carnarvon's advice (which Cooper inaccurately transcribes and from which he over-selectively quotes) is entirely in line with the memorandum he had earlier sent to the Queen about the South African conference, and the parallel is significant for this thesis:

There is I think a reasonable ground for requesting one or more district G[rand] Lodges. The distances & difficulties of communication are so great that it is not fair to insist upon Cape Town being the sole centre of masonic business... I sd. therefore encourage the formation of one district Gd. Lodge for Griqualand – the two Dutch States and Natal – holding out the intimation or even the promise to them that hereafter, when masonry has made further progress & the circumstances of the case pointed to it, there wd. be no disinclination to divide this enormous territory into more manageable jurisdictions. I see many advantages in the proposed Masonic Union of all the

¹²⁰ There is a copy of Carnarvon's memorandum of 20 April 1875 to the Queen on PRO 30/6/1, f. 126.

lodges in the two Colonies & the two Dutch States if it can be accomplished as a present measure to be hereafter followed by a more perfect system...

Delay may possibly stimulate the mischievous demand for emancipation from all allegiance and an independent Gd. Lodge.

I should hope from the statements in these papers that the English element scattered through the Dutch States is strong enough, if incorporated in one district Gd. Lodge, to overpower & absorb all foreign influences and thus to bring the whole Dutch masonry ultimately under the Gd. Lodge of Engl.¹²¹

(The final paragraph above should not be isolated from Carnarvon's wider thinking at the time or presented as evidence of masonic imperialism, but it should be seen as an early expression of Carnarvon's 'highest ambition' for 'the advent of political and administrative union', namely the restoration of 'a real union in sentiment of the Dutch and English' race'.)¹²²

Carnarvon's masonic interests in South Africa are examined more closely in a later section, but here attention is drawn to the fact that as in matters of colonial administration, in matters masonic Carnarvon was willing to see self-government advance within the UGLE's jurisdiction in the colonies of white settlement, to take steps to avoid the disintegration of England's masonic empire, and, in South Africa, to attempt ultimately a union of 'Dutch' and 'English' interests within 'a more perfect system', a confederation under the Grand Lodge of England. In South Africa the first two of Carnarvon's masonic aims were achieved, but whereas a political union of South Africa eventually arose from the ashes of the Boer War, masonically the 'Dutch' and the 'English' jurisdictions have never united, and today the masonic territory is still shared between a minority 'Dutch' 'Grand Lodge of South Africa' and a number of District Grand Lodges still under the Grand Lodges of England and Scotland.

The next imperial events with which Carnarvon became involved as a freemason concerned the extent of the jurisdiction within the British Empire of the 'English' Supreme

¹²¹ Carnarvon at Highclere to the Grand Secretary, 9 Dec 1875, in the 'Division of Districts in South Africa' file in the Library and Museum of Freemasonry, London, together with Southey's letter to Hervey of 27 September 1875 and its enclosures (found by me in another file, 'Misc. Papers concerning division of South Africa into Districts 1875-1881'). As recently as 30 November 2009 the library informed me that these two files are to be found in the as yet uncatalogued series of boxed correspondence in its 'Biog. Room'.

¹²² Alan C. Cooper, 'The effects of political, economic and social events on the Order of Freemasons in South Africa, with some reference to the movement for the formation of a United Grand Lodge, 1772-1961' (1983), his dissertation presented for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Stellenbosch, pp. 44-46. Carnarvon's speech in the House of Lords, 23 April 1877, as quoted by Hardinge, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, p. 316. For an 'imperialist' interpretation of Carnarvon's advice to the Prince of Wales (not to Grand Lodge) in 1875, and an unsubstantiated assertion that Carnarvon 'pushed the English Grand Lodge to appoint a District Grand Lodge for the Transvaal and The Orange Free State', see Harland-Jacobs, *Builders of Empire*, p. 260.

Council of the A & A Rite (of which he was still the head), an international confederation of the Rite, and an international masonic conference following which the first signs of the impending great rift between what might be termed religious freemasonry and agnostic freemasonry became evident, a rift in which Carnarvon was to play a key role and which still obtains today. Mandleberg has already chronicled the details of the international congress of Supreme Councils that was held in Lausanne in September 1875.¹²³ Of interest here are the following points: Carnarvon (while, but not as, Colonial Secretary of arguably the strongest nation in the world) personally signed the 'memorandum of suggested heads of discussion for Lausanne with the views of the Supreme Council on some of them' which was then circulated to the other Supreme Councils; the 'English' achieved their main objectives at the conference; and they subsequently joined the first international confederation of Supreme Councils and signed the 'Treaty of Alliance' among its members, a key feature of which was the definition of the jurisdiction of the 'English' Supreme Council as 'England, Wales and the dependencies of the British Crown.' The 'Scottish' Supreme Council did not accept this definition, claiming that it had an equal right with its 'English' counterpart to establish units of the Rite, under 'Scottish' jurisdiction, in 'the dependencies of the British Crown.' It therefore established such a unit in the British Crown Colony of Gibraltar. The 'English' Supreme Council objected and on 11 October 1876, while Carnarvon was still its head, and the Prince of Wales its Grand Patron, it decided to break off relations with the 'Scottish' Supreme Council – a decision it did not implement until 26 November 1877, in the vain hope that some resolution could be found to the problem that had arisen between them. (The rupture lasted until 1889, giving the lie to any claim that there was a monolithic and united 'British' freemasonry promoting the integrity of the British Empire.)¹²⁴

In February 1877 the 'Supreme Council of the Ancient and Accepted Rite for England and Wales *and the Dependencies of the British Crown*' regretfully accepted Carnarvon's resignation 'in consequence of your Lordship's public duties and engagements as a Minister of the Crown'.¹²⁵ However, since the 1875 Lausanne conference, it had gradually become clear to

¹²³ Mandleberg, *op. cit.*, pp. 269-307.

¹²⁴ See, for example, Harland-Jacobs, *Builders of Empire*, pp. 7, 23, 30. So strong was the antipathy between the two Supreme Councils that the 'English' one dropped for ever the word 'Scottish' from the full title of the Rite, which until then it had been content to use, namely the 'Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite...'.
¹²⁵ The emphasis is mine.

the Supreme Council and to the UGLE that moves were afoot in freemasonry in France to do away with what for 'English' freemasons and their ilk was a cardinal condition for (in their terms) regular freemasonry, namely that its members should be required to express a belief in 'God, the Great Architect of the Universe'. When indeed the Grand Orient of France (the main 'French' Grand Lodge) appeared to the UGLE to have gone so far as to remove this cardinal condition from its constitutions, leaving it to a man's conscience whether he believed in 'God' or not, it fell to Carnarvon to advise the Prince of Wales as to how the matter should be presented to Grand Lodge. With the Prince's agreement to his proposals, Carnarvon then put the problem to Grand Lodge on 5 December 1877, gained its approval to set up a committee under his chairmanship to investigate the facts and then to recommend any necessary action, and reported back to the Prince.¹²⁶

On 6 March 1878 Carnarvon presented his committee's findings to the Grand Lodge. The 'French', he said, in their 'unprovoked, uncalled for, unrequited *revolutionary* innovation', had 'blotted out, as one of the necessary and essential fundamental principles of the Craft, the belief in God and the immortality of the soul.'¹²⁷ In his opinion, the UGLE, 'the mother Grand Lodge of all Europe' could not remain silent in this matter, and nothing 'would so justify the scurrilous taunts that have been thrown out against Freemasonry at times...as it would be by sanctioning, even by silence, such a step as that which the Grand Orient of France has taken.' On the advice of his committee, Grand Lodge resolved to instruct its lodges:

not to admit any foreign Brother as a Visitor unless (1) He is duly vouched for or unless his Certificate shows that he has been initiated according to the Ancient rites and ceremonies in a Lodge professing belief in T. G. A. O. T. U. [ie in God], and (2) Not unless he himself shall acknowledge that this belief is an essential landmark of the Order.¹²⁸

This crucial resolution soon led to a complete rupture of relations between the UGLE and the Grand Orient of France, and today the masonic world is still divided by that rupture into two camps: those Grand Lodges which demand of their candidates a belief in a 'Supreme Being' or 'God' and those which do not. For Carnarvon, and for the vast majority of the upper ranks of British society at the time, atheism was associated with republicanism and worse, and its

¹²⁶ PRO 30/6/4, ff. 103-06.

¹²⁷ The emphasis is mine.

¹²⁸ *Proceedings* of the UGLE, 6 March 1878. That the pages for 6 and 7 March 1878 have been cut out of Carnarvon's diary (CP BL Add 60911) is frustrating but not necessarily relevant to the masonic matter in hand.

adherents were considered to be untrustworthy, unworthy of respect and unfit to serve as Members of Parliament, even if so elected. To consort with Grand Lodges that could admit atheists to their ranks would endanger the UGLE's hard-won reputation for respectability and loyalty. Press reports in early 1875 that the renowned English atheist Charles Bradlaugh had once been improperly admitted as a joining member – from a 'French' lodge – to a lodge under the UGLE prompted a campaign of vilification against him in *The Freemason* which presaged the furore that surrounded his attempts to enter the House of Commons after his election in 1880 and until he was finally admitted in 1885.¹²⁹ Carnarvon's attitude to the Bradlaugh affair can be seen from his comment in 1880: 'The Bradlaugh case is an abomination simply'.¹³⁰

But we must now return to the Grand Lodge meeting held on 5 December 1877, for Carnarvon there persuaded it to take another decision that still obtains today, in effect that the UGLE should remain in communication with foreign Grand Lodges, such as the 'Swedish' one in which the Prince of Wales had been initiated, which, unlike the UGLE, demanded of its initiates, members and even visitors that they should be not only monotheists, but Christians. The way for Grand Lodge to accept Carnarvon's advice (see below) had been skilfully prepared by the (acting) Senior Grand Warden, Lord Tenterden – the Permanent Under Secretary at the Foreign Office – who had himself 'initiated Turks, Jews, and persons of all creeds and nations'. Tenterden argued that, contrary to the wishes of some 300 (mainly Jewish) petitioners, the UGLE should not attempt to persuade the Grand Lodge in question (the 'Grand Lodge of the Three Globes' at Berlin) to amend its ways. He stated that 'the Lodge of the Three Globes has always been a Christian Grand Lodge' and that 'There were other Lodges which a person who was not a Christian could go to in Germany'. Moreover:

The case was not at all analogous to that of the Grand Orient of France. The Grand Orient had made a very recent innovation, and the Grand Lodge of England had taken action in the matter. But in the case of Germany, they had proceeded for 137 years under the old constitutions on which they were founded.

Carnarvon then demonstrated his skill and experience as a freemason and as a statesman. First he praised 'the extremely fair, liberal, temperate, and Masonic manner and language in which the question had been discussed by all those of the Jewish Brethren who had taken part in it'.

¹²⁹ For full details of this episode see Andrew Prescott's "'The Cause of Humanity': Charles Bradlaugh and Freemasonry' (2003) in *AQC* vol. 116 (2003), pp. 15-64.

¹³⁰ Carnarvon to Phillimore, 11 July 1880, a copy of which is filed as CP BL Add 60861, f. 114.

He then clinched the argument by pointing out that, if the motion before Grand Lodge were passed, the Prince of Wales as their Grand Master would have to 'convey a resolution to the German Grand Lodge and the Emperor of Germany, as the head of that Grand Lodge, which on argument might turn out to be a matter of internal regulation.' They would then have placed the Prince in a predicament from which he could hardly extricate himself satisfactorily.¹³¹

The (masonically) momentous meeting of Grand Lodge on 5 December 1877 was Carnarvon's last before his resignation from Disraeli's cabinet on 24 January 1878.¹³² The 'proximate cause' of his resignation was the government's increasingly combative pro-Turkish stance against Russia, which Carnarvon viewed as an insanity that would lead to a repeat of the Crimean War.¹³³ This marked the end of Carnarvon's close relationship with Salisbury and earned him for some time the opprobrium of both the Queen and the Prince. Carnarvon even felt the Prince's coolness towards him at masonic meetings, as for example on 24 April 1878 when, as Carnarvon recorded in his diary: 'I came up to attend G.L. [Grand Lodge] the P. of Wales in the Chair. He seems to me to have grown more silent, moody, & though personally pleasant no longer to take pain to please' and added, by way of a possible explanation: 'he is a very strong Turk.'¹³⁴

(b) 1878-1890

Despite the temporary *froidueur* that arose between the Prince and Carnarvon following Carnarvon's resignation from Disraeli's government and from the Colonial Office in 1878, the Prince annually re-appointed Carnarvon as his Pro Grand Master thereafter, and Carnarvon died while still holding that office – and that of the Craft's Provincial Grand Master for Somerset. The Prince was established and revered as the Craft's royal figure-head, and Carnarvon as his right-hand man, the masonic elder statesman to whom the Prince could leave

¹³¹ All the quotations in this paragraph are taken from *Proceedings*, 5 December 1877. But see also Carnarvon to Prince of Wales, 6 December 1877, PRO 30/6/4, f. 106.

¹³² Coincidentally, Carnarvon's successor as Colonial Secretary was Sir Michael Hicks Beach, at whose initiation in the Apollo in February 1856 Carnarvon had been present, and who joined Westminster and Keystone Lodge during Carnarvon's Mastership in 1859. Hicks Beach was appointed Provincial Grand Master for Gloucestershire in 1880.

¹³³ Blake, *op. cit.*, p. 637.

¹³⁴ CP BL Add 60911, 24 April 1878. This despite the Prince's private letter to 'My dear Lord Carnarvon' of 26 January 1878: 'Nobody regrets more than I do that you should have ceased to belong to the present Govt. & vacated that high office in it which you so ably filled, & I may say that I regret quite as much the reason which forced you to tender your resignation.' (PRO 30/6/4 f. 110)

the oversight of the Craft's internal and external affairs, and who would represent the Prince when he was unable to preside over meetings of Grand Lodge or to carry out public ceremonies, such as laying the foundation-stone of a cathedral, with the appropriate masonic ritual.

Only once after 1878 did Carnarvon return to government (as Viceroy of Ireland, with a seat in Salisbury's cabinet, from June 1885 until January 1886), but his unsuccessful attempt in that brief period to persuade the cabinet (and the Queen) to satisfy the demands of the more moderate Irish nationalists by offering them a greater degree of self-government was publicly interpreted by Salisbury as a willingness to envisage rupturing the integrity of the British Empire at a time when the empire was being challenged by other European powers. Once again, as in his attempt to establish a South African confederation, Carnarvon was ahead of his time, and once again, as over electoral reform in 1867 and the Eastern question in 1878, he found himself out of favour with the Tory party – on this occasion because the Tories' opposition to Gladstone's proposals for Irish Home Rule were partly fuelled by the hope that it would encourage the Liberal unionists to desert him in their favour, and thus deliver a death-blow to the Liberal party. Carnarvon was not cut out for such party-political intrigues. And far from envisaging the break up of the empire, Carnarvon thought that its integrity could best be preserved by increasing the degree of self-government accorded to its more mature dependencies on the one hand and, on the other, by strengthening the institutional, emotional, commercial and other ties that bound its constituent parts to the motherland.

But to return for the moment to 1878. With the experience he had accumulated from his three ministerial stints at the Colonial Office and his time as an Opposition front-bench spokesman on colonial matters, Carnarvon gave a significant address on colonial administration to the Edinburgh Philosophical Society in November that year.¹³⁵ That address will be considered in more detail in the section on Carnarvon's imperial philosophy that follows, but as it sets out once again the ideological framework within which Carnarvon also viewed 'English' freemasonry and the administration of its (masonic) empire, attention must be drawn here to some of its main features. It is also necessary to emphasise that it is consistent with the 'colonial policy' Carnarvon outlined to Grand Lodge when he became a freemason in

¹³⁵ Carnarvon's address on 'Imperial Administration' to the Edinburgh Philosophical Society on 5 November 1878 as published in *The Fortnightly Review*, vol. XXIV, N.S., no. CXLIV, 1 December 1878, pp 751-764.

1856, two years before his first ministerial appointment, and with his approach to the demands for independent Grand Lodges in the Australian colonies that would confront the UGLE in the 1880s. Carnarvon told his Edinburgh audience that ‘for him ‘the true strength of our Imperialism’ lay ‘in the self-government of the great Anglo-Saxon Colonies’ whose inhabitants ‘are content to follow in the track of English traditions and belief’ and ‘remain to the backbone Englishmen.’ The ‘main principles of local freedom and absolute self-government on which these colonies are to be governed’ (which he had outlined to Grand Lodge in 1856) had, he said, now ‘been settled and accepted on all hands.’ For Carnarvon, ‘the main question’ was ‘how this vast empire is to be held together, and how we are to prevent those particles from flying, as it were, into political space.’ His hope was that ‘the common instincts of language, faith, laws, institutions, of allegiance to a common sovereign’ would ‘draw the bonds between them and us yet closer’ and that in the fullness of time the ‘noble dream’ of ‘a great English-speaking community, united together in a peaceful confederation’ would be realised.

As will be demonstrated in the case studies of Canada and Australia that follow, Carnarvon saw freemasonry as one of the institutions that could strengthen imperial bonds. He had originally opposed the formation of the first independent Grand Lodge in a British colony (Canada) on the ground that it was necessary to maintain ‘the due dependence and allegiance of the Canadian Lodges to the Grand Lodge of England.’ He had wished to see ‘the [‘English’] Grand Lodge the fountain of appeal – the source of our great policy, and the sole arbiter’, but then his intervention had come too late, and by 1878 there was little or no contact between the UGLE and the seven Canadian Grand Lodges.¹³⁶ Determined to prevent the nascent Grand Lodges in the Australian colonies from flying into masonic space (adopting the terminology used by Carnarvon in Edinburgh), and conscious of his Grand Master’s initial refusal to contemplate any further diminution of the UGLE’s masonic empire (see below), Carnarvon was to assist them on their road to masonic independence when the local circumstances were appropriate – in the hope that they would accept the Prince of Wales as their Grand Patron and the Grand Master of the UGLE as their final court of appeal, and thus demonstrate their continued allegiance to the UGLE and to the mother country as a whole. While the four

¹³⁶ *Masonic Observer* (November 1856) vol. 1, filed on CP BL Add 60945 as f. 33. The seven Canadian Grand Lodges extant in 1878 were the ‘Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of Canada’ (in the province of Ontario), and the Grand Lodges of Nova Scotia (1866), New Brunswick (1867), Quebec (1869), British Columbia (1871), Manitoba (1875), and Prince Edward Island (1875).

Australian Grand Lodges recognised by the UGLE during Carnarvon's tenure as Pro Grand Master dutifully sought and obtained the Prince's agreement to be their Grand Patron – a purely honorary office – none of them accepted Carnarvon's idea that the Prince should 'consent in some way to undertake the duty in certain very limited cases of the decision of certain appeals.'¹³⁷ Carnarvon knew that 'we are losing nothing that we could possibly have retained for one moment against their wish.' But he deluded himself when he went on to say that 'we are following the analogy of Imperial Administration', because the new Grand Lodges did not owe allegiance to any superior masonic body. He could claim, perhaps, that 'the ties of Masonic affection have not in the least been weakened', but the masonic link with the UGLE had been broken for ever and freemasonry in New South Wales, South Australia, Victoria and Western Australia in effect sank beneath the UGLE's horizon. While Carnarvon expounded the same colonial policy as a colonial administrator and as Pro Grand Master, the Grand Lodges in the colonies of white settlement followed a different path from the colonies themselves: whereas the colonies (in Canada, South Africa and Australasia) remained within the British Empire (later the British Commonwealth) until the late twentieth century, the Grand Lodges were completely independent of any other masonic authority from the moment of their inception and have remained so ever since. Masonically, Carnarvon's 'noble dream' remained just that.

Before looking briefly at the remaining major events in Carnarvon's masonic career from 1878 to 1890, a comment is necessary on the one occasion where Carnarvon was felt to have crossed the wires of imperial and masonic administration, sparking muted criticism and slightly burning his fingers in the process. Whether he was acting under instruction from his Grand Master, or whether he originally tried but failed to stifle the initiative is not known, but it was Carnarvon who wrote the letters to 'English' lodges throughout the empire in January 1887 (one of which was printed in the 'Court Circular' of *The Times*) suggesting a voluntary contribution of one guinea from every member to the Prince of Wales' favourite project, the Imperial Institute, to demonstrate both 'their loyalty to the Throne and their personal affection and respect for His Royal Highness their Grand Master, in a manner which will represent alike

¹³⁷ Carnarvon, *Proceedings* (6 June 1888).

the feelings of good citizens and true Masons.’¹³⁸ While Carnarvon was able to report in April 1887 that a majority of the responses to his suggestion was favourable, it appears that by July the idea had been quietly dropped in favour of substantial contributions to masonic charities.¹³⁹ The Church of England’s response to a suggestion that it too should support the Imperial Institute had been similar: it decided to build its own ‘Church House’. As the Archbishop of Canterbury had put it in December 1886:

The mother church did not propose to beg from our Colonies and our daughters all over the world. The Imperial Institute would be founded by the Empire of Great Britain; their house [i.e. Church House] would be a mother’s house...but among all the ties which bound the colonies to this country there were other ties than those of Imperial interests alone. Among all the feelings which united the colonies to England none was stronger than the church feeling.¹⁴⁰

And the dissatisfaction with the attempts to use imperial pillars – such as the church and freemasonry – as collecting boxes for the Imperial Institute was still rumbling on when Carnarvon visited Australia at the end of 1887, as this comment in a Melbourne daily newspaper shows:

We are sorry that our distinguished guest, the Earl of Carnarvon, is assuming the character of a travelling tout on behalf of the Imperial Institute...Every influence had been used to bring in subscriptions towards the building of the Imperial Institute. The circulars issued to all regiments of the Army and to each ship in the Navy savor [*sic*] very much of blackmail. English bishops have called upon their curates to contribute...The Freemasons of England were amongst the societies appealed to for funds.¹⁴¹

As will be made clear in the case-study of Carnarvon and Australia, there is no evidence that Carnarvon made any attempt, in Australia or elsewhere, to follow up his letters to lodges. By that stage he must have realised that such an appeal was felt to be inappropriate by the Craft in England and in the colonies, and that to pursue it (what Trainor has called one of ‘the more

¹³⁸ The only copy of the original circular letter of 8 January 1887 found so far is pasted into the Minute Book of the Lodge of Antiquity (now deposited in the LMF) and attached to the minutes of the emergency meeting held on 7 February 1887 to discuss it. Carnarvon refers to it in his second letter to lodges, dated 13 April 1887, which is reprinted in *The Freemason*, 23 April 1887, p.223. *The Times* 25 April 1887, p. 9, col. C, Court Circular: ‘The Queen’s Jubilee’.

¹³⁹ *Proceedings* 1 June 1887.

¹⁴⁰ *The Times* 11 December 1886, p 7, ‘Church House’.

¹⁴¹ *The Age*, 17 November 1887.

provocative forms of British imperial enthusiasm') would perpetuate the embarrassment it had already caused.¹⁴²

However, apart from that one error of judgment, Carnarvon was generally successful as Pro Grand Master. In 1877 he clarified the roles of the Grand Master, Pro Grand Master and Deputy Grand Master.¹⁴³ He saw Grand Lodge through some serious internal problems (for example, the collapse of the UGLE's bankers in 1878 and the destruction of its 'temple' by fire in 1882), and in June 1884 he stoutly defended 'English' freemasonry against the charges levelled against freemasonry in general by the encyclical *Humanum Genus* issued by Pope Leo XIII a few weeks earlier.¹⁴⁴ Carnarvon expressed his respect for Leo XIII as a statesman 'with ability and...discretion' but regretted that he 'should have been so far misled by false representation' as to sign, surely 'most undesignedly', such a 'misstatement of facts.' Carnarvon told Grand Lodge that the encyclical fell into 'two great errors': first, it confounded 'all Masonic bodies in all parts of the world in a common and sweeping charge of condemnation', and secondly it then confounded all of them 'with infidels' and, in politics, with 'revolutionists and anarchists.' While he did not seek to defend 'all Masonic bodies in all parts of the world' he 'fearlessly' denied that these charges could in any way be substantiated against 'this Grand Lodge or any lodge under its rule.' As evidence to support his claim that 'social order and religion have no stronger friends, no truer pillars to rest upon than the Masonic bodies of England' Carnarvon cited not only the rules and constitutions of the 'English' Craft – 'one and all breathing a spirit of religion and of obedience to the law' – and its long line of 'illustrious leaders' such as the Prince of Wales, but also two 'comparatively recent facts', namely that the UGLE had broken off relations with French lodges on the ground that they had 'erased from their title-deeds and charters the affirmation of the immortality of the

¹⁴² Luke Trainor, *British Imperialism and Australian Nationalism* (Cambridge, 1994), p. 105. Trainor also wrote that 'the attempt to secure funds for its [the Imperial Institute's] establishment from Australia was...to prove a major embarrassment to Governors and governments and the identification with the royal family was to make the situation worse, until the depression and financial dependence on Britain in the early 1890s left the colonies little choice but to show their "loyalty".' (Trainor, *op. cit.*, p. 51.)

¹⁴³ PRO 30/6/4 ff. 88-90.

¹⁴⁴ On the internal problems see the entries for 2 February, 21 March and 24 April 1878, and for 5 December 1883 in Carnarvon's diaries (CP BL Add 60911 and 60921). For the full text of Carnarvon's response to the papal encyclical see *Proceedings*, 4 June 1884, p. 240. The encyclical was issued on 20 April 1884. For papal attitudes to freemasonry see also Owen Chadwick's *A History of the Popes 1830-1914* (Oxford, 1998), pp. 304-5, and Aldo A. Mora's *Storia della Massoneria italiana dalle origini ai nostri giorni* (1992), p. 217, where it is claimed that that Leo XIII produced more than a thousand documents attacking freemasonry during his papacy from 1878 to 1903.

soul and the belief in a Supreme God', and that on the Prince's behalf he, as a freemason, had laid the corner-stone of a tower of Peterborough Cathedral (on 7 May). Here, once again, we hear why Carnarvon the conservative statesman remained an active and leading freemason for thirty-five years: for him 'English' freemasonry was one of the strongest pillars of 'social order and religion' and a bulwark against the growth of atheism, 'Sedition, Revolution, Socialism, and Communism' which both he and the Pope feared. And the value of the conservative role of the 'English' Craft – and of the Anglican church – in the empire as a whole is a theme which Carnarvon developed in his speeches during his private visits to Canada (1883), South Africa (1887) and Australia (1887/88), and one to which this thesis will return.

As his health began its last decline, Carnarvon attended Grand Lodge less frequently. The death of the man whom *The Freemason* called 'the *alter ego* in Freemasonry of his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales' in June 1890 was much lamented. The Prince himself ordered the 'English' Craft to go into mourning for six months and had the following resolution moved on his behalf in Grand Lodge:

That Grand Lodge has received with most profound regret, the sad intelligence of the decease of the late Right Honourable the Earl of Carnarvon, who for upwards of 15 years had held the exalted position of Pro Grand Master in the Order in this jurisdiction, and it desires to place on record its grateful appreciation of the invaluable services rendered by him to English Freemasonry during the whole of that period. His wise advice, his just ruling, and his unflinching courtesy will long be remembered by Grand Lodge, over whose deliberations he has so often presided with conspicuous ability, whilst his unceasing exertions for, and devotion to the best interests of the Craft will ever be recognised as having signally contributed to the high position it now occupies.¹⁴⁵

Just seventy-seven years later, however, when the Grand Lodge of England celebrated its 250th anniversary, Carnarvon's signal contribution to the Craft had already been forgotten, and today his biographical file in the Library and Museum of Freemasonry remains inaccurate and incomplete.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁵ Report of the meeting of Grand Lodge on Wednesday 3 September 1890 published in *The Freemason* (1891) vol. XXV, 1891.

¹⁴⁶ Carnarvon receives but one brief mention in *Grand Lodge 1717-1967*, the UGLE's official publication to mark its 250th anniversary, and then only in relation to the relatively minor matter of the precedence of the officers of the UGLE. His biographical file at the LMF (BE 68 (CAR) BLI Fol.) omits any mention of his visit to Canada in 1883, and incorrectly states, for example, that he 'was one of the leaders in the faction in giving them [English Lodges in Canada] independence' – which he was not, and that he installed the first Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of New South Wales – which he did not.

Conclusion

This section on Carnarvon the freemason is not intended as a chronicle but as a selection of the events from his masonic career that show that freemasonry played a significant part in his life. While his entry into freemasonry was probably prompted by his intellectual curiosity and his antiquarian or historical interests, and although he appears to have been interested in colonial affairs before he became either a freemason or a politician and statesman, he remained an active member of the Craft because he valued it as one of the pillars of society and as a link in the imperial chain. Moreover, his experience of Canadian moves towards masonic independence – which predated his first ministerial office – was an experience that assisted or even caused him to formulate a colonial policy which he then consistently applied in his dealings with the colonies of white settlement, whether as a statesman or as a leading member of the Church of England or as the day-to-day head of the UGLE. Carnarvon did not particularly enjoy ‘knife and fork’ freemasonry, and he did not need the fellowship or connections it provided. However, while it would be an exaggeration to claim that freemasonry coloured everything that Carnarvon did, it is surely clear that if its aims and practices had not been consistent with his system of morality, and if in his view the Craft had not been of value in maintaining social order throughout the British Empire, he would not have remained a member. Moreover, his comments on and his attitude towards freemasonry are at the root of his attitude towards Britain’s developing relationship with Canada, South Africa and Australia, and a careful study of them throws new light on Carnarvon the statesman. Any biographer or historian whose work touches on Carnarvon but who overlooks or underestimates Carnarvon’s freemasonry does not do full justice to an important and as yet under-researched British statesman and freemason of the second half of the nineteenth century.

Chapter 3: Carnarvon's philosophy of empire

Introduction

In his paper 'The Earl of Carnarvon, Empire, and Imperialism, 1855-1890', Bruce Knox wrote that 'Carnarvon's ideas and ideals, now relegated, have a good deal more to tell us about the practice of imperial governance'.¹ This section of the thesis will build on Knox's effort to rescue Carnarvon's 'ideas and ideals' – his imperial philosophy – from obscurity. It will examine them in greater detail than Knox, and show them to constitute an approach to colonial and imperial affairs which Carnarvon formulated in broad outline even before his first ministerial post, and then maintained, almost without change, until his death. Previous studies have concentrated on Carnarvon's 1878 address on colonial administration, overestimated the importance of Carnarvon's membership of the Imperial Federation League ['IFL'], failed to highlight the distinctions that Carnarvon drew between the self-governing 'Anglo-Saxon' colonies and the other elements of Britain's empire, and paid insufficient attention to the characteristics of the British Empire which, in his view, distinguished it from all others. This examination will include some of Carnarvon's earliest expressions of his imperial philosophy and compare them with some made in the last few years of his life. It will draw attention to the fact his imperial philosophy was also relevant to and consistent with his attitude to colonial churches and to colonial freemasonry. It is intended to show how Carnarvon compared and contrasted the British Empire with the empires of antiquity and those of more recent times. It will also demonstrate that Carnarvon was not 'one of the foremost advocates of Imperial Federation'² in the sense in which the IFL used the term in its obituary of Carnarvon, and that for Carnarvon 'the true strength of our Imperialism' and the main focus of his imperial philosophy was on 'the great Anglo-Saxon Colonies'.³

But did Carnarvon actually have an imperial philosophy? After all, towards the end of his life Carnarvon claimed 'I have always avoided...urging ambitious or cut-and-dried schemes. I have rather wished to see the affection of the mother country and the colonies dwelt

¹ Bruce Knox, 'The Earl of Carnarvon, Empire, and Imperialism 1855-1890', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* (1998), vol. 26, pp. 63-4.

² *Imperial Federation*, 1 August 1890, p.181.

³ Carnarvon, 'Imperial Administration', p. 752.

upon.⁴ The first sentence of this claim would no doubt be challenged by those historians who have seen Carnarvon as an ‘ultra-imperialist’ who ‘pushed [his colonial policy] ahead with a ruthless and doctrinaire enthusiasm’ – but the evidence available in Carnarvon’s speeches and writings actually supports his claim.⁵ Those sources also support the second sentence, but, in addition, they reveal that Carnarvon recognised that ‘affection’ or sentiment alone was not sufficient to protect the British Empire from eventual disintegration, in his view the inevitable fate of its predecessors and competitors. Carnarvon certainly had an imperial vision, but this section will show that it was neither a ‘cut-and-dried’ scheme nor one that he pushed ‘with a ruthless and doctrinaire enthusiasm’.

The section comprises an examination of the essential components of that vision, namely Carnarvon’s views on federation, ‘natives’ and ‘dependencies’, self-government, ‘the monarchical principle’, ‘mutual advantages and common interests’, the distinctive nature of British imperialism, the role of ‘free institutions’ (the Anglican Church and freemasonry), and the Empire as a ‘family’, and his preference for a moderate and non-partisan approach.

Federation

Federation is necessarily the first component of Carnarvon’s imperial philosophy to be considered, if only because Carnarvon’s reputation as a colonial administrator and as a statesman is usually associated with the terms federation and confederation, and because many historians have contrasted his success in the confederation of Canada in 1867 with his failures to move the South African colonies along the same path in the 1870s and to persuade the imperial government in the 1880s to introduce a greater degree of self-government in Ireland.⁶ True, federation in one form or another was a constant in Carnarvon’s thinking about international, imperial and colonial relations from at least January 1854 when, in moving the

⁴ Carnarvon’s speech at the parliamentary banquet in his honour in Melbourne, Australia, 8 December 1887, as reported in *The Argus* of 10 December 1887.

⁵ For the views of ultra-imperialists, and where they differed from Carnarvon’s, see Peter J. Cain ‘Empire and the languages of character and virtue in later Victorian and Edwardian Britain’ *Modern Intellectual History*, 4, 2 (Cambridge, 2007), pp. 249–273. The quote about ‘enthusiasm’ is from Hyam, *op. cit.*, (1976), pp. 303–4.

⁶ See, for example, Bruce A. Knox, ‘The Rise of Colonial Federation as an Object of British Policy, 1850–1870’, *The Journal of British Studies*, Vol. 11. No. 1 (Nov., 1971), 92–112; ‘Conservative Imperialism 1858–74: Bulwer Lytton, Lord Carnarvon and Canadian Confederation’ *The International History Review*, VI, 3, August 1984, pp. 333–357; ‘The Earl of Carnarvon, Empire, and Imperialism, 1855–90’ *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* (1998) vol. 26, 2, pp 48–66

address in reply to the Queen's speech, he cited 'the union which has been firmly cemented between England and France' [!] as a recognition of 'the principle that petty internal differences must yield before a great fusion of *confederated* [my emphasis] nations'.⁷ But for Carnarvon even federation and confederation were not 'cut-and-dried' terms: he tended to use the terms indiscriminately and admitted that 'confederation is in itself a very elastic, and perhaps misleading term.'⁸ What, then, did Carnarvon mean when he spoke of federation?

(a) Imperial Federation

Carnarvon was anxious to maintain the integrity of the empire – or at least of Britain and its remaining white settler colonies. Speaking of the relationship between Britain and her Australian colonies in 1887 Carnarvon described 'the close union of feeling, interest, and thought' as 'the federal bond' which united them closely together and which 'in a certain sense is federation itself'.⁹ (Carnarvon could equally well have been speaking of the informal federation that bound Canada and New Zealand to Britain.) And it was this 'affection of the mother country and the colonies' which Carnarvon wished to see 'dwelt upon' if the integrity of the empire was to be maintained and strengthened. Carnarvon himself appears never to have drawn up or advocated any scheme for the formal federation of the empire's constituent parts. In 1889 he even congratulated the Imperial Federation League on having 'done wisely in avoiding formulating any formal scheme' and he reasserted his view that 'it is far better that the scheme, whenever it arises, should come on the initiative of the great Colonies.' It is, however, true that he never banished wholly from his imagination 'that noble dream... of a great English-speaking community, united together in a peaceful confederation' which he had mentioned to the Edinburgh Philosophical Society in 1878.¹⁰

As a classical scholar Carnarvon naturally compared the British Empire with the Roman Empire. Indeed, in that Edinburgh address he claimed that there was 'no precedent for

⁷ 31 January 1854. (The quotation is from a typed copy of *Hansard's Debates* vol. 130 p. 5 on CP BL Add 60945.)

⁸ Carnarvon's speech at the parliamentary banquet in his honour in Melbourne, Australia, 8 December 1887, as reported by Hardinge, *op. cit.*, vol. 3, pp. 277-80.

⁹ Carnarvon's speech at a masonic reception in South Australia, reported in *The South Australian Advertiser* of 3 December 1887, a copy of which is filed on CP BL Add 60940, f. 14.

¹⁰ Carnarvon, 'Imperial Administration' (1878), p. 763. The dream was not unique to him, however. The Liberal MP, W.E. Forster, had used almost the same words when addressing his Bradford constituents in 1870, and Carnarvon had then quoted them approvingly in the House of Lords on 14 February 1870. (*The Times*, 15 February 1870).

the English Empire except one – the great Empire of Rome'. More modern scholars have since pursued the comparison and noted the importance of Rome to other Victorian thinkers.¹¹ But while in 1878 Carnarvon highlighted Rome as a precedent, his 'noble dream' bears a closer resemblance to the Greek model for a colonial empire which Arthur Mills had described in 1856 as 'a 'union resting not on state contrivances and economical theories', like that of Rome, 'but on religious sympathies and ancestral associations.'¹² In this respect it is interesting to turn to Carnarvon's notes, written apparently in the 1860s, on some of the authors he had consulted. There, in his comments on or quotations from an unidentified book by 'Freeman', he noted that the Achaean League of ancient Greece and the 'U.S. of North America (AD 1778-1862)' were the two most perfect forms of 'federal government' and that 'federation sd be compared not with perfect union, but perfect separation'.¹³ (There is no evidence, however, that Carnarvon's 'noble dream' was in any way derived from or influenced by the American model.)¹⁴

(b) 'Intercolonial' Federation

Carnarvon understood that it was more difficult to realise that 'noble dream' if the colonies in a particular territory – such as Canada, South Africa and Australia – did not themselves federate in a more formal sense. Unfederated, the British holdings in such a territory would be less able to defend themselves or to be defended by Britain from external attack; they would be more costly to administer from Britain; and the opportunities for self-government afforded to their local administrators would be commensurately restricted. Carnarvon therefore encouraged and facilitated local initiatives towards a more formal federation of the colonies in a particular territory, and in the first instance, in Canada, his efforts reached a successful conclusion in the Confederation of 1867. As for the Australian colonies, Carnarvon was 'convinced that Intercolonial [*sic*] Federation' in that territory was 'the first and the natural, if it be not the best and indispensable condition to Imperial Federation' and that its outcome would be 'to make

¹¹ For a useful bibliography see Duncan Bell, 'From Ancient to Modern in Victorian Imperial Thought', *The Historical Journal*, 49, 3 (2006), pp. 735–759.

¹² The quotation is cited by Bell, *op. cit.*, p. 743.

¹³ CP BL Add 60979 f. 53. 'Freeman' was presumably E.A. Freeman, the author of *History of Federal Government* (London, 1863), whom Gladstone later appointed as the Regius Professor of History (1884–92). As Richard Symonds makes clear in his *Oxford and Empire: The Last Cause* (1986), Freeman regarded himself as a republican and he opposed imperial federation, having drawn the lesson 'From Athenian history...that the British Empire should [instead] be a unity of scattered kinsfolk.'

¹⁴ For the imaginative leap of some of the proponents of 'Greater Britain' from the model of the self-dissolving empires of antiquity to the 'progressive' model presented by the USA see Bell, *op. cit.*, 757–59.

states already great a still greater and more significant Dominion – another home of the British race, and another support to the old Mother Country'.¹⁵ Carnarvon therefore remained ready to support a timely initiative from the Australian colonies, but none presented itself during his lifetime, and his hopes for a federated Australia were not realised until after the start of the twentieth century.

In South Africa's case, Carnarvon tried while he was the Secretary of State for the Colonies to stimulate federation there by calling representatives of the British colonies and the Dutch republics in South Africa to a conference in London to discuss it, and he even went so far as to introduce enabling legislation in the imperial parliament before he had gained their commitment to any formal confederation.¹⁶ Accordingly, when he moved the second reading of the permissive South African confederation bill on 23 April 1877, he stressed that while it was 'one of outline and principle, containing the framework of a future Confederation' it was 'essentially permissive, one by which no sort of pressure would be put upon the Colonies, while it would at the same time give every opportunity for confederating should they think it advisable to do so.'¹⁷ Carnarvon urged parliament to believe that 'such a principle of Confederation must add strength to these Colonies, give larger objects, a higher policy, a wider political life... a greater prosperity and peace, and a close consolidation of Imperial interests.'¹⁸

Carnarvon's permissive bill, supported as it was by Disraeli's cabinet and by Lord Kimberley from the Opposition's front bench, was passed, unopposed – but the seed failed to flourish on the ground in South Africa. There the settlers of British origin were but a minority of the whites in the territory; relations between them and the white (Dutch) majority were not – contrary to Carnarvon's view – conducive to confederation; and both 'races' (as Carnarvon termed them) were vastly outnumbered by the black 'natives'. Put simply, the crucial elements of 'sentiment and interest' were insufficient among the colonial and state leaders in South

¹⁵ Carnarvon, speech at the inauguration of the City of London branch of the Imperial Federation League, 15 November 1889, as reported in *Imperial Federation*, 1 December 1889, pp. 276-77.

¹⁶ As the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies in 1859, however, Carnarvon had forcefully argued against Sir George Grey's proposal for a South African federation, deeming it to be impractical for any minister to propose to parliament 'in present circumstances' (Carnarvon's minute of 7 January 1859, PRO/30/6/133, ff. 39-47). For the official view of Carnarvon's reasons for the conference and its outcome see 'Memo [dated 14 February 1877] on South African Affairs since Lord Carnarvon's assumption of office', PRO/30/6/48, ff. 225-319, and the Colonial office's internal and confidential report on the conference held in August 1876, 'Africa No. 102', on CO 879/10 in the National Archives.

¹⁷ Hardinge, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, pp. 283-4.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

Africa for the idea of confederation to take hold there in the late 1870s. Carnarvon's hope that 'these communities, now scattered and isolated by conflicting interests' throughout South Africa would soon 'form a strong, peaceable and loyal Confederation under the British Crown' was not to be realised before his resignation in 1878, or indeed during his lifetime. In the review of his attempt to facilitate confederation in South Africa that he wrote in 1888, Carnarvon ascribed its failure to the fact that 'the Imperial proposals did not secure the necessary local concurrence' and he reiterated that 'proposals for Confederation now ought to proceed from South Africa herself, and to be the spontaneous outcome of her own desires and public interests'.¹⁹ The evidence therefore strongly suggests that, far from pushing ahead 'with a ruthless and doctrinaire enthusiasm', Carnarvon realised from the outset that any formal federation of the South African states could only be facilitated, not imposed, by the imperial government, and that while his attempt to facilitate confederation in South Africa was consistent with his long-standing attachment to 'federation', a key component of his imperial philosophy, its timing was premature.

Before turning to another key component, namely self-government, we must first briefly pursue Carnarvon's mention of 'natives' and consider how he viewed those parts of the empire that lay outside the inner circle of the close family and were not among the self-governing 'great Anglo-Saxon Colonies' wherein lay for Carnarvon 'the true strength of our Imperialism.'²⁰

'Natives' and 'dependencies'

One of the benefits Carnarvon 'earnestly hope[d]' would flow from confederation in South Africa was 'a better security for the right treatment of the native races'.²¹ In the 'great Anglo-Saxon Colonies' in British North America and Australasia the responsibility for 'right treatment of the 'native races' had essentially been devolved to the colonial governments. But elsewhere in the empire it was important in Carnarvon's view that the imperial government itself retained that responsibility to ensure that the native populations were not abused and

¹⁹ Carnarvon, 'The Cape in 1888', *Fortnightly Review*, June 1888, pp. 882-883.

²⁰ Carnarvon, 'Imperial Administration'.

²¹ Hardinge, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, pp. 283-4.

misgoverned by a small white minority.²² There, in Carnarvon's opinion, most of Britain's colonies were not yet ready for self-government and, until 'in the fulness [*sic*] of time, these uneducated beings are raised to a far higher degree of independence, the Secretary of State must be their protector.'²³ Britain had accepted the obligation 'as regards all those native races...of giving them protection, and of gradually raising them in the scale of human knowledge and happiness.'²⁴ But when Carnarvon examined 'the condition of these people' in India, 'the greatest dependency of the Crown', where Britain had 'undertaken to provide for the protection and maintenance...for an incalculably large portion of the human race', he concluded that even there 'we are still frightfully distant from the result which we are bound to have in view.'²⁵ In the case of a smaller colony, the Gold Coast, Carnarvon actually recognised that Britain was partly responsible for the unfortunate condition of its people, for, having 'taught these people ... to lean upon us' they had 'lost their manliness and independence of character'.²⁶ Nevertheless, some progress had been made there: Britain had 'given the people a system of education' and it had 'led them a certain distance along the road to civilization'. But if Britain were to abandon them 'the wheel of progress would run backward, and even human sacrifices would be seen at Cape Coast Castle within a year'²⁷ In brief, Carnarvon accepted that Britain in the 1870s had a moral obligation not to abandon the less advanced, non-'Anglo-Saxon' parts of the empire she had acquired because there it had 'races struggling to emerge into civilisation' who needed to be well governed under the aegis of Britain's more advanced civilisation, so that 'the light of morality and religion can penetrate into the darkest dwelling-places.' For Carnarvon that was 'the real fulfilment' of Britain's duty as an imperial power

²² See the 'substance' of Carnarvon's address on 'Imperial Administration' to the Edinburgh Philosophical Society, 5 November 1878, as published in *The Fortnightly Review*, Vol. XXIV, N.S., No. CXLIV, 1 December 1878, pp 751-764, especially p. 756.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 756.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 756.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 757-58.

²⁶ See also Carnarvon's undated draft of a memorandum for the Cabinet on South African affairs, filed as f. 37 on PRO/36/6/42, at II (2) of which, headed 'Our duty towards the Natives', he wrote: 'We have given them promises & they have looked to us for support. We have received & transmitted their protests. We have repeatedly intervened on their behalf; our general policy has undoubtedly the effect of making them lean upon us. It wd. hardly be possible to desert them under the pressure of an [next word illegible] open and insulting compulsion & to hand them over to the tender mercies of men such as the Boers whose dealing with Native tribes have been (and are) as ruthless as any on record & the mere statement of wh raise [*sic*] an extraordinary feeling of indignation in this country.'

²⁷ Carnarvon's speech in the House of Lords, 12 May 1874 as cited by Hardinge, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, pp. 145-52.

towards its less fortunate members, 'the true strength and meaning of Imperialism' to be applied to the empire's less advanced constituents.²⁸

Carnarvon's attitude towards the outer circles of Britain's empire was not unusual for his times – but historians have overlooked that part of his imperial philosophy which was averse to expansion for expansion's sake, a part that will be examined later in this section.²⁹ Carnarvon considered the burden of administering the less developed parts of the world that were already within Britain's imperial rule to be so heavy that he warned against any unavoidable further acquisitions on the grounds that 'the acquisition of territory is as a rule the last resource, that with an enormous empire it is an evil in itself, and that in proportion as men extend their boundary so they multiply their perils and difficulties.'³⁰

Self-government

Carnarvon knew that another duty of the imperial government was 'to breathe into the whole of that mighty mass' of the empire 'a common unity' and 'to find for it that animating and binding principle which is the nearest approach to the spirit of patriotism that you look for in an individual'.³¹ Yet, at least for the Anglo-Saxon colonies, Carnarvon also espoused domestic self-government, an essential component of his imperial philosophy, and a 'gift' to be bestowed by Britain on all her overseas territories in the fullness of time, even if – for the least advanced territories – that time stretched far over the horizon. How, philosophically, was he able to combine freedom with allegiance, *libertas* with *imperium*?³²

There being little prospect of being morally able to confer self-government upon the other dependencies of the British crown, Carnarvon, when dealing with what he termed the 'Anglo-Saxon colonies', concentrated his efforts on achieving that combination of local freedom and imperial allegiance which, ultimately, had eluded previous empires and thus hastened their decline and dissolution. Britain had long lost most of its American colonies, and

²⁸ Carnarvon 'Imperial Administration' (1878), p. 764.

²⁹ For example, Dilke's *Greater Britain* was published in 1868 and Seeley's *Expansion of England* in 1883.

³⁰ Carnarvon 'Imperial Administration' (1878), p. 760.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 762.

³² In his dismissal of Grey's case for a South African federation in 1859, Carnarvon had written: 'I do not know in the whole history of the world of an instance where the separation of a Colony from the Mother Country has not had as its proximate cause some grievance or difference, and where the dissolution of the tie has been accomplished with the mutual satisfaction which is generally predicted for us by all those who speak of our connexion with our Colonies as a merely temporary arrangement.' (PRO/30/6/133, ff. 39-47.)

her relations with what had since become the USA were frequently strained. But Carnarvon could 'never...help thinking how splendid and unassailable the Anglo-Saxon race would have been had that fatal separation never taken place.'³³ Why, in Carnarvon's opinion, had that regrettable state of affairs come about, and how could Britain prevent her remaining great colonies flying off into 'political space'?

He answered this question in speeches he made to masonic audiences in early 1857, a year before his first ministerial appointment in the Colonial Office (contrary to Harland-Jacobs' claim), when a group of Canadian lodges was demanding a greater degree of self-government.³⁴ The answer, he said, was always to bear in mind that 'no community can continue to cohere except upon the universal principle of human institutions – that of mutual advantage; and this can only be secured by a system of reciprocal concessions'.³⁵ Britain had not granted its American colonies the concession of self-government they had justifiably demanded and which Britain could have made without losing the colonies' allegiance; instead Britain had tried to continue direct rule from London by force, and the colonies had seceded. Now, because the Grand Lodge of England had responded so tardily to the request from some of its lodges in Canada, 'the feelings in Canada in favour of independence had grown very strong, and...it was more than doubtful if their [the Grand Lodge of England's] colonial supremacy could now be preserved. He was afraid that in this matter they had gone too near that fatal rock "Too Late", which had shipwrecked so many empires, dynasties and governments.'³⁶ Carnarvon's fear was justified: the initial refusal by the Grand Master of the UGLE to make any concessions to an earlier petition had led to the secession of a number of lodges and the formation of the first independent Grand Lodge in a British colony; the concessions eventually offered to the remaining 'loyal' lodges in Canada were indeed too late to prevent the formation of the second independent Grand Lodge there.

There were of course limits to the concessions that the 'mother country' could make to its more mature children if they were to remain close and loyal members of the British imperial family, and in Carnarvon's imperial philosophy those limits, in relation to colonial

³³ Carnarvon's speech at the parliamentary banquet in his honour in Melbourne, Australia, 8 December 1887, as reported in *The Argus* of 10 December 1887.

³⁴ *Masonic Mirror* vol. 1, 1857, p.126 dated 'Bath, Jan 8 1857' and entitled 'Bro The Earl of Carnarvon at Bath'. Harland-Jacobs, *Builders of Empire*, p. 260.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ CP BL Add 60945. Transcription of a speech made on 26 March 1857 in Stonehouse, Devon.

administration, were remarkably similar to those he applied to masonic administration. Yet again, those limits were clear in Carnarvon's mind a considerable time before he took up his first ministerial office (in 1858), for it was in October 1856 that in a speech to the UGLE he explained the 'colonial policy' he would apply to the petitioning Canadian lodges – a policy he subsequently applied in the Colonial Office. For Carnarvon the 'great secret of government' was that 'the governing body shall only attempt those duties which it is competent to perform.' And of the two principles of government – 'compulsion and persuasion' – he preferred to apply the second. His advice to the Grand Lodge on how to administer its lodges in the Canadian colonies, and the approach he subsequently adopted towards colonial governments was: 'Make them your friends, and do not seek to alienate them; attempt not to depose them into the condition of slaves.' Thus, while he was certain that 'the due dependence and allegiance of the Canadian Lodges to the Grand Lodge of England' had to be maintained, and the Grand Lodge had to remain the 'fountain of appeal – the source of our great policy, and the sole arbiter', he 'would utterly surrender to the Prov. Grand Lodge all the minutiae of local business.' He would refuse to countenance the Canadians' request that they should be allowed to appoint their own Provincial Grand Master as this would 'lead to alienation', but he agreed with the proposal that they should elect two candidates from which the Grand Master in London would select one for that office. He also favoured a stronger representation of colonial lodges in the centre, at Grand Lodge. Carnarvon hoped that by granting these concessions to 'further independence or self-government' the UGLE would yet avoid the secession of the remaining lodges in Canada West.³⁷ That hope proved futile, for Zetland's eventual offer of concessions was made, as Carnarvon had feared, 'Too late'.³⁸

Thirty-two years later Carnarvon was to echo the same thoughts, this time in the context of colonial rather than masonic administration. At a meeting of the St George Club in London in 1888 he said that there were but two visible ties binding the self-governing colonies to Britain: their Governors, the imperial monarch's representatives, on the one hand, and the colonies' right of appeal to the Privy Council on the other. As for the Governors he was certain that 'the free and untrammelled appointment of such officers by the Crown was to the public interest and to the advantage of all.' (He had recently written to *The Times* to defend the

³⁷ Carnarvon's speech at Grand Lodge, 1 October 1856, as reported in *The Masonic Observer* of November 1856, a copy of which is to be found on CP BL Add 60945, f. 33.

³⁸ For the details, see the case study of Carnarvon and Canada below.

government's refusal to bow to Queensland's request that the name of an intending governor should be submitted to the colony's government before the appointment was actually made.)³⁹ And 'with regard to the appeal to the Privy Council, he could wish to see colonial subjects more completely represented on the Judicial Committee of that Council.'⁴⁰

Carnarvon also argued that by granting, in his terms, absolute local freedom and absolute self-government to the great Anglo-Saxon colonies Britain demonstrated that it was 'neither jealous of the aspirations of those colonies, nor indifferent to their desires'. After all, Britain had 'fostered their growth' and now recognised 'in that growth the pillars of... [its] own greatness...those free institutions which we gave them a quarter of a century ago'. And by crowning the colonies' achievements with the concession of self-government Britain hoped to 'remove for ever and a day all chances of disunion, and difference, and jealousy, which could exist between the mother country and her child.'⁴¹ As the Dominion of Canada was to exemplify after its creation in 1867, 'the great colonies endowed with free and responsible self-government' could 'deal...admirably, with the questions which concern themselves, their local institutions and the sphere of their internal life'. However, the settlement of 'large constitutional questions' would still require 'the help of the home Government', as would questions 'with which the relations and interests of foreign nations are interwoven.' Carnarvon was able to see for himself the success of this policy towards those colonies when he visited Canada in 1883 and Australia in 1887/88: in both territories the colonies had achieved self-government and had remained loyal. The same applied to the Anglican Church, and Carnarvon pointed out the similarity when addressing the synod of the Church in Canada in September 1883: 'Canada politically was entirely free and untrammelled as far as domestic legislation went and the Church in Canada was also entirely free. This quasi-independence did not in the least affect Canadian loyalty to the Crown, and on the part of the Church unbounded loyalty to the great Mother Church.'⁴² Self-government, granted in good time to mature colonies, was thus the key to solving the problem of how in their case to combine freedom with allegiance, and it was therefore a key component in Carnarvon's imperial philosophy.

³⁹ *The Times* of 19 November, 1888, cited by Hardinge, *op. cit.*, vol. 3, p. 290.

⁴⁰ *The Times*, 6 December 1888, p. 13, col. F.

⁴¹ Carnarvon's speech on moving the second reading of the North American Provinces Confederation Bill, 19 February 1867 (*The Times*, 20 February 1867, p. 6, col. C.

⁴² *The Globe* (Toronto), 19 September 1883.

Local freedom was not, however, sufficient in itself to guarantee continued allegiance. Another ingredient was required, one which Carnarvon believed would distinguish the British Empire from all others and one which will be examined later in this section. But first it must be noted that the loss of the American colonies had taught Carnarvon another lesson – how to manage separation if all attempts to keep a mature child within the close family failed. As he put it on 14 February 1870, ‘If there is any lesson which we should draw from the loss of the United States, it is the misfortune of parting from those colonies in ill-will and irritation.’⁴³

In fact, no colony left the British Empire on Carnarvon’s watch, but during his 34 years as a freemason he eventually had to accept with good grace the formation of a number of entirely independent Grand Lodges in British colonies in Canada and Australasia, Grand Lodges which recognised no higher authority than their own, owed no allegiance to the Grand Lodge of England, and elected their own Grand Masters. (Harland-Jacobs incorrectly describes these new Grand Lodges as having achieved only ‘fiscal and administrative independence’, or, as Carnarvon described the Church and Confederation of Canada in the quotation in the preceding paragraph of this section, ‘quasi-independent’.)⁴⁴ As will be seen from the case study of Carnarvon’s Australian visit in 1887/88, despite the failure of Carnarvon’s final attempt to continue one last ‘visible tie’ between the nascent Grand Lodges in Australia and the Grand Lodge of England (by having them retain the Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of England as their final court of appeal), and despite the fact that communications between them and their masonic parent thereafter became ever less frequent, their affection for their parent – if not their allegiance – remained intact, thanks to the timely granting of independence and fraternal recognition.

‘The monarchical principle’⁴⁵

The special component in Carnarvon’s imperial philosophy, the one that in his opinion distinguished the British Empire from all others, was what Beasley has termed ‘the monarchical principle’ which, if maintained, Carnarvon thought would ensure and perpetuate imperial integrity. Carnarvon’s concept of the empire as a kingdom can be dated to at least his Stonehouse speech in 1857 when ‘[h]aving regard to the number of Freemasons and their

⁴³ *Annual Register* (1870), p. 117.

⁴⁴ Harland-Jacobs, *Builders of Empire*, p. 213.

⁴⁵ Beasley, *op. cit.*, p. 126.

diffusion over the country, the colonies, and the associated Lodges of other countries' Carnarvon suggested that 'English Freemasonry might be viewed as a kingdom.'⁴⁶ In terms of colonial rather than masonic administration, however, it was also the 'British Crown' that cemented and distinguished the 'intercolonial' federation of Canada, of which Carnarvon was to say in 1867 that 'unlike every other federation that has existed – it derives its power from an external authority – from that which is the recognised source of power and right – the British Crown'. Loyalty to the British Crown was also an essential ingredient in imperial relations: as Carnarvon stressed in his Edinburgh address a decade later, the 'allegiance to a common sovereign', like the other 'common instincts' of language, faith, laws, and institutions, would 'draw the bonds between them [the colonies] and us yet closer.'⁴⁷

Indeed, for Carnarvon, that 'loyalty to a common sovereign' was the most important of those 'common instincts' for it was, as he put it in Canada in 1883, a part of 'the greatest gift that the Crown and Parliament of England' could bestow on a mature colony, namely 'absolute, unqualified, unstinted freedom in self-government, combined with an [*sic*] union with the ancient Monarchy of England.'⁴⁸ Loyalty to the British Crown was the essential ingredient in the 'affection of the mother country and the colonies' that Carnarvon wished to see 'dwelt upon', for although a possession as mature as Canada was 'free as the winds of heaven' in 'legislation... [and] in self-government', he trusted that 'in loyalty to the Crown, in love to the Mother Country' it might 'ever be bound in chains of adamant' to Britain.⁴⁹ In 1887 the Australian colonies had yet to achieve the 'dominion' status that a confederated Canada had achieved in 1867, but Carnarvon gave them a similar message: 'it has been given to you in the Australian colonies, more than anywhere else, to show how it is possible to combine freedom with devotion to the monarchy.'⁵⁰ The 'pride of race and Empire united to the loyalty felt for a common Sovereign' was, with commerce and defence, one of the 'three great forces which must be pillars in any system of Confederation, and must affect all its parts and relations, whether internal, as between Colony and Colony, or external', as between a colony and Britain. That 'strange feeling... which as a matter of fact, exists so strongly in distant Colonies... and

⁴⁶ CP BL Add 60945, 26 March 1857.

⁴⁷ Carnarvon, 'Imperial Administration', p. 763.

⁴⁸ Carnarvon's speech at a banquet in his honour, 19 September 1883, as reported in Hardinge, *op. cit.*, pp. 95-6.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ Carnarvon's speech at the Imperial Exhibition in Adelaide, 30 November 1887, as reported in the *South Australian Advertiser* of 1 December 1887.

which we call loyalty to the person of a Sovereign whom the vast majority have never seen and never can see' was, for Carnarvon, the greatest of those informal 'influences of incalculable power' that determined 'the nature and duration of the connection of England with her Colonies.'⁵¹

'Mutual advantages and common interests'

Yet, according to Carnarvon's imperial philosophy, 'affection' and 'sentiment' – even when combined with the unique ingredient of loyalty to a common sovereign and the gift of self-government – were not sufficient to maintain the empire. As we have already seen, he had pointed out in 1857 that 'no community can continue to cohere except upon the universal principle of human institutions – that of mutual advantage.'⁵² He frequently returned to this theme in later years, and in 1887 he expressed this element of his philosophy thus to an Australian audience:

it must not be merely sentiment on which any closer formal union with England must be based. It must also have the sanction of interest...Unless all parties can feel...that it is in the interests of both...federation would be simply playing with the word, and would lead us into great and profound difficulties.⁵³

On another occasion on that same visit Carnarvon again related 'mutual advantage' to successful 'federation' when he said that 'the magic word "federation"...however defined' had to be 'based on two things: loyalty, and mutual advantages and common interests.'⁵⁴ By that time in his life Carnarvon was beginning to speak of the relationship between Britain and her 'great colonies' as a growing 'partnership'. For example, he told the Australian colonies in 1887 that they were 'stepping from the past where local duties, however important...had no relationship to Imperial duties' and were now 'joining in a partnership in Imperial matters.'⁵⁵

But what were those 'mutual advantages and common interests'? The two most obvious to Carnarvon and to his colonial audiences were closely related to each other, namely defence and commerce. No other British statesman devoted so much of his energies between 1853 and 1890 to persuading the imperial parliament on the one hand that it had to maintain

⁵¹ Carnarvon, 'Annexation and Confederation in Australasia', published 27 December 1884, as quoted by Hardinge, *op. cit.*, p. 128.

⁵² *Masonic Mirror* vol. 1, 1857, p.126 in a report entitled 'Bath, Jan 8 1857'.

⁵³ Speech, 9 December 1887 in Melbourne, as reported in Hardinge, *op. cit.*, p. 278, and in *The Age* (Melbourne), 10 December 1887.

⁵⁴ Carnarvon's speech, 9 November 1887 in Melbourne, as reported in *The Age* the next day.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

and preferably improve the defences of the coaling stations that fuelled its merchant fleet and its navy, and the colonial governments on the other that as their economies grew they should contribute to that imperial effort. His expertise in this field was reflected in his appointments as chairman of cross-party imperial defence commissions and committees in 1879 and 1881. Britain's navy was the most powerful in the world, but it had at least three disadvantages from Britain's point of view: it was expensive to maintain, it was not self-reliant but needed the support of colonial outposts scattered over the globe – and it could not defend Canada from attack from its immediate neighbour, the USA. Carnarvon's imperial philosophy in respect of commerce and defence therefore was that the lines for the former had to be kept open, if necessary by naval force, and that if a territory could not be defended, Britain should endeavour to strengthen it by federating her colonies within it and by maintaining a peaceful relationship with the likely source of any threat to it.

Thus, although he originally disapproved of the arbitration by which Britain settled the USA's claims against Britain after the American civil war, he later recognised that in return for Britain's generosity the USA had in effect accepted Canada's right to exist as an independent and generally well-disposed neighbour and had withdrawn for good any threat to invade Canada.⁵⁶ And by assisting the confederation of the Canadian colonies he claimed to have 'materially strengthen[ed] each and all the provinces in defence against invasion.'⁵⁷ He was therefore pleased in 1878, having left the Colonial Office for the last time, to record his 'greatest satisfaction' that during his spell as Colonial Secretary from 1874-78, 'so far as the Colonial Government was concerned' he was 'not aware that one unfriendly word ever passed between the English and the United States Governments.'⁵⁸ As regards the colonies in Australia, Carnarvon was quick to congratulate those that passed the Naval Defence Bill – which in his view bound them to their motherland 'in bonds of common defence.'⁵⁹ And, as he said on his return to London in an address to the London Chamber of Commerce, it was the Australian colonies' duty 'to place their great capitals, overflowing with wealth and all the

⁵⁶ CP BL Add 60898, 26 and 29 November 1866.

⁵⁷ *Annual Register* (1867), pp. 11-16.

⁵⁸ Carnarvon, 'Imperial Administration' (1878), p. 756.

⁵⁹ Carnarvon's speech, 25 November 1887, in Melbourne, as reported in *The Age* the next day.

splendour of a rising civilisation, in a position of adequate defence, both for their own sake and to give shelter to the Navy in time of difficulty.’⁶⁰

The ‘cementing influences of a combined defence’ and the ‘vastness of our commerce’ were indeed two of the three ‘great forces which must be pillars in any system of Confederation’ (the other being the above-mentioned loyalty to a common sovereign).⁶¹ But commerce was not only a pillar – it was for Carnarvon the life-blood which had ‘created and kept our Empire.’⁶² As Carnarvon told an Australian audience in 1887: ‘our capital finds its way into your colonies; and your markets receive our goods.’⁶³ Were that life-line to be severed the empire would die and ‘England would become an overcrowded, pauperised, discontented island in the North Sea.’⁶⁴ The lines of commerce therefore had to be defended, even if that meant the acquisition of control of additional territory. Such a measure would normally be contrary to one of the general tenets of Carnarvon’s imperial philosophy – he claimed in 1890 that ‘we covet nothing; we only desire to retain and develop the possessions which have been granted to us’ – but, if another power threatened or seemed to threaten a line of commerce, Carnarvon was quite clear that Britain would have to make a pre-emptive strike.

By 1880 that threat to Britain’s commercial interests in South Africa had become perceptible, thanks to what Carnarvon called the ‘modern craving for colonial annexation.’ In Carnarvon’s opinion, if ‘the large tract lying immediately to the north of the Transvaal, and of our Bechuanaland territory...[w]ere it to pass into the hands of another European Power, it would virtually hem us in.’ If that ‘middle space’ or ‘no-man’s land’, as he called it, ‘were to pass into foreign hands the results would be simply disastrous’: ‘our colonies would lose their right of way into the interior...our traders would forfeit the markets, which would soon be closed by hostile tariffs...England and her colonies alike would relinquish the free navigation of the Zambesi, the great high road of Eastern Africa.’ He would have preferred ‘to preserve the territory neutral and free for all nations’ if that had been possible, ‘but now that this part of

⁶⁰ Carnarvon’s address to the London Chamber of Commerce, 10 December 1889, as reported in *Imperial Federation* (the journal of the Imperial Federation League), 1 January 1890, p. 11.

⁶¹ Carnarvon, ‘Annexation and Confederation in Australasia’, published 27 December 1884, as quoted by Hardinge, *op. cit.*, p. 128.

⁶² Carnarvon’s address to the London Chamber of Commerce, 10 December 1889, *Imperial Federation*, 1 January 1890, p. 11.

⁶³ Carnarvon’s speech at a parliamentary banquet in Sydney, as reported in the *Sydney Morning Herald* of 20 December 1887, p. 5, col. 4c.

⁶⁴ Carnarvon’s address to the London Chamber of Commerce, 10 December 1889, *Imperial Federation*, 1 January 1890, p. 11.

Africa has become the subject of foreign ambition or enterprise...our safety lies in the formal extension of our protectorate up to the banks of the Zambesi.’⁶⁵ (Those who might see this remark as evidence that Carnarvon was an ‘ultra-imperialist’ should bear in mind that at the time he made it Carnarvon had been out of the Colonial Office for ten years and that he was responding to the ‘modern craving for colonial annexation.’ Until that time, and with the exception of the Transvaal [see below], Carnarvon had indeed viewed ‘the acquisition of territory...as a rule [as] the last resource.’)⁶⁶

The distinction between British and ‘foreign imperialism’

In his address to the Edinburgh Philosophical Society in 1878 Carnarvon recognised that ‘we have been of late much perplexed by a new word, “Imperialism”, which has crept in among us’ and declared that he did not particularly like it ‘for the obvious reason that it suggests uncomfortable Continental associations.’⁶⁷ For Carnarvon, the use of the word ‘imperialism’ in the British context was acceptable only if its ‘true meaning’ was understood, namely the acceptance of two duties: first, ‘to recognise...that there are obligations which we owe beyond the limits of the four seas’, and second ‘to breathe into the whole of that mighty mass...a common unity; to find for it that animating and binding principle which is the nearest approach to the spirit of patriotism that you look for in an individual.’⁶⁸ (As Knox has demonstrated, leading Liberals such as Robert Lowe and William Gladstone did not wish the term ‘imperialism’ to be used in this positive sense; they wanted it reserved for ‘territorial aggrandisement, backed by military display’ and ‘the assertion of absolute force over others’, or ‘Beaconsfieldism’ as they later termed such actions.)⁶⁹

Contrasting ‘true’ British imperialism with the ‘foreign’ or ‘false’ version, Carnarvon pointed up the features of the British model of the second half of the nineteenth century which would ensure that the constituent parts of the British Empire would hold together for longer

⁶⁵ Carnarvon, ‘The Cape in 1888’, published in the June 1888 issue of *Fortnightly Review*, pp 883-84.

⁶⁶ Carnarvon, ‘Imperial Administration’ (1878), p. 759.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 759. See also Koebner, *op. cit.*, pp. p. 123, where he states that ‘Imperialism...became more widely used for the first time in spring 1876. It served as an anti-Disraeli slogan of the Opposition and was meant to underline the alien character of the Royal Titles Bill.’

⁶⁸ Carnarvon, ‘Imperial Administration’, p. 761.

⁶⁹ Bruce A. Knox, ‘The Earl of Carnarvon, Empire, and Imperialism, 1855-90’ *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* (1998), vol. 26.2, pp 48-66. Lowe’s private response to Carnarvon on his Edinburgh address (CP BL Add 60854, f. 146). W.E. Gladstone, ‘England’s Mission’, *Nineteenth Century*, September 1878, pp. 560-84.

than those of any previous empire. Those features were for him a matter of pride. That pride, if encouraged throughout the empire, could contribute materially to ‘the close union of feeling, interest, and thought’, to that ‘federal bond’ which held the empire together and which ‘in a certain sense is federation itself’.⁷⁰

First among those distinguishing features was the fact that the British Empire was ruled by a constitutional monarch, by the Crown and parliament acting together, and not by a despot.⁷¹ Secondly, as the greatness of the British Empire did not depend on its size but rather on its quality, and as Britain did not intend to acquire more territory, it did not need the ‘vast standing armies’ of its European competitors.⁷² Thirdly, it had a progressive, moral purpose, that of bringing its less well developed parts to a higher level of civilisation: as ‘the greatest colonising power ever’ Britain recognised ‘the more than human Power [sic] which has entrusted to our race a great mission’, as yet ‘only half accomplished.’⁷³ Fourthly, there was the special nature of the connection between Britain and her colonies: whereas in the colonies of France, Spain and Germany ‘it would be difficult to say that between them and their mother country there runs any strong sense of connection’, in British colonies there were ‘absolutely genuine ties – ties of kindness and love’ that bound them to the ‘mother country’.⁷⁴ And, finally, those ties, culminating as they did in loyalty to a common sovereign, enabled Britain to grant ‘real liberty abroad’ to its mature colonies – in the form of ‘self-government’ – while retaining both their allegiance to Britain and their commitment to what was becoming an imperial partnership.⁷⁵ That was something no other empire had achieved.

‘Free institutions’: the Anglican Church and freemasonry

Carnarvon’s imperial philosophy comprised not only principles and attitudes but also institutions that would help to maintain and promote ‘social order’, the absolute prerequisite for the realisation of that philosophy. The ‘crowning institution’, as has been shown, was the

⁷⁰ Carnarvon’s speech at a masonic reception in South Australia, reported in *The South Australian Advertiser* of 3 December 1887, a copy of which is filed on CP BL Add 60940, f. 14.

⁷¹ Carnarvon, ‘Imperial Administration’, p. 761.

⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 763.

⁷³ Carnarvon’s speech at the state banquet for Lord Carrington, 26 January 1888, as reported in the *Sydney Morning Herald* of 27 January 1888.

⁷⁴ Carnarvon’s speech at a parliamentary banquet in Sydney, as reported in the *Sydney Morning Herald* of 20 December 1887, p. 5, col. 4c.

⁷⁵ Carnarvon’s speech at the state banquet for Lord Carrington, 26 January 1888, as reported in the *Sydney Morning Herald* of 27 January 1888.

monarchy. Then of course there were the ‘gifts’ of constitutional government and the law. But there were also two ‘free institutions’ which Carnarvon frequently referred to as the guardians of social order: religion (particularly the Christian religion as practised by the Anglican Church), and freemasonry as promulgated and practised by the United Grand Lodge of England. Carnarvon’s pleasure on visiting both churches and lodges in Canada, South Africa and Australia and finding how closely they resembled their parent institutions in England echoes his reaction to what he found in the ancient French city of Nîmes when he visited it in 1868: ‘It is marvellous to see how every Roman provincial town was in all its institutions & ideas the copy of the great mater urbis & orbis...as close an assimilation as Roman provincials could bring about’. Such assimilation explained ‘in part at least the consolidation and the long enduring influence of that most wonderful Empire.’⁷⁶

(a) Freemasonry

As we have seen above, Carnarvon viewed ‘English’ freemasonry as ‘the representative of private and civil virtues’ and thus one of ‘the great pillars of order and liberty’ in ‘this ancient royal commonwealth’.⁷⁷ For Carnarvon it ‘represented the principle of good citizenship and social order.’⁷⁸ When speaking or writing about those ‘great pillars’ to non-masonic audiences Carnarvon rarely mentioned freemasonry, however. His article on ‘The Cape in 1888’ was one of those rare instances, for there he wrote of ‘Freemasonry as a powerful influence for good’ that ‘ignores the varieties and opposition of nationalities, and invites men of different races to a community of action for excellent and practical objects.’⁷⁹ It is unnecessary to explore this any further here as the point has already been made in the section on ‘Carnarvon the freemason’ – except to repeat that in Carnarvon’s view the institution of freemasonry supported not only social order, but religion. As he said when defending ‘English’ freemasonry against the papal accusation of infidelity, ‘social order and religion have no stronger friends, no truer pillars to rest upon than the Masonic bodies of England’⁸⁰

⁷⁶ CP BL Add 60900, 7 March 1868.

⁷⁷ *The Freemason*, 19 November 1870, pp. 588 *et seq.*

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹ Carnarvon, ‘The Cape in 1888’, p. 880.

⁸⁰ *Proceedings*, 4 June 1884, p. 240.

(b) Religion

A conversation with a French gentleman ‘of the old school’ on a French railway station in 1860 was significant enough for Carnarvon to record in his diary the Frenchman’s comments on the continuing effects of scepticism in France: espoused first by the upper classes, scepticism had led to ‘the overthrow of religion, monarchy, & social order’ and now ‘the lower part of the community’ was ‘infected & daily growing more irreligious.’⁸¹ For Carnarvon, religion, social order and the monarchy were interdependent and each therefore had to be supported and defended if Britain was to avoid revolution, the results of which would take decades to overcome, as the example just across the English Channel showed. The significance of the ‘free institution’ of religion in Carnarvon’s equation has not previously been adequately explored, and it is only in the last two decades that historians have turned their attention to its significance in British thought in the latter half of the Victorian period.

In 1960 Robert Blake commented that historians were only then beginning to notice that ‘religion played a predominant part in politics’ in the 1860s and indeed throughout much of the nineteenth century.⁸² He could have made the same comment about the neglect of religion by many imperial historians at that time for, as Andrew Porter later wrote of the historians of empire of the 1970s and 1980s, their interests ‘also lay elsewhere, in the constitutional, political and economic aspects of Britain’s overseas expansion.’⁸³ There were, of course, exceptions. Miller in 1966 argued that the various forms of the Christian religion which the British emigrants brought with them to the ‘old dominions’ – Australia, Canada, South Africa and New Zealand – were ‘a significant element in building connections between Britain and the Four.’ He also made the point that although in such territories, by the 1860s, the ‘Church of England was essentially decentralized’ and the colonial churches enjoyed ‘local independence’, the ‘links with the churches in Britain remained very close’ and the ‘various branches of the Church of England clung for long to the practice of importing Archbishops.’⁸⁴ Hyam included ‘Anglican churches’ among his ‘props of empire building’ along with ‘masonic lodges’⁸⁵ Nonetheless, as Robin Winks has demonstrated, it was not until the 1990s that

⁸¹ CP BL Add 60894, 2 November 1860.

⁸² Robert Blake, *Disraeli* (1960), p. 503.

⁸³ Andrew Porter, *Religion versus Empire? British Protestant missionaries and overseas expansion, 1700-1914* (Manchester, 2004), p. 2.

⁸⁴ J.D.B. Miller, *Britain and the Old Dominions* (London, 1966), p. 25.

⁸⁵ Hyam, *op. cit.* (1976), p. 150.

'Imperial historians began once again to take religion seriously, a reflection perhaps of what was called the "revival of faith" by contemporaries.'⁸⁶ Reviewing some of that historiography Andrew Porter answered the question 'Whether...there were in fact systemic connections between religion and empire' with 'a qualified "yes".'⁸⁷ He argued that although 'religious sentiment and ecclesiastical allegiances contributed to the late 19th century movement for closer Imperial unity', they were able 'at the same time to accommodate the growth of colonial particularisms.'⁸⁸ It was therefore 'impossible to speak in any straightforward way of "religious", "ecclesiastical" or "missionary" imperialism' as '[s]uch hard and fast categories are almost meaningless.'⁸⁹ He could equally well have made this point about Harland-Jacobs' use of the term 'masonic imperialism'.

More recently, but like their colleagues in British imperial history, historians of Britain's political and social scene in the second half of the nineteenth century have also been emphasising what Blake called religion's 'predominant part.' John Darwin has claimed that in Victorian Britain 'religion remained central to social aspiration and identity.'⁹⁰ Callum Brown has gone further, and his study of secularisation in Britain 're-brands Britain of 1800 to 1963 as a highly religious nation'.⁹¹ And recent biographers of Gladstone and Salisbury have emphasised the centrality of religion to their subjects' *Weltanschauungen*.⁹²

For Salisbury, according to Michael Bentley, '[r]eligion was central but he would never talk about it.'⁹³ For Carnarvon, Salisbury's Tory colleague and occasional friend, religion was also 'central' – but, unlike Salisbury, he often spoke about it. Like Salisbury, however, he did not 'confuse religion with the Church of England' but supported that ancient 'established and Erastian' church as a bulwark 'against the forces of atheism and Dissent' throughout his

⁸⁶ Robin W. Winks, *The Oxford History of the British Empire: Vol. V: Historiography* (Oxford, 1999), p. 63.

⁸⁷ Andrew Porter, 'Religion and Empire: British Expansion in the Long Nineteenth Century, 1780-1914', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, XX (1992.3), pp 370-90, and specifically pp. 374 and 386.

⁸⁸ Andrew Porter, 'Religion, Missionary Enthusiasm, and Empire' in *The Oxford History of the British Empire: Volume III The Nineteenth Century* (OUP 1999), p. 235.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 244.

⁹⁰ John Darwin, *After Tamerlane: the Global History of Empire since 1405* (2007), p. 25.

⁹¹ Callum G. Brown, *The Death of Christian Britain: Understanding secularisation* (2001).

⁹² See, for example, Michael Bentley's *Lord Salisbury's World: Conservative Environments in Late-Victorian Britain* (Cambridge, 2001) and Richard Shannon's *Gladstone: God and Politics* (2008).

⁹³ Bentley, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

political life.⁹⁴ Carnarvon also strongly defended the support afforded to the Anglican Church by the Crown and by parliament because the church in turn supported the monarchy and the whole social fabric of Britain and its colonial empire. Yet Carnarvon as Colonial Secretary told the imperial parliament in 1867 that he 'regarded it as settled that the Colonial Churches in all temporal matters were completely independent'.⁹⁵ (As his friend Robert Phillimore was to write of the Church in the West Indies in 1868, colonial churches were 'like the Church of Ireland 'disestablished, as far at least as the imperial legislature is concerned.')⁹⁶ For their part, the colonial churches still looked to Canterbury for guidance in matters spiritual, but they were under no obligation to do so as even the oath of canonical obedience to Canterbury gradually fell into desuetude.⁹⁷ What then, in Carnarvon's view, was the relationship between the disestablished colonial churches and the established 'great Mother Church', and did it, in his opinion, contribute to the integrity of the empire?

During his visit to Canada in 1883 Carnarvon had observed and publicly recognised that the ecclesiastical independence of the Church in Canada 'did not in the least affect' its 'unbounded loyalty to the great Mother Church.'⁹⁸ A year later he read a paper to the Church Congress in Carlisle in 1884 in which he pointed out that although the colonial churches were disestablished, the 'maintenance of the great Mother Church of England established as part of the constitution of this realm is both a mainstay to them and indirectly a bond of union to the whole Empire.'⁹⁹ Thus, for Carnarvon, the relationship between the disestablished Anglican churches in the colonies and the established church in England resembled that between a mother and a grown-up daughter who had set up her own home in a distant land. It was not a formal tie, but one of those bonds of affection that would ensure the perpetual integrity of the empire.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 189.

⁹⁵ Carnarvon, speaking as Colonial Secretary in a debate with the Bishop of Oxford in the House of Lords, as reported in *The Times* of 16 February 1867, p. 8, col. F.

⁹⁶ R. J. Phillimore, *The Ecclesiastical Law of the Church of England*, published posthumously in 1895, p. 1781.

⁹⁷ For the changing status of colonial churches in the Victorian period see Francis Warre Cornish, *The English Church in the Nineteenth Century* (1910), Part II, especially pp. 262-63, 410, and 424.

⁹⁸ Carnarvon's address to the Canadian Provincial Synod at its meeting in Toronto, as reported in *The Globe* of 19 September 1883.

⁹⁹ Carnarvon's address to the Church Congress in Carlisle, 3 October 1884, filed in CP BL Add 60982A ('Pamphlets and Speeches of Lord Carnarvon').

With independence came responsibility, however, and Carnarvon took it upon himself to urge the free colonial churches to exercise that freedom ‘moderately and reasonably’.¹⁰⁰ As he reminded a diocesan synod in South Africa in 1887, in England he had ‘never been slow or doubtful on the matter of the enormous value of the connection of the English Church with the State...for the safety alike of Church and State’, and he thereby implicitly recommended that the colonial church, though disestablished, should try to maintain a similar relationship with the local state.¹⁰¹ He also recognised, however, that ‘[e]very Church which is a National Church must reflect National sentiment and National interest’ and he therefore accepted that ‘provided that the great standards of doctrine be observed and adhered to’ no one should be ‘afraid of small and immaterial differences which may exist’ as between a colonial church and ‘the Great Mother Church’. In summary, Anglican churches in the colonies – churches that were free yet loyal, tolerant yet doctrinally sound – formed an essential part of the ‘free institution’ of religion, an institution that was critical for the realisation of Carnarvon’s imperial philosophy. United in spirit with the Church of England, whose ‘one great feature’ was ‘its breadth and comprehensive toleration’, colonial churches contributed to the informal ties that kept the imperial family together.¹⁰²

‘All in the family’

In her valuable article ‘All in the Family: Freemasonry and the British Empire in the Mid Nineteenth Century’ Harland-Jacobs fully explored ‘an important aspect of Masonic and imperial ideology: the consistent appropriation of the language and idioms of families’ on the ground that the ‘metaphor of the family had great explanatory power for Freemasons, not only as members of a cosmopolitan brotherhood but also as citizens of a global empire.’¹⁰³ There she compared freemasonry in British North America and India and confined her study to the mid-nineteenth century. The following paragraphs build on her work and examine how a British imperial statesman and a leading ‘English’ freemason used the metaphor of the family to express his imperial vision in the latter half of that century in England, in two of Britain’s colonies of white settlement, and in South Africa.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁰¹ Carnarvon’s address in Cape Town, 19 September 1887, as reported in the evening edition of the *Cape Times* that day.

¹⁰² Carnarvon’s address to the Church Congress in Carlisle, 3 October 1884, filed in CP BL Add 60982A.

¹⁰³ *Journal of British Studies*, 42 (October 2003) pp. 448-482.

In this thesis we have already had several examples of Carnarvon's usage of the metaphor of the family in such expressions as 'the mother country' and the 'mother church'. But these were commonly used expressions at the time, and Carnarvon nurtured a wider vision of the empire than they implied. As he put it in 1870, he wished:

it was possible that an Englishman and a colonist, when they passed in their respective countries, should feel that they were members of the same great empire, that they should [experience] no difference whatever except in sky and climate, and that in all other respects an Englishman should feel himself a citizen in Canada, and the Canadian should feel himself no stranger in England.¹⁰⁴

Carnarvon later claimed to have experienced that sensation himself during his visit to Montreal when in 1883, and in words that presaged John F. Kennedy's neater turn of phrase in Berlin some eighty years later, he told his hosts: 'I came here half a Canadian at heart, and now I am an entire Canadian.' He urged his generation to 'teach our children on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean that we in Canada and in England are kith and kin, members of a common family, subjects of a common sovereign, and united to each other by ties of loving affection that time in its course can only strengthen.'¹⁰⁵ By the time he visited Australia four years later Carnarvon had added a Latin tag to his description of the world-wide British 'race', for there he spoke of his pride that an Australian in England and an Englishman in Australia could both say '*Civis sum Britannicus*'.¹⁰⁶

But to return to the metaphor of the family: as Carnarvon himself grew older, and as he saw for himself the potential of Britain's more mature colonies, he began to describe Britain as an aging parent increasingly hoping for support from the younger generation, now in the colonies. For example, he told Australian audiences in 1887 that as Colonial Secretary he had 'constituted in a humble degree the link between old Downing-street and young Australia'; and

¹⁰⁴ Carnarvon's reply to the Queen's Speech, 14 February 1870, as reported in the *Annual Register* (1870), p. 116.

¹⁰⁵ Carnarvon's speech, 19 September 1883, as reported in *The [Montreal] Gazette* the next day.

¹⁰⁶ Carnarvon's speech, 9 November 1887, as reported in *The Age* the next day. Carnarvon's wariness towards extending British citizenship beyond the colonies of white settlement seems first to have surfaced when in 1859, drafting a reply to a question from the Foreign Office about the status of Fijians, he wrote: 'The Feejians [*sic*] ask to be "made British Subjects", and though the objection is a purely theoretical one, and they are perhaps just as much entitled to the distinction as the Creoles or the Negro population of the West Indies, I can easily conceive it possible that, one day so wide an extension of British Citizenship – if citizenship is to carry any rights or privileges – may be inconvenient... though I admit the severity & the selfishness of refusing to admit to our protection the unfortunate islanders who are terrified by the license of French sailors, and the annexation ideas of the United States Government, I think that, as a matter of prudence, we ought to hesitate before we return a favourable answer to the Foreign Office.' (PRO/30/6/133, ff. 267-71, Carnarvon as Under-Secretary to the Secretary of State, 9 Feb 1859.)

that while he accepted that Australia had 'taken her place amidst the family of European nations' (a somewhat premature claim) and that 'a new generation has grown up in Australia – a generation which knows England only by books and hearsay, and the recollections of their elders', it was nevertheless his and England's 'earnest desire...that the younger generation shall not be allowed to let their hearts grow cold to the old country.'¹⁰⁷ As we have seen, one of the practical reasons why Carnarvon wished to keep the self-governing white colonies within the imperial family and to keep the life-blood of imperial commerce flowing was to prevent Britain from becoming 'an overcrowded, pauperised, discontented island in the North Sea.'¹⁰⁸ Carnarvon feared that the parental home was becoming overcrowded and therefore wanted a territory like Canada or Australia to be 'another home of the British race, and another support to the old Mother Country.'¹⁰⁹

Carnarvon supported emigration to the white colonies to relieve the demographic pressure he thought was building up in Britain, and to that extent he could indeed be described* as a proponent of John Darwin's 'demographic imperialism'.¹¹⁰ He also recognised that where 'emigration flows in full and regular streams', as it did to Canada, Australia and New Zealand, so too did communications of all kinds because 'in every village... [there were] families who have sons and daughters settled in these distant offshoots of the Mother country.'¹¹¹ (Conversely, because there was relatively little emigration to the Cape, there were fewer 'connecting ties' with Britain and, consequently, more difficult communications.)¹¹² His visit to Canada in 1883 made him more than ever aware of the particular potential of Britain's first Dominion (which he had helped to create in 1867), and on his return he told the Highclere Working Men's Club (Highclere Castle being his main residence) that 'although he would never advise any man hastily or lightly to leave the old country, yet if he once made up his mind to go, he honestly believed that nowhere would he find a healthier life, a friendlier welcome, or a better home than in British North America.'¹¹³ He also discussed 'East End'

¹⁰⁷ Carnarvon's speeches of 14 and 25 November 1887, as reported in *The Argus* of 15 November and *The Age* 26 November 1887.

¹⁰⁸ Carnarvon's address to the London Chamber of Commerce, 10 December 1889, *Imperial Federation*, 1 January 1890, p. 11.

¹⁰⁹ Carnarvon's speech at inauguration of the City of London branch of the Imperial Federation League, 15 Nov 1889, *Imperial Federation*, 1 December 1889, pp. 276-77.

¹¹⁰ Darwin, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

¹¹¹ Carnarvon, 'The Cape in 1888', pp. 885-86.

¹¹² *Ibid.*

¹¹³ *The Times*, 12 November 1883, p. 11, col. G.

emigration with the Rector of Stepney before addressing 'a crowded gathering at the Stepney Meeting Hall upon the advantages offered by Canada as a place of emigration for working men.'¹¹⁴ He did not, however, advocate mass emigration, but a 'gradual method...which implied the hearty concurrence of the Colonies and the careful selection of the emigrants and their families.'¹¹⁵ As he later told *The South Australian Advertiser*, he had 'always deprecated the idea of encouraging the emigration to the colonies of those who are unsuitable as colonists, as in his opinion it was 'unwise as regards the immigrants' and 'unjust as regards the colonies' for the state to aid the emigration of 'useless and pauperised people'.¹¹⁶ (It is interesting to note, however, that thirty years earlier he had himself called and chaired a meeting of 'ticket-of-leave men' in Newbury, which Henry Mayhew, WWB Beach and George Portal had also attended, and at which 'a large majority...decided by a show of hands, in favour of a colonial life'.)¹¹⁷

Thus we have ample evidence that as a statesman Carnarvon was in favour of a careful scheme of state-aided emigration – but there is no evidence at all in the *Proceedings* of the UGLE or in Carnarvon's papers that he or the Grand Lodge of England used freemasonry to promote and finance emigration. That individual lodges assisted poor and needy brethren and their families as far as they could is certainly true, just as churches surely helped members of their congregations. No doubt the small Royal Masonic Institution for Girls in London looked into the possibility of finding employment in the colonies for its graduates. But no evidence has been found to support Harland-Jacobs' suggestion that the UGLE itself had 'more grandiose schemes' or to justify her claim that 'the Masonic network proved especially useful in the effort to shift people around the empire and ensure that the right sort of Britons went out to the colonies'.¹¹⁸ The assistance rendered to impoverished members and their dependents by 'English' lodges was but a minuscule contribution to emigration when compared with the tens of thousands assisted by other British voluntary organisations such as Barnardo's and the Salvation Army.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁴ CP BL Add 60921, 24 November 1883; *The Freemason* vol. 17, p. 170, 29 March 1884.

¹¹⁵ Carnarvon, quoted in Hardinge, *op. cit.*, vol. 3, p. 97.

¹¹⁶ *The South Australian Advertiser* of 2 December 1887, a copy of which is filed on CP BL 60940 as f. 13.

¹¹⁷ As reported in the *Berkshire Chronicle* of 31 Jan 1857.

¹¹⁸ Harland-Jacobs, *Builders of Empire*, pp. 248-250.

¹¹⁹ Andrew Thompson, *The Empire Strikes Back? The Impact of Imperialism on Britain from the Mid-Nineteenth Century* (2005), p. 112, states that Barnardo's helped 28,000 people emigrate between 1870 and 1914, and the Salvation Army 200,000 by 1930.

The non-partisan approach

There is one last element in Carnarvon's imperial philosophy that demands attention here, a constant characteristic of his attitude to politics and to his church, and one which goes some way to explaining why he was attracted to and remained an active member of the 'English' Craft: a distinct preference for a moderate and non-partisan approach. In the late 1860s Carnarvon went so far as to write to John A. Macdonald that he belonged to 'no political party', and to tell his mother that he was repelled by 'the foolishness and violence of both parties' [the Liberals and the Conservatives] whenever he encountered them.¹²⁰ In fact, Carnarvon never supported any political party other than the Conservatives, though he maintained contacts and friendships with members and supporters of the Liberal party throughout his political life, and occasionally flirted with the idea of a moderate Conservative-Liberal coalition.¹²¹ In terms of his imperial philosophy, however, it was Carnarvon's view that the imperial government's administration of colonial and intra-imperial affairs should as far as possible be above party politics and handled in a bi-partisan way.¹²² There would of course be occasions when party politics could not be avoided altogether: as Carnarvon said, when addressing the Edinburgh Philosophical Society on imperial administration, it was hard for him to 'avoid all party politics...when speaking on questions even of abstract politics'. Nevertheless, Carnarvon was particularly keen to keep party politics out of the two associations he joined that were specifically designed to promote colonial and imperial interests, the Colonial Society and the Imperial Federation League.

Carnarvon was one of the early members of the Colonial Society and one of its first vice-presidents after its formation in 1868.¹²³ He was attracted to it as 'a place of meeting for

¹²⁰ Carnarvon to Macdonald, dated 6 March 1867, in private possession. Carnarvon to his mother 4 February 1868, quoted by Hardinge, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, p. 8. Letter to Robert Phillimore dated 7 August 1868, CP BL Add 60861, f.42.

¹²¹ See, for example, Carnarvon's letter to Phillimore of 4 April 1867 (CP BL Add 60861, ff. 26-27); his diary entry for 27 October 1867 (CP BL Add 60811); and his discussion with Lady Derby on 10 April 1874 (CP BL Add 60911).

¹²² As an example, Carnarvon wrote to W.E. Forster, the Liberal MP, to congratulate him on his non-partisan approach, and to hope that the time had come 'when Colonial policy may be, very greatly at least, taken out of the category of party questions. Ever since I knew anything of the subject in /67 [!] I have endeavoured to treat the matter from this point of view' (PRO/30/6/43, ff. 314-15, 3 December 1875).

¹²³ Trevor R. Reese, *The History of the Royal Commonwealth Society 1868-1968* (1968), pp. 12 and 68. Reese describes Carnarvon as a 'fellow' of the institute, but the correspondence on CP BL Add 60811 (ff. 36 and 52) indicates that he was in fact a Vice-President. Reese helpfully plots the changes in the institute's name from 'Colonial Society' in 1868, through 'Royal Colonial Society' in 1869 and eventually to 'Royal Commonwealth Society'.

all Gentlemen connected with the Colonies and British India, with library and reading-room' and because he was assured that 'no paper shall be read, nor any discussion permitted to take place tending to give to the Society a political or party character.'¹²⁴ Consequently, when the (by then Royal) Colonial Society proposed to hold, 'in the rooms & under the sanction of the society' a 'Colonial Conference upon the relations of the Colonies to the Mother Country in which the Colonial Governments are to be requested to express their opinions', Carnarvon expressed his 'entire dissent' and threatened to resign if the proposed conference, 'a proceeding as essentially political as can be conceived', went ahead. The Society dropped the idea.¹²⁵

As for the Imperial Federation League ['IFL'] Carnarvon declined an invitation to join it in 1884, and when he eventually did so (in December 1886) he did not take up its invitation to become a member of its executive committee and a vice-chairman.¹²⁶ Even after joining, Carnarvon was not a particularly active member, attending only one annual general meeting and the inauguration meeting of the City of London branch (at which he did, however, speak) – and there is no evidence in the archives of the IFL or of the UGLE to support Harland-Jacobs' claims that the 'connection between Masonry and the Imperial Federation League was evident in the activities of Lord Carnarvon' or that Carnarvon went to Australia 'as an official representative of the IFL.'¹²⁷ However, his membership of the IFL does indicate his willingness to belong to a non-partisan but imperially-minded association whose membership represented 'men of every shade of opinion' and which was headed by a political rival, Lord Kimberley. And Carnarvon's sole speech to a meeting of the IFL demonstrated his eagerness to dispel any 'fear...in this country...that Federation is mixed up with political parties and controverted questions.'¹²⁸ After all, he had always readily acknowledged that his Liberal predecessor as Colonial Secretary, Edward Cardwell, had laid the foundations of his 'Bill for the Confederation of the British North American Provinces' in 1867, and he had welcomed the fact

¹²⁴ Letter of 19 August 1868 from A.R. Roche of the Colonial Society to Carnarvon (CP BL Add 60811, f. 36).

¹²⁵ See the draft or copy of a letter to Lord Bury, the President of the Royal Colonial Society, in CP BL Add 60811, f. 52.

¹²⁶ Harland-Jacobs states that Carnarvon became a member of the IFL's 'council' in 1885, but, according to the IFL's archives at the British Library, he did not join the association until 1886. According to the same source Carnarvon joined its 'General Committee' (to which about 450 other members of the IFL belonged) and not its 'Executive Committee' or council. See *Imperial Federation*, 1 January and 1 February 1887, and the minutes of the IFL's Executive Committee (CP BL Add 62778 ff. 103 and 108).

¹²⁷ Harland-Jacobs, *Builders of Empire*, p. 269.

¹²⁸ Carnarvon's speech at the inauguration of the City of London branch of the Imperial Federation League, 15 Nov 1889, *Imperial Federation*, 1 December 1889, pp. 276-77.

that from at least that date onwards ‘the principles of local freedom and absolute self-government’ on which Canada and similarly mature colonies were to be governed had been ‘settled and accepted on all hands’.¹²⁹

Conclusion

On the evidence presented in his papers and in contemporary reports of his speeches Carnarvon divided the territories comprising the British Empire into five categories: the ‘home’ nations of England and Scotland; the ‘great Anglo-Saxon colonies’ in British North America and Australasia (where colonists were ‘content to follow in the track of English traditions and belief, and they remain to the backbone Englishmen’); the two special cases of South Africa and Ireland; the military posts such as Gibraltar and Malta; and, lastly, the rest – including India.¹³⁰ His imperial philosophy as described above comprehended all five categories and he attempted to apply it to each category, with varying degrees of success.¹³¹ But it was to the relationship between the first two categories, between the imperial centre and the ‘great Anglo-Saxon colonies’ that Carnarvon devoted most of his imperial thinking, and to the problem of how ‘to secure and preserve on the one hand the self-government...given to the different Colonies, and on the other hand to add to that a more real connection.’¹³²

Of the ‘several influences’ that could help achieve that aim Carnarvon emphasised to others and personally practised ‘a greater sympathy, a greater heartiness of expression, a greater affection, [and] a more sincere pride in this great Empire’.¹³³ For him the ‘ledgers of commerce and the manuals of political economy’ did not ‘shut up within their pages the whole philosophy

¹²⁹ For Carnarvon on Cardwell see, for example, his speech at the inauguration of the City of London branch of the Imperial Federation League, 15 Nov 1889, as reported in *Imperial Federation*, 1 December 1889, pp. 276-77. Carnarvon, ‘Imperial Administration’ (1878), p. 753.

¹³⁰ Carnarvon, ‘Imperial Administration’, p. 763.

¹³¹ Any closer examination of Carnarvon’s practice towards the last two categories, and indeed towards Ireland, lies beyond the scope of this thesis, except to note that his attempt to move the debate towards a greater degree of self-government for Ireland failed either because he overestimated his ability to persuade his chief, Salisbury, and his monarch of the advantage of some timely devolution or because his chief used Carnarvon’s initiative – as Irish viceroy in 1885 – as bait to encourage Gladstone to make the move towards Home Rule for Ireland that would split the Liberals to the Conservatives’ advantage.

¹³² Carnarvon’s speech in the House of Lords, 14 February 1870, as quoted by Hardinge, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, p. 18.

¹³³ *Ibid.*

of this matter', and he therefore urged his audiences not simply to 'regard colonial questions from a hard political or material standpoint.'¹³⁴

Carnarvon's encouragement of federation in South Africa was premature by several decades, and the 'rainbow coalition' took even longer to break upon the scene. Australia has still to cut its last remaining constitutional ties to Britain. But Carnarvon's imperial philosophy presaged the formula adopted by the dominions (by then comprising Australia, Canada, the Irish Free State, New Zealand and South Africa) at the Imperial Conference of 1926 wherein it was agreed that they were 'autonomous communities within the British Empire, equal in status, in no way subordinate to another in any respect of their domestic or external affairs, though united by a common allegiance to the Crown, and freely associated as members of the British Commonwealth of Nations.'¹³⁵ That formula marked the closest those parts of the empire came to realising Carnarvon's dream of a peaceful confederation of all the English-speaking nations throughout the world.¹³⁶ But, as Carnarvon had always wished, the 'affection of the mother country and the colonies' was still being 'dwelt upon' for decades thereafter. It did not, in the end, prevent the dissolution of the British Empire (though traces of it still remain in today's 'loose hung Commonwealth'), and if Carnarvon were to view the situation today he would conclude that as he feared in 1857, the 'great colonies' have in the end flown off into 'political space', and that Cardinal Manning's prediction of 1889 has eventually come to pass, namely that 'we have no Imperial spirit in us'.¹³⁷ That development lies far beyond the limits of this thesis, and we must therefore now return to the latter half of the nineteenth century and, in the next chapter, consider in three case studies the extent to which Carnarvon's careers as a statesman and as a freemason crossed, diverged or ran in parallel.

¹³⁴ Carnarvon, 'Annexation and Confederation in Australasia' published 27 December 1884, as quoted by Hardinge, *op. cit.*, p. 128.

¹³⁵ See the Report of the Inter-Imperial Relations Committee, Imperial Conference, 1926, Cmd. 2786, p. 14 (quoted by Miller, *op. cit.*, p. 39). Using the terminology of that conference, the British Empire then comprised not five categories of territory, as it had for Carnarvon, but three: Britain and the Dominions, the 'Indian Empire' and the 'Colonial Empire'.

¹³⁶ Carnarvon, 'Imperial Administration', p. 763.

¹³⁷ *Masonic Mirror*, vol. 1, 1857, p. 126. *Imperial Federation*, 1 December 1889, pp. 276-77. The term 'loose hung Commonwealth' is still applicable today, although its use dates back to at least 1919, long before the 'British Commonwealth' rebranded itself as just 'the Commonwealth'. (See, for example, the letter from J.X. Merriman to Lord Bryce of 15 February 1919 in the Bryce Papers [C2] at the Bodleian Library, as quoted by Hyam, *op. cit.*, 1976, p. 51.)

Chapter 4: Case Studies

Introduction

In the three case studies of Canada, South Africa and Australia that follow, the similarities, connections and differences between the attitude and actions of Carnarvon the statesman and Carnarvon the freemason in the context of Britain's relations with each colony – particularly at those points where his two careers intersect – will be explored in turn. The extent to which masonic administration mirrored or differed from imperial administration in each territory will also be examined. Each case study begins with a brief résumé of the relevant recent historiography.

Carnarvon and Canada

In 1984 Bruce Knox attempted to correct an 'historiographical distortion' by bringing to prominence the role played by Carnarvon in 1866-67 in the planning and execution of the creation of what became the Dominion of Canada via the British North America Act of 1867. He argued that 'Carnarvon deserves far more [credit] than he has been given', that Carnarvon's 'central hope' was that 'confederation would enhance the relationship between Britain and her great colonies', and that Carnarvon's 'concept of co-operation without imperial abdication governed his behaviour.'¹ Quoting Carnarvon's speech during the second reading of the British North America Bill in February 1867, Knox highlighted Carnarvon's welcome of 'the perpetuation of "the monarchical principle" in the new dominion... "recognising in it [the dominion] the conditions of our own greatness"'.²

Ged Martin, in his *Britain and the Origins of Canadian Confederation, 1837-67* (1995), was rather more critical of Carnarvon's role.³ In his view, 'There was a marked deterioration in the relations between the young and excitable Carnarvon and his austere and more experienced predecessor [Cardwell]' after Carnarvon succeeded him as Colonial Secretary in 1866, and Carnarvon took over Cardwell's preparatory work in a 'headlong rush' towards confederation.⁴ He did however credit Carnarvon with an eventual 'formula [that] was

¹ Knox, Bruce, 'Conservative Imperialism 1858-74: Bulwer Lytton, Lord Carnarvon and Canadian Confederation', *The International History Review*, VI, 3, August 1984, pp. 335 and 349.

² *Ibid.*, p. 352.

³ Ged Martin, *Britain and the Origins of Canadian Confederation, 1837-67* (1995).

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 278. Carnarvon was 35 at the time.

ideal in reconciling the outward pageantry of imperial supremacy with the actual reality that Confederation was the achievement of the provincial politicians themselves, even if they had framed their scheme to conform with a British sentiment in favour of a union of the provinces.⁵ Martin did not mention Carnarvon (or freemasonry, for that matter) in his article on the history and historiography of Canada in *The Nineteenth Century* (1999), the third volume of the *Oxford History of the British Empire*, but he did privilege the much larger and politically significant Orange Order by pointing out that it was ‘the most widespread social institution in British North America’ and that ‘Ontario had 900 Lodges in 1870’.⁶

The *OHBE* has since been supplemented by the *Oxford Companion to Canadian History* (2004) and, most recently, by a work in the *OHBE*’s ‘Companion Series’, namely *Canada and the British Empire* (2008), edited by Phillip Buckner.⁷ In Buckner’s view:

the Dominions were given less preferential treatment and much greater attention was paid to Britain’s African and Asian colonies. Even those parts of the world considered to be part of Britain’s ‘informal empire’ were treated in more detail in the volumes on the nineteenth and twentieth centuries than the colonies of settlement in Canada and Australasia.⁸

He and his fellow contributors sought ‘to remedy that problem by giving a more detailed account of Canada and the British Empire, one that presents a Canadian perspective on the history of Canada’s long participation in the British Empire.’⁹ In their view ‘no one is served by the collective historical amnesia which denies that Canada was for nearly two centuries a predominantly British nation.’¹⁰ Buckner makes two points of particular relevance to this thesis:

the British migrants who carved out colonies overseas were not prepared to accept subordination to a remote Imperial authority for very long after settler dominance was firmly established and the majority of the colonists...They demanded and received institutions of self-government that gave them the power to determine their own destiny.¹¹

and, on Canadian ‘Britishness’ in the period this thesis covers:

Britishness did not preclude multiple overlapping identities and one could remain English, Irish, Scottish, and Welsh while becoming British and

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 289.

⁶ Ged Martin, ‘Canada from 1815’, *The Nineteenth Century* (1999), p. 536.

⁷ G. Hallowell (ed.), *The Oxford Companion to Canadian History* (Oxford, 2004); Phillip Buckner (ed.), *Canada and the British Empire* (Oxford, 2008).

⁸ Buckner, *op. cit.*, p. vi.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 20.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. ix.

Canadian, but over time it was the latter loyalties that were increasingly central in the way most English Canadians thought of themselves.¹²

(John Darwin, in his most recent work, *The Empire Project* (2009), also comments on this ‘special quality of settler nationalism’, the rejection of subservience combined with allegiance to the British Crown, and calls it ‘Britannic nationalism’.)¹³

As far as the history of Canadian freemasonry is concerned, there are a very few studies covering the whole country, and rather more that concentrate on freemasonry in a particular province, but to date, Jessica Harland-Jacobs, Michael Jenkyns and the present writer appear to be the only historians who have sought to place the history of Canadian freemasonry within the broader context of British imperial history.¹⁴ Our different perspectives and our differing interpretation of the evidence will become clear in what follows.¹⁵ Only the present writer, however, has drawn attention to similarities in the history of the church and of freemasonry in Canada, and to Carnarvon’s visit to Canada in 1883.¹⁶ On the development of the church in Canada one cannot do better than refer to Marguerite van Die’s *Religion and Public Life in Canada – Historical and Comparative Perspectives* (2001) and the collection of John Moir’s more traditional essays published as *Christianity in Canada: Historical Essays* in 2002.¹⁷ Van Die ‘examines the ways in which religious beliefs, traditions, and practices translated into public concerns during a time when Canadian and Western society was restructuring extensively through the formation of the modern state’ and emphasizes how the Anglican Church has adapted itself

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 6.

¹³ John Darwin, *The Empire Project: The Rise and Fall of the British World System, 1830-1970* (Cambridge, 2009), p. 147.

¹⁴ For a general history see J.R. Robertson, *History of Freemasonry in Canada* (Toronto, 1900); and for provincial histories see, for example, John H. Graham, *Outlines of the History of Free Masonry in the Province of Quebec* (Montreal, 1892), R.S. Foley and W.S. Herrington, *A History of the Grand Lodge of AFAM of Canada in the Province of Ontario, 1855-1955* (Toronto, 1955), and W.E. McLeod, (ed.), *Whence Come We? Freemasonry in Ontario 1764-1980* (Hamilton, 1980).

¹⁵ Jessica Harland-Jacobs, “‘Hands across the Sea’: The Masonic Network, British Imperialism, and the North Atlantic World”, *Geographical Review*, vol. 89, no. 2 (1999), pp. 237-253; “‘The Essential Link’: Freemasonry and British Imperialism, 1751-1918”, D.Phil. dissertation, Duke University (2000); ‘All in the family: Freemasonry and the British Empire in the Mid-Nineteenth Century’, *Journal of British Studies* 42 (October 2003), pp. 448-482; *Builders of Empire: Freemasons and British Imperialism, 1717-1927* (University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, 2007). Michael Jenkyns, *Irish Masonic Lodges in the Province of Canada (1819-1858) and Masonic Independence* (2005). J.W. Daniel, ‘Grand Lodges in British Colonies: Imperial consolidators or Commonwealth seedlings?’, *AQC* 119 (2006), pp. 7-33.

¹⁶ See, for example, Daniel, ‘Grand Lodges in British Colonies’, pp. 18-19.

¹⁷ Marguerite van Die, *Religion and Public Life in Canada – Historical and Comparative Perspectives* (Toronto, 2001); John Moir, *Christianity in Canada: Historical Essays* (Yorkton, 2002), ed. Paul Laverdure.

to the reality of disestablishment since the mid-nineteenth century and ‘successfully reconstructed itself as a public religion capable of articulating in new ways the church’s social responsibility’.¹⁸ Moir’s essays demonstrate that one cannot properly understand Canadian history without taking the role of religion into account, and his work is credited with repositioning religious history as a legitimate scholarly pursuit within the broader discipline of history.¹⁹

The directly relevant historiographical scene having thus been set, this case study will now examine how Carnarvon’s attitude changed towards Canadian masonic independence between his initiation in 1856 and his visit to Canada in 1883, and consider the extent to which that attitude differed from or contributed to his imperial philosophy. It will demonstrate that recent scholarship has both overestimated the imperial role of ‘English’ freemasonry (and of Carnarvon as one of its leaders) in the latter half of the nineteenth century, and yet, by concentrating on the Craft Grand Lodges, has overlooked the imperial relevance of the other masonic institutions with which Carnarvon was connected. Research into their relevance offers an explanation of Carnarvon’s conscious avoidance of contact with ‘Canadian’ freemasons as such during his 1883 visit, and indicates the complexity of masonic networks. Records of that visit will be analysed to compare the attention Carnarvon paid to the Church of Canada with the time he devoted to freemasonry while there, and to discover whether he used either platform to promote his imperial philosophy. And this case study in particular will test the accuracy of the prediction that Sir Frederic Rogers made to Carnarvon in 1866 – that ‘Responsible Govt. once established the dissolution of the Empire becomes a matter of time’ – in both the imperial and the masonic context.²⁰

There were four periods in Carnarvon’s life when his general imperial interests in matters Canadian coincided with his specific masonic interests in that territory: 1856-1859, 1866-67, 1871-74, and 1883-84. After sketching the relevant background, this case study will follow that chronological order.

¹⁸ Van Die, *op. cit.*, pp. 6-7.

¹⁹ See, for example, Elizabeth Smyth’s review of Moir’s *Christianity in Canada* in *The Canadian Historical Review* (2004), 85.3, pp. 552-554.

²⁰ Sir Frederic Rogers, Permanent Under-Secretary at the Colonial Office, to Carnarvon, his Secretary of State, 26 December 1866, PRO 30/6/154, ff. 206-8. See also Knox, ‘Conservative Imperialism’, p. 355.

(a) Background

During the nineteenth century millions of Britons left the British Isles for new lives in Britain's colonies in 'British North America' (today's 'Canada'), Australia and New Zealand. Between 1826 and 1856 a million emigrated to British North America (henceforward 'BNA') alone, where they gradually outnumbered and eventually overwhelmed the indigenous peoples and the previous European colonisers, the French. These new 'white settlers' were of course not just 'Anglo-Saxons' as Carnarvon described them: many were Irish, Scots, Welsh or Cornish, from the Celtic fringes of the British Isles. Their motives for emigration to the 'colonies of white settlement' varied, but they were all subjects of the British Crown. In BNA their leaders were aware of their rights as such, and there some 'settlers...agitated for responsible government as soon as they found their feet.'²¹ For imperial Britain, on the other hand, a proud country that had lost those of its American colonies that lay to the south of Canada in the previous century, its 'prime imperative – and major anxiety' was to preserve the 'security and loyalty' of its remaining colonies in BNA, and once the settlers began to prosper in their new homes, successive British governments sought ways to encourage them to bear more of the burden of defending and governing the territories they occupied.²² However, the aspirations of these 'neo-Britons' could not be satisfied for long by a form of government the key features of which were: colonial governors appointed by the Crown without any consultation with the settlers; the lack of colonial representation in the metropolis; and legislation imposed by the monarch's imperial government with little understanding of or responsiveness to the settlers' special needs and circumstances. Therein lay what Daniel Gorman has described as 'the perennial paradigm of empire...*imperium et libertas* — how to maintain both structure and unity while also preserving the cherished ideal of freedom', and what David McIntyre called 'the tension between Dominion autonomy and Imperial unity'.²³

In 1838 Lord Durham was briefly appointed as Governor-General of Canada (but not, as Harland-Jacobs claims, as 'Acting Grand Master for the Canadas').²⁴ After resigning the

²¹ J.D.B. Miller, *Britain and the Old Dominions* (1966), p. 25.

²² Peter Burroughs, 'Imperial Institutions and the Government of Empire', *OHBE* vol. 3, p. 171.

²³ Daniel Gorman, 'Wider and Wider Still?: Racial Politics, Intra-Imperial Immigration and the Absence of an Imperial Citizenship in the British Empire', *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History*, 3:3 (2002). David McIntyre, commenting on Duncan Hall's *The British Commonwealth of Nations: A Study of its Past and Future Development* (1920) in his chapter on 'The Commonwealth' in the *OHBE* vol. 5, p. 560.

²⁴ Harland-Jacobs, 'The Essential Link', p. 224. The references to the *Proceedings* of the UGLE which Harland-Jacobs makes in support of her claim refer not to Durham's Canadian appointment, but to his

appointment Durham wrote the eponymous report in which he recommended the union of Upper and Lower Canada (though he would have preferred a union of all the BNA colonies) and 'a system of responsible government [such] as would give the people a real control over its own destinies.'²⁵ The political union of the two Canadas was effected in 1841. Lord Elgin, the colony's Governor from 1849, confirmed its 'responsible self-government', and the colony was generally left to its own devices in matters of internal administration. To quote Niall Ferguson and Ged Martin, "[r]esponsible government" was a way of reconciling the practice of empire with the principle of liberty' and 'a Governor acting as constitutional monarch provided the basis for effective power-sharing between Empire and the periphery.'²⁶ (Although Harland-Jacobs points out that Durham was a senior member of the UGLE, she presents no evidence that he took any interest in local freemasonry while he was in Canada. Lord Elgin, whom she does not mention, was a prominent 'Scottish' freemason but he too seems to have made no use of his masonic connections while in the colony. This surely suggests that neither 'proconsul', as Harland-Jacobs would have styled them, regarded freemasonry as a significant institution in the imperial context.)²⁷

In the wake of the Durham Report most of the other colonies in BNA also became self-governing in their internal affairs between 1848 and 1855. There, too, executive authority passed on the one hand to locally-elected politicians, and on the other to the Crown, through governors appointed by the monarch on the advice of the government in London. This new model of colonial governance appeared to reconcile colonial self-government with imperial unity and thus to solve 'the political conundrum posed at the time of the American Revolution', at least in so far as the relations between each colony in BNA and Britain itself were concerned.²⁸ However, as under the new model the colonies in BNA still did not form a single political unit they remained relatively weak in the face of threats from across their southern

earlier resignation as Deputy Grand Master on his appointment as Ambassador to Russia. See Professor WE McLeod's article on 'Simon McGillivray' in *AQC*, vol. 96 (1983), pp. 26-28, and his letter on 'Lord Durham: Almost Provincial Grand Master' in *AQC*, vol. 109 (1996), pp 151-52. For an account of Durham the Freemason, see John Webb's article 'John George Lambton, The First Earl of Durham' (1996) in *AQC*, vol. 109 (1996), pp.115-46.

²⁵ For some undated notes by Carnarvon on the Durham Report see PRO.30/6/132, ff. 337-346, in which, incidentally, he describes 'English' and 'French' as different 'races'.

²⁶ Niall Ferguson, *Empire: How Britain made the modern world* (2003) pp. 110-112. Ged Martin, 'Canada from 1815' in *OHBE*, vol. 3, p 539.

²⁷ Harland-Jacobs, *Builders of Empire*, p. 259.

²⁸ Burroughs, *op. cit.*, p. 187.

border. Their weakness potentially threatened the security of the empire, and Britain had still to bear more of the cost of defending and administering them than it wished. That problem would not be resolved until the colonies confederated (from 1867) and until Britain signed the Treaty of Washington with the USA in 1871.

But to return to the period from 1848 to 1855, during which the colonies in BNA achieved 'responsible government'. Unfortunately for the freemasons in BNA there had been no such advance in masonic governance. There had been 'English', 'Irish' and 'Scottish' lodges in North America for over a century, and those south of the Canadian border had formed themselves into independent Grand Lodges soon after the British colonies there had declared independence from Britain in 1776.²⁹ But in what then became known as British North America only the 66 'English' Lodges had achieved any degree of self-government by the early 1850s. The UGLE had eventually agreed to cluster them into three Provincial Grand Lodges: Canada West (52 lodges); Montreal and William Henry (eleven lodges); and Quebec and Three Rivers (three lodges). The Grand Master of the UGLE appointed the Provincial Grand Masters – but without reference to its members in Canada – and he delegated to them certain limited powers of inspection and control, but these they rarely exercised. For example, Sir Allan MacNab, who became Premier of Canada in 1854, had been the 'English' Provincial Grand Master for Canada West since 1846, but he had often failed to attend or even call the requisite annual meeting of the lodges under his local jurisdiction. (The twenty 'Irish' and two 'Scottish' lodges still reported directly to their Grand Lodges in Dublin and Edinburgh respectively.)³⁰

The labels 'English', 'Irish' and 'Scottish' attached here to the lodges in Canada at this time do not necessarily reflect the ethnic or national origins of their members; they simply indicate which of the three Grand Lodges in the British Isles was their 'mother' Grand Lodge, the Grand Lodge from which they had obtained their warrant of constitution and to which they owed allegiance – and fees. Freemasons in Canada wishing to form a new lodge could and did apply to any one of the three 'home' Grand Lodges, and would sometimes choose the one most

²⁹ For a brief history of 'British' Freemasonry in Canada before 1848 see W E McLeod, 'Simon McGillivray' in *AQC* vol. 96 (1983), pp. 2-32, and *Whence Come We? Freemasonry in Ontario 1764-1980*, ed. Wallace McLeod (Hamilton, 1980).

³⁰ Jenkyns, M *Irish Masonic Lodges in the Province of Canada (1819-1858) and masonic Independence* (2005).

likely to grant them a warrant most quickly.³¹ Thus, for example, not all the 'Irish' Lodges in Canada were composed solely or even mainly of recent Irish immigrants, and 'English' Lodges could have among their members ethnic Irish and Scots, some of whose families had emigrated to Canada more than a generation before.

The 'English' freemasons in Canada had good reason to complain about the way in which the Craft had fallen behind the improvements 'which marked every other branch of social and political economy of this noble country' and about how they had been treated by the UGLE.³² So serious was their complaint that in October 1852 the Provincial Grand Lodge of Canada West passed a resolution that 'the welfare of masonry in the province demanded, as an absolute necessity, the establishment of an independent Grand Lodge with exclusive control of the Craft in Upper Canada [*sic*].'³³

That the 'English' Provincial Grand Lodge under MacNab as its Provincial Grand Master should even have contemplated independence in 1852 was remarkable. In the pro-republican rebellions of 1837 and 1838 MacNab had led the 1,000-strong 'Principal Body' of loyalist forces which routed the rebels at Montgomery's Tavern on 7 December 1837, and he had then temporarily commanded the loyalists on the Niagara frontier in January 1838. For these services he had received a knighthood. MacNab the politician had then initially objected to the introduction of 'responsible government', fearing that it would weaken the colony's ties with Britain. Like MacNab, most of the Canadian colonists of British and Protestant origins were still intensely loyal to their monarch. Not even the rebellions of 1837 and 1838 and the Annexation Manifesto of 1849 could unseat 'the creed of Canadian conservatism' which in 'English Canada...extolled the monarchy, the British connection, and the evil of Americanization.'³⁴ The colonists were also aware that Canada could not stand alone and that

³¹ Jenkyns, *op. cit.*, cites the case of the petitioners for the proposed King Solomon's Lodge in Toronto who in 1846 first applied to the 'English' Provincial Grand Lodge for a warrant. When the Provincial Grand Secretary refused, on the ground that there were already enough lodges to satisfy the need, the petitioners approached the Grand Lodge of Ireland, and Dublin granted their request. Harland-Jacobs, in her paper 'All in the Family' (footnote on p.460) refers to the *Proceedings* of 25 October 1854 of the 'English' Provincial Grand Lodge of Canada West, in which she says concern was expressed 'about two Irish lodges in particular – King Hiram no. 226 in Ingersoll and St. John's no. 286 in York – which were composed of English Freemasons who had been unable to secure warrants from English authorities.'

³² 'Address' of the 'Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of Canada' to the UGLE, eventually printed in *The Freemason's Magazine* of 1 March 1856, pp. 169-176.

³³ This Jenkyns (*op. cit.*) quotes from J.R. Robertson, *History of Freemasonry in Canada* (Toronto, 1900), p.717.

³⁴ John English, *The Oxford Companion to Canadian History* (2004), ed. G. Hallowell, p.151.

certain parties in the USA even had designs on BNA territory. By the early 1850s, however, many colonists, including MacNab, had accepted 'responsible government', and some were pressing for even greater autonomy. Indeed, by then there was a spirit abroad in Canada that resented any unwarranted intrusion by the metropolis in the colony's local affairs and any perceived lack of respect towards the colony – and, for the 'English' freemasons in Canada, their treatment by the UGLE was resented on both counts.³⁵

In summary, the complaints of the 'English' lodges in the masonic Province of Canada West were fourfold. First, 'the want of harmony in action and working' that resulted from having lodges of the three British masonic constitutions working in the same territory, a situation which was felt to perpetuate 'local and national feelings and prejudices and conflicting interests' – surely an early indication of a nascent Canadian identity. Second, the requirement to pay dues to London while also having to bear the cost of a Provincial Grand Lodge and of bailing out, as far as they could, needy freemasons who had emigrated to Canada from Britain. Third, the delays in communications from London, amounting to 'a neglect highly discourteous'. And, finally, the selection of a Provincial Grand Master 'without reference to the opinions of the Fraternity in Canada...although they would naturally be the best informed on the subject and most deeply interested in the result.'³⁶ Yet, just across the border, in the United States, there was already an independent Grand Lodge in each State, subject to no higher masonic authority, and electing its own Grand Master. The practice there of exclusive territorial jurisdiction meant that no other Grand Lodge could set up lodges in the same State and expect to be recognized. Members of lodges in Canada were presumably becoming increasingly aware of these independent Grand Lodges, thanks to the masonic press and the increasing ease of travel and communications.³⁷ It would not have been surprising, therefore, if frustrated freemasons in Canada had sometimes envied the independent and more democratic

³⁵ See also Alan Lester, *Imperial Networks: Creating identities in nineteenth-century South Africa and Britain* (2001), p. ix, where he remarks that 'In each settler colony, colonial identities were also created through communication with, and often out of antagonism towards, certain metropolitan social and political groups that concerned themselves, even if only periodically and half-heartedly, with events at the margins of empire.'

³⁶ 'Address' of the 'Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of Canada' to the UGLE, eventually printed in *The Freemason's Magazine* of 1 March 1856, pp. 169-176.

³⁷ For the role of 'print-capitalism' in enabling 'rapidly growing numbers of people to think about themselves, and to relate to others, in profoundly new ways' see Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of Nationalism* (2nd ed., 1991), p. 36.

organization of their American neighbours, and wished to be in closer control of freemasonry within their own borders.

For similar reasons, the 'Irish' lodges were critical of their relationship with their Grand Lodge in Dublin, and they too pressed for a greater degree of self-government – but their requests, like those of their 'English' masonic counterparts, were left unanswered or declined. The 'Irish' even went so far as to try to find out in late 1853 if Dublin would recognise an 'Independent Grand Lodge of Canada West' if one were formed, and they made the point that they were acting 'in conjunction with a similar movement on the part of the English Lodges' which also believed that an independent body would 'tend to unanimity amongst the Brethren generally, and the benefit of the Order in Canada West.'³⁸ This is evidence that even at this early stage in the movement towards masonic independence in Canada the 'Irish' and the 'English' masons in Canada were working 'in conjunction' and that both gave priority to the development of local freemasonry over their distant ties with the Grand Lodges of Ireland and England. Without going into further detail here, suffice it to record that the majority of 'English' and 'Irish' lodges in Canada had become so frustrated with their 'home' bases that a number of them came together on 10 October 1855 and resolved '[t]hat the Grand Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons of Canada, be and is hereby formed'.³⁹ Forty-one lodges transferred their allegiance to it: fifteen were from the 'English' Province of Canada West, ten from the 'English' Province of Canada East, fifteen 'Irish' lodges and a 'Scottish' one.⁴⁰ That the 'English' lodges predominated is also shown by the facts that the new body elected as its Grand Master Colonel William Mercer Wilson, an ethnic Scot but an 'English' mason, and that 'Irish' masons filled only three of the twenty-three posts available.⁴¹

³⁸ Jenkyns, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

³⁹ 'Address' of the 'Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of Canada' to the UGLE, eventually printed in *The Freemason's Magazine* of 1 March 1856, pp. 169-176.

⁴⁰ These figures are taken from the letter dated 28 May 1856 from Francis Richardson, the secretary of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Canada West, reprinted on pp. 492-3 of *The Freemasons' Monthly Magazine* of 1 July 1856. While different reporters give different numbers, they all concur that the majority of the lodges that formed this original Grand Lodge of Canada were from the two 'English' masonic provinces in Canada.

⁴¹ This factual account of the formation of the first Grand Lodge in a British colony runs counter to the claims in the Anglo-biased leading article in *The Freemason's Magazine* of 17 November 1858 that the first 'Canadian' Grand Lodge was formed '[u]nder the leadership of Irish Masons', and that 'the first outbreak against supreme authority in Canada' was attached to 'Irish and Scotch lodges'. (See also Harland-Jacobs, *Builders of Empire*, p.212.) The article's bias may stem from that of an 'English' correspondent in Canada, where some 'English' freemasons were critical of the speed with which the number of 'Irish' Craft lodges had recently increased. (See, for example, Jenkyns, *op. cit.*, p.20). Such a

Thus, contrary to any claim that freemasonry helped turn men into ardent citizens of empire, by November 1855 freemasonry had in fact already turned otherwise loyal Canadian subjects of the British Crown – such as MacNab and Wilson – away from their parent Grand Lodges in Britain and into local Grand Lodges that were as independent of their parents as those in the USA. ‘English’, ‘Irish’ and ‘Scottish’ freemasons in Canada had initiated an independence movement that predated by more than a century the final severance of the Canadian nation’s constitutional links with Britain.⁴² For the first time in the British Empire, a significant proportion of the lodges in an overseas colony had democratically decided to form their own, independent, Grand Lodge. Their unilateral declaration, their decision to act without the prior permission of their Grand Masters in the British Isles, the fact that they were still subjects of the British monarch, made their move unique – and, to those remaining within the UGLE’s Provincial Grand Lodge of Canada West, disloyal. At its meeting in late October 1855 it therefore declared the meeting on 10 October to have been irregular; prohibited masonic intercourse with those who had joined the ‘recusant’ body; and reported accordingly to the UGLE in London.⁴³ Undeterred, the new Grand Lodge was consecrated on 2 November 1855 and Wilson, the Grand Master-elect, was installed by H.T. Backus, a Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of the State of Michigan. (This would appear to be the first indication that the independent-minded Canadian freemasons were in direct touch with freemasons south of their border, and that some American Masons were willing to assist them to achieve their objective.) For the new Canadian Grand Lodge it was important to obtain recognition from other Grand Lodges as this would certificate its legitimacy and encourage the other lodges in Canada to join it. Grand Master Wilson therefore wrote to London, ‘offering the right hand of brotherhood’

criticism was probably also part and parcel of a more widespread attitude of people of English stock towards the Irish, both at home and in the colonies. For the various and varying British attitudes towards the Irish in the 1860s see for example Michael de Nie, “‘A Medley Mob of Irish-American Plotters and Irish Dupes’: The British Press and Transatlantic Fenianism”, *The Journal of British Studies*, No. 2, April 2001, pp 213-240; and Roger Swift’s review of *Victoria’s Ireland? Irishness and Britishness, 1837-1901* (2004), ed. Peter Gray, in *English Historical Review*, vol. cxx, 486, of April 2005, pp. 548-49.

⁴² The nation of Canada did not finally sever its formal links with Britain until in 1949 the Canadian Supreme Court succeeded the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council as the final court of appeal for all Canadian legal cases, nor even then until the Canadian constitution was domesticated in 1982. Nevertheless, Canada today still shares its monarch with the United Kingdom.

⁴³ *The Freemason’s Magazine* 1 July 1856, pp. 492-93.

and in the belief that the new Grand Lodge could ‘confidently claim from you reciprocation of our Fraternal regard.’⁴⁴

The masonic press in America and England was not slow to comment on what had happened in Canada. One American organ reported that ‘Forty-two [*sic*] Lodges have seceded from the Grand Lodges of England, Ireland and Scotland, and formed an independent Grand Lodge, for the government of the Canadas’, and then added a paragraph which is of interest not only to those who have commented on the use of the family metaphor in the British Empire:

For our part, we cannot see what benefit England derives from a Provincial Body three thousand miles distant; and we think it would redound to her credit to yield up the truncheon where she cannot compel obedience. We certainly would have felt more pleased if the Canadians, after setting forth their grievances, had requested the Grand Lodges to absolve them from their obligations, and assist them in forming a government suitable to their wants...and yet, we hope the Grand Lodge of England will make a virtue of necessity, and imitate the father whose favorite [*sic*] daughter clandestinely married a man of her choice, for fear she might be refused on asking – give them a scolding for their precipitation, a blessing and good advice for their future life...⁴⁵

For several years the UGLE did not follow that advice, nor was Wilson’s wish for ‘reciprocation’ granted, as will be shown in the next section.

(b) 1856-59: from ‘responsible government’ to (masonic) independence

Such was the nature of Anglo-Canadian masonic affairs when Carnarvon was initiated into freemasonry in London in February 1856, the circumstances of which have been set out in some detail in Chapter 2. Carnarvon was already known for his interest in Canadian affairs in general to the extent that his speech in the House of Lords on 1 March 1855 impressed a London correspondent of the *Toronto Daily Colonist* with his ‘intimate acquaintance with our doings’ and caused him to report that Carnarvon ‘was really quite enthusiastic when he spoke about Canada.’⁴⁶ And there can be no doubt that his friends and masonic sponsors, William Wither Bramston Beach and George Raymond Portal, would have briefed him on Canadian masonic affairs in particular. Perhaps it was no coincidence that at a dinner in honour of Portal’s brother in January 1856 Carnarvon had bemoaned ‘the way in which the distant

⁴⁴ ‘Address’ of the ‘Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of Canada’ to the UGLE, eventually printed in *The Freemason’s Magazine* of 1 March 1856, pp. 169-176.

⁴⁵ *The Masonic Messenger* (New York) of 15 December 1855.

⁴⁶ A copy of the report in the *Toronto Daily Colonist* of 24 March 1855 is filed in CP BL Add 60945.

dependencies and colonies of this country, dependencies and colonies which had been treated with too little attention, too little thought, and too little tenderness'. And just before Carnarvon's initiation Portal had had a letter published in the masonic press asking for more information about the 'defection' of formerly 'English' freemasons in Canada and expressing the view that 'either there has been a most unmasonic precipitation on the part of the Canadians, or else the most culpable neglect and dereliction of duty on the part of the authorities of Grand Lodge.'⁴⁷ In any case, after his initiation Carnarvon quickly came to the conclusion that both of Portal's 'painful alternatives' were 'correct'.⁴⁸

Contrary to previous reports on this subject, Carnarvon did not initially or presciently support the UGLE's proposal to recognise the Grand Lodge of Canada that had been founded in late 1855, as Harland-Jacobs has claimed.⁴⁹ Nor was he 'one of the leaders in the faction in giving them [English Lodges in Canada] independence'.⁵⁰ Like Portal, and indeed like Lord Zetland, their Grand Master, Carnarvon thought that those who had formed the breakaway Grand Lodge in Canada had acted with 'most unmasonic precipitation' – though he sympathised with them in their complaints against the UGLE. He therefore concentrated his efforts on persuading the Grand Lodge of England to make immediate and sufficient concessions to those 'English' lodges that had remained loyal to the UGLE's Provincial Grand Lodge of Canada West to ensure their continuing allegiance to the UGLE, and on pressing for the reform of its the administration. As he told Grand Lodge in October 1856, he was certain that the 'English' lodges in Canada that had not joined the recusant body should maintain their allegiance to the UGLE, and that they should remain under the ultimate jurisdiction of the UGLE – but he wanted the UGLE to delegate to them the responsibility for their local administration.⁵¹ Addressing a masonic meeting in Bath two months later he expanded on that statement: as the lodges in the UGLE's Province of Canada West did not 'ask an exclusive right of election' or anything that touched 'our supremacy or their allegiance', and as they demanded, in his view, 'far less than we should be prepared to grant', he would even have

⁴⁷ *The Freemason's Monthly Magazine* of 1 February 1856, p. 99. The letter is undated and signed 'G.R.P... P.M. No. 10'.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ Harland-Jacobs, *Builders of Empire*, p. 213.

⁵⁰ Carnarvon's biographical file in the Library and Museum of Freemasonry, London, BE 68 (CAR) BLI Fol.

⁵¹ As reported in the *Masonic Observer* of 1 November 1856, a copy of which is filed as f. 33 in CP BL Add. 60945.

allowed the Provincial Grand Lodge ‘a concurrent voice’ in the election of their Provincial Grand Master’.⁵² (To allow the freemasons of the Province to appoint their own Provincial Grand Master would have ‘lead to alienation’, he claimed.) He also favoured a stronger representation of colonial lodges at Grand Lodge itself. Carnarvon still hoped that by granting these concessions to ‘further independence or self-government’ the UGLE would yet avoid the secession of the remaining lodges in Canada West.⁵³ But he feared that the damage to Anglo-Canadian relations had already been done:

In Canada, the noblest possession of the British Crown it [freemasonry] has reflected – and I will not stop here to inquire how much it has consolidated – the English Empire. Alas, that I should say that this “has been” the case, and is so no more!⁵⁴ ...Canada, the brightest jewel in our tiara, the fairest flower in our wreath, is in danger of falling to the ground...Four years of unredressed complaint...have produced their necessary and most miserable results. Some of the Lodges in that noble Colony have broken off their connection with us; others still cling to us, but in the last stage of exhausted patience and I must say of just dissatisfaction. As yet, however, they have not taken the final and irrevocable step. They are still content to forward fresh petitions and complaints. To them I would say, “Well have you done, in bearing with neglect, and disfavour; continue a little longer to display the patience and forbearance that you have so honourably shown under the provocations of many years; there are many here in England who are pleading your cause; and if you will only be true to yourselves, the day is not far distant when all that is just and reasonable in your claims shall be conceded.”⁵⁵

From this quotation two things at least are clear. First, Carnarvon’s view that in its fragmented condition, with the formation of an irregularly formed independent Grand Lodge and the threat of another, ‘English’ freemasonry in Canada was no longer helping to ‘consolidate’ the empire. And secondly, his recognition that the breakaway Grand Lodge had ‘broken off their connection’ with the UGLE, and that it was, like any other Grand Lodge, a completely

⁵² Carnarvon’s speech, a typed version of which is filed as ff. 109-110 on CP BL Add 60945.

⁵³ Carnarvon’s speech in Grand Lodge, 1 October 1856, as reported in the *Masonic Observer* of 1 November 1856, a copy of which is filed as f. 33 in CP BL Add 60945.

⁵⁴ Harland-Jacobs distorts the import of this section of Carnarvon’s speech by omitting the second sentence (‘Alas...’), and reducing the first to ‘It has reflected...and consolidated the British [sic] Empire’. Moreover, although she cites the source for this quotation as ‘Hardinge, *Life of Henry Herbert*, p. 225’ (i.e. Hardinge, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, p. 225), Hardinge in fact wrote not ‘the British Empire’ but ‘the English Empire’, and his version corresponds with the version used in this thesis.

⁵⁵ Carnarvon’s speech in Bath in late December 1856, as filed in CP BL Add 60945, ff. 109-10. These typed folios claim to be a copy of the report in the *Masonic Mirror* vol. 1, 1857, page 126, but on checking them against that report they were found to be significantly different. Hardinge used the typed version in his biography.

independent masonic institution – and not ‘semi-independent’ as Harland-Jacobs has claimed.⁵⁶ We must also note that although the two masonic speeches under reference contain much in common with speeches Carnarvon was to make later on colonial administration, they were made before he took up his first appointment in the Colonial Office (in 1858) and even longer before he became the Pro Grand Master of the UGLE (in 1874).⁵⁷

Lord Zetland, the Grand Master of the UGLE, belatedly tried to stop the haemorrhage of the remaining 41 ‘English’ lodges in his masonic province of Canada West by offering generous concessions, but, as Carnarvon’s friend Beach had reported on his return from a visit to Canada in the spring of 1857, ‘nothing short of Independence would suffice for the present emergency.’⁵⁸ Indeed, the overwhelming majority voted for independence in June 1857, when the ‘sentiment was uttered by many, “England, with all thy faults, I love thee still!”’, but, as Canadians, they could not forget that they must love Canada better’ – than which there could hardly be a better expression of an early Canadian proto-nationalist attitude towards Britain.⁵⁹ All but three of the lodges then in effect seceded from the UGLE and in September 1857 formed the second Grand Lodge to be established in the territory, with T. Douglas Harington, the ‘English’ Provincial Grand Master of the masonic Province of Quebec and Three Rivers, installing Sir Allan Napier MacNab as its first Grand Master. As both had acted without the UGLE’s permission, Harington then resigned from the ‘English’ constitution, and the UGLE demanded the return of MacNab’s warrant.⁶⁰ Harington was later also elected as the Grand Master of the ‘Canadian’ Grand Lodge that had been formed in 1855, and he and MacNab then amalgamated the two Grand Lodges as ‘the Grand Lodge of Canada’ in Toronto in July 1858.

Carnarvon very much regretted the whole affair, and particularly that the former ‘English’ freemasons had had to depart without the approval and blessing of the UGLE: ‘every prediction he had made had been miserably but literally carried out... Those Canadian Lodges which owed allegiance to us twelve months since did so no longer. The old time-honoured connection between the two countries had been severed for a day and for ever.’⁶¹ (As

⁵⁶ Harland-Jacobs, *Builders of Empire*, p. 3.

⁵⁷ Harland-Jacobs, in ‘The Essential Link’, pp. 2-3, is therefore incorrect when she states that Carnarvon made his speech in Bath from the ‘vantage point’ of having been Colonial Secretary and Pro Grand Master.

⁵⁸ Beach to Zetland, 6 May 1857, as printed in the *Freemason’s Magazine* (1857), pp. 814-15.

⁵⁹ *Freemason’s Magazine*, 1 August 1857, p. 674.

⁶⁰ *Freemason’s Magazine*, 1 November 1857, pp. 857 and 1033-34.

⁶¹ Typed extract from the *Freemasons’ Magazine*, vol. 4, p. 310, ‘Grand Demonstration at Bath’ (10 February 1858), filed in CP BL Add 60945 ff. 116-17.

mentioned in the section above on 'Carnarvon's imperial philosophy', he was to remind another audience some years later that '[i]f there is any lesson which we should draw from the loss of the United States, it is the misfortune of parting from those colonies in ill-will and irritation.'⁶² We can see how Carnarvon viewed these events from his reply (on Colonial Office letterhead) to a letter which Harington sent him soon after his appointment as Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies (in late February 1858):

I would have wished much that the old connexion between the Craft in England & Canada had not been broken off : still more that it had not terminated from the causes & under the circumstances which have brought about the separation; yet now that the step has been taken, I sincerely trust that the future course of Canadian Masonry will be prosperous, and that when the recent events are softened by the lapse of time, the former feelings of cordiality & good will [*sic*] may one more be renewed.⁶³

He also explained to Harington his caution in recommending that the UGLE recognise an independent Grand Lodge in Canada:

I...have abstained in Grand Lodge from advocating that recognition of Canadian Masonry as an independent body, not from any doubt that such a recognition would be an expedient measure, and one likely to restore a kindly feeling between the members of the Craft here & in Canada, but because I feel that, at this moment, it would be refused, or acceded to in an unsatisfactory manner. Whenever the opportunity offers itself for urging this measure, I shall certainly not fail to do so in the manner in which I then think to be most effective.⁶⁴

The opportunity offered itself once the two 'Canadian' Grand Lodges had amalgamated, though Carnarvon still advised against recognising the new body until full information had been received from Canada, and he did not support recognition until he had been assured that only a small minority of 'English' lodges had decided to remain under the jurisdiction of the UGLE.⁶⁵ Bearing in mind the extent to which Carnarvon had by then become officially involved in Canadian affairs (he had moved the second reading of the 'Government of New Caledonia [later 'British Columbia'] Bill' on 26 July 1858, and hosted at Highclere a

⁶² The *Annual Register* (1870), p. 117.

⁶³ Carnarvon to Harington, 7 April 1858, CP BL Add 50786 ff. 49-52.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵ See *Proceedings* for 1 December 1858 and the fuller report in the *Freemason's Magazine*, vol. xlix, 6 December 1858, pp. 1081-93.

delegation of Canadian politicians in England to discuss confederation), his last recorded remarks on the secession of the erstwhile 'English' lodges are worth noting here:⁶⁶

I trust that whatever may have been the causes which led to the separation of the Canadian Lodges, and no one regrets that more than I do, no one has spoken more freely concerning them than I have, still, whatever these causes may have been, I trust that though we may henceforth be separate as bodies, we may in heart be one – having the same common object – that we may still be united by ties as strong and as enduring as those bands which unite us socially and politically with the Canadian dependencies of the British Crown.⁶⁷

In the end, therefore, Carnarvon had decided to let bygones be bygones and to hope that the future relationship between the Craft in Canada and the UGLE would be as strong as that which was still enjoyed, 'socially and politically', between Britain and its Canadian colonies. The two dissident Grand Lodges in Canada had amalgamated with a view to strengthening the Craft in Canada – a move that presumably met with Carnarvon's approval as it was consistent with his views on 'intercolonial federation'.⁶⁸ The UGLE had recognised the amalgamated body, and hands of friendship had thus been extended from each side of the Atlantic. However, Carnarvon's hope for the future strength of the masonic ties was not to be realised. Once the UGLE recognised the Grand Lodge of Canada (in December 1858), official communications between the two bodies dried up. Indeed, apart from the occasional spat over the UGLE's remaining Craft lodges in Canada, and some matters relating to other masonic orders (see below), Canadian freemasonry disappeared from England's view. True, further Grand Lodges were formed in Nova Scotia (1866), New Brunswick (1867), Quebec (1869), British Columbia (1871), Manitoba (1875), and Prince Edward Island (1875), but their formation went almost unnoticed, and certainly without any comment by Carnarvon.⁶⁹ These several Grand Lodges have remained separate ever since, with the result that there is still no Canadian national Grand Lodge today.⁷⁰ It would therefore be difficult to argue that Canadian freemasonry *as a whole*, lacking as it did any overarching national organisation, could have

⁶⁶ The remarks were made immediately after the UGLE's decision on 1 December 1858 to recognize the new, united, Canadian body.

⁶⁷ *Freemason's Magazine* (1858), p. 1084.

⁶⁸ See the eponymous section in Chapter 3 on Carnarvon's imperial philosophy.

⁶⁹ For further details, and for the evolution in the nineteenth century of the UGLE's policy on the recognition of Grand Lodges formed in British territories overseas, see James W. Daniel, 'Grand Lodges in British Colonies: Imperial consolidators or Commonwealth seedlings?' *AQC*, vol. 119 (2006), pp. 19-21.

⁷⁰ The 'Grand Lodge of Canada' that had been created in 1855 had in due course to restyle itself as the 'Grand Lodge of Canada in the Province of Ontario' (in 1887).

played any significant part in maintaining the integrity of the empire – even if it had wished so to do. Not has any evidence been found that any of the several Grand Lodges in Canada actively promoted empire. Though ‘responsible government’ was granted to colonies in Canada in the 1840s, Canada, as a united nation, did not finally cut its constitutional ties with Britain until the patriation of the British North America Act of 1867 in 1982. The Canadian Grand Lodges cut theirs with their British parents from the moment of their foundation.

(c) 1866-67: Carnarvon, Macdonald and Britain’s first Dominion

No evidence has been found to show that freemasonry, or the links between freemasons, played any part in the negotiations in London in late 1866 that led up to the confederation of Canada in 1867. Like Carnarvon, John Alexander Macdonald, the leader of the Canadian delegation, was a freemason.⁷¹ He and Carnarvon got on well from their first encounter, and their friendship lasted until Carnarvon’s death in 1890. They shared a similar ‘noble dream’ for the core constituents of the British Empire, a loose confederation of the ‘auxiliary British nations’ (Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa), ‘ranged about a central power’ while remaining ‘separate nations’, or an ‘alliance of equal and autonomous states linked together by a common sovereign’ – a vision that was to be realised in the British Commonwealth in the early twentieth century.⁷² No evidence has yet been found, however, that they ever met as masonic brethren, wrote to each other about masonic affairs, or attended any masonic meeting together.⁷³ As statesmen they had no need of a masonic connection, and as friends they could,

⁷¹ In the Library and Museum of Freemasonry, London, there is a paper by ‘Marshall S Loke, of 56 Langford Road, Rochester, NY, 14615 USA’ which includes biographical notes on the Prime Ministers of Canada who were Freemasons. The entry for Macdonald includes the following: ‘Initiated, passed and raised in St John’s Lodge No. 758 (EC) now Ancient St John’s Lodge No. 5 (GLC), and remained a member till his death in 1891. Lodge attended his funeral ‘in a body’. Joined Zetland Lodge No. 386, Toronto, in 1875 and resigned in 1884; was made a life member of Dalhousie Lodge No. 58, Ottawa in 1880; exalted [into the Royal Arch] in 1847 in Victoria Chapter, Montreal, now St Paul’s Chapter; joined Ancient Frontance Chapter No 1, Kingston, in 1854 and resigned in 1880; honorary life member of Lafayette Chapter No. 5, Washington DC; KT [Knight Templar] in 1854 in Hugh de Payens Enc No. 22 (EC) and resigned in 1884.’ (LMF file name and location: ‘Ontario, Grand Lodge of Canada, and Grand Chapter, from 1931’, housed in the Lodge File Room. There is no specific shelf reference or class mark.)

⁷² Macdonald’s restatement of the value of the Canadian/British alliance in 1875, as recorded by Donald John A. Creighton in his *The Old Chieftain* (1955), pp. 206-7. The final quotation is from E.A Benians, Sir James Butler and C.E. Carrington (eds.), *The Cambridge History of the British Empire*, vol. 2, ‘The Empire-Commonwealth 1870-1919’ (1959), p. 4.

⁷³ But it is interesting to note that Macdonald dined with the Carnarvons on 16 November 1884, less than three weeks before Carnarvon recorded in his diary: ‘I presided in G. Lodge and made them a statement on the difficult question of the G.L. of Quebec & the English Lodges’. (CP BL Add 60923, entries of 16 November and 3 December 1884).

and did, enjoy their friendship without visiting each other's lodges. It must, however, be noted that once the British North America Bill, for the federal union of Canada, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick was signed into law on 29 March 1867, Macdonald's role in its design and realisation was 'amply recognized' in Britain: he was appointed as the first Prime Minister of the Dominion of Canada, knighted – and also appointed as 'the Representative of the Grand Lodge of England at the Grand Lodge of Canada' by the Grand Master of the UGLE, Lord Zetland, on 29 April 1868, from whom he also received (in absentia) 'the rank and privileges of a Past Senior Grand Warden of the Grand Lodge of England.'⁷⁴ Although Carnarvon had resigned from his ministerial post before the Bill was enacted it is not improbable (though there is no proof) that Carnarvon would have made certain that Zetland and his deputy, Lord de Grey and Ripon (who sat opposite Carnarvon in the House of Lords), were aware of Macdonald's suitability for this distinction.

(d) 1871-74: the independence of another masonic body in Canada

The 'Supreme Council of the 33rd Degree of the Ancient and Accepted Rite for England', with its seat in London, had been warranted by the Supreme Council for the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction of the Rite in the United States in 1845, itself a daughter of the 'Mother Supreme Council' formed in Charleston in 1801. The 'English' Supreme Council consisted of nine senior 'English' freemasons, and under its jurisdiction the Rite had been active in British North America since 1861. As stated in Chapter 2, Carnarvon was appointed as the Deputy Grand Master of the UGLE in 1870 and, as a member of the Rite since 1860, he was subsequently elected to the 'English' Supreme Council of the Rite in early 1871. By then, senior members of the 'English' Rite in Canada, including T. Douglas Harington (see above), were pressing for a greater measure of self-government, as their counterparts in the 'English' Craft there had done in the 1850s. Carnarvon attended the Supreme Council's meeting on 11 July 1871 when its Grand Secretary General reported that in response to a letter from Harington he had asked Harington 'to suggest a scheme...for bringing the [Canadian members'] fees, and intervals of time between the degrees more into harmony with the working of the A&A Rite in the United

⁷⁴ 'John Alexander Macdonald' by J.K. Johnson and P.B. Waits in the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online*, www.biographi.ca (September 2005). *Proceedings*, 29 April 1868.

States.’⁷⁵ Harington replied by proposing a ‘system of local government and supervision’ which the Supreme Council (including Carnarvon) accepted on one condition: that the fees for the Rite’s highest degree, the thirty-third, would still have to be paid to the London and not retained locally.⁷⁶ This, however, did not satisfy Harington, and, like his Craft brethren in 1855, he replied on 22 November 1871 ‘that those who are on the spot in Canada must know their own wants better than others possibly can.’ Charles Vigne, the president (‘Sovereign Grand Commander’) of the Supreme Council consequently reported when it met, in Carnarvon’s absence, on 12 February 1872, that ‘We have had much trouble with the Brethren in Canada respecting fees etc, and a spirit of independence, such as they evinced some time since in Craft masonry, appears likely to cause annoyance. Still, I hope, by firm but judicious management, this feeling may soon subside.’ There is nothing in the archives of the Supreme Council to suggest that Carnarvon did not share this hope. Judging from his imperial philosophy and from his response to the secession of the UGLE’s lodges in Canada between 1855 and 1858 he would have hoped that the concession of virtual self-government to the members of the ‘English’ Rite in Canada would have been sufficient to satisfy their aspirations and yet to retain their allegiance to the ‘English’ Supreme Council.

Once again, however, the imperial centre – this time including Carnarvon – was in danger of misreading the signals it was receiving from the colonial periphery, for the Canadians continued to press for further autonomy. In 1873 a member of the Supreme Council, Dr Robert Hamilton, visited Canada and met Harington and other members of the Rite. Hamilton reported to the Supreme Council at its meeting on 8 July 1873 that:

the problem of dealing with such Bodies scattered over such a vast extent of territory and amongst people of such diverse character is one that cannot be solved by the application of rules adapted for the government of a limited and homogenous country like England. The political state of a country will always exercise a powerful influence on the form of its Masonic Government...The Dominion enjoys perfect self-government...The system of general government in civil life gives a desire for self government in Freemasonry...⁷⁷

Hamilton included in his report the Canadians’ latest proposal: that they should be allowed to govern the Rite within the Dominion ‘but at the same time...be subordinate to this Supreme Council, to whom in all cases whatsoever right of appeal would be reserved’ and he

⁷⁵ *Minute Book* of the Supreme Council for 11 July 1871.

⁷⁶ *Minute Book* of the Supreme Council for 10 October 1871.

⁷⁷ *Minute Book* of the Supreme Council for 8 July 1873.

recommended 'the policy of granting our Brethren in Canada as comprehensive a measure of self government as can be accomplished without abdicating the sovereign prerogatives of the Supreme Council of England.' Hamilton also relayed the Canadians' warnings that 'unless a large concession of self-government was granted, a severance would be inevitable, and that the Canadian Brethren would declare their independence'.

Carnarvon attended the Supreme Council's subsequent discussion of the Canadian proposal on 15 November 1873 and was a party to its decisions: to order a plebiscite of its members in Canada in order to discover whether they wanted an independent Supreme Council that 'must extend from the Atlantic to the Pacific, including the whole dominion'; to ask other Supreme Councils 'whether, in the event of the plebiscite being in favour of separation, they will give their consent thereto'; and 'in the event of a Supreme Council being recognized for Canada, a Warrant be issued to them, gratis.' The plebiscite proved unanimously in favour of 'separation'. Nothing further was heard of retaining a 'right of appeal' to the 'English' Supreme Council or of the 'subordination' of a Canadian Supreme Council to its English parent – presumably because it was realised that in the Rite, as in the Craft, independence meant just that, and a supreme body was indeed supreme within its jurisdiction and the equal of any other similar body.

Meanwhile, Carnarvon, who had returned to the British cabinet as Colonial Secretary in February 1874, was elected by the 'English' Supreme Council as the Sovereign Grand Commander of the A & A Rite in July 1874. Thus it was while he was both Colonial Secretary and the head of the 'English' Supreme Council that he signed the warrant for the independent Supreme Council for Canada.⁷⁸ The new body, the first independent Supreme Council to be created in a British colony, was then constituted on 16 October 1874 – not by a member of the 'English' Supreme Council but by Albert Pike, the Sovereign Grand Commander of the Supreme Council of the Southern Jurisdiction of the United States of America, the first or 'Mother Supreme Council'.

No record of Carnarvon's personal contribution to or attitude towards these proceedings has been found, but it is possible to surmise that his experience of the UGLE's disastrous handling of a similar problem in the 1850s had led him to ensure that if a separation in the Rite had to occur it would be managed in such a way that 'ill-will and irritation' were at

⁷⁸ See also C.J. Mandleberg, *Ancient and Accepted* (1995), pp. 78-9, 155, 207, 233-4, 264, and 269.

all costs avoided.⁷⁹ Whatever his personal contribution, however, the 'English' Supreme Council as a whole had quickly recognised that the Canadian's 'spirit of independence' was not just a cause for 'annoyance' that could be dealt with 'by firm but judicious management', as his predecessor but one as Sovereign Grand Commander had thought. Instead, one of its nine members had assessed the mood on the ground in Canada, the Canadian members' views had been determined in a plebiscite, and the 'English' Supreme Council had then promptly decided to grant, without strings attached, that which could no longer be withheld. Once again, however, the break was complete and the two Supreme Councils had little contact with each other thereafter until the creation of the informal 'Conference of English-speaking Supreme Councils' in the 1960s. Yet again 'English' freemasonry had not so much 'consolidated' the British Empire as caused the formation of an independent body in a colony long before the colony severed its remaining ties with Britain.

(e) 1883-84: Carnarvon's visit to Canada

Carnarvon and his wife spent September and October in 1883 on a private visit to Canada, a visit that he had been urged to make particularly by those who remembered his part in facilitating the formation of the dominion in 1867 and who shared his view of the future of the 'great Anglo-Saxon colonies' as he had expressed it, for example, in Edinburgh in 1878.⁸⁰ This was Carnarvon's first visit to any of the 'great Anglo-Saxon colonies' and by looking at it in some detail, which no one since Hardinge has done, it should be possible to identify the points at which his masonic connections touched or overlay his other networks and interests, and to assess whether in this instance, as Harland-Jacobs claims, Carnarvon used freemasonry 'as a vehicle for encouraging imperial sentiment in the dominions and spreading the idea of imperial federation'.⁸¹

That Carnarvon's visit was 'unofficial', as the *Montreal Gazette* informed its readers on 3 September 1883, did not prevent him from making several public appearances in the company of the Governor (by then Lord Lorne), visiting the Houses of Parliament in Ottawa with Premier Macdonald, and, in Montreal, addressing both a provincial synod of the

⁷⁹ The *Annual Register* (1870), p. 117. See also Chapter 3 (the section on 'Self-government').

⁸⁰ See Chapter 3 on Carnarvon's imperial philosophy. It may be relevant to note that his friend and relative, Robert Herbert, the PUS at the Colonial Office, had toured Canada in late 1882 (see Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 47).

⁸¹ Hardinge, *op. cit.*, vol. 3, pp. 90-96. Harland-Jacobs, 'The Essential Link', p. 269.

(disestablished) Episcopalian Church on 18 September and a civic reception and ‘great banquet’ in his honour the next day – all of which were reported in the local press.

Of these events, however, only the two addresses are relevant to this thesis. In both he spoke at some length on imperial ties, and from the note in his diary it is clear that he had prepared at least the address to the synod in the hope that his ‘few sentences’ would ‘come into print.’⁸² The press in Montreal and Toronto duly reported his speech the next day, and particularly the parallel he drew between matters political and ecclesiastical when he said that ‘Canada politically was entirely free and untrammelled as far as domestic legislation went and the Church in Canada was also entirely free’, adding that this ‘quasi-independence did not in the least affect Canadian loyalty to the Crown, and on the part of the Church unbounded loyalty to the great Mother Church.’⁸³ He was delighted to tell his audience ‘You have in Canada absolute freedom in legislation and self-government. But in Canada I find at every step where I go evidence of the most unbounded loyalty to the imperial Crown and affection for the old Mother Country.’⁸⁴ In other words, he had seen in Canada the successful realisation of the key component of his imperial philosophy in both the political and ecclesiastical spheres: the granting of self-government to mature colonies and, consequently, to colonial churches, on such terms and in time to preserve the colonies’ allegiance to the Crown and the churches’ to ‘the great Mother Church’, two of the great institutions that would ensure the empire’s future.⁸⁵ (While in Canada Carnarvon also attended and commented on two church services, discussed ‘religion, science and speculation’ at a dinner party and, after a visit to a local school, wrote critically in his diary about how the scriptures were being taught – but these events are mentioned here solely to demonstrate the time and interest he devoted to religious affairs during his visit.)⁸⁶

The press reported even more fully on his address to the civic reception in his honour held on 19 September, which Carnarvon described in his diary as ‘a brilliant affair.’⁸⁷ Three hundred people attended the banquet, and Sir Francis Hincks presided when, at the last moment

⁸² CP BL Add 60921, Carnarvon’s diary entry for 18 September 1883.

⁸³ *The Gazette* (Montreal), 19 September 1883.

⁸⁴ *The Globe* (Toronto), 19 September 1883, pp. 1-2.

⁸⁵ See also Chapter 3 on ‘Carnarvon’s imperial philosophy’ above.

⁸⁶ CP BL Add 60921, the entries for 5, 9, 11 and 16 September 1883.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 19 September 1883.

Macdonald was unable to get to Montreal.⁸⁸ The occasion provided the Canadians with an opportunity to thank ‘the statesman who was the chief instrument in obtaining the sanction of the Imperial Parliament’ for the Act by which Canada had become a Dominion – and it gave Carnarvon a platform on which to proclaim his devotion to Canada and to speak of the links between the colony and Britain even more forcefully than he had at the synod. In a long speech he called his part in the Act ‘the greatest pride of my public life’, and he told his audience ‘I came here half a Canadian at heart, and now I am an entire Canadian.’ He praised the progress Canada had made since achieving ‘unstinted freedom in self-government, combined with a union with the ancient monarchy of England’, Britain’s ‘greatest gift’ to its first dominion, and he prayed that Canada would ‘administer this great trust which has been confided to you...in an imperial and not merely a colonial spirit.’ Finally, in his peroration, Carnarvon said ‘we in Canada and in England are kith and kin, members of a common family, subjects of a common sovereign, and united to each other by ties of loving affection that time in its course can only strengthen’ and he expressed the hope that ‘in loyalty to the Crown, in love to the Mother Country’ Canada would ever be bound to Britain ‘in chains of adamant.’⁸⁹

Did Carnarvon also act as an ‘imperial booster’ at his two meetings with freemasons (both meetings were in Montreal) and how were they reported in the press?⁹⁰ The short answers are ‘no’ and ‘not at all.’ Carnarvon gives them the briefest of mentions in his diary and seems to have kept as low a masonic profile as possible – for reasons that will become clear.

Carnarvon’s first masonic visit in Canada was to a meeting of the Carnarvon Royal Arch Chapter in Montreal on 18 September, a visit which he evidently managed to squeeze in between his attendance at the synod in the morning and a ‘gt reception’ given by his hosts, Mr and Mrs George Stephens, that evening. Carnarvon’s diary entry reads: ‘A meeting at the Freemasons Carnarvon Chapter. They work under the Quebec Gd Lodge. They seemed much pleased to see me.’⁹¹ Their pleasure was quite understandable: Carnarvon had apparently given the Chapter’s founders permission to use his name when the chapter was set up (by ‘Canadian’ and not or no longer ‘English’ freemasons) in 1861, and Carnarvon, as Pro Grand Master of the

⁸⁸ Hincks was a former co-premier of Canada and colonial governor, whom Carnarvon had known since at least September 1866 when had entertained him at Highclere (*CP BL Add 60897*, entries for 8-10 September 1866).

⁸⁹ *The Gazette* (Montreal), 20 September 1883.

⁹⁰ The term is borrowed from Harland-Jacobs, *Builders of Empire*, p. 258, where it is applied to the Prince of Wales.

⁹¹ *CP BL Add 60921*, 18 September 1883.

UGLE, held ex officio the equivalent position in the Supreme Grand Chapter of England – a masonic body which he had joined in 1857 but which he had very rarely attended.⁹² The only other surviving record of Carnarvon's visit to the chapter is to be found in a history of freemasonry in Quebec published in 1892, wherein we read that at the 'Special Convocation' of the chapter 'a richly "Illuminated" Address was presented to...the late Right Hon the Earl of Carnarvon...then on a visit to Canada, and in whose honor [*sic*] the Chapter, by permission, had been named.' The 'illustrated address' (unlike those Carnarvon was to receive in South Africa and Australia) could not be found in the Carnarvon archives, but the official history records that the address mentioned the chapter's pride that it bore 'the time-honored [*sic*] name of Carnarvon' and the desire of its members 'to evince to you [Carnarvon] their great appreciation of the active interest you have always taken, and trust will ever take, in Canadian affairs.'⁹³ All that is recorded there of Carnarvon's response is that he 'made a gratifying reply thereto.'

Carnarvon's second masonic visit in Montreal, on the morning of 20 September, has left even less of a trace. According to Carnarvon's diary he 'attended a meeting of the 3 English Lodges who have retained their allegiance to the Gd Lodge [UGLE]. I did not enter into any of the past controversies but merely spoke kindly & warmly.'⁹⁴ No other record of this meeting has surfaced. The fact that none of these three 'English' lodges (the three that had not transferred their allegiance to a 'Canadian' Grand Lodge) appears to have mentioned it in its minute books, and that no mention of the meeting appears in the masonic press or in the official history strongly suggests that this was but an informal meeting with 'English' freemasons, and one for which neither they nor their visitor had time to prepare an address. But in Carnarvon's mention of 'past controversies' there is a clue as to why Carnarvon proceeded so cautiously and, more particularly, why there was no contact during his visit between him and the Grand Lodge of Canada, the Grand Lodge of Quebec, the Supreme Council for Canada (whose constitutional warrant he had signed) or any other of the masonic organisations with which he was connected. The 'past controversies' were presumably those that had stemmed from the formation by eighteen lodges of the Grand Lodge of Quebec in October 1869; its dispute with the Grand Lodge of Canada; its demand that the UGLE should withdraw the warrants of the

⁹² See Chapter 2, 'Carnarvon the freemason', above.

⁹³ John H. Graham, *Outlines of the History of Free Masonry in the Province of Quebec* (Montreal, 1892), pp. 537 and 596-97.

⁹⁴ CP BL Add 60921, 20 September 1883.

three 'English' lodges in Montreal (territory over which the new Grand Lodge tried to claim exclusive jurisdiction); and the fact that the UGLE had delayed recognising the new body until 1875, when it received a letter from Sir John Macdonald, the UGLE's representative at the Grand Lodge of Canada (as mentioned above), 'to the effect that all differences between the Grand Lodge of Canada and the newly-formed Grand Lodge of Quebec had been amicably adjusted.'⁹⁵ But controversies that had arisen before Carnarvon took senior office in the UGLE and which had then been settled soon after he became its Pro Grand Master – due perhaps to some extent to an intervention by his friend, Macdonald – do not today appear to have been sufficient reason for Carnarvon to have proceeded so cautiously as a freemason on a visit to Canada several years later, and for the 'Canadian' masonic authorities to have made no contact with him while he was there. Is there a more plausible explanation for the failure of both parties to draw on the masonic strings that were supposed to help bind them and the empire together?

Research into the Canadian masonic press and the archives of masonic institutions other than the Craft has revealed that Quebecois freemasons were so angry with some of the masonic authorities in England, headed as they were by the Prince of Wales, that as loyal citizens of the empire they complained loudly and bitterly that the 'English' masonic 'bigotry' was in effect damaging imperial relations. The first of the new cracks to appear in the imperial masonic edifice, as far as Anglo-Canadian masonic relations in the 1880s were concerned, was the decision of the Canadian (masonic) Knights Templar in August 1883 to sever any remaining bonds of loyalty to the Knights Templar in the British Isles and to the Prince of Wales in his capacity as the 'Supreme Grand Master of the Convent General', a body that had been created in what quickly proved to be a vain attempt to unite all 'British' Knights Templar under the Prince as the 'Supreme Head of the confederated bodies'.⁹⁶ The Canadians petitioned 'His Royal Highness the Grand Master...to absolve this Great Priory [the 'National Great Priory of Canada'], and all Officers and Fratres and members thereof, from their obligations of

⁹⁵ For further details of these controversies see J.R. Robertson, *History of Freemasonry in Canada* (Toronto, 1900). The quotation is from the UGLE's *Proceedings* for 3 March 1875. Macdonald's intervention would appear to be the only one he made in his capacity as the UGLE's representative. He is on record as having presented his credentials as such to the Grand Lodge of Canada in July 1868 (see Roy S. Foley and W.S. Herrington *A History of the Grand Lodge of AFAM of Canada in the Province of Ontario, 1855-1955* (1955), and of having been received in that capacity at a special meeting of the Lodge of Antiquity (Montreal) on 27 July 1869.

⁹⁶ For further details see James W. Daniel, 'Pure – and Accepted – Masonry' in *AQC* (1993), vol. 106, p. 82.

fealty to him as Supreme Grand Master, so that this Great Priory may be enabled fully and without doubt to affirm and maintain the position which it has taken upon itself as an Independent Great Priory.' Their letter of 10 August 1883 was printed in that month's issue of *The Canadian Craftsman and Masonic Record*, published in Port Hope, Ontario. But the masonic problems also involved another order, namely Mark Masonry, and the same issue of *The Craftsman* also carried an article entitled 'The Invasion of Quebec' and published the letter of 13 August 1883 from the Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of Quebec to Lord Henniker, a successor of Lord Carnarvon as the Grand Master of the 'English' Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons, protesting against 'the establishment of two Lodges of Mark Master Masons by your Grand Lodge in the city of Montreal, within the jurisdiction of the Grand Chapter of Quebec...contrary to well established principles of Masonic jurisdiction'.⁹⁷ Worse was to follow. Ten days after Carnarvon's arrival in Canada the same masonic newspaper printed an article entitled 'Masonic Bigotry' which included the following passages:

Insult after insult will not tend to draw the ties of colonial affection closer to the British Throne, if it is constantly continued, and now four Colonial Grand Lodges, whose members are composed of loyal citizens, find their efforts in the cause of Masonry cramped and crippled, because of the intolerant narrow-mindedness and the masonic bigotry of the rules of the Masonic Grand Bodies over which the Heir Apparent to the Throne presides...

The intolerant manner in which the United Grand Lodge, Grand Mark Lodge, and Grand Chapter of England, are at this present time treating the Masons of Quebec, the Masons of the Dominion, and in fact the Masons of the continent, is proof positive – if proof were required – that a spirit of intolerant bigotry against us exists in the minds of the leading spirits in Craft, Mark and Capitular Masonry in England.⁹⁸

Perhaps Carnarvon's mention of 'past controversies' was disingenuous. Perhaps he turned a blind eye or a deaf ear to these current controversies, despite the fact that he held or had held senior offices in all the allegedly bigoted bodies in England, and that the reputation of his Grand Master, the Prince of Wales, was being publicly criticised. Perhaps the 'Canadian' masonic authorities were unaware of his visit (unlikely, given the amount of press coverage it received) or no member of the 'Canadian' chapter he visited or of the three 'English' lodges with whom he met on 18 and 20 September had read or commented to him on the articles in

⁹⁷ *The Canadian Craftsman and Masonic Record*, no.8, 15 August 1883.

⁹⁸ *The Canadian Craftsman and Masonic Record*, no.9, 15 September 1883, pp. 273-75.

The Craftsman of 15 August and 15 September – and similar articles in *The Freemason* (printed in Toronto). It is, however, clear that all was far from well in Anglo-Canadian masonic relations at the time of Carnarvon's visit, and that this research provides a plausible explanation for Carnarvon's and his 'Canadian' masonic counterparts' behaviour at the time of his visit. The problems took years to resolve and there is no evidence that Carnarvon played any part in the eventual restoration of masonic harmony.

(f) Conclusion

Previous accounts, in particular those of Hardinge and Harland-Jacobs, have misinterpreted or at least oversimplified Carnarvon's involvement with freemasonry over a period of some thirty years in what was to become the Dominion of Canada, and they have thereby distorted or missed its relevance to a fuller understanding both of him as a statesman and of freemasonry as a component in his imperial philosophy.⁹⁹ His wish to maintain tight bonds of affection between the Canadian colonies and Britain was realised during his life-time in the political and ecclesiastical spheres with which he was closely involved, and he and his Canadian hosts did not hesitate to draw attention to these when he visited Canada in 1883. But the masonic story is quite different. Despite Carnarvon's best efforts in the 1850s and in the 1870s, the masonic links between England and Canada quickly weakened once provincial or national independent masonic bodies were established, first in the colonies of BNA and then in the Dominion of Canada. Indeed, the jurisdictional disputes that then arose between two of the 'Canadian' Grand Lodges in the 1870s on the one hand and between the masonic authorities in Quebec and those in London in the 1880s on the other were hardly an advertisement of an imperially-minded institution. Freemasonry in the dominion was generally fragmented and, compared with institutions such as the Episcopalian Church of Canada and the Orange Order in Canada, it remained a minor player on the national and imperial stage. That is why Carnarvon all but neglected it in 1883, and why Anglo-Canadian masonic records for the period under review present no evidence to support the claims that for '[p]rominent local governors, army commanders, and colonial secretaries agreed that Freemasonry was a valuable asset to the imperialist' and that it 'assisted them individually and collectively in the tasks of government

⁹⁹ Peter Gordon, *op. cit.*, on the other hand, completely overlooked the subject.

and defending the empire and in the imperialist mission of making the empire a source of national strength.¹⁰⁰

Moreover, if one considers the actual state of freemasonry in the dominion as depicted here, and if one compares Carnarvon's use of the platform provided by the Provincial Synod in Montreal with his avoidance of imperialist matter in his two encounters with 'Canadian' and 'English' freemasons in the same city, it is hard to agree with Roger Burt that freemasonry 'had an unparalleled capacity to bridge across communities, both at home and abroad, and no other organization was as well organized, as geographically dispersed, as efficiently structured, and as durable.'¹⁰¹ This privileging of freemasonry is unjustified. Quite apart from the Anglican Church there was at least one other 'well organized, geographically dispersed, efficiently structured and durable' organisation in Canada, and one of whose tenets included loyalty to the Crown, namely the Orange Order, by far the largest fraternal network in Canada.¹⁰² Freemasonry in Canada was not in the same league, and, as has been seen, even the one branch that in 1883 owed 'obligations of fealty' to the heir to the imperial crown wished to be relieved of them so that it could 'fully and without doubt' affirm and maintain its position as an independent body. Carnarvon did not and could not use any branch of freemasonry while he was in Canada to promote his imperial philosophy because freemasonry in the dominion was already bearing out Sir Frederic Rogers' prediction that, once established, responsible government would inevitably lead to the dissolution of the Empire.¹⁰³

Carnarvon and South Africa

(a) Introduction

Imperial historians who over the last fifty years or so have studied Carnarvon's involvement with South Africa have, not surprisingly, concentrated their attention on his unsuccessful efforts

¹⁰⁰ Harland-Jacobs, *Builder of Empire*, p. 259.

¹⁰¹ Roger Burt, 'Freemasonry and business networking during the Victorian period', *Economic History Review*, LVI, 4 (2003), pp. 657-688.

¹⁰² The Orange Order probably appeared fanatical to Carnarvon, and the cooling of his relationship with his long-standing friend, Lord Sandon, was not unrelated to Sandon's 'Orange convictions' – as James Bentley describes them in his *Ritualism and Politics in Victorian Britain* (1978). For relevant information on the Order see the *Oxford Companion to Canadian History*, ed. Gerald Hallowell (Oxford, 2004), pp. 464-65, and particularly p. 321 where it is claimed that by 1900 'one third of Canadian Protestant adult males had become Orangemen.'; Hyam, *op. cit.* (1976), pp. 155-56, who in turn refers to Tony Lane, *The Orange Order* (1972); David Fitzpatrick's 'Ireland and the Empire', *OHBE*, vol. 3, p. 518; and Ged Martin's 'Canada from 1815', *OHBE* vol. 3, p. 536.

¹⁰³ Rogers to Carnarvon, 5 October 1866, as quoted by Knox, 'Conservative Imperialism', p. 355.

to bring about the confederation of the British and Boer polities in South Africa between 1874 and 1878 (i.e. while he was the Secretary of State for the colonies), and in particular on Britain's peaceful annexation of the Transvaal in 1877 and the subsequent Anglo-Boer wars. Clement Goodfellow, for example, in his *Great Britain and South African Confederation, 1870-1881* (1966) carefully documented the genesis, development and legacy of Carnarvon's confederation policy, calling the annexation of the Transvaal its 'climax', and ascribing the policy's ultimate failure to flaws in Carnarvon's personality.¹⁰⁴ Cornelis de Kiewiet somewhat disputed Goodfellow's analysis in 1981 when he wrote:

The British annexation of the Transvaal is frequently regarded as the outcome of Carnarvon's impatient, personal response to a 'crisis' on the 'periphery of empire'. In fact, however, it came after almost a decade of renewed imperial intervention in South Africa, which began with the annexation of Basutoland in 1868 and of Griqualand in 1871. The chronology confirms the recent contention that for Britain the 'new imperialism' was signalled by Disraeli's speeches and policies between 1866 and 1868.¹⁰⁵

Saunders and Smith described Carnarvon as 'impatient to achieve a South African confederation similar to the one he had inaugurated in Canada' and they succinctly commented that 'Far from advancing the cause of federation, the British annexation of the Transvaal provoked an anti-Imperial reaction which helped to destroy it.'¹⁰⁶ Like Goodfellow, Knox, in 1998, and Andrew Porter in 2000 also clearly attribute the annexation to Carnarvon.¹⁰⁷ Cain and Hopkins applied a different and wider-angled lens to Carnarvon's confederation policy. They viewed it as a design 'to turn central Africa and Mozambique into labour reserves for the mines and the farms of the south' and concluded that it failed 'because of the hostile reactions it provoked in South Africa, and because diamonds were unable to generate the resources needed to carry Confederation through, with the result that independence had to be restored to the

¹⁰⁴ , Goodfellow used a strikingly architectural image to describe this climax: 'It was as if the imperial builder, having failed to lay even a secure foundation for his federal arch, suddenly threw up the keystone, hoping that the legislative framework he was constructing at the same time would hold it in position until the rest of the arch could be built. The effect was spectacular; it seemed for a while that by this daring gamble British policy was defying the laws of political gravity. Only after C's departure did the keystone fall, and by its crushing weight destroyed the dream of the builder.' Goodfellow, *op. cit.*, p. 111.

¹⁰⁵ C.W. de Kiewiet, 'Confederation', *The Cambridge History of South Africa* (Cambridge, 1981), Roland Oliver and G.N. Sanderson (eds.), vol. 6, p. 379.

¹⁰⁶ Christopher Saunders and Iain R. Smith, 'Southern Africa, 1795-1910', *OHBE*, vol. 3, pp. 606 and 607.

¹⁰⁷ Knox, 'The Earl of Carnarvon, Empire, and Imperialism, 1855-90' (1998), *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, vol. 26, 2, p. 57. (Two pages earlier, in the same article, Knox accuses Carnarvon of personal ambition, an 'over-estimation of his political capacities' and a susceptibility 'to high-flying optimism'. A. Porter, 'The South African War and the historians' (2000), *African Affairs*, 99. p. 636.

Transvaal in 1881.’¹⁰⁸ And in his most recent book, *The Empire Project* (2009), John Darwin turns the spotlight away from Carnarvon and on to Sir Theophilus Shepstone, for whom he claims the annexation was but the first stage in his ‘grand design’ to ‘build a greater Natal’ (the second being the invasion of ‘Zululand’ in 1879 – when Carnarvon was no longer in office).¹⁰⁹

Saul Dubow, on the other hand, has very recently used ‘the unusual case of South Africa’ to explore, in his words, *How British was the British World*. There he answers the related question, ‘why studies of identity formation...were relatively slow to emerge in the British world’, by claiming that this was partly due to the otherwise valuable interventions of Robison and Gallagher in imperial history but which ‘also exerted a restraining influence that deterred enquiry into key research areas which animate the “new” imperial history, namely, those dealing with culture and ideology, identity and the relationships between colonial knowledge and power.’¹¹⁰ Saul explores ‘the utility of a concept of Britishness [which] downplays the jurisdictional power of the British crown and British parliament in favour of institutions and symbols that are shared or de-territorialised’ and he concludes that ‘Britishness, in this sense, is better seen as a field of cultural, political and symbolic attachments which includes the rights, claims and aspirations of subject-citizens as well as citizen-subjects.’¹¹¹ One such institution that could be viewed in that light is freemasonry, but neither Dubow nor any of the other historians listed so far in the historiographical introduction to this case study has mentioned freemasonry at all.

The exceptions to this oversight are Ronald Hyam in 1976, Alan Cooper in 1983 and, more recently, Jessica Harland-Jacobs. As noted in the opening chapter of this thesis, however, neither Hyam nor Cooper develops their respective claims that Carnarvon’s ‘federal policy in South Africa involved masonic links’ or that Carnarvon’s one significant intervention in masonic affairs before his visit there in 1883 indicated ‘some identification of high masonic

¹⁰⁸ P.J. Cain and A.G. Hopkins, *British Imperialism, 1688-2000* (2nd edition, 2001), p. 320. (In fn. 68 to their page 68 they describe Carnarvon as ‘a Tory grandee dedicated to maintaining his estates (amounting to nearly 36,000 acres), to securing the future of his dynasty, and to the survival of the great landowners in an era of free trade and increasingly democratic politics. As an aristocrat and a gentleman, he believed that the “duties of property” were linked to the “right to rule”.’)

¹⁰⁹ John Darwin, *The Empire Project: The Rise and Fall of the British World System, 1830-1970*, (Cambridge, 2009), p. 223.

¹¹⁰ Saul Dubow, ‘How British was the British World? The Case of South Africa’, *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, vol. 37, 1 March 2009, p. 3.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

direction with British Colonial office thinking during this period.¹¹² Harland-Jacobs looks far more closely at the Carnarvon-South Africa connection in her *Builders of Empire* (2007), and her conclusions, like those of Hyam and Cooper, will be examined here.

More generally, this second case study will explore the similarities, connections and differences between the attitude and actions of Carnarvon the statesman and Carnarvon the freemason in the context of Britain's relations with South Africa. As it follows on from the case study of 'Carnarvon and Canada' it will also consider the differences between Carnarvon's masonic interventions in the two territories. More especially it will demonstrate that in South Africa in 1887, unlike in Canada in 1883, several of the leading figures in the local administration of the colonies and states were indeed linked masonically, and that their links were publicised during Carnarvon's visit. It will compare the uses to which Carnarvon put the public, ecclesiastical and masonic platforms made available to him in South Africa during his brief visit in 1887 as recorded in his diary, his speeches and in contemporary reports in the colonial press. (Historians have generally overlooked or paid insufficient attention to that visit, concentrating instead, as already mentioned, on Carnarvon's premature and unsuccessful efforts to achieve a confederation of the British colonies and the Boer states in South Africa in the 1870s and, in particular, on the annexation of the Transvaal in 1877.) This section will also argue that Carnarvon's advice in 1875 to his Grand Master, the Prince of Wales, on the organisation of freemasonry in South Africa, should be re-read and set in the context of his general aim to improve relations between the British and the Dutch 'races' in South Africa, an essential component of his South African policy. And it will continue to test Harland-Jacobs' claim that freemasonry, given the evidence of its actual condition at the time, consolidated the British Empire.

There were two periods when Carnarvon's masonic and political interests in South Africa coincided: 1874-78, while he was both Secretary of State for the Colonies and Pro Grand Master of the UGLE, and a few weeks in 1887 when he was out of political office but still Pro Grand Master – and Chancellor of the University of the Cape of Good Hope, which he

¹¹² Hyam, *op. cit.* (1976), p. 154. Cooper, *op. cit.*, p. 46.

had been since 1885.¹¹³ His interventions in each will be looked at in turn, after a section setting out the relevant background.

(b) Background

In setting out his detailed account of the ‘genesis of Lord Carnarvon’s [South African] policy, 1874-5’ Goodfellow states that until Carnarvon resumed ministerial office in 1874 his ‘main concern in his speeches had been with defence’. Indeed, South Africa hardly featured on Carnarvon’s agenda during his first two stints at the Colonial Office (1858-59 and 1866-67), the latter of which was largely taken up with preparations for the confederation of colonies in British North America.¹¹⁴ By the time he returned to the office of Secretary of State for the Colonies in 1874, however, the challenges and opportunities that South Africa presented to Britain had assumed a far greater significance and were to demand so much of Carnarvon’s time and energy for the next four years that he had little time for other colonial matters.

For a variety of reasons, including the hope that a self-governing colony based on the Cape would itself initiate moves to confederate the several colonies and states in southern Africa along Canadian lines, the previous (Liberal) imperial government had pressed ‘responsible government’ on Britain’s Cape Colony in 1872. Although that degree of independence was not to be granted to the other South African colony, Natal, until 1893, its colonists ‘exercised an effective control over their own affairs long before that’, though ‘until the end of the 1870s...they remained dependent on the British for defence, especially against their powerful northern neighbours, the Zulu.’¹¹⁵ The two land-locked Boer republics established in the 1850s, namely the Orange Free State and the South African Republic, though beyond British rule, relied on access to British ports in the Cape and Natal. The ownership of Griqualand West, including Kimberley and its diamond mines, remained a matter of dispute between Britain and the OFS. Britain had annexed Griqualand West in 1871, soon after

¹¹³ The minutes of the Council of the university for 31 January 1885 record on 0. 412 that ‘By the unanimous vote of Convocation on the 6th December, the Right Hon. the Earl of Carnarvon was elected chancellor of the University in succession to the Right Hon. Sir Bartle Frere.’

¹¹⁴ Goodfellow, *op. cit.*, pp. 49-72, but especially p. 51. On his page 18 Goodfellow also mentions Carnarvon’s ‘Minute on Sir George Grey’s scheme of a Federation in South Africa’ of 7 January 1859, in which Carnarvon sets out the arguments against Grey’s scheme, but Goodfellow does not highlight Carnarvon’s comments that it was not ‘a practical measure which under present circumstances any English Minister could propose to Parliament’ and amounted ‘to an abandonment, and not a consolidation of our powers’ (PRO/30/6/133, ff. 39-47).

¹¹⁵ Christopher Saunders and Iain R. Smith, ‘Southern Africa, 1795-1910’, *OHBE* (1999), vol. 3, p. 602.

diamonds were discovered there, and it had thereby thwarted any ambitions the OFS may have had in that respect. As far as the white population of these white-governed entities was concerned, the Dutch-Afrikaners always outnumbered the British immigrants. Even at the end of the nineteenth century, after the gold and diamond rushes and despite the consequently increased flow of British immigrants, 'the Dutch-Afrikaner population in the Cape Colony still outnumbered the British by three to two.'¹¹⁶ Moreover, except in the Cape and a few other towns 'there was little social mixing or intermarriage between the two groups.'¹¹⁷ Carnarvon would have been well briefed on the South African situation by the Permanent Under-Secretary at the Colonial Office, Robert Herbert, his cousin and a close friend. Herbert had 'favoured the introduction of responsible government at the Cape in 1872 as the only way to achieve regional consolidation'.¹¹⁸ Unfortunately, however, the 'responsible government' of the Cape Colony had refused to take over the administration of the neighbouring territory of Griqualand West which Britain had annexed in 1871.

The questions of consolidation and self-government had also recently arisen among the freemasons in South Africa, but it is unlikely that Carnarvon would have become aware of this until 1875, in an episode that will be examined later in this section. Similarly, because Carnarvon did not take up his first appointment at the centre of 'English' Craft freemasonry until 1 June 1870 (when Lord Ripon, Lord Zetland's successor as Grand Master, made Carnarvon his deputy), it is unlikely that he would previously have been aware of the tensions between the three European masonic jurisdictions that were sharing the masonic territory of South Africa, namely the 'Dutch', the 'English' and the 'Scots'.

The first lodge in what is today the Republic of South Africa was formed under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge (actually the 'Grand East' or 'Grand Orient') of the Netherlands in Cape Town in 1772.¹¹⁹ That lodge, 'De Goede Hoop', and its sister, 'De Goede Trouw' – the only two 'Dutch' lodges in South Africa until the 1860s – came under the local authority of a 'Deputy Grand Master National' for South Africa, who from 1847-1874 was Sir Christoffel Joseph Brand, a distinguished lawyer, the 'elected Speaker of the first Cape

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 601.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 599-600.

¹¹⁸ Jones, *op. cit.*, pp. 38 and 59.

¹¹⁹ Alan A. Cooper, 'The effects of political, economic and social events on the Order of Freemasons in South Africa, with some reference to the movement for the formation of a United Grand Lodge, 1772-1961' (Dissertation presented for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Stellenbosch. September 1983), p. 7.

Legislative Assembly in 1854', the editor of *De Zuidafrikaan*, the paper he and others had founded to protect their culture', and an enthusiastic freemason.¹²⁰ His son, Jan Brand, also a distinguished lawyer, had been initiated in his father's lodge, 'De Goede Hoop' in 1842, and since 1864 he had been the President of the Orange Free State, where he too continued his active participation in freemasonry. The proliferation of 'English' lodges from the 1840s, particularly along the coast to the east of the Cape and in Natal, and the decision in 1860 for some of the members of the 'Dutch' 'De Goede Hoop' lodge to break away and form the first 'Scottish' lodge in South Africa, worried Christoffel Brand. Fearing that 'Dutch' freemasonry would be overwhelmed by the English-speaking 'English' and 'Scottish' lodges, he set off into the interior of South Africa in 1861 on the first of what Alan Cooper has called 'his unique "missionary" travels into the interior of South Africa to encourage Dutch Freemasonry'.¹²¹

By 1862 there were enough 'English' lodges, though scattered over a huge territory, to petition the UGLE to consolidate them into a 'Provincial Grand Lodge of South Africa', and they recommended that Richard Southey, the Treasurer-General of Cape Colony, should be their Provincial Grand Master. Lord Zetland, the Grand Master, acceded to the colonists' request (demonstrating thereby that he had learnt some lessons from the mishandling of similar requests from Canada in the previous decade), and Southey was appointed in March 1863. Southey's official duties (he became the Colonial Secretary of the Cape Colony in 1864) did not allow him sufficient time to advance the consolidation of 'English' freemasonry, and his perceived neglect of his masonic responsibilities may have encouraged instead the fragmentation of 'English' freemasonry, the first indications of which reached London in 1869.¹²² Some of the 'English' lodges to the far east of Cape Town reported that because of the difficulties of communicating with Cape Town they would prefer to be directly administered from their Grand Lodge in London. Lord Zetland accepted his advisors' recommendation that 'such of the Lodges on the Coast of Africa who desire to be relieved from their responsibilities to the Provincial Grand Lodge and make their returns direct to this Office should have your Lordship's permission to do so.'¹²³ It was also reported to Lord Zetland that one of the 'English' lodges had seceded from the UGLE and transferred its allegiance to the Grand Lodge

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*

¹²² *Ibid.*, p. 41. For the report to Lord Zetland see Grand Secretary Hervey's letter to him of 29 December 1869 at the Library and Museum of Freemasonry, London (on file GBR 1991 FMH HC 9/B/64).

¹²³ *Ibid.*

of Scotland, and that Southey, according to Cooper had 'suspended all communication with Scottish masons, creating a ridiculous situation, as many masons, particularly in Cape Town, belonged to both constitutions and were now barred from Scottish lodges.'¹²⁴

Such occasional difficulties among the different masonic constitutions working in South Africa were outweighed by the normally good relations they enjoyed with each other, as evinced in Cape Town where the 'Dutch' and the 'English' shared premises, and in the OFS where in 1865 the President, Jan Brand, laid the foundation stones of both masonic 'temples' in Bloemfontein, the one for the 'Dutch' lodge 'Unie' and the other for the 'English' lodge 'Rising Star', and then regularly attended meetings of both lodges.¹²⁵ One 'Dutch' lodge, 'Harmony' at Richmond, even called for the unification of all the freemasons in South Africa in an independent Grand Lodge of South Africa in 1870, but without success.¹²⁶ In 1872 the extraordinary mixture of nationalities, allegiances and masonic origins of the freemasons in South Africa was demonstrated by the signatories to the petition to the UGLE for permission to found the first 'English' lodge in the appropriately named town of New Rush (later Kimberley) in Griqualand West: in addition to R.H.W. Giddy, Britain's first Resident Commissioner in its most recent acquisition, there were petitioners hailing from Australia, the USA, and Shanghai.¹²⁷ By 1875 the two major masonic constitutions in South Africa, the 'Dutch' and the 'English', had achieved parity in terms of membership and the number of lodges: the 'Dutch' had 21 lodges, the 'English' 22, and each constitution had just over 1,000 members. The 'Dutch' lodges outnumbered the 'English' in the Western Province (by eight to three), the OFS (three to two), and the South African Republic (both 'Dutch'); the 'English' predominated in the Eastern Province (eleven to three) and in Griqualand West (tree to two); and each had four lodges in the Midland Province.¹²⁸

These, in brief, were the political and masonic circumstances relevant to this thesis that obtained in South Africa when in 1874 Disraeli made Carnarvon his Secretary of State for the Colonies. The wealth of the states and colonies was increasing, as were their populations, especially with the recent further influx of white immigrants in the diamond rush. Carnarvon

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*

¹²⁵ A.A. Cooper, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 34 for the archival references.

¹²⁷ A.A. Cooper, *op. cit.*, p. 52.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 54. These statistics are taken from the report of a committee of the 'English' lodge 'Joppa' that was circulated on 25 February 1875 which Cooper summarises.

began the year as Lord Ripon's Deputy Grand Master in the UGLE, and ended it as the Pro Grand Master to Ripon's successor, the Prince of Wales. In South Africa the respectability of freemasonry was indicated by the willingness of members of the white elite in the various local communities (such as the Brands, Southey and Giddy) to fill some of its senior local offices. The number of masonic lodges was increasing, and there was talk of consolidation within local freemasonry and in the Colonial Office.

(c) 1874-78: Secretary of State for the Colonies and Pro Grand Master

Carnarvon's return to imperial prominence in 1874 was almost immediately marked in South Africa by the renaming of Harmsfontein (a village some 400 miles inland from Cape Town) as 'Carnarvon', a settlement that would later become the principal town of an eponymous magisterial district and division.¹²⁹ One of his first interventions in South African affairs as Disraeli's Colonial Secretary, however, was to turn down Governor Sir Henry Barkly's suggestion that Britain should annex Bechuanaland. Carnarvon argued that as Britain stood 'in circumstances of great difficulty as regards the administration of Griqualand, and the difficulty would only be increased by the addition of further territory' it would obviously be 'no light matter to commit the Home Government to the risks of doubtful and highly unsatisfactory collision with the Republic.'¹³⁰ This marked from the outset a cautious approach to any expansion of British rule in South Africa and an awareness of the sensitivity of relations with the Boer republics.¹³¹ As he wrote in his diary, a 'very serious harvest of Colonial difficulties & anxieties' had appeared, and he quickly became concerned about the problems with the Zulus on Natal's border, the treatment of the native tribes by the Dutch in the Transvaal, and the inherent instability of an immense unfederated territory.¹³² With the success of the Canadian confederation in mind, but well aware of the different complexities posed by the demographic and political situations in South Africa, he began to consider whether a form of federation might nevertheless be achievable and assist with the solution of some of the problems his imperial government had inherited. He wrote to Barkly for advice on the local situation on 27

¹²⁹ *Standard encyclopedia of Southern Africa* (Cape Town, 1972), p. 100.

¹³⁰ Carnarvon to Barkly, 24 April 1874, as quoted by Hardinge, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, p. 172.

¹³¹ As a further example of his caution at his time see the draft (undated) memorandum (with his manuscript amendments) on the South African situation filed as f. 31 on PRO/30/6/42.

¹³² See for example the entries for 11, 15 and 20 April 1874 in Carnarvon's diary, CP BL Add 60906.

May, and his letter shows that he was both aware of the risks and yet willing to intervene in favour of consolidation if the right opportunity presented itself:

The present situation and relations of the various States that occupy South Africa are so full of difficulty and even political risk, that I should be prepared to make a decided effort towards placing them – as I conceive – upon a securer footing if the occasion were to offer itself : and in considering this question it has often occurred to me whether some form of federation might not solve some of the existing difficulties – I say “some form of federation” for these States as you are well aware [are] in such different degrees of civilization and political organization that a uniformity of constitution would I think be hardly practicable.¹³³

Meanwhile, and finding the cabinet ‘very timid’ and worried about the outbreak of further hostilities in South Africa, Carnarvon persuaded J.A. Froude to undertake a secret mission to South Africa for which he specified three particular subjects: ‘generally Federation’, ‘relations of Free States & Natives & ourselves’ and ‘Natal in reference to recent insurrections.’¹³⁴ True to form, however, Carnarvon did not act independently or incautiously when commissioning Froude. Again, the evidence is to be found in Carnarvon’s diary: his entry following his meeting with Froude on 24 June 1874 reads: ‘Agreed that he sd have £1000 from Secret Service money – to wh Derby & Disraeli have both agreed’.¹³⁵ (Knox has queried Carnarvon’s choice of Froude for this mission, and claims that the choice points to a flaw in Carnarvon’s character which he describes as ‘a tendency to be unduly impressed by ideas’ – but he does not attribute the same flaw to Disraeli and Derby who backed Carnarvon’s decision.¹³⁶) That Carnarvon had not already decided to pursue federation as a matter of public policy is clear from a letter he wrote to Barkly in August 1874:

I am far from having any decided opinion as to a possible federation of S. African states. It is a measure which must, wherever it is tried, depend for its success upon the circumstances and feelings of the time, and it was rather with a wish to know how far, in your opinion, those circumstances and feelings were favourable that I made my inquiries of you. Federation would contribute to solve some of the native difficulties. Half the cruelty and injustice to a native race arises from fear; – and the Union of the States would give a consciousness of strength which *might perhaps* go some way to make a humaner and kindlier

¹³³ Carnarvon to Barkly, 27 May 1874, as quoted by Hardinge, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, p. 173.

¹³⁴ CP BL Add 60906, 24 June 1874.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*

¹³⁶ Bruce A. Knox, ‘The Earl of Carnarvon, Empire, and Imperialism, 1855-90’, *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* (1998) vol. 26, 2, p. 55.

[policy] more likely. But it might also have another effect, and anyhow it would in another point of view be inexpedient if – as I gather from your letter – the institutions of the Cape are not yet consolidated and sufficiently ripe for this further change.¹³⁷

By April 1875 Carnarvon had decided, on the basis of the information and advice he had received, that the way ahead was for the imperial government to call representatives of the colonies and states in South Africa to a conference to discuss ‘native affairs’ – the ultimate object of which, however, was to prod the several territories towards confederation. Carnarvon’s proposal was approved by the cabinet and by the Queen, to whom he wrote on 29 April 1875:

Should they [the Dutch States] accept the invitation to join this Conference, Lord Carnarvon sees a strong possibility of ultimately securing a confederation of all the Colonies and States of S. Africa and the union of the republics to Your Majesty’s possessions. If this can be achieved, with proper securities for the just treatment of the Native Races which is a condition of paramount importance, but which Lord Carnarvon is inclined to believe to be practicable, the advantages to be gained will be in all respects very great, and much that is now in S. Africa a cause of difficulty and even danger will, it may be hoped, be converted into a source of strength.¹³⁸

When President Burgers of the Transvaal Republic visited London the following month Carnarvon told him that confederation was ‘the ultimate object subject only to securities being taken for the natives’ and obtained his approval of the despatch summoning the conference.¹³⁹ And in July Carnarvon again demonstrated the flexibility of the non-doctrinaire approach he was adopting when, as regards the internal administration of Natal (one of the constituent colonies of the confederation he ultimately envisaged), he argued in the House of Lords that there was a third way, lying between ‘responsible government’, as enjoyed by colonies in Canada and Australia (but for which Natal was not yet equipped), and ‘absolute and direct control from the Home Government in England’, namely the delegation of as much responsibility to the colonial legislature as it could bear, ‘on the principle of trust’.¹⁴⁰ When the Cape government opposed his policy, Carnarvon attributed their opposition to ‘personal and

¹³⁷ Carnarvon to Barkly, 22 August 1874 as quoted by Hardinge, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, p. 175.

¹³⁸ Carnarvon to the Queen, 29 April 1875, PRO/30/6/1, f. 126. The Queen’s approval was transmitted to Carnarvon the next day (General Ponsonby, the Queen’s Private Secretary, to Carnarvon, 30 April 1874, PRO 30/6, f.130).

¹³⁹ CP BL Add 60907, Carnarvon’s entries for 8 and 11 May 1875.

¹⁴⁰ Hardinge, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, p. 169.

local jealousies', and in the belief that he could overcome these as well as he had overcome the local difficulties he had encountered in his handling of the Langalibalele affair and changing Natal's constitution, he advised the Queen that:

The question of Confederation is one which recommends itself on so many grounds and embraces so many interests that I think it likely when once before the Country to subdue the small sectional jealousies which now stand in the way, and ultimately I hope bring into union the two Dutch States whom we ought never to have lost and whom I believe it is still possible to restore to the Crown.¹⁴¹

Once again he sought and received the Queen's approval of the course he had adopted.¹⁴²

This time, however, he also took the precaution of privately briefing the editor of *The Times* on his course:

Confederation will, if I can attain it, be a very great result of many months' labour: but from private communications which I have had I entertain considerable hopes of success. If I do succeed the Dutch States will be brought back under the English flag: but in the stages of negotiation preliminary to this I am treading on very delicate ground. There are past grievances & differences to overcome and great present jealousy and suspicion to conciliate: and an incautious word or act on the spot may upset all my plans. It is however well worth trying for...¹⁴³

This, then, was where Carnarvon stood on the political development of South Africa when, in the autumn of 1875, he as Pro Grand Master was required to advise his Grand Master, the Prince of Wales, on how to react to despatches from Southey and Giddy on masonic developments in South Africa. And it is in this context that we should re-read the opinion which Carnarvon drafted for the Grand Master's Council to consider before the Council made its recommendation to the Grand Master.

Southey and Giddy, colonial administrators and two of the leading 'English' freemasons in South Africa, had reported and commented on a nascent masonic movement towards independence. They had also recommended that instead of the current arrangement whereby the 'English' lodges came either under the one Provincial Grand Lodge in Cape Town or the Grand Secretary's office in London they should all be re-grouped into a number of District Grand Lodges. In their opinion, such an arrangement would improve the local

¹⁴¹ Carnarvon to General Ponsonby, 16 July 1875, PRO 30/6/1, f. 158.

¹⁴² Sir T. Biddulph to Carnarvon, 19 July 1875, PRO 30/6/1, f. 159.

¹⁴³ Carnarvon to Delane, 2 June 1875, PRO 30/6/43, ff. 228-30.

administration of 'English' freemasonry and, by devolving greater authority to more local units, stymie those 'English' masons who had begun to think about forming a United Grand Lodge of South Africa.¹⁴⁴ It would also prevent the risk that the control of freemasonry might fall into 'Dutch' hands just when 'English' freemasonry was expanding. They also agreed that the time was not yet ripe to consolidate South African freemasonry fully, let alone to declare masonic independence (as had already happened in Canada). As Giddy put it: 'Perhaps a Grand Lodge of South Africa would be possible after South Africa becomes a federation of British colonies'¹⁴⁵ For his part Southey wrote:

I consider it self-evident that the time has not yet arrived for the Masonic independence of South Africa, which I am certain could never tend to the benefit of our Order while the country is split up into several independent and antagonistic states. Something of the kind may perhaps be a wise measure hereafter when South Africa has become a Confederation of British Colonies...¹⁴⁶

Carnarvon accepted the argument that 'distances & difficulties of communication are so great that it is not fair to insist upon Cape Town being the sole centre of masonic business'.¹⁴⁷ He therefore recommended that the 'English' lodges in the British colonies of Griqualand and Natal and in the republics of the Orange Free State and the Transvaal should for the time being be separated from the Provincial (by then restyled 'District') Grand Lodge at the Cape and brought together under a new District Grand Lodge – on the understating that 'when masonry has made further progress & the circumstances of the case pointed to it, there wd. be no disinclination to divide this enormous territory into more manageable jurisdictions.' He advised that the new District should be formed without waiting for further information as delay might 'stimulate the mischievous demand for emancipation from all allegiance and an independent Grand Lodge.' Finally he expressed the hope that the preponderance of 'English' lodges over

¹⁴⁴ See, for example, the circular urging that the time had come for masonic independence circulated by the 'English' lodge 'Joppa' at Cape Town on 25 February 1875, summarised by A.A. Cooper, *The Freemasons of South Africa*, (Cape Town, 1986), p. 54.

¹⁴⁵ Giddy to Hervey, 27 Sep 1875, on the file 'Division of Districts in South Africa' in the Library and Museum of Freemasonry, London (in the series of boxed but uncatalogued correspondence in the Biog. Room).

¹⁴⁶ Southey to Hervey, 27 September 1875 – a letter found in a bundle of correspondence in the LMF, London, marked 'Misc. Papers concerning division of South Africa into Districts 1875-1881' (in the series of boxed but uncatalogued correspondence in the Biog. Room) and which Cooper does not mention.

¹⁴⁷ See the section on 'Carnarvon the freemason' above. The quotations in this paragraph are from the letter dated 9 Dec 1875 from Carnarvon to Hervey, the Grand Secretary, which is held in the Library and Museum of Freemasonry, London, (in the series of boxed but uncatalogued correspondence in the Biog. Room) and which has already been quoted at greater length in the section 'Carnarvon the freemason'.

the 'Dutch' ones within the geographical area to be covered by the proposed District Grand Lodge would 'overpower & absorb all foreign influences and thus to bring the whole Dutch masonry ultimately under the Gd. Lodge of England'.

Previous commentators have misread this section of Carnarvon's advice to the Prince of Wales in two respects. Firstly, they have failed to realise that in his recommendation of 9 December 1875 Carnarvon's hope for the absorption of 'Dutch' freemasonry into the jurisdiction of the UGLE referred only to the 'Dutch' lodges in the territory to be covered by the new District Grand Lodge – and not therefore to the whole of 'Dutch' freemasonry in South Africa. Secondly, they have not noticed that Carnarvon avoided commenting on Southey's and Giddy's suggestions that further down the line, once the South African colonies and states were confederated, the formation of a united and independent Grand Lodge of South Africa might become a realistic and appropriate proposition. Instead he deemed any call for masonic independence by 'English' freemasons in South Africa to be the expression of a wish eventually to throw over their allegiance to and institutional links with the UGLE. Thus Carnarvon's advice as a freemason was consistent with his general imperial philosophy: he was happy to support the principle of subsidiarity and the practice of devolution provided allegiance could be maintained, and he wished to see among the white 'races' in South Africa the harmony that prevailed in the 'great Anglo-Saxon colonies.'

Carnarvon's advice was considered by the key members of the Grand Master's Council, an agreed but different position was then put to the Prince, and in April 1876 a grouping of most of the 'English' lodges in South Africa into three districts ('Western', 'Eastern' and 'Griqualand West') was announced, with several lodges taking up the option to remain under London's direct control.¹⁴⁸ Carnarvon, though the Pro Grand Master, does not appear to have tried to force through his initial recommendation but to have accepted the advice of his colleagues on the Council. The appreciation in South Africa of his efforts on behalf of 'English' freemasonry there can perhaps be read into the formation of 'Carnarvon Lodge' in Richmond (Natal) in the following year.¹⁴⁹ It is, however, interesting to note that while

¹⁴⁸ See the letters from John Havers and A. McIntyre dated 21 and 28 December 1875 respectively, found by me in the same bundle as Southey's of 27 September (see above), and at the time uncatalogued and unnumbered.

¹⁴⁹ This information about Carnarvon Lodge No. 1684 (EC) is taken from the history of the lodge by Graham Grenfell, an extract from which was sent to the writer from a contact in Natal in 1994. See also

Carnarvon the statesman was beginning to become more proactive in stimulating the discussion of the political confederation of South Africa, as a freemason he was willing to promote the fragmentation of the administration of 'English' freemasonry in the same territory, admittedly in the hope that this would fend off any moves towards the formation of a local Grand Lodge.

It is thus an exaggeration for Cooper to claim that Carnarvon's advice to the Grand Master's Council 'indicates some identification of high masonic direction with British Colonial office [sic] thinking in this period'.¹⁵⁰ It should also be observed that although both Southey and Giddy were colonial administrators and Carnarvon was in a sense their chief as the imperial Colonial Secretary, they did not address their masonic correspondence to him personally nor did he reply directly to them in any capacity. Again, this episode offers no evidence to support Harland-Jacobs' allegation of an 'infiltration of the colonial service' by freemasons that 'helped to lubricate the wheels of colonial administration.'¹⁵¹ None of Carnarvon's colleagues in the Colonial Office in London was a freemason; Southey and Giddy were not at the apex of colonial administration in South Africa; and there is no sign of masonic oil being applied to their official work in the South African colonies or in their official careers. Indeed, Carnarvon as Colonial Secretary had already rebuked Southey in 1874 for his expansionist actions and was eventually to remove him from his official position in Griqualand West.¹⁵² Moreover, a re-reading of Carnarvon's one significant intervention in South African freemasonry in this period, combined with the results of Cooper's trawl of 'Dutch' and 'English' masonic records of the 1870s, does nothing to support Peter Merrington's sweeping claim that 'Masons [undefined]...supported plans to federalize South Africa in the 1870s' and his more particular one that Carnarvon 'interpreted moves towards Masonic unity and independence in South Africa in the 1870s as political signals for federation and "responsible government"'.¹⁵³ It is true, however, that in December 1876, some months after the creation of

Thos. N. Cranstoun-Day, *The British Lodge No. 334 and English Freemasonry at the Cape of Good Hope* (privately published, 1936), p. 113.

¹⁵⁰ A.A. Cooper, D. Phil. dissertation, p. 46.

¹⁵¹ Harland-Jacobs, 'Essential Link', p. 25.

¹⁵² Goodfellow, *op. cit.*, pp. 55 and 84, and Section IV of the internal 'Memo on South African Affairs since Lord Carnarvon's assumption of office', dated 14 February 1877, PRO/30/6/48, ff 225-319. As Southey re-surfaces later in this thesis it is to be noted here that by 1877 'the former Lieutenant-Governor of Griqualand West' had been 'elected to the Cape Legislative Assembly as a member for Grahamstown' where he joined other 'Eastern separatists' (Goodfellow, *op. cit.*, p. 130).

¹⁵³ Peter Merrington, 'Masques, Monuments, and Masons: The 1910 Pageant of the Union of South Africa', *Theatre Journal* 49.1 (1997) 1-14, fn. 22.

the Western Division of the 'English' Craft in South Africa (of which Southey, still resident in Kimberley, was the first District Grand Master), the Deputy District Grand Master, Charles Aiken Fairbridge, chaired a meeting in Cape Town of about 200 freemasons (of undefined jurisdictions) to consider the case for masonic independence. The meeting noted that in 'political affairs' the Cape colony was adjudged fit for 'responsible government' and discussed whether in masonic affairs they should therefore also be ready to take on 'the responsibility of self-government'.¹⁵⁴ Fairbridge went so far as to regret that the unification movement in South African freemasonry (such as it was) had begun just when the UGLE had split its 'English' component into three divisions, each of which was hardly likely to give up its newly acquired status. Nothing came of the meeting, however, and no independent Grand Lodge was formed in South Africa until the 1960s, and even then the 'English' and the 'Scottish' lodges declined to transfer their allegiance to it – and they have remained attached to London and Edinburgh to this day.

As far as the intersection of Carnarvon's political and masonic interests is concerned there are only two other events during the period 1874-78 that need detain us. The first, a relatively minor matter, occurred in 1877 when Sir Hercules Robinson, the Governor of New South Wales (Australia) and a 'Scottish' freemason, cabled Carnarvon – presumably in both his political and his masonic capacities – to enquire whether it would be appropriate for him to accept the office of District Grand Master.¹⁵⁵ Unfortunately this cable and Carnarvon's reply cannot now be traced, but in so far as Carnarvon was himself occupying the office of Secretary of State for the Colonies while also filling the second highest position in the UGLE, it is unlikely that he would have advised Robinson against that step. In the event, however, Robinson did not allow his name to go forward as it became clear that he would not be the sole candidate and, as the monarch's representative in the colony, he could presumably not risk being defeated.¹⁵⁶ (The relevance of this incident will become clear when we consider Carnarvon's visit to South Africa and Australia ten years later.)

The second event took place in July 1876, namely the mutually satisfactory resolution of the dispute between Britain and the OFS that had arisen over Britain's annexation of

¹⁵⁴ *The Cape Argus* of 2 December 1876, as quoted by A. A. Cooper, D Phil dissertation, p. 69.

¹⁵⁵ Karl R. Cramp and George A. Mackaness, *A History of the United Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of New South Wales* (Angus & Robertson Ltd. Sydney and London, 1938), p. 92 et seqq.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

Griqualand West in 1871. Agreement was eventually reached after face-to-face negotiations in London between Colonial Secretary Carnarvon and President Jan Brand of the OFS. Years later Carnarvon would look back on this event with some satisfaction: he had persuaded Brand to 'relinquish all claim to the controverted territory' for a Crown 'indemnity of £90,000 – a sum which no one, who considers that more than £4,000,000 of diamonds are now annually extracted from the mines, will say was an extravagant price.'¹⁵⁷ Is there any indication at all that the two parties to the negotiations recognised each other as freemasons or that freemasonry played any part in the negotiations? Carnarvon did not mention any such connection in his diary for that year, or in 1888 when he wrote an article for *The Fortnightly Review* about his South African experiences, an article in which he commented on his negotiations with Brand and, in an unrelated paragraph, the role of freemasonry in South Africa. The press did not mention the connection and neither has any commentator since. And from Carnarvon's diary it would appear that he did not get on particularly well with Brand in any capacity: Carnarvon described him as 'so incurably obstinate, narrow & dull'. The negotiations did not, however, 'come to a break down...as at one moment seemed likely', and in 1888 Carnarvon was even to praise 'the temper and moderation with which Mr. (Sir John) [*sic*] Brand engaged in this critical and complicated question'.¹⁵⁸ But there is no evidence that their masonic connection was either mentioned or regarded as relevant.

After dealing with the proposals for re-configuring the masonic administrative districts in South Africa in 1875 Carnarvon took no further action with regard to freemasonry in the country, and his time between then and his resignation from the Colonial Office was taken up first by the annexation of the Transvaal and then by the 'Eastern Question'.¹⁵⁹ In early 1878, before he was able to make any further substantive progress towards confederation in South Africa, he resigned from the government. After Disraeli's government was defeated, it was Gladstone and his Colonial Secretary, Lord Kimberley, who pressed ahead '[d]espite warnings from President Brand of the Orange Free State of the growing likelihood of a Transvaal rebellion' with plans to achieve the

¹⁵⁷ Carnarvon, 'The Cape in 1888', p. 874.

¹⁵⁸ CP BL Add 60908, f. 122, 30 May 1876; Carnarvon, 'The Cape in 1888', p. 874.

¹⁵⁹ For an 'official' account of Carnarvon's actions as Secretary of State in re South Africa up to February 1877 see the 'Memo on South African Affairs since Lord Carnarvon's assumption of office', dated 14 February 1877 (with amendments in what appears to be Carnarvon's hand), filed as ff. 225-319 on PRO/30/6/48.

confederation that had eluded Disraeli and Carnarvon, and who then 'blundered into a war in the Transvaal' in 1880, two years after Carnarvon had retired from the scene.¹⁶⁰

(d) 1887: Carnarvon's visit to South Africa

Carnarvon, accompanied by his second wife and two servants, broke his journey to Australia in September 1887 with a fortnight in South Africa. The visits to South Africa and Australia were made in Carnarvon's private capacity: he had resigned as Viceroy of Ireland in January 1886 and, contrary to other historians' claims, he did not travel as an emissary of the Imperial Federation League or of the UGLE, and the Prince of Wales' request that he try to drum up some more financial support for the Imperial Institute while in Australia was not made until Carnarvon informed him of his travel plans.¹⁶¹ The long sea journeys and the months to be spent in the warmer climes of the southern hemisphere were primarily intended to improve his increasingly frail health. He may even have already known that he was dying of liver cancer. Once his travel plans were made, apparently in late July 1887, Carnarvon must have written to his contacts in both countries to advise them of his visit. No evidence has surfaced to indicate that he wrote other than to the colonial governors, but in both countries it was not only they who metaphorically at least rolled out the red carpet for him, but also the many and varied political, civic, ecclesiastical and masonic authorities.

Sir Hercules Robinson, who had retained a closer relationship with Carnarvon, his former Colonial Office chief, than most colonial governors, was now the Governor and High Commissioner of the Cape Colony and it must be assumed that he and his staff were largely responsible for the full programme of events in Cape Town and Kimberley, several of which were either laid on in Carnarvon's honour or timed to coincide with his visit. As Robinson was also a freemason, though not an active or senior one in South Africa, and as he attended two masonic meetings with Carnarvon in Cape Town, it may be assumed that it was he who informed the local freemasons of the visit and ensured that their plans to welcome Carnarvon fitted in with the rest of his programme. The local press were also informed, and the tone to be set for the visit can be seen from two articles that appeared in *The Cape Argus* on 17 September, the day after Carnarvon's arrival:

¹⁶⁰ Saunders, *op. cit.*, p. 607.

¹⁶¹ For fuller details of the background to Carnarvon's visit to Australia see 'Lord Carnarvon in Australia' in J.W. Daniel, *Masonic Networks and Connections* (2007), pp.232-33.

['Our Visitors']...are kindly looked upon with very kindly feelings, intensified by the reports of the colonists, who visited England in the Exhibition year, of the thoughtful hospitality and attention paid to them by Lord and Lady Carnarvon in their beautiful English home. By common consent old political differences, if any remain in the new world in which we now live, have been dropped in order to welcome a scholarly nobleman, the Chancellor of our University, and the working head of the great Masonic brotherhood which happily is so well represented in this colony...

...it is understood that addresses from the various Masonic Lodges – Lord Carnarvon is Pro-Grand Master of England – will be presented...[and] the Earl will open the new Temple of the British Lodge, now nearly completed, and the Masonic brethren in town will then give a ball in his honour in the Commercial Exchange.¹⁶²

Thus, from the outset of Carnarvon's visit, two things were made clear to the newspaper's readership: any remaining 'old political differences' were to be dropped while he was in the Cape, and freemasonry was to play a significant part in his programme. (The first had also been the case when he had visited Canada in 1883, but there, as already noted, the masonic content of his programme had been minimal and no mention of it had appeared in the press.)

Carnarvon's first public engagement was indeed a masonic one, and one which received a full report in the press. In his diary entry for 19 September 1887 Carnarvon simply recorded 'A large masonic meeting in the Dutch Gd Lodge – English, Dutch & Scotch Masons all assembled – to present me with Addresses of welcome. I merely spoke in generalities in answer. Everything passed off well.'¹⁶³ The press report was more informative. The 'English' District Grand Lodge (Western Division) met, by courtesy of the 'Dutch' lodge 'De Goede Hoop', in its splendid masonic temple in Cape Town, with C.A. Fairbridge (who, it will be recalled, had pressed for masonic independence in 1877) in the chair as the District Grand Master, to welcome their Pro Grand Master, Lord Carnarvon, to South Africa. All three masonic constitutions then practising in South Africa were represented: the 'English', the 'Dutch' and the 'Scottish'. The 'Dutch' contingent was led by their new Deputy Grand Master National, J. H. Hofmeyr (the Master of the Supreme Court), and Sir Hercules Robinson, though but a very junior freemason, was especially introduced, to the strains of the British national anthem, just before Carnarvon made his entrance to the tune of 'God Bless the Prince of Wales'. In his response to the several addresses of welcome that were read and then presented to him, Carnarvon appears indeed to have spoken 'in generalities' and thus to have carefully

¹⁶² *The Cape Argus*, Saturday 17 September 1887, a copy of which is filed on CP BL Add 60940.

¹⁶³ CP BL Add 60929, 19 September 1887.

avoided any political or specifically imperial matters, though echoes of his imperial philosophy can be heard in his reference to his visit as one to his 'own South African home' and to his 'own people'. He praised 'the generous rivalry' of the different constitutions, and 'the harmony with which masonry is worked in all parts of South Africa, and of all its truthful allegiance to the great landmarks and principles of the Order'. He thanked the 'Dutch' freemasons for their aid and support over the decades since the first 'English' lodge was established in Cape Town. In his peroration he thanked his audience for demonstrating 'that harmony which ought to prevail amongst masons of every race, tongue, and nationality, especially in the races here in South Africa, which have so many ties of common friendship, regard, interest, and loyalty', and he then expressed the hope that his visit would help in some small way 'to cement this bond of union amongst our great order.'¹⁶⁴ There is no mention here of the Imperial Federation League, the Imperial Institute or even of freemasonry as an imperial link.¹⁶⁵

For the want of any evidence to the contrary it is reasonable to assume that Carnarvon adopted the same approach when he addressed the two other masonic meetings he attended while in South Africa, for on each of these occasions the 'Dutch' were well represented and Carnarvon wished to emphasise the harmony that prevailed between them and their 'English' and 'Scottish' counterparts as freemasons rather than as members of an imperial family. In Kimberley on 24 September the freemasons of the seven lodges of the three masonic constitutions in Griqualand West met in the town hall to welcome Carnarvon, and a passage in the address presented to him by the 'English' freemasons summarises the points they wished to make:

...we trust that the assemblage of the Craft today, representing the various constitutions of Masonry, will be accepted not only as an assurance of our unswerving loyalty to Queen and Craft and the act of homage through yourself as Pro-Grand Master of English Masons, but also as a spontaneous and hearty fraternal welcome on the level platform of Masonic Brotherhood to our most illustrious Brother, Lord Carnarvon, whose high and long association with, and earnest labours in our Order, have made his name honoured by every member of the Craft...¹⁶⁶

The newspaper added that Carnarvon 'responded in an appropriate speech', but gave no details of it, and neither does Carnarvon's diary.

¹⁶⁴ *The Independent* (Cape Town), 23 September 1887.

¹⁶⁵ Harland-Jacobs claims that at 'Every step along the way, he rallied Freemasons to the cause' of the Imperial Institute.

¹⁶⁶ *The Daily Independent*, 26 September 1887.

Freemasons in their regalia also attended the brief ceremony in De Aar that evening when Carnarvon alighted from the return train to Cape Town for less than an hour to lay the foundation stone of the Carnarvon Recreation Hall, but nothing like the number from all three masonic constitutions that attended his final meeting in Cape Town on 27 September when he consecrated a new temple for British Lodge No. 334.¹⁶⁷ Once again, Robinson (the 'Governor and High Commissioner'), and Hofmeyr (the local head of the 'Dutch' freemasons in South Africa and Master of the Supreme Court) accompanied him, but this time 'The Hon Richard Southey' is also recorded as being present.¹⁶⁸ A careful reading of Carnarvon's speech at the subsequent luncheon, which about 150 freemasons attended, shows that Carnarvon again avoided banging the imperial drum and concentrated instead on the relationship between the Dutch and the English 'races', the colonists' allegiance to the Queen, freemasons' devotion to the Prince of Wales, and the essential and beneficial characteristics of freemasonry.¹⁶⁹ Returning to a theme he had first spoken about before he became a freemason, Carnarvon emphasised the role that 'private societies and private associations' had played in human society down through the ages, and added that 'Masonry is emphatically one of those associations bound together for purposes of public and private good, and one of those societies in which the State must rejoice because it sees a fair and good handmaiden of its own work.' The three characteristics of freemasonry he highlighted were its practical and consistent charitable activities, its solid support of social order, and its contribution to 'the bond of union amongst not merely classes, but amongst nationalities.' Then he turned to the similarities he had seen between the Dutch and the English in South Africa where he had found 'none of those trenchant divisions which separate them from so many other races'. Both races had been successful in trade and commerce, both were 'great colonisers and pioneers of civilisation', and one of his ancestors, Sir Philip Sidney, had even died on Dutch soil 'fighting with and for

¹⁶⁷ CP BL Add 60929, 24 September 1887.

¹⁶⁸ Cranstoun-Day, *op. cit.*, p. 123.

¹⁶⁹ Carnarvon's speech was fully reported in *The South African Freemason* (1887), pp. 4-7, which in turn thanked the *Cape Times* for the text. Robinson's speech, made partially in response to a remark suggesting that it was a rare pleasure to see the Governor in a masonic meeting, is of slight interest on two counts: his comments that although he had been a freemason for 43 years 'he had never had the opportunity of sufficiently regular attendance at Lodge to gain experience', and that he had welcomed the presence of freemasons wherever he had served 'because they always stood by the side of law and order, and because their principles exemplified all that was best in human nature.'

Dutchmen' in the 'desperate struggle for the conservation of the liberty and freedom of conscience.' Carnarvon's diary entry hardly does justice to this speech:

We had a gt Masonic demonstration & banquet. Sir Hercules went with me and we had a good deal of speaking. I was rather tired with the whole affair, but the reception was extraordinarily warm & enthusiastic and whilst speaking only on Masonic subjects I was able to say much that I hope may be useful in a public point of view as regards relations of Dutch & English.¹⁷⁰

A year later Carnarvon was to write in a published article that in the Cape he had seen that the 'Dutch and English can evidently work well together in the management of public affairs' and opined that 'as the fusion of the two races proceeds their harmony will become more complete.'¹⁷¹ In the same article he wrote that he knew of 'no place where Freemasonry plays a more useful part in public as well as private affairs than at the Cape'. That distinction, between freemasonry's parts in public as well as private affairs, presumably explains why, when mentioning the imperial contributions made by both Robinson and Hofmeyr in that article, he did not point out that both were also freemasons.

How differently Carnarvon treated his ecclesiastical and civic audiences! Addressing the diocesan synod of the Anglican Church in Cape Town on 19 September Carnarvon reminded the assembled clergy and laity that in England he had 'never been slow or doubtful on the matter of the enormous value of the connection of the English Church with the State...for the safety alike of Church and State' told them that he would 'submit to anything rather than see that union dissolved.'¹⁷² Thereby he implicitly recommended that the colonial church, though unfortunately disestablished, should try to maintain a similar relationship with the local state, and he stressed their 'allegiance to the Common Church' while recommending that like every 'Colonial Church' they should be 'very careful how you invite or embrace any restrictions which may fetter or hamper your own free course of action.'¹⁷³ Then, on his way to Kimberley, he stopped in Beaconsfield (named after the ennobled but by then deceased Disraeli) to be welcomed by the local civic dignitaries. When they expressed the hope that Carnarvon's visit would 'strengthen those feelings of loyalty and attachment to the Mother Country which every true Colonist entertains', Carnarvon responded that their words had

¹⁷⁰ CP BL Add 60929, 27 September 1887.

¹⁷¹ Carnarvon, 'The Cape in 1888', pp. 867, 868 and 880.

¹⁷² Carnarvon's address in Cape Town, 19 September 1887, as reported in the evening edition of the *Cape Times* that day.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*

'touched...a kindred feeling of loyalty to our Honoured Sovereign' and said of Beaconsfield/Disraeli, his former chief, that 'there never was any statesman who had more at heart his devotion to his sovereign and the Empire.'¹⁷⁴ And at the dinner in his honour given by the members of the Kimberley Club on 24 September he acknowledged the part he had played in bringing Griqualand West into the Cape Colony and thus into the British Empire. He went on to acknowledge the lesson that the British Empire had learned from the 'old Romans': that it was 'only by modern scientific inventions' that such a 'vast expanse could be brought under the one central government so necessary for the well being of the whole' – not that the Romans had the railways and the telegraph to which the modern Carnarvon was actually referring.¹⁷⁵ (His reference to the railway – its power of 'binding the whole dominions together' in Canada and Australia – seems to have been the closest he went to the subject of confederation when addressing any audience in South Africa.¹⁷⁶) That Carnarvon was indeed a skilful and pragmatic orator, well aware of his audience whenever and wherever he spoke, is demonstrated by the different notes he struck when addressing these non-masonic gatherings: at these he could mention the empire, and even hint at closer federation, whereas as a freemason, addressing freemasons from different masonic constitutions, he avoided matters that could be considered political – let alone imperialist – and concentrated on the Craft's ability to promote social cohesion and good order.

In his final speeches in South Africa Carnarvon developed the theme of public morality when, on 29 September, he took his 'seat as Chancellor of the University of the Cape of Good Hope, was admitted as a Master of Arts, conferred degrees, received an address and replied to it in a rather long speech'.¹⁷⁷ In his history of the university, Mark Boucher claims that from the outset it tried 'to foster a greater South Africanism within a British framework' and that the names of those appointed as its chancellor evinced 'much sympathy for political federalism in some university circles.' Carnarvon was the university's third chancellor, and the first to attend the 'annual degrees day'. He and his predecessor, Sir Bartle Frere, certainly fit Boucher's description of the university's chancellors, but in his speeches (for there were two) to the convocation in September 1883 Carnarvon did not mention federation. Instead he observed

¹⁷⁴ *The Daily Independent* of 23 September 1887.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁷ Maurice Boucher, *Spes in Arduis: a history of the University of South Africa*, Pretoria: Unisa (1973), p. 75. Boucher gives no details of the speech, however.

'with pleasure' that 'every year...the academic connection between this country and England grows and strengthens', gave some words of encouragement to the undergraduates and to the men and women on whom he conferred degrees, and then, having stressed that the 'moral hemisphere' was higher than the intellectual, he set out his view of the university's primary social responsibility:

above all, she can take her part, a great part, as the instructress of public morality...I have always firmly believed that public and private morality cannot be dissevered. It is not enough that a country should be governed by men of high ability and great intellect. Unless honour and truth, justice and uprightness, hold the helm, the vessel of the State is in jeopardy...May that be the aim of the university...May it raise men, good and true, for the service of the State, and may it assist in maintaining that public morality to which I have alluded, and without which no country, no government, no form of government, can prosper.¹⁷⁸

Thus, for Carnarvon, the university, like the church and freemasonry, had a primary role in the promotion of morality and good order, and it was for that reason that he supported all three institutions.

(e) Conclusion

By the time of Carnarvon's visit to the Cape in 1887 it is evident that he indeed had masonic as well as other links to people and institutions in that British colony, and that the Cape's freemasons made no secret of their masonic links with him. Nor did Carnarvon avoid any masonic contacts as he had in Canada four years earlier. Carnarvon did not, however, exploit freemasonry while in South Africa for the promotion of specifically colonial or imperial ideas. Even when mentioning his and the colonists' allegiance to Queen Victoria, and freemasons' devotion to their royal brother, the Prince of Wales, Carnarvon seems to have been aware of the distinction correctly drawn by Hyam, namely that 'a strong feeling for the Throne' was 'quite different from a devotion to Britain.'¹⁷⁹ He was also of course aware that not all the freemasons at any of the masonic meetings he addressed were members of his own Grand Lodge, and that some owed their allegiance not just to another of the three 'home' Grand Lodges, but to the Grand East of the Netherlands. The sight of the colonial governor and the former Colonial Secretary sharing the same masonic platforms probably warmed the hearts of 'English'

¹⁷⁸ *Cape Times*, Friday 30 September 1887.

¹⁷⁹ Hyam *op. cit.* (2002), p. 251.

freemasons in Cape Town and Kimberley, but the presence of members of the Netherlandic constitution presumably made it clear to masonic and non-masonic observers that freemasonry in South Africa was part of a more wide-spread family even than the British Empire, a family whose members shared universal rather than imperial values. As freemasons, the members of the 'Dutch' and 'English' constitutions in South Africa had no political, national or imperial agendas, but their mutual desire to promote social morality, and their ability to transcend their 'racial' differences, were values and strengths that Carnarvon could play to and support, as a freemason and as a statesman. For Carnarvon, the success of an avowedly apolitical fraternity, devoted to the promotion of personal and social morality and whose membership in South Africa crossed social and national boundaries, could only strengthen South African cohesion in the longer term and thus, according to his imperial philosophy, the maintenance of the empire.

Carnarvon and Australia

(a) Introduction

As was the case in South Africa, in Australia Carnarvon was linked masonically with several of the leading figures in the local administration of the colonies, and these links were publicised during Carnarvon's visit to Tasmania, Victoria, South Australia and Queensland between 20 October 1887 and 17 February 1888. This third case study will therefore explore the similarities, connections and differences between the attitude and actions of Carnarvon the statesman and Carnarvon the freemason in the context of Britain's relations with Australia, and it will compare his masonic intervention there with those he had already made in Canada and, more recently, in South Africa. After a résumé of recent historiography relating to Carnarvon's connection with Australia, the structure of this case study will follow the model used for the previous two: a description of the relevant features of the background, followed by a more detailed examination of the one period (1887-88) when Carnarvon's political and masonic interests in Australia intersected. However, here the study of that one period can be broken down into two parts: in the first, the records of the uses to which Carnarvon put the public and masonic platforms made available to him during those four months will be examined; in the

second, Carnarvon's subsequent reports and advice to the Prince of Wales and to the UGLE – and their effect – will be reviewed.¹⁸⁰

When Stuart Macintyre reviewed the historiography of Australia and the British Empire in 1999, he complained that 'The links that earlier historians took for granted are now broken, and the Imperial dimension of Australian history lies in neglected, often unrecognized fragments', and commented that 'There is something in Australia's present disposition, it would seem, that resists the Imperial past.'¹⁸¹ He concluded that 'not until the lingering effects of the colonial condition are finally expunged to Australian satisfaction is the Empire likely to find acceptance in its future historiography.'¹⁸² Two of his fellow contributors to the *OHBE*, Donald Denoon and Marivic Wyndham, swam against the postcolonial tide by setting Australia's history in the wider context of the Western Pacific and by chronicling the main events in Australia's relationship with Britain, including paragraphs on the eventual federation of the Australian colonies in 1901 and the dominion's continued reliance thereafter 'not only on British naval power, capital, and markets, but equally on English, Irish, and Scots cultural traditions.'¹⁸³

Recognising that the *OHBE* of 1999 did not do enough to restore the 'Imperial dimension of Australian history', Deryck Schreuder and Stuart Ward in 2008 edited and contributed to a collection of essays to which they gave the provoking title of *Australia's Empire* and which, according to the foreword by Roger Louis, was intended to 'pursue themes that could not be covered adequately in the main series while incorporating recent research and providing fresh interpretation of significant topics'.¹⁸⁴ In the belief that 'it would be absurd to dismiss the sheer weight of British and imperial agency in Australian history as a conservative fantasy' the contributors 'share an emphasis, not on reviving a moth-eaten imperial vision, but on understanding the significance of Empire in Australia's past and how the unravelling of that phenomenon brought its own tide of radical change.'¹⁸⁵ Though once again there is no mention

¹⁸⁰ No ecclesiastical platform was available to Carnarvon in Australia, though he took care to have private meetings with some of the leaders of the Anglican and Roman Catholic churches there. (See, for example, his diary notes on dinners with Primate Barry and Cardinal Moran on 14 and 20 December 1887 respectively, in *CP BL Add 60929*.)

¹⁸¹ Stuart Macintyre, 'Australia and Empire', *OHBE* (1999), vol. 5, pp. 163 and 164.

¹⁸² Macintyre, *op. cit.*, p. 181.

¹⁸³ Donald Denoon with Marivic Wyndham, 'Australia and the Western Pacific', *OHBE* (1999), vol. 3, pp. 546-572.

¹⁸⁴ Deryck M. Schreuder and Stuart Ward (eds.), *Australia's Empire* (Oxford, 2008).

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 'Introduction', p. 22.

of freemasonry in this work, and Carnarvon is only mentioned as an investor in Australian real estate, Schreuder and Ward themselves identify the church as one of their five key 'instruments of Empire'.¹⁸⁶ In her chapter 'Religion and Society' Hilary Carey takes this point further and, in the terms of this thesis, makes the relevant statement that:

Religion had an important role to play in the struggle over imperial, British, and Australian national identities. By the 1870s, colonial governments in Australia were constitutionally largely independent from Britain; and the same could be said for the Christian denominations. However, the absence of legal bonds did not lead to the collapse of the attachment to Britain. Indeed, for leading Anglicans, love of Britain was an article of faith.¹⁸⁷

In his equally valuable contribution, Mark McKenna posits 'the centrality of Monarchy to any history of Australia' and that 'At the heart of Australian colonial narratives of belonging to "the British race" was the Monarchy – all the larger somehow because of its physical distance', while bemoaning the facts that 'there is a yawning gap in the historiography', there being no history of monarchy in Australia to date.¹⁸⁸ Oddly, however, McKenna seems to have overlooked the celebration of the celebration of Queen Victoria's jubilee in the Australian colonies in 1887, which coincided with Carnarvon's visit there.

The emergence of a particularly Australian identity continues to engage historians' interest, and in his *British imperialism and Australian Nationalism* (1994) Luke Trainor does indeed cover Victoria's jubilee, but he does not mention Carnarvon's visit, or Carnarvon's contribution to the discourse on either federation or defence.¹⁸⁹ Bob James 're-visited' Australian identity in his 2005 study of 'mateship' and quoted with approval the earlier claims by Bolton and Hudson that whereas 'Many men joined the Freemasons' in nineteenth century Australia it was still 'a body whose...influence in Australian society has been grossly neglected by historians' and that despite the strength and durability of such fraternal organisations their 'diversity and importance for...Australian political and cultural life is little studied.'¹⁹⁰ More recently, John Darwin

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

¹⁸⁷ Hilary M. Carey, 'Religion and Society', *Australia's Empire* (Oxford, 2008), pp. 188-209. Carey's chapter complements John Ward's earlier one on 'Religion in Australia: The Emancipation of the Colonial Churches' in his *Empire in the Antipodes: The British in Australasia, 1840-1860* (1966), pp. 87-100.

¹⁸⁸ Mark McKenna, 'Monarchy: From Reverence to Indifference', *Australia's Empire* (Oxford, 2008), pp. 262 and 264.

¹⁸⁹ Luke Trainor, *British Imperialism and Australian Nationalism* (New York, 1994).

¹⁹⁰ Bob James, 'Mateship – its secret world: re-visiting the Australian identity', *The Past Is Before Us*, proceedings of the Ninth National Labour Conference (University of Sydney, 2005) p. 331,

too has noted what he has termed 'the inclusive character of colonial political life', but he has also drawn attention to the fact that the shared identity of the majority of the colonists in the nineteenth century was 'Britannic' and that 'Even more than at home, Scots and Irish "colonials" adopted a "British" allegiance even if they preserved a strong sentimental attachment to their ethnic identity.'¹⁹¹ Harland-Jacobs is the only recent historian to have examined in any detail the merging of 'English', 'Irish' and 'Scottish' masonic interests in Australia to form local Grand Lodges in the Australian colonies before the formation of the Commonwealth of Australia (1901), and only she and the present writer have recently considered freemasonry in Australia as a whole in the context of imperial history and drawn attention to Carnarvon's visit to Australia.¹⁹²

(b) Background

Avner Offer has succinctly described Australia as 'the richest society in the world between the 1860s and the 1890s, settled almost entirely by British migrants and their descendants, financed (over and above local accumulation) from Britain, subject to British jurisdiction, and accepting British sovereignty', a territory to which Britain had 'transferred a set of mature institutions, a legal system, property rights, and the management of diplomacy and defence', but which was still 'tied to Britain by a web of kinship, investment, and trade, and by the political institutions of Empire which still had a binding force.'¹⁹³ John Ward describes the period 1840-60 as the one 'in which British origins, British connections or British policies were fundamentally important', despite the fact that responsible government had begun in New South Wales in 1856.¹⁹⁴ Denoon and Wyndham have also pointed out that Australia remained 'dependent not only on British naval power, capital, and markets, but equally on English, Irish, and Scots

<http://asslh.econ.usyd.edu.au/BLHG> Proceedings (13 December 2009); Wayne Hudson and Geoffrey Bolton (eds.), *Creating Australia: Changing Australian History* (St Leonards, NSW, 1997), p. 3.

¹⁹¹ Darwin, *op. cit.*, p. 178. See also Dan Weinbren and Bob James, 'Getting a Grip: the Roles of Friendly Societies in Australia and Britain Reappraised', *Labour Review*, no. 88 (May, 2005), pp. 87-103.

¹⁹² Harland-Jacobs, 'Hands across the Sea', 'The Essential Link', 'All in the Family' and *Builders of Empire*; Daniel, 'Grand Lodges in British Colonies' and 'Lord Carnarvon in Australia' in *Masonic Networks and Connections* (2007), pp. 179-224 and 225-272. For histories of the Grand Lodges in the individual Australian colonies see, for example, Karl R. Cramp and George Mackaness, *A History of the United Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of New South Wales* (1938) and E. Mander-Jones (ed.), *A History of Craft Masonry in South Australia 1884-1934* (Adelaide, 1976).

¹⁹³ Avner Offer, 'Costs and Benefits, Prosperity and Security, 1870-1914', *OHBE* vol. 3, pp. 709-10.

¹⁹⁴ Ward, *op. cit.*, p. 1.

cultural traditions.’¹⁹⁵ It must not be forgotten therefore that in the 1880s, and indeed until the turn of the century, ‘Australia’, as a united political entity, did not exist. Instead, the territory still consisted of several self-governing British colonies, each with a governor appointed by the Crown, and each with ties and communications with the imperial government in London that were as close, if not closer, than those it enjoyed with its neighbours.

As in the political institutions so too in the Anglican church and in freemasonry. The colonial church in the Australian colonies, like its counterpart in British North America, had long been disestablished.¹⁹⁶ In Tasmania, for example, an Act of the colonial parliament in 1858 ‘to regulate the affairs’ of the ‘United Church of England and Ireland’ had authorised the bishop, clergy and laity to meet in synod, and required the bishop to summon an annual synod; the act was then amended by one passed in 1882 – a copy of which was found in Carnarvon’s papers – by which ‘Ireland’ was removed from the church’s title, and the synod was empowered to appoint the bishop and regulate his tenure of office. Each bishopric was self-governing, though the Anglican church in Australia still looked to the Archbishop of Canterbury as representing the ‘Mother Church’. In freemasonry, however, self-government was less far advanced. Each colony had up to three District Grand Lodges, depending on how many of the three ‘home’ Grand Lodges were represented in the colony. The UGLE had a District Grand Lodge in each colony, headed by a District Grand Master who was appointed by the Grand Master in London (with little or no consultation with the lodges in the District) and who, like the bishops of the Anglican churches in Australia, was merely required to hold an annual meeting of the lodges under his jurisdiction and to send an annual report to the UGLE. ‘English’ lodges paid dues and fees to London in return for certain membership services from the centre. The ‘Irish’ and ‘Scottish’ lodges did likewise with their respective headquarters in Dublin and Edinburgh. As in colonial and ecclesiastical administration, there was also no national or even proto-national body or association to which the separate District Grand Lodges in Australia could belong, and in the freemasons’ case their ties to their ‘home’ bases were far

¹⁹⁵ Donald Denoon and Marivic Wyndham, ‘Australia and the Western Pacific’, *OHBE* vol. 3, pp. 569-70.

¹⁹⁶ Ward, *op. cit.*, ‘Religion in Australia: The Emancipation of the Colonial Churches’, pp. 87-100.

stronger than any informal ones they or their members may have had with neighbouring jurisdictions.¹⁹⁷

The Australian colonies remained separate self-governing colonies until the creation of the Federal Commonwealth of Australia in 1901.¹⁹⁸ Until then the Colonial Office favoured and gently encouraged their moves towards federation but did not push them forward too obviously for fear of an unfavourable local reaction. A more federated Australia, in Whitehall's view, would not only be stronger and better able to withstand any external threat, but an easier territory to govern and one which could be encouraged to make a more significant contribution to its own defence and to the cost of keeping open the empire's vital trade routes. The growing prosperity of the Australian colonies was attractive to the imperial government – and by the 1880s it was perceived by statesmen in London and Australia to be potentially attractive to possible foreign aggressors.

Carnarvon's efforts towards federation in Canada and South Africa had not gone unnoticed in Australia, and some of his contacts there from his periods at the Colonial Office had kept him *au fait* with local discussions as to the possible confederation of some or all of the Australian colonies. For example, a year or more after Carnarvon left the Colonial Office for the last time, Sir Henry Parkes had sent him for comment a copy of an article that he had written for a Melbourne newspaper on 'the unification of the three older Colonies of Victoria, New South Wales & South Australia'.¹⁹⁹ After seeing confederation at work in Canada in the autumn of 1883, Carnarvon then welcomed the report of the 'Inter-Colonial Conference' held in Sydney in December that year 'as a first and necessary step to that closer co-operation of the Colonies with the Mother Country, which means an acceptance of common liabilities and a partnership in the duties and risks of Empire.'²⁰⁰ He recognised, however, that 'the full confederation, for which Canada was ready in 1867' was not practicable in Australia, where:

¹⁹⁷ There were also two small breakaway groups in Victoria and NSW, but these need not be considered at this point.

¹⁹⁸ 'Federal Commonwealth' was the term used in Queen Victoria's Proclamation, quoted in *Australia: A biography of a nation* (2002) by Phillip Knightley, p 59. Australia achieved independence, but still within the British Commonwealth, in 1931. Its remaining legislative, executive and judicial links to Britain were not abolished until 1986, and even today it shares its monarch with the United Kingdom.

¹⁹⁹ Parkes (at the office of the colonial secretary in NSW), to Carnarvon (at Highclere Castle), 8 October 1879 (Hampshire Record Office, file ref. 75 M 91 R12).

²⁰⁰ Carnarvon, *Annexation and Confederation in Australasia* (December, 1884), as quoted by Hardinge, *op. cit.*, vol. 3, pp. 123-131.

Melbourne and Sydney stand in greater rivalry to each other than Halifax and Quebec...the antagonism of tariffs is more marked in Australasia than it ever was in Canada; and although the establishment of penal or military stations by a foreign Government in the neighbouring islands constitutes a strong motive for some form of union, there is nothing in Australasia that corresponds in real political force and pressure to the presence of a powerful State marching with the Canadian frontier for 3,000 miles.²⁰¹

The Australian colonies could therefore not yet bear 'the strain of an [*sic*] uniform legislation and a single government', and any federation there would not follow the Canadian model but be of 'a looser, and, so to say, of a less perfect kind.'²⁰² Two of the three 'great forces which must be pillars in any system of Confederation...whether internal, as between Colony and Colony, or external, as between Australasia and the Mother Country' were already exerting pressure upon the Australian situation: 'the vastness of our commerce' and 'the pride of race and Empire united to the loyalty felt for a common Sovereign.' The third, 'the cementing influences of combined defence', was still wanting. He ended the article with the hope that the 'Home Government' would 'know how to inspire the conviction that Australia and the Australian people are regarded by us here in England as integral parts of this Empire – flesh of our flesh, and bone of our bone – as fully as if we were dealing with Yorkshire or Hampshire, instead of the Antipodes.'²⁰³

As far as Australia's masonic affairs were concerned, Carnarvon does not seem to have become particularly involved with them until shortly before his departure for Australia, via South Africa, in the summer of 1887, by which time the attitude of the UGLE towards independence movements in the white settler colonies had changed profoundly since Lord Zetland's initially high-handed treatment of the Canadian petitions for greater autonomy in the mid 1850s. The gradual increase in the number of independent Grand Lodges in Canada and the possibility that lodges in Australia might eventually follow the same course was now generally viewed with equanimity by those involved with the central administration of the UGLE. As one such said in 1869: 'If Australia and other colonies are to be lost, so be it, it will not check the progress of Freemasonry.'²⁰⁴ Provided all the lodges ('English', 'Irish' and 'Scottish') in a British colony – or at least an overwhelming majority of them – could be shown to be in favour of forming their own Grand Lodge, they would henceforth receive the approval

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 128.

²⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 129.

²⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 131.

²⁰⁴ *Proceedings* of the UGLE, 1 September 1869.

of the UGLE and it would wish them well in their independence. Thanks to the masonic press and to the increasing number of people moving around the empire, freemasons in Australia were well aware of what had happened in Canada since 1855, and some were even inspired to strike out on their own in the hope that others would follow. The first independent Grand Lodge to be formed in an Australian colony was the Grand Lodge of New South Walès in 1877 (by which time there were already seven such in the Canadian provinces). A second was formed in Victoria in 1883. However, both these creations were deemed 'dissentient' and 'irregular' by all three 'home' Grand Lodges as they did not have the backing of anywhere near a majority of the lodges in either colony. As a result, freemasonry became divided in both colonies, 'regular' freemasons being forbidden to have any masonic contact with the 'irregulars.' In contrast, the required majority for masonic independence was found in the colony of South Australia, and the Grand Lodge formed there in April 1884, with Chief Justice Samuel Way as its Grand Master, was immediately recognised by the UGLE.²⁰⁵ There is no evidence that Pro Grand Master Carnarvon or Grand Master the Prince of Wales expressed any opinion about – let alone attempted in any way to interfere with – this former particle of the 'home' Grand Lodges flying off into masonic space. Neither attended the UGLE's meeting when the new creation was accorded recognition, and the officer who presided in their place wished 'God speed' to this 'promising addition to the Grand Lodges of the world.'²⁰⁶

Meanwhile the 'irregular' Grand Lodge of Victoria decided on a direct approach to the Prince of Wales. Its Grand Master, the Hon. George Selth Coppin, commissioned a fellow member of the Victorian legislative assembly and a future Prime Minister of the colony, the Hon. James Brown Patterson, to request an audience with the Prince in London. With or without the knowledge of either Col Shadwell Clerke, the Grand Secretary of the UGLE, or of Carnarvon (there is no evidence either way), the Prince received Patterson at Marlborough House. Patterson delivered Coppin's letter in which he compared 'the wonderful progress of the Australian colonies under local self-government' with the delayed progress towards masonic self-government caused by 'District Grand Officers, who sacrifice the unity, strength

²⁰⁵ Chief Justice Samuel Way (1836-1916) had sat on the Supreme Court bench since 1876, and was the chancellor of the University of Adelaide from 1883-1916. (See his entry in the 1990 edition of the *Australian Dictionary of Biography* vol. 12, pp 417-420, by J.J. Bray.) His 'Grand Lodge of South Australia' was formed by the twenty 'English' lodges, the six 'Scottish' ones, and five of the six 'Irish' ones in the colony.

²⁰⁶ *Victorian Freemason* (Supplement) 6 December 1886, p. 4.

and general progress of the Craft for the sake of retaining the dignity of representing the Grand Lodges of England, Ireland and Scotland; promoting, encouraging and maintaining national distinctions that are at variance with the fundamental principles of Masonry.'²⁰⁷ The Prince told Patterson in July 1884 that he would be glad if the wishes expressed 'on behalf of several important colonies, could, if possible, be carried into effect.'²⁰⁸

As far as can be seen from the available evidence, the Prince of Wales then took advantage of the appointment in 1885 of his friend and masonic brother, Lord Carrington, as the next Governor of NSW by commissioning him to try to re-unify freemasonry in at least that colony. Shadwell Clerke, the UGLE's Grand Secretary, briefed Carrington on the masonic situation before he left for NSW, but, as Carrington eventually revealed to the UGLE fourteen years later: 'when I was first sent out to New South Wales in 1885 I had a distinct message from the Grand Master to heal, if I possibly could, the differences which unhappily existed in Freemasonry in that Colony.'²⁰⁹ At the time, and despite the fact that he had been initiated before the Prince and had been the Senior Grand Warden of the UGLE for a year (1882-83), Carrington had very little experience of freemasonry and had not even held the office of Master of a lodge. And his hands were tied, for, as he explained to the welcome addressed to him by the 'irregular' Grand Lodge of NSW soon after his arrival in the colony:

As the representative of Her Majesty I beg to thank the members of your body, styling themselves the Grand Lodge of New South Wales for your expression of loyalty and devotion to the Throne; I also in my official capacity beg to return my most sincere and grateful thanks to so influential a body of the citizens of NSW, and it is a matter of much regret to me that, owing to the non-recognition of your Grand Lodge by the Parent Grand Lodge of the United Kingdom, I am precluded by their decision at the regular Quarterly Communication of Wednesday, 7th December, 1881, from receiving the address in my Masonic capacity.²¹⁰

When he received the address of welcome from the UGLE's District Grand Lodge, however, Carrington demonstrated that he did so in his masonic capacity by wearing his masonic regalia.²¹¹

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁹ *Proceedings*, 6 September 1899.

²¹⁰ V.C.N. Blight, 'Most Worshipful Brother The Earl of Carnarvon, Pro Grand Master United Grand Lodge of England', a paper published by the United Grand Lodge of New South Wales (1982/3 ?), a copy of which is held on Carnarvon's biographical file in the Library and Museum of Freemasonry, London [FMH ref: BE 68 (CAR) BLI Fol.].

²¹¹ *Ibid.*

Such were the relevant circumstances obtaining in 1887, the first year for which we have evidence (see below) that Carnarvon became directly involved in freemasonry in Australia. It is of course possible that before Carnarvon decided in July 1887 to make a private visit to Australia the Prince told him, his Pro Grand Master, about the commission he had given to Carrington and about his wish that masonic harmony should if possible be restored in Victoria and NSW – but no evidence to this effect has been found, nor any to suggest that Carrington and Carnarvon had communicated on masonic subjects or even known each other before then.²¹²

(c) The immediate context of Carnarvon's visit to Australia in 1887-88

In July 1887 Carnarvon decided to leave England in late August for some months in the warmer climes of South Africa and Australia in the hope that this would restore his health.²¹³ At that time Carnarvon was a key member of the committee set up by the Prince of Wales to supervise the establishment of the proposed Imperial Institute in London, and it was in that capacity that at the end of July he told the Prince of his forthcoming absence and volunteered to resign from the committee. The Prince would not hear of his resignation but instead hoped that while in Australia Carnarvon could 'rouse our Colonial friends' there and 'induce them to subscribe more than they have done' – and that the visit would indeed improve his health.²¹⁴ From the first of the two letters Shadwell Clerke sent Carnarvon on 15 August it is clear that he too had been informed of Carnarvon's forthcoming absence, and the local arrangements made in Australia for the Carnarvons suggest that Carnarvon sent messages ahead to the governors of the Cape, Tasmania, Victoria, South Australia and NSW to warn them of his impending arrival and (presumably) in the hope that they would put their residences at his and Lady Carnarvon's disposal. (Although the visit was essentially a private one, and Carnarvon's last ministerial appointment had ended in January 1886 with his resignation as Viceroy of Ireland, Carnarvon was still the chairman of the Royal Commission on the Defence of British Possessions & Commerce Abroad – whose first report had just been published in the proceedings of the

²¹² The librarian's note in Carnarvon's biographical file [BE 68 (CAR) BLI Fol.] in the Library and Museum of Freemasonry in London claims that he 'was sent as a mediator to NSW', but this claim has yet to be substantiated.

²¹³ For the case for the dating of Carnarvon's decision see J.W. Daniel, 'Lord Carnarvon in Australia' in *Masonic Networks and Connections* (2007), pp. 232-33. CP BL Add 60807, ff. 155-56.

²¹⁴ Prince of Wales to Carnarvon, 29 July 1887 (CP BL Add 60757, f. 153).

Colonial Conference held in London in April 1887 – as well as being a member of the Duke of Cambridge’s Royal Commission for the International Exhibition to be held in Adelaide that year, the year of the Queen’s golden jubilee.)

It is not known who told the ‘English’ freemasons in Australia about Carnarvon’s plans, but the news must have travelled quickly because on 8 August the *Victorian Freemason* in Melbourne reported that ‘the Earl of Carnarvon, the Pro Grand Master of England, will visit the colonies about September next. He will probably have something to say about the “Union”.’²¹⁵ And in its leading article the newspaper drew the parallel between the wishes of the unrecognised Grand Lodge of Victoria for the consolidation of all four constitutions in the colony in a united (and thus recognisable) independent Grand Lodge and what had already been achieved in the political sphere: they simply wished to ‘stand by the principles of local control and election of officers’ rather than to continue under ‘the “nominee” system, which has served its purpose both politically and Masonically in the foundation work of the colonies’.²¹⁶ In that writer’s view, masonic ‘Union’ and independence were appropriate in a self-governing colony, and the moment was opportune as Patterson, now the Grand Master of the ‘irregular’ Grand Lodge of Victoria, would be willing to step aside in a united Grand Lodge in favour of Sir William Clarke who, remarkably, was the District Grand Master of the ‘English’, the ‘Irish’ and the ‘Scottish’ District Grand Lodges in the colony.²¹⁷

Meanwhile, and unbeknown to Carnarvon, Carrington, the inexperienced Master Mason who was now the Governor of NSW, had begun to make some headway towards achieving the apparently confidential and personal wish their Grand Master, the Prince of Wales, had expressed to him in 1885, namely that he would try to heal the masonic differences in the colony. At a masonic dinner in Sydney on 24 June 1887 held by the ‘English’ and ‘Scottish’ lodges to mark the Queen’s jubilee, Carrington had regretted the ‘serious and deplorable division’ in the Craft in NSW but had expressed the hope that as all freemasons in the colony were ‘strongly united’ in their ‘loyalty to the Queen’ they might, in this her jubilee year, take the first steps ‘to bring the Masonic bodies of this colony into one harmonious

²¹⁵ *Victorian Freemason* (Melbourne), vol. 5, no. 12, 8 August 1887, p. 107.

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 112.

²¹⁷ *Ibid.* Sir William (John) Clarke was one of the richest men and the largest landowner in South Australia, a member of the colony’s Executive Council, governor of the Colonial Bank of Australia, the ‘Irish’ Provincial Grand Master since 1881 and the ‘English’ and ‘Scottish’ District Grand Master since 1884. (See Sylvia Morrissey, ‘Clarke, Sir William John (1831-1897)’, *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, vol. 3, Melbourne University Press (1969), pp 422-424.

whole' by effecting 'in a lawful and proper manner' a 'general reconciliation of the brethren'. He also suggested that the 'English' District Grand Master would not oppose harmonisation if the proper procedures were followed.²¹⁸

The nature of the 'harmonious whole' envisaged by Carrington became clear when on a visit to the independent but recognised Grand Lodge of South Australia in Melbourne on 26 July 1887 he told his hosts that he hoped 'we [the NSW freemasons] may presently find ourselves in the happy and fraternal condition in which you now are in South Australia' – in other words he foresaw a united and independent Grand Lodge of NSW (with himself as its first Grand Master), to which the majority of the freemasons in the colony would have transferred their allegiance.²¹⁹ (Coincidentally, a 'Party of union' had been formed in NSW by a group of Masters of the 'English' lodges in NSW the previous day, thereby demonstrating the grass-root support for amalgamation.)²²⁰ So sure was Carrington of the way ahead that he put his proposal in letters to the Prince of Wales and to Clerke, the Grand Secretary.

Clerke then wrote to the Prince to the effect that provided all the lodges in NSW supported the proposal, it could not be objected to, and that he intended to advise Carrington on the correct procedures to be followed.²²¹ Clerke had just written to bring Carnarvon into the picture on 15 August, having learnt that Carnarvon was about to leave for Australia, when he received a letter from Sir Francis Knollys, who wrote:

I have submitted your letter of the 11th to the Prince of Wales. HRH approves of the action you propose to take in regard to Lord Carrington's communication but he thinks it should be a sine qua non that the Australian Grand Lodge should be affiliated with the Grand Lodge of England and that it should not be independent such as Ireland and Scotland. Only on this condition can HRH agree to Lord Carrington's proposal.²²²

The Prince had intervened – unexpectedly and contrary to all the advice he had been given – to require a change of the UGLE's policy towards masonic independence movements in the colonies, a policy that it had maintained and applied since its recognition of the Grand Lodge of

²¹⁸ *Daily Telegraph*, 25 June 1887.

²¹⁹ *Victorian Freemason*, 8 August 1887.

²²⁰ 'An Account of the Agitation which led to the Amalgamation of the Masonic Order in New South Wales under one Grand Lodge' by Ernest B. Taylor in his *An Historical Memo 1883-1905* [of his lodge, Emulation No. 121], published in Sydney in 1905.

²²¹ Clerke's letter of 11 August 1887 has not been traced, but its content can be assumed from the Prince's reply of 15 August, sent through his private secretary.

²²² CP BL Add 60807, f. 153. Sir Francis Knollys was Private Secretary to the Prince of Wales and had been a freemason since his initiation in Westminster and Keystone Lodge in 1870.

Canada in 1858, and most recently in the case of the Grand Lodge of South Australia. Clerke immediately sent a further letter to Carnarvon:

This is an unfortunate misconception of the position. I had carefully explained in my letter that the new Gd Lodge would be as independent as those of Ireland & Scotland...Of course what the Prince lays down is impossible. What they want and mean to have is an independent Gd Lodge and provided they are unanimous we have neither the right nor the power to refuse them. I must now write to Sir Francis and explain the matter but I fear the Prince looks on it as a kind of "separatist" movement which out [sic] to be resisted and the unity of the Masonic Empire maintained. Universal Masonic law will not however allow of this.²²³

Suddenly the Prince of Wales sounded like the Lord Zetland of the early 1850s who had initially refused to countenance masonic independence in Canada – and indeed like the Lord Carnarvon of 1856-58 who had fought to preserve the allegiance to the UGLE of the remaining 'English' lodges there after a 'separatist' movement had set up the first Grand Lodge ever in a British colony.²²⁴

Carnarvon had not expected to become involved in the problems of Australian freemasonry (of which he appears to have been uninformed before Clerke's letters of 15 August 1887), yet, just before his departure, he was faced by the dilemma posed by his Grand Master's response to Carrington's reasonable and normally unexceptionable proposal. The manner in which he dealt with the dilemma, to the satisfaction of all parties, is a measure of the statesman and freemason that has not previously received the attention it deserves.

A detailed chronicle of Carnarvon's four months in Australia has recently been published, but the present case study will concentrate on a comparison of his activities there as a statesman and as a freemason, and, in particular, on the half dozen or so substantive speeches he made in each capacity.²²⁵ These, and the interviews Carnarvon gave to local newspapers, received detailed and generally favourable press coverage as his visit progressed. Thanks to the recently increased speed of communications between Britain and Australia, the local press also quickly picked up the allegations carried in the London press that in his 'secret' meeting with Parnell, the Irish leader, in London two years earlier Carnarvon had in effect offered self-government to Ireland, and Carnarvon had to issue a denial from Sydney – but that episode is of only slight tangential interest to this thesis. However, the Australian press also reprinted and

²²³ *Ibid.*

²²⁴ See the Canadian case study above.

²²⁵ J.W. Daniel, *Masonic Networks and Connections* (2007), pp. 225-72.

commented on at least one of the speeches Carnarvon had made in South Africa, en route for Australia, and as the commentary reflects aspects of the political and masonic atmosphere in which Carnarvon's Australian visit took place it will be considered here.

Carnarvon was publicly welcomed to Australia not as a member of the Imperial Federation League (indeed, no mention of the IFL during his visit has been found at all) but as a leading imperial statesman, the most senior to visit Australia, and the one whose benevolent interest in the colonies of white settlement was well understood and had been consistently applied for some thirty years.²²⁶ As the Chief Justice of South Australia put it, Carnarvon was seen to have 'anticipated by more than a quarter of a century the interest which is now felt by English people and English politicians in the colonies and in colonial affairs' and to have 'united to the practical skill of the statesman' the 'learning of the scholar and the insight of the political philosopher'.²²⁷ Sir Samuel Way also correctly observed that:

the open secret of our distinguished guest's colonial policy has been to give us the fullest freedom in the management of our colonial affairs, and to develop and to strengthen and to draw closer and yet closer the ties binding the colonies to each other and to the mother country

and added that he (Way) agreed with those who claimed that 'if England a hundred years ago had only had a Secretary of State for the Colonies of the same character as our distinguished guest, the United States of America would still form part of the British Empire.'²²⁸ (Carnarvon himself had attributed the loss of the USA to the intolerance and short-sightedness of Britain's colonial policy in a speech he made in 1857, before his first appointment to the Colonial Office.)²²⁹ Carnarvon for his part was well aware that the nascent moves towards a federation of the Australia colonies could not be rushed – and might even be hindered if perceived to be driven by the imperial parliament. He also knew that there was little support in Britain or Australia for any formal federation of the empire as a whole. He therefore exercised great caution when he touched on these themes while in Australia. However, in the knowledge that the Australian colonies were slowly moving towards taking a greater share in the costs of

²²⁶ Harland-Jacobs incorrectly describes Carnarvon in Australia as 'an official representative of the IFL' and as 'an enthusiastic ambassador for the Imperial League'. (*Builders of Empire*, p. 269).

²²⁷ Sir Samuel Way, speech at a banquet in Carnarvon's honour, 2 December 1887, as reported in a special supplement to the first edition of *The South Australian Freemason*, published in Adelaide on 1 [sic] December 1887.

²²⁸ *Ibid.*, but here as reported in 'A record of Freemasonry in the whole of the Australian Colonies' published on 1 January 1888 in the first edition of the *Australasian Keystone* (Melbourne).

²²⁹ CP BL Add 60945. Transcription of a speech made on 26 March 1857 in Stonehouse, Devon.

defending their shores (the Naval Defence Bill was before the colonial parliaments when he arrived), and that the majority of the colonists still placed a high value on their connections with the British Isles, Carnarvon, as will be seen, concentrated on the related themes of improving the empire's defences against the increasing external threats, maintaining and even strengthening the bonds uniting colonies and motherland, and Australia's role as a now mature partner in a uniquely structured global empire. He developed these themes as the visit continued, adjusting his messages according to the audience and local sensitivities.

(d) Carnarvon's speeches as a statesman while in Australia

Carnarvon's first public speech in Australia as a statesman (rather than as a freemason) was made at the mayoral dinner in Melbourne (Victoria) on 9 November 1887, and in it Carnarvon immediately addressed those themes.²³⁰ Introducing Carnarvon to the audience of about a thousand, the Governor, Sir Henry Loch, made clear his own view of the current discourse on the most appropriate form of federation for the British Empire by stating that 'a union between these colonies and the mother country is the federation that seems to me to be the only Imperial Federation possible and reasonable, at all events for the present.' Carnarvon acknowledged that 'the magic word "federation"' has been much talked about in England' but he did not then continue on that particular subject, on the ground that 'time and circumstance prevent[ed] him from full explanation of it.' Instead he insisted that however it might be defined, 'federation' had to be based on two things: loyalty to the sovereign on the one hand, and mutual advantages and common interests on the other. Defence was one such 'common interest' and Carnarvon reminded his audience that the best way for nations to ensure peace was to prepare for war. (In so doing he was encouraging the colonial government to contribute to the colony's maritime defences by passing the Naval Defence Bill.) Carnarvon called the current relationship between Britain and its Australian colonies a growing 'partnership'. Englishmen and Australians were all of the same 'kith and kin', he said, and both an Australian in England and he in Australia could proudly declare '*Civis sum Britannicus*'.²³¹

²³⁰ The quotations in this paragraph are from the report of the event printed in *The Age* of 10 November 1887.

²³¹ This was the only speech by Carnarvon in Australia that was reported (on 1 January 1888) in *Imperial Federation*, the organ of the Imperial Federation League.

By the time of the dinner given in his honour by the Legislative Council of Victoria on 25 November in Parliament House, Melbourne, the Victorian parliament had passed the Naval Defence Bill and Carnarvon was thus able to congratulate his hosts on this step which, he said, would help tie the colony to the mother country in bonds of mutual defence. Then, as if to mark this development in the colony-metropolis relationship, he added 'you are stepping from the past where local duties, however important, have had no relationship to Imperial duties and you are joining in a partnership in Imperial matters from henceforth.'²³² (He even went so far as to claim that Australia had thus taken her place amidst the family of European nations' – overlooking, presumably for effect, the facts that not all the Australian colonies had yet passed the Naval Defence Bill, that they had yet to be federated, and that an Australian nation had yet to be formally created.)²³³ The speech was warmly received. The *South Australian Advertiser* remarked that 'Our colonial politicians will profit much if they take example from Lord Carnarvon's speech' as it was 'not self-assertive, nor dogmatic, nor boastful.'²³⁴ It also agreed with Carnarvon's view of the European threat to Australia's well-being, of the danger of an isolationist stance even for a federated Australia, and of the need for the 'Imperial race' to stand together.²³⁵ *The Age* wished that Carnarvon could change the current attitude of the Colonial Office towards the colonies and persuade it to 'substitute a policy of conciliation for one of dictation' as that would 'do more to consolidate the Empire and win our allegiance and affection than even the [recent Imperial] Conference did when it offered to relieve the British taxpayer of so much of defending their shores.'²³⁶ In that comment is revealed the central tension in the development towards a distinct Australian identity: on the one hand a wish to be treated with more respect by London, and on the other a degree of reluctance to accept any greater share of what London saw as the burden of empire.

The two speeches Carnarvon made during his first stay in Melbourne thus demonstrate the esteem in which Carnarvon was already held in Australia, and the tact with which he pursued his long-term two-fold agenda: granting the maximum possible degree of self-government for the white settlement colonies while maintaining and where possible

²³² *The Age*, 26 November 1887.

²³³ *Ibid.* The speech was also reported in *The Argus* of 28 November 1887.

²³⁴ *South Australian Advertiser* of 1 December 1887, in CP BL Add 60940, f.12.

²³⁵ *Ibid.*, 2 December 1887.

²³⁶ *The Age*, 26 November 1887.

strengthening their imperial bonds – what Daniel Gorman has succinctly termed the ‘perennial paradigm of empire’.²³⁷

Then in Adelaide, on one of his three visits to the International Exhibition, Carnarvon stressed the role of the monarchy as an imperial binding agent. He reminded his audience that the ‘jubilee means the rejoicing of a free and loyal nation in the fact that the sovereign has reigned for half a century’ and he congratulated the colonists that they in Australia were able to demonstrate ‘more than anywhere else’ how it was possible ‘to combine freedom with devotion to the monarchy.’²³⁸ Asked by a correspondent about his views on state-aided emigration to Australia, Carnarvon answered that it was ‘a question of degree.’ On the one hand he had ‘deprecated the idea of encouraging the emigration to the colonies of those who are unsuitable as colonists’ because nothing would be ‘more unwise as regards the immigrants or unjust as regards the colonies than that we should send useless and pauperised people to the colonies’. On the other, however, nothing could be ‘more beneficial to many of our colonies than the supply of really good material, and nothing can be better for the individuals who emigrate if they answer to that condition’.²³⁹ The Carnarvons then eventually travelled back to Melbourne via, *inter alia*, the mining centre of Ballarat where, at a mayoral reception in his honour in the Town Hall on 7 December, Carnarvon spoke of Australia as ‘South England’, and of England and Australia as belonging to one nation, one family.²⁴⁰

Once he had returned to Melbourne the Victorian parliament gave a banquet in his honour on 9 December 1887 when, according to a strap line in the report carried in *The Argus*, Carnarvon made an ‘Important Speech on Imperial Federation’.²⁴¹ The Governor spoke first of ‘the under current of patriotic attachment to the mother country that flows through the throbbing veins and vigorous life of this young and prosperous country.’ The Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, proposing Carnarvon’s health, agreed with the Governor’s sentiment, but then, in words that strongly indicated the growth of a specifically Australian identity, he

²³⁷ Gorman, *op. cit.* The full quotation reads: ‘The perennial paradigm of empire was *imperium et libertas* — how to maintain both structure and unity while also preserving the cherished ideal of freedom.’

²³⁸ *The South Australian Advertiser* of Thurs 1 Dec 1887, a copy of which is filed on CP BL Add 600940 as f. 12.

²³⁹ As reported in *The South Australian Advertiser* and *The South Australian Register* of Friday 2 December 1887, filed on CP BL Add 60940 as f. 13.

²⁴⁰ The speech was reported in the *Ballarat Courier* and the *Ballarat Star* of 8 December 1887.

²⁴¹ The quotations in this paragraph are from the report of the event in *The Argus* of 10 December 1887, a copy of which is filed on CP BL Add 60940 as f. 16. See also the entry in Carnarvon’s diary (CP BL Add 60929) for 9 December 1887.

described the colonists as 'neither Englishmen, Irishmen, nor Scotchmen' but as 'all three combined in the one name of Australians.' They desired, he said, 'an Imperial federation that would bind them body and soul with the people of the mother country' and that Australia would always and only be populated by 'English, Scotch, and Irish, who would at all times be united as one people, having one history, one literature, one language, and serving the crown and the throne.' This, of course, was music to Carnarvon's ears, and he responded in like manner. However, on the specific question of imperial federation, he said that although he was not 'insensible in any way to a closer union in form as well as in sentiment' he personally had always 'avoided...urging ambitious or cut-and-dried schemes', preferring 'to see the affection of the mother country and the colonies dwelt upon.' If England felt 'more and more pride and sympathy in the progress of Australia' and if Australia on the other understood 'not only how great her heritage is in the past history of England, but also how great is her interest in a closer union', the rest would 'flow easily and naturally.' Carnarvon then turned to the question of what he had called in Canada 'intercolonial' federation and he urged the assembly to ensure two things: first, that federation should not 'extinguish or obliterate the splendid individualities of your great colonies', and secondly, that it should be 'the distinct outcome of public wish.' And he made it clear that he did not believe that the 'closer union' of British colonies in a larger British territory had inevitably to lead to their separation from Britain. Canada had proved this, for there confederation had 'simply tightened the bonds, increased the loyalty, and brought them into closer connection with the mother country.' Handled properly, even the aspirations of the American people need never have led to the 'fatal separation' between the USA and Britain – and then 'how splendid and unassailable the Anglo-Saxon race would have been'. Thus the sub-editor who wrote the strap line had not done justice to Carnarvon's speech: true, Carnarvon had addressed 'imperial federation', but his emphasis had been on the eventual federation of the Australian colonies and on maintaining an empire built on the mutual 'affection of the mother country and the colonies'. His caution in this matter went unnoticed in at least one quarter, however, for in NSW the (local) *Daily Telegraph* wrote of its opposition to 'the plan of military partnership and Imperial federation of which Lord Carnarvon is an advocate', to any 'partnership in a policy of war and Imperial ambition' and to any 'entanglement in the national, and racial, and dynastic feuds and embroilments of the old world.' Australia, it argued, should concentrate instead on the 'great national ideal' of 'building up of the great dominion of

Australia' and that to do otherwise would show 'disloyalty and unpatriotism to the interests and the high future of Australia.'²⁴²

Carnarvon went on to make another two significant 'imperial' speeches in NSW and one in the less well-disposed colony of Queensland. In NSW Carnarvon's long-term correspondent and now the Premier of the colony, Sir Henry Parkes, hosted a parliamentary dinner in his honour on 19 December. Parkes praised Carnarvon as a 'liberal conservative' and described his fellow Australians as 'Britons to the backbone.' Carnarvon then made a powerful speech in which he claimed that unlike any other nation's colonies those of Britain enjoyed 'absolutely genuine ties – ties of kindness and love' that bound them to the mother country.²⁴³ He raised the spectre of a European threat, arguing that only as members of this 'great federation' could the constituent parts of the empire survive against the 'millions of the Continental armies', and that the empire's 'safety against the use of force lies in preparing for war, which may break out at any time.' The local press again reported Carnarvon's speech in full, and generally favourably, but again a more national note could be heard in some of their commentaries. *The Sydney Morning Herald* thought that he had 'dwelt more than was necessary, perhaps, upon the value of the Imperial connection' since imperial federation had never been 'the live question that it has been at home' and '[s]eparation from the mother country...when the Australian colonies have grown too large for parental control' was believed to be 'so far distant that the question has never yet been seriously discussed.'²⁴⁴ But *The Daily Telegraph* continued its line against being 'coaxed into an Imperial alliance for offence and defence', a line which, it argued, was consistent with the 'degree of self-dependence that closely borders on political independence' that had been allowed to develop in the colony, thanks 'partly to the indifference of the English Governments and partly to the caution and foresight of such Ministers as Lord Carnarvon.'²⁴⁵

The Carnarvons then made an excursion to Brisbane (Queensland) where they were the guests of the Governor, Sir Anthony Musgrave. The Brisbane *Courier* announced that the visit was an unofficial one (which, it thought, explained why 'only some fifty or sixty persons' had assembled to welcome the visitors) and it reminded its readers that Carnarvon had served in the

²⁴² *The Daily Telegraph*, 16 December 1887 (CP BL Add 60940, f. 18).

²⁴³ Carnarvon's speech at a parliamentary banquet in Sydney, as reported in the *Sydney Morning Herald* of 20 December 1887, p. 5, col. 4c.

²⁴⁴ *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 20 December 1887 (CP BL Add 60940, f. 19).

²⁴⁵ *The Daily Telegraph*, 20 December 1887 (CP BL Add 60940, f. 19).

Colonial Office where his cousin and a former Secretary of the colony, Sir R.G.W. Herbert, had been and was still the Permanent Under Secretary.²⁴⁶ The article also mentioned Carnarvon's high masonic office. Carnarvon quickly discovered that the colony's attitude to Britain and the British Empire differed remarkably from what he had experienced in the more southern colonies; it had, for example, recently rejected the Naval Defence Bill. As he wrote in his diary on 4 January 1888, a few days after his arrival in Brisbane:

The state of feeling here as to Imperial policy – Union, Federation, Defence – and all questions connected with them is very different from 'what it is in the South & unsatisfactory. There is a large section who are inflated with their own importance, believe in their power of standing alone, thinks that Engd [sic] has objects & designs altogether [sic] are in a fool's paradise or indulge in rather discreditable notions of getting as much English money as they can & then being independent.²⁴⁷

The Queensland parliament was not in session, so Carnarvon intended to speak 'plainly' on 'Union & defence' at the dinner in his honour at the Queensland Club. However, the members of the club signalled their objection to any mention of federation and the press were in any case excluded from the dinner.²⁴⁸ Carnarvon therefore agreed to a brief and off-the-cuff interview with a representative of the *Courier* on 6 January in the hope that this would bring his arguments on the subjects of 'Union, Federation, Defence' to public attention. The interview was fully reported – but an accompanying article was less than sympathetic to some of Carnarvon's points.²⁴⁹ As far as the Naval Defence Bill was concerned, Carnarvon told the reporter that he regretted its initial rejection by Queensland because it destroyed 'that appearance of complete and hearty unanimity' he desired the empire to present to 'the public opinion of Europe...at a time of unquestionable crisis.' Even a federated Australia, he continued, would not be strong enough on its own to defend its 'great towns...coasting trade...[and its] growing commercial interests with other parts of the world.' Australia needed a 'great protectress'. Moreover, Australia's ties with Europe meant that it could not avoid becoming involved in its wars. Neutrality was 'an amiable illusion' and would not be respected for long by the 'great nations' of the world. The colonies' only 'real chance of continued safety

²⁴⁶ *Brisbane Courier*, 31 December 1887.

²⁴⁷ *CP BL Add 60930*, 4 January 1888.

²⁴⁸ Hardinge, *op. cit.*, vol. 3, p. 282.

²⁴⁹ See 'An interview with Lord Carnarvon: Union with Great Britain' in the *Courier* of 7 January 1888, p.5. The article appeared in the same issue, and a copy of it is filed on *CP BL Add 60940*, f. 23.

and prosperity lay in their 'connection with Great Britain', head of the greatest confederacy and the greatest Empire the world has yet seen.' Just as he desired to see 'the different Australian colonies drawn much more closely together' he also favoured 'Imperial union', but rather than 'hurry the matter' he had always thought it 'more prudent to allow things to grow'. A 'system of common defence' was 'one of the first and best steps incidental to the creation of such further union', and that is why he hoped the Naval Defence Bill would eventually be passed. Finally, pressed by the reporter to give his views on 'the China question', Carnarvon dealt with it too in the context of 'the naval defence question'. Presciently – at least to an observer in the twenty-first century – Carnarvon observed that 'China is one of those great elements in the future' which would have to be reckoned with:

Her colossal population, her gradual growth in the resources of the so-called modern civilisation and government, the increase of her navy, her nearness to Australia...make it quite plain that at any moment she might exercise a tremendous influence in this part of the world.²⁵⁰

It was another question on which Australia could not stand alone – not even on the specific problem of Chinese immigration – 'unless supported by the whole strength of Great Britain.'

Commenting on Carnarvon's views, 'offered temperately and discreetly' as they had been by a 'statesman of...known moderation', the *Courier* accepted that the Queensland parliament would eventually pass the Naval Defence Bill 'if for nothing else, for the sake of intercolonial concert', but the paper could not accept Carnarvon's view that the time was ripe for a 'closer union of the colonies with Great Britain.' It alleged that he had overlooked 'the fact that the spirit abroad is not in favour of political or purely dynastic unions; it is the spirit of nationality'. He had not understood that 'a community enjoying self-government at this distance from the centre must have a national existence apart from the Imperial.' However, it assured Carnarvon that the Australian colonies had no desire 'to throw off their allegiance to England, or to start an independent existence at present'. As for seeking any other protectress than Britain, the 'pride of race would forbid it; the growing sentiment of nationality would disdain it.' But when their inevitable federation was accomplished 'the united colonies' would be 'the loyal ally of the mother-country, and not the dependent.'²⁵¹

It was probably with some relief that Carnarvon returned to Sydney (NSW). There he made the last substantive 'imperial' speech of his visit to Australia when, on 26 January 1888,

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁵¹ *Ibid.*

at the state banquet which Governor Carrington held to mark the centenary of NSW, he briefly contrasted the relationship between British colonies and their motherland with those of colonies under other imperial powers, such as Holland, France and Portugal, which ‘knew no real liberty abroad, and...were united by no ties of common sentiment at home’ and where ‘[a]ffection for the mother-country, willing loyalty to the Crown, and the thousand subtle influences and bonds of intercourse that unite Britain with her colonies, were wanting.’ By contrast, he said, Britain and her colonies shared ‘in great measure, a unity of purpose’ and exercised in their relationship ‘a boundless influence upon the fortunes, the characters, and the institutions of each other.’²⁵²

(e) The masonic component of Carnarvon’s visit to Australia

Having reviewed the speeches Carnarvon made to non-masonic audiences in Australia, and the reception they received, we can now consider the masonic component of Carnarvon’s visit. The majority of the press reports, personal papers and diary entries already used in this case study have not seen the light of day, or at least that of a historian’s searchlight, for over a century, but for this section of it another primary source has recently come to light, probably for the first time since 1888: a remarkable collection at Highclere Castle of most of the beautiful ‘illustrated addresses’ the various masonic bodies in Australia presented to Carnarvon when they met him. Even allowing for their requisite rhetorical content, these addresses provide a valuable insight into the relationship, real, imagined or hoped for between the donors and the recipient.

Hardly had Carnarvon reached Australia from South Africa and settled into the Governor’s residence in Hobart (Tasmania) when a deputation of freemasons from the local ‘English’ District Grand Lodge greeted him at Government House to read out and present their loyal address.²⁵³ As inhabitants of ‘a colony which prides itself on an unswerving loyalty to the Queen and the Mother Country’ they assured their Pro Grand Master (as ‘the representative and immediate deputy’ of their Grand Master, ‘the Illustrious Prince...who is destined...to be the ruler of the mightiest empire under the sun’) of their ‘unswerving attachment to the grand principles of the Order’ and of their ‘loyalty to the Grand Lodge of England’. Reading a prepared reply, Carnarvon said he recognised and valued their ‘loyalty to the Crown’, to the

²⁵² *Sydney Morning Herald*, 27 January 1888.

²⁵³ The address, dated 21 October 1887, and Carnarvon’s reply were printed in *The Mercury* (Hobart) of 22 October. There is also a copy on CP BL Add 60807, f. 161.

Grand Master, and to the principles of 'our Ancient Order' – and he then singled out the social importance of 'English' freemasonry in whose 'teaching and practice' '[l]aw and order, and all that we prize most highly in our public life' would 'always find a firm support'. In these remarks Carnarvon appears to have followed the distinction made in the address: its authors, as colonists, had expressed their 'loyalty to the Queen and the Mother Country'; as freemasons under the UGLE they had assured their Pro Grand Master of their allegiance to it and to the order in general.

Soon after Carnarvon's transfer to Melbourne (Victoria), the capital city of a colony in which the Craft was divided between lodges loyal to the 'home' Grand Lodges (the majority) and those that had transferred to or been created by the 'irregular' and minority Grand Lodge of Victoria, the *Victorian Freemason* reported that its readers expected 'great things from the Pro Grand Master of English Freemasons'.²⁵⁴ The leader writer expected him to 'dispel the Utopian desire of many prominent masons in Victoria for a Grand Lodge of Australia' and to remind them that in Canada there was a separate Grand Lodge in each province. The paper also carried a report of the speech Carnarvon had made a few weeks earlier to the diocesan synod in Cape Town (see the previous case study) in which he had said *inter alia* that 'colonial synods had not proved the dangerous innovations predicted', that a 'national church must reflect national sentiment and national interest', and that provided 'the colonial churches were at one with the common church in doctrine, feeling, and allegiance, they need not fear little differences.' 'Mutatis mutandis', commented the writer, if Carnarvon would 'only change the word church into Freemasonry the same address...[would] be applicable. There is no intention to cut the painter in Freemasonry in Victoria any more than there is in forming Church Synods.' It is not known whether Carnarvon read this article, but it is significant that just after his first meeting with Carrington, the bearer of the Prince's commission, Carnarvon took the initiative in following the Prince's wish to restore harmony to freemasonry in the colony by inviting George Selth Coppin, the Grand Master of the 'so-called Grand Lodge of Victoria' and a member of the colony's Legislative Assembly, to meet him on 12 November at Government House. The meeting was confidential, but Carnarvon recorded in his diary that in a long discussion 'on the subject of re-union' he 'took a note' of Coppin's proposals, 'expressed no

²⁵⁴ *Victorian Freemason* (Melbourne), 7 November 1887, p. 40.

opinions' and stated that he could say nothing further until he had seen and spoken to the Prince.²⁵⁵ (The outcome will be considered in the post-visit section of this case study.)

Two days later 150 of the 'English', 'Irish' and 'Scottish' freemasons of Victoria gave a 'gt Masonic banquet' in Carnarvon's honour, presided over by their local head, Sir William Clarke. (The freemasons under the 'irregular' Grand Lodge of Victoria, despite Carnarvon's meeting with Coppin and despite the fact that several of its members were leading figures in Victorian society, were excluded, thereby demonstrating the colony's masonic disharmony to the principal guest.) From his diary it is clear that Carnarvon enjoyed the warmth of the welcome he received at the banquet and the reception of his speech when he 'went a little beyond Masonry & spoke generally of unions & cordial relations between Engd [*sic*] and Australia.'²⁵⁶

The detail of the extent to which he went 'beyond Masonry' at this masonic event can be seen from the report in *The Argus*.²⁵⁷ Clarke welcomed Carnarvon as 'a statesman with a European and an Australian reputation'.²⁵⁸ His comment that Australians would have been pleased to see Carnarvon back again as Colonial Secretary was cheered by his audience, but he then touched on something which had not been properly understood (as he put it) by the freemasons of Victoria: Carnarvon's letters sent out in January that year soliciting a voluntary contribution of one guinea towards the costs the Imperial Institute from every 'English' freemason throughout the empire. (Carnarvon had written in his capacity as Pro Grand Master and had claimed that their contributions would demonstrate both 'their loyalty to the Throne and their personal affection and respect for His Royal Highness their Grand Master, in a manner which will represent alike the feelings of good citizens and true Masons.')²⁵⁹ As Clarke explained, the local freemasons had already marked the Queen's jubilee by establishing almshouses in Melbourne for needy freemasons and their dependents. In fact, as shown in an earlier section of this thesis, the idea had already been quietly dropped by the time Carnarvon reached Australia, and this explains why Carnarvon, in his reply, did not follow up on Clarke's statement that the Victorians would, however, also contribute to the Institute, nor did he repeat

²⁵⁵ CP BL Add 60929, 12 November 1887. For proof that it was Carnarvon who took the initiative, see Coppin's letter to Carnarvon dated 12 November filed on CP BL Add 60807, f. 171.

²⁵⁶ CP BL Add 60929, 14 November 1887.

²⁵⁷ *The Argus*, 15 November 1887, a copy of which is filed on CP BL Add 60940.

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁹ *The Freemason* p.223 1887; *The Times* 25 April 1887, p. 9, col. C, Court Circular: 'The Queen's Jubilee'.

the appeal but instead he briefly described the project and then moved on to other subjects, including 'unions & cordial relations'. (However, his fleetness of foot in dealing with the difficult subject Clarke had raised did not deter another newspaper from noting that the 'Freemasons of England were amongst the societies appealed to for funds' for the Institute and regretting that their 'distinguished guest' was 'assuming the character of a travelling tout' on the Institute's behalf.)²⁶⁰

Carnarvon then continued his speech by praising the growth of freemasonry in the colony since the first lodge had been established there in 1842 (it now numbered some 100 lodges and 6,000 members, he claimed), the generosity of the local civic authorities in providing the land for the masonic almshouses, and the splendour of the Melbourne masonic hall which alone could accommodate forty lodges. The almshouses and the hall justified freemasonry 'in the eyes of the world generally' and 'vindicate[d] it from those aspersions which from time to time are thrown upon it.'²⁶¹ It was, he said, a good thing occasionally 'to remind our brethren and those outside the mystic pale' that unlike freemasonry in 'many parts of the world' where it was 'associated with the ideas of discord, internal faction, and sedition', 'our' freemasonry was 'perfectly clean' and 'associated only with ideas of law, of order, of constitutional rule, and of sympathetic charity.' Its 'real position in these respects' was made plain by the Queen's patronage of the order, the leadership of the Prince of Wales as its Grand Master, and most recently by the assembly of 6,000 freemasons in the Albert Hall to approve a loyal address to the Queen on her jubilee. As 'the pillars of law and order' freemasons were 'one more special instance of the similarity which prevails between England of the northern hemisphere and England of the southern hemisphere' for '[g]reat societies like this play a large part in the history and the life of a people'. This led into the peroration: a 'new generation' had grown up in Australia, 'a generation which knows England only by books and hearsay, and the recollections of their elders' – but it was the home country's 'earnest desire...that the younger generation shall not be allowed to let their hearts grow cold to the old country' for there they were considered as 'kith and kin'.²⁶²

²⁶⁰ *The Age*, 17 November 1887. For further details of this incident see the section on 'Carnarvon the freemason' above.

²⁶¹ These, and the other quotations in this paragraph, are taken from *The Argus*, 15 November 1887.

²⁶² *Ibid.*

In this, his first substantive speech to an audience of Australian freemasons, loyal colonists all, Carnarvon had thus emphasised the order's respectability, its role as a pillar of law and order in both hemispheres of the British Empire, and its charitable work. But while he also dwelt on the desirability of maintaining warm relationships between the older and younger members of the imperial family, he did not in this speech address imperial or intercolonial federation, or the harmonisation of freemasonry in the colony. In Canada he had kept a low masonic profile. In the masonic events he had attended in South Africa he had avoided the promotion of specifically colonial or imperial ideas, although 'whilst speaking only on Masonic subjects' he had said much that he hoped would 'be useful in a public point of view as regards relations of Dutch & English.'²⁶³ In Victoria, a colony that in 1887 was still tied more closely to Britain than Canada had been in 1883, and where, unlike South Africa, the colonists were overwhelmingly of British stock and the freemasons he addressed were uniformly loyal to one or other of the 'home' Grand Lodges, Carnarvon was able to expand his first speech just 'a little beyond Masonry'. In Adelaide, however, the location for his next masonic speech, he would have to adjust his remarks to suit a context he had never before encountered.

On the day of his arrival in Adelaide, the capital of the colony of South Australia, the *South Australian Register* published a long article about Carnarvon, both as a statesman and as a freemason.²⁶⁴ It included, for example, the full text of the UGLE's resolution no longer to recognise the Grand Orient of France (the French body having dropped as a requirement for membership a belief in a Supreme Being) and an identification of the leading part Carnarvon had played in preparing the ground for that decision. It also mentioned that Carnarvon would attend a meeting of the Grand Lodge of South Australia. For Carnarvon this would be a unique experience: he had never before visited another Grand Lodge, let alone one that had both absorbed lodges previously loyal to the 'home' Grand Lodges and been recognised by its parents as a regularly formed and independent member of the world-wide masonic family.

Bearing in mind his own Grand Master's recently expressed disinclination towards NSW's masonic independence, Carnarvon must have been pleased with the welcome he received from South Australian Grand Master, Chief Justice Sir Samuel Way, and with the wording of the illustrated address which was presented to him at the meeting on 2 December

²⁶³ CP BL Add 60929, 27 September 1887.

²⁶⁴ *The South Australian Register*, 29 November 1887.

1887, though in his diary he called it ‘altogether rather a severe evening’s work.’²⁶⁵ The address welcomed Carnarvon as ‘a Member of the Commonwealth of letters, as a Statesman, and as a Freemason’ and thanked him for his contribution towards ‘the development, the consolidation and the unity of Her Majesty’s Colonial Dominions’. It then continued with this particularly significant passage:

Although no longer owing allegiance to the Grand Lodge of England...to which indeed a majority of our Lodges originally belonged...[t]he severance of our connections with the Grand Lodges of Great Britain and Ireland has no more diminished our fraternal feeling towards the Members of the Craft under their respective jurisdictions, or our adherence to the principles and landmarks of Freemasonry, than the development of our political institutions has lessened our loyalty to the Throne, or our desire to continue under the British Empire.²⁶⁶

As Way himself put it:

The presence of Lord Carnarvon there that night was cumulative proof that in declaring their Masonic Independence, they had not cut themselves off from the Masonic Brotherhood on the other side of the world...They [had] substituted for the old tie of dependence the stronger and still more enduring ties of gratitude, of alliance, and of brotherhood of a more fully developed character...²⁶⁷

Way nevertheless hoped that his Grand Lodge might have ‘another federal tie to the Grand Lodge of England’, namely the ‘recognition of his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales [as its patron]... [for] in no part of her Majesty’s dominions would he [the Prince] find more loyal subjects of her Majesty, or more devoted to his Highness’s person than were the Freemasons of South Australia.’²⁶⁸ Despite this mention of a ‘federal tie’ and Way’s further allusion to the possible future federation of the Australian colonies, Carnarvon did not use the occasion to promote schemes of either colonial or imperial federation but chose instead – and in accordance with his imperial philosophy as outlined above – to speak of ‘the close union of feeling, interest, and thought which binds England and the Australian colonies together’ which was ‘in a certain sense...federation itself...the federal bond which unites us closely together’ and which he hoped would grow and last for ever.²⁶⁹ And, as in Melbourne, he singled out the social role of ‘English’ freemasonry: its ‘uniform respect for law, in the following of the

²⁶⁵ CP BL Add 60929, 2 December 1887. The meeting did not start until 8.30 p.m. and, despite having already dined with Way beforehand, Carnarvon then had to attend and speak to the 250-350 freemasons at the subsequent ‘banquet’. (*The Australian Keystone*, vol. 1, no. 1, 2 January 1888, p. 4, gives 350; the *South Australian Advertiser* of 3 December 1887 gives 250.)

²⁶⁶ *South Australian Advertiser*, 3 December 1887.

²⁶⁷ *The South Australian Freemason* (Adelaide), in its supplement to its edition of 1 December 1887.

²⁶⁸ *The South Australian Advertiser*, 3 December 1887.

²⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

constitution, in the love of freedom, and in loyalty to the Crown'; its charitable acts; and, for example in the Cape, 'its influence in the removal of difficulties, in the reconciling of dissensions, and in the bringing together of men of different races.'²⁷⁰

In his final substantive speech to a masonic audience in Australia, namely the one he gave at the banquet following the meeting of the 'English' District Grand Lodge of Queensland on 4 January 1888, Carnarvon did, however, go further 'beyond Masonry' than he had before – perhaps having been inspired to emphasise the value of freemasonry as an imperial bond by the more nationalistic attitude of some of the people he encountered there.²⁷¹ Once again he contrasted 'English' freemasonry with the Craft in other parts of the world where it had 'sometimes allowed itself to be mixed up with other associations, other objects, other traditions', and he stressed the social role and responsibilities of 'English' freemasons as the 'loyal subjects to the Queen', especially their dedication to the 'unflinching maintenance of law and order'. Then, in his peroration, Carnarvon spoke not just of the nature of the ties that bound Britain and her colonies together, but specifically of the Craft as one of those ties:

...if there is one thing more striking to the traveller than another it is this, that as he passes round the globe, ever keeping on British territory, ever living under the protection of the English flag, ever hearing the English language, that he feels he is encircled by a great ring, so to speak, of English institutions and thoughts, and last of all, he is surrounded by English Masonry.²⁷²

Carnarvon said that he looked upon 'English Masonry as a very great bond of union' and the District Grand Lodge of Queensland 'as a distinct link in the chain.' There were many different bonds of union, but the most powerful were those, such as freemasonry, 'which appeal most intimately to our private feelings, our affections, and our social intercourse', for 'Masonry...has enabled many things of a semi-public nature to be accomplished that no public legislation would ever have achieved.' At least at this one masonic meeting, therefore, Carnarvon can be said to have 'waxed poetic on the significance of the empire and Freemasonry's role as a bridge

²⁷⁰ *Australian Keystone*, vol. 1, no. 1, 2 January 1888.

²⁷¹ Carnarvon also spoke at a meeting of Carnarvon Lodge in Victoria, but there, as will be seen from the record of his speech on page 3 of the first issue of the *Australian Keystone* (2 January 1888), his speech was hardly noteworthy in this context.

²⁷² All the quotations in this paragraph have been taken from the version of Carnarvon's speech that appeared in the *Courier* on 5 January 1888.

between the metropole and the colonies' – but one looks in vain for any mention of the Imperial Federation League, the Imperial Institute, imperial or intercolonial (con)federation.²⁷³

(f) Carnarvon's intervention in the Craft while in New South Wales

Finally, and before he left NSW for the last time, Carnarvon was able to prepare the way for restoring harmony to freemasonry in that colony, where, it will be recalled, an 'irregular' but increasingly popular and well-respected Grand Lodge had already been formed, with which the remaining members of the 'home' Grand Lodges were forbidden to communicate. Having greater authority and experience than Carrington, who at that time held no masonic office in NSW and was but a former Senior Grand Warden of the UGLE, Carnarvon took soundings with representatives of the 'irregular' body as to the formation of a united Grand Lodge for the colony which the UGLE could recognise. Despite the wish of the long-serving 'English' District Grand Master (Williams, in his illustrated address to Carnarvon), that the Pro Grand Master's visit would 'result in further cementing the Bond of Fraternal Union by which we are united to The Grand Lodge of England! [his emphasis]', Carnarvon persuaded him to resign. Carnarvon then personally drafted the terms for the proposed united Grand Lodge of NSW under Carrington, to which the parties signified their assent – the whole depending on Carnarvon's ability to gain the approval of the Prince of Wales on his return to England. The full details of the Australian end of this episode have already been recently published elsewhere, so here it is only necessary to emphasise Carnarvon's careful but decisive role in the negotiations, and to mention once again the inaccuracy of previous accounts of his masonic intervention in NSW (see above).²⁷⁴

(g) Carnarvon's interventions on his return to England

Although before Carnarvon's departure from Australia he and Carrington had already obtained the Prince of Wales' approval for the appointment of Carrington as Williams' successor as the 'English' District Grand Master of NSW, the first step towards the proposed re-unification of freemasonry in the colony, Carnarvon still had to persuade the Grand Master's Council of the way ahead that he had identified, and then the Grand Master himself. This he did on 18 and 31

²⁷³ Harland-Jacobs, 'The Essential Link', p. 290.

²⁷⁴ Daniel, *Masonic Networks and Connections* (2007), pp. 253-55 and 262-67.

May 1888 respectively. Of his conversation with the Prince the entry Carnarvon made in his diary reads:

I had a long & interesting talk with the P of Wales mainly on Australian subjects. I began with Australian Masonry & discussed all that I sd say next week in Gd Lodge...I described to him the difference of the political atmosphere – the very strong Imperialist feeling in Victoria, the lessening of it in N.S.W., & the almost anti-Imperialist sense in Brisbane.²⁷⁵

He also advised the Prince to visit Australia, and the Prince thereupon asked him to draft a programme. Evidently Carnarvon's powers of persuasion were up to the task he had set himself and he was able to square the circle, so to speak, as regards the Prince's wish to stop the NSW Grand Lodge (as originally suggested by Carrington) from becoming as independent of the UGLE as the Grand Lodges of Ireland and Scotland on the one hand, and what the Grand Secretary had described as the 'universal masonic law' of masonic independence on the other. The solution Carnarvon proposed, and which the Prince accepted, was that the Prince should consent to South Australia's petition that he should become their 'Grand Patron', and that, when the united Grand Lodges were formed in Victoria and NSW, he should accept the same honorary position in each. However, Carnarvon's hope (or, rather, the thought that he dangled before the Prince and the UGLE, and which he had last mentioned when he was involved with Canadian masonic independence in the 1850s) that the Grand Master of the UGLE or the UGLE itself might be the last court of appeal for colonial Grand Lodges, was not and could not be realised.

At Grand Lodge on 6 June 1888 Carnarvon spoke of his Australian visit, and told the meeting that 'though the Grand Lodge of South Australia now enjoys entire self-government and independence...there has been no wavering whatever of affection and the old Masonic loyalty to the Mother Craft here at home' and that the Prince of Wales, having heard his report, had agreed to become its honorary patron.²⁷⁶ (Carnarvon's report was inaccurate, however: the only expression of 'loyalty' in the address presented to him by the Grand Lodge of South Australia was the colonists' loyalty to the Throne, undiminished by the development of their political institutions.) He also praised Australian freemasonry for 'uniting various classes and interests together...composing differences and soothing animosities' and, as in England, for

²⁷⁵ CP BL Add. 60930, 31 May 1888.

²⁷⁶ Way attributed this to Carnarvon's efforts on South Australia's behalf and wrote on 11 June 1888 to thank him accordingly. (BL Add. 60802 ff. 110-112).

being ‘the foremost champion for the support of law and order, and of hearty loyalty to the Throne.’ At the next meeting, on 5 December 1888, Carnarvon successfully proposed the recognition of the recently inaugurated United Grand Lodge of NSW, the terms for which he had himself drawn up (and of which Carrington had been installed as the first Grand Master in the presence of more than 4,000 masons) and then announced that the Prince of Wales would accept its invitation to be its Grand Patron.²⁷⁷ The United Grand Lodge of Victoria, the plans for which Carnarvon had discussed with Coppin and Clarke in Melbourne and then presented to the Prince of Wales on his return to England, was formed on 29 March 1889 and recognised by the UGLE in Carnarvon’s absence on 5 June that year. And as each Grand Lodge was established in an Australian colony so it effectively disappeared from the UGLE’s view, just as the Canadian ones had – until and unless, as had happened in Quebec, any problem arose over the continued right to exist of the very few masonic units that had remained loyal to their mother Grand Lodge in Britain.

(h) Conclusion

As in the previous two case studies, the above results of a closer examination of the contemporary records relevant to Carnarvon’s visit do not sit easily with the descriptions of him as an incurably fidgety, impulsive and ruthless statesman or as a masonic imperialist.²⁷⁸ They do, however, fit the description of a statesman and freemason of ‘energy and persuasiveness’ – even when his health was failing – dedicated to preserving the integrity of what he held to be the core of the Empire, ‘England’ and her white settler colonies, even as the degree of self-government increased in those colonies and the freemasons there opted for complete independence. As a statesman, Carnarvon in Australia let it be known that he strongly supported a stronger defensive tie between the colonies there and Britain, and that he encouraged the maintenance and where possible the improvement of the ties of affection between the two countries as partners in a mature relationship in a world whose peace was under threat. He also indicated his support for moves towards a closer intercolonial federation

²⁷⁷ Contrary to the note in Carnarvon’s biographical file in the Library and Museum of Freemasonry in London, Carnarvon did not install Carrington: Carnarvon had left Australia well before the formation of the UGL of NSW.

²⁷⁸ George Hamilton, *Parliamentary Reminiscences and Reflections*, (1916-22), as cited by Peter Gordon in his article on Carnarvon in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* [‘ODNB’] (on-line edition, 2004-8), pp. 697-703; Hyam, *op. cit.* (1976), pp. 303-4; A. Roberts, *op. cit.*, p. 830 and chapter note no. 17; Harland-Jacobs, ‘The Essential Link’; and Knox, ‘Conservative Imperialism’, pp. 335.

and that he would not be averse to a more formal federation of the empire as a whole – but he was cautious not to press these views on his audiences or readers, let alone any ambitious or off-the-shelf schemes for their realisation. He was impressed by the continuing loyalty to the Crown of the self-governing colonies in Australia, but was left in no doubt of the growing mood in favour of a distinct national identity within the imperial fold, and of partnership rather than dependence. As a freemason, Carnarvon recognised freemasonry's contribution as a pillar of society, whether in Britain or in her colonies, and in one instance (Queensland) he cited it as one of the 'bonds of union' that held the empire together. But he also recognised that the tide for masonic independence in the Australian colonies could not be turned back, and that the most he could achieve by way of a final tie to 'English' freemasonry would be to have the Prince of Wales become the honorary patron of the emerging Grand Lodges in Australia. He paved the way for what might be termed a federation of lodges in both NSW and Victoria, but they, like the Grand Lodge of South Australia, would soon fly the imperial nest for an independent existence within a world-wide brotherhood. In freemasonry in the 1880s, but not yet for many years in the imperial relationship between Australia and Britain, what Gorman termed the 'bonds of sentiment' did not stand 'the test of...burgeoning sovereignty'.²⁷⁹ Moreover, when the Australian colonies eventually federated in 1901, the Grand Lodges in each colony, just like those in Canada in 1867, were already too well established to come together to form a national Grand Lodge of Australia, and they have remained separate entities to this day.

²⁷⁹ Gorman, *op. cit.*, p. 1.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

Introduction

The principal aim of this thesis has been to demonstrate that a closer examination than heretofore of Carnarvon's careers as a statesman and as a freemason – at the key points where they crossed, diverged or ran in parallel – significantly amends and adds to our understanding both of him and of aspects of imperial history. This closer examination of Carnarvon's personal papers, his speeches and his publications, and an approach which includes Carnarvon's freemasonry and his Anglicanism, has added to our knowledge of him, his imperial philosophy, and his practice as both a statesman and a freemason. While it is accepted that a general model for the way masonic networks operated in the British Empire cannot be based on the study of a single man, however significant he may have been, this thesis contends that current models are inadequate but can be improved by a closer examination of the ideas and interactions of such individuals as Carnarvon. The overall result of this particular examination, it is contended, is a more nuanced and balanced view of the role of freemasonry in the British Empire – and in the life of one imperial statesman. In this, the concluding section of the thesis, the results of this examination will be pulled together, both to suggest answers to the questions posed in the Introduction or raised in the overview of the relevant historiography, and to indicate further lines of enquiry.

The principal conclusions concern the transition towards federation and independence in two of the white settler colonies and South Africa in the second half of the nineteenth century, and the attitude to those developments of a significant British imperial statesman. In summary, this thesis concludes:

- (a) that the secession of the majority of freemasons of British nationality in Canada and Australia from the jurisdiction of the 'home' Grand Lodges and their formation of local, independent Grand Lodges in those British territories should not be read as a consolidation of the British Empire but as a portent of its eventual dissolution;
- (b) that this development in masonic administration was not analogous with imperial administration (despite Carnarvon's claim to the contrary), nor even with the devolution of the colonial church;
- (c) that as the key objective of Carnarvon's colonial/imperial policy was to maintain the integrity and improve the defence of the British Empire – especially its 'Anglo-Saxon'

elements – he rued the disestablishment of the Anglican church in the colonies, objected initially to masonic independence there, helped to prevent a move towards it in South Africa, eventually accepted it in Canada rather than presciently supporting it, and ultimately assisted it in the Australian colonies while still trying (unsuccessfully) to find a way of institutionally linking the nascent Grand Lodges there with at least the head if not the body of the United Grand Lodge of England, its Grand Master, the Prince of Wales;

(d) and that portrayals of ‘English’ freemasonry as an institution dedicated to upholding the Empire, and of Carnarvon as a doctrinally-driven, aggressive and impulsive ultra-imperialist – let alone as a masonic imperialist – do not do justice to the fuller range of evidence now available to historians, and tend to distort our understanding of the British Empire and of ‘English’ freemasonry’s relationship with it.

Carnarvon’s imperial philosophy and practice

Well before he took up his first ministerial appointment Carnarvon had developed an imperial vision, an imperial framework within which he then acted consistently throughout his adult life. Not all the influences which sharpened that vision will ever be known, but among the most obvious were:

- his regret that Britain had managed not only to lose its American colonies but had done so in a way that impeded a close relationship between them and Britain once they had gained their independence;
- his fear of mob-rule (the perils of which had been lastingly demonstrated by the French Revolution) and his determination to maintain in Britain the institutions that would continue to ensure social order, such as the Crown in parliament, the Church, and freemasonry;
- his early recognition of the importance of the relatively youthful and energetic colonies of white settlement to what he described as an ageing and overcrowded Britain;
- his general disposition to avoid extremes, and his preference for moderation;
- his awareness of the causes of the disintegration of the empires of antiquity, and of the distinctions between Britain’s empire in the nineteenth century and those of her rivals;
- and his sense of the social and moral duties of both a well-educated and well-endowed aristocrat towards his fellow men, and of the ‘mother country’ towards its ‘children’.

Carnarvon's philosophy of empire also comprehended Britain and all its territories. He categorised the empire's components into five groups, to two of which he devoted most of his energies as an imperial statesman: in the one he placed what he called the 'great Anglo-Saxon colonies' in Australasia and British North America; and in the other the two special cases of Ireland and South Africa. This thesis has concentrated, though not exclusively, on Carnarvon in connection with three countries (two from the first group – Canada and Australia – and one from the second, South Africa) which Carnarvon visited in the 1880s. His chief concern in dealing with these three countries was to find ways to combine *imperium* with *libertas*, to respect their desire for self-government and, where appropriate, to facilitate it while keeping the colonies within the empire. For him there were three keys to the conundrum: the timely application of the principle of subsidiarity; the recognition that strong relationships are based on mutual advantage; and the maintenance and encouragement of what he termed 'affection', with its particular expression in allegiance to the British monarch. The combination of these three keys in the British Empire was, in Carnarvon's view, unique and would open the door to sustainability, the door that had remained closed to all other empires.

Carnarvon's imperial philosophy, or more particularly what in 1856 he already called his 'colonial policy', was particularly remarkable on at least three accounts: its early emergence in Carnarvon's public life, its consistency and its farsightedness. By the age of twenty-five, and two years before his first ministerial appointment (in 1858), Carnarvon had already formulated the policy in sufficient detail for him to explain – initially to an audience of freemasons – how he wished to see it applied. The policy was robust enough for Carnarvon to maintain it until his death in 1890. Furthermore, it presaged the formula adopted by the British Dominions at the Imperial Conference of 1926 to describe the status they had by then attained within the empire, namely that of 'autonomous communities within the British Empire, equal in status, in no way subordinate to another in any respect of their domestic or external affairs, though united by a common allegiance to the Crown, and freely associated as members of the British Commonwealth of Nations.'¹

¹ See the Report of the Inter-Imperial Relations Committee, Imperial Conference, 1926, Cmd. 2786, p. 14 (quoted by Miller, *op cit*, p 39). Using the terminology of that conference, the British Empire then comprised not five categories of territory, as it had for Carnarvon, but three: Britain and the Dominions (then comprising Australia, Canada, the Irish Free State, New Zealand and South Africa), the 'Indian Empire', and the 'Colonial Empire'.

Carnarvon described the main components of his 'colonial policy' in his speech at Grand Lodge in 1856, when the governing body of 'English' freemasonry was facing not only the demand from its remaining lodges in Canada for more delegated powers, but the prospect of their secession from its jurisdiction. Carnarvon's advice was to 'make them your friends, and do not seek to alienate them', 'surrender [to them] all the minutiae of local business', prefer 'persuasion' to 'compulsion', and thus retain their 'due dependence and allegiance' and maintain Grand Lodge's status as the 'fountain of appeal – the source of our great policy, and the sole arbiter.' Recognising that it was but natural for British subjects in the white-settler colonies gradually to seek ever greater powers of self-government, Carnarvon believed that the transition could and should be handled in such a way as to 'remove for ever and a day all chances of disunion, and difference, and jealousy, which could exist between the mother country and her child.'² He argued that if the colonial policy he advocated had been applied to Britain's American colonies in the previous century their loss or at least their alienation might have been prevented.

However, the 'English' Grand Lodge (like the Grand Lodges of Ireland and Scotland) failed to heed Carnarvon's advice in time to prevent the loss of the overwhelming majority of its lodges in the Canadas to locally-based Grand Lodges. Later, as more and more lodges in the other colonies in British North America and in the Australian colonies decided to form their own Grand Lodges, even the intervention of the Prince of Wales and Carnarvon's wish to maintain formal links between them and the Grand Lodge of England were thwarted not only by the pressure for masonic independence but by the 'universal Masonic law' that precluded the subservience of a Grand Lodge to any other masonic body, even as a 'fountain of appeal.' Similarly, while Carnarvon was the head of the 'English' Supreme Council of the Ancient and Accepted Rite of Freemasonry, it had to accept the secession of its Canadian membership and the transfer of their masonic allegiance to the first Supreme Council to be formed in a British dominion, the Supreme Council for Canada. In that respect, therefore, the application of Carnarvon's imperial philosophy failed to achieve its aim of preventing some of the empire's colonial particles flying off into space.

² Carnarvon's speech on moving the second reading of the North American Provinces Confederation Bill, 19 February 1867, as recorded in the *Annual Register* (February 1867) pp. 11-16.

That said, Carnarvon's interventions in the problems that had arisen among freemasons in Victoria and New South Wales were such that soon after his visit in 1887/88 the parties in each colony were able at last to come together and to form independent Grand Lodges, to their and the UGLE's satisfaction, and for which Carnarvon won the Australians' plaudits and thanks. The 'alienation' he feared in the 1850s had been avoided. The freemasons in both colonies eventually left the 'parental home' on good terms, offering, of course, to stay in touch – but within the wider global masonic community rather than an imperial one. Similarly, no ill feelings accompanied the formation of the several Grand Lodges established in British North America after 1860, and, like the Grand Lodges in the Australian colonies, they also soon disappeared out of the UGLE's sight.

In South African freemasonry, however, Carnarvon's imperial philosophy could be said to have been more successful. True, Carnarvon's hope that 'English' freemasonry there would absorb its 'Dutch' counterpart was not and has not been realised, but, despite the formation of a 'Grand Lodge of South Africa' in the 1960s by the 'Dutch' freemasons, and despite the fact that the overwhelming majority of the freemasons in South Africa are now of South African rather than British nationality, the majority of the lodges in South Africa have chosen to remain under either the UGLE or the Grand Lodge of Scotland.³ For the 'English' freemasons in South Africa (and *pari passu* for the 'Scottish' ones), Carnarvon's policy appears to have been effective: they have not flown the nest; they manage their domestic affairs within the UGLE's rules and under District Grand Masters appointed by the UGLE's Grand Master; and they are still happy to be administered by the UGLE in London, for whose services they continue to transfer fees to Britain in sterling, despite exchange rate fluctuations. In their case, affection has maintained allegiance, to use Carnarvon's terminology. Yet looking at South Africa as a whole it could be argued that freemasonry there today, divided as it is between the 'Dutch' jurisdiction on the one hand and the 'English' and 'Scottish' ones on the other, reflects and perhaps even perpetuates the social divisions of 150 years ago and might yet be

³ This phenomenon is not unique to South Africa, however, where the majority of the members are still of European origin: in territories as diverse as Sierra Leone, Ghana, Nigeria and East Africa, where the membership is today overwhelmingly of African or Asian origin, the lodges still operate within the jurisdiction of either the UGLE or the Grand Lodge of Scotland.

undermining in some small way Carnarvon's hope that 'as the fusion of the two races proceeds their harmony will become more complete.'⁴

In the broader field of imperial politics, however, Carnarvon saw his philosophy bear fruit, at least in Canada. Once there was a sufficient ground-swell in favour of confederation in the colonies of British North America, Carnarvon encouraged it and then channelled it into the successful formation in 1867 of Britain's first 'dominion', to the advantage of the colonies, to Britain and to the empire as a whole. But that complete success was not to be repeated elsewhere during his lifetime.

By the time Carnarvon visited the still unfederated Australian colonies in the late 1880s, their relations with the imperial centre were still close and the mutual advantages of the relationship was generally well appreciated, but it took the fear of external threats from other colonial powers to persuade the Australian colonial governments to bear a greater share of the costs of defending their shores and their maritime trade routes. Carnarvon let it be known that he strongly supported stronger defensive ties between the Australian colonies and Britain, that he wanted the ties of affection between the two countries maintained in a mature partnership in a world whose peace was under threat. But it was also in Australia that he best demonstrated his cautious approach to federation, for there, although he indicated his support for moves towards a closer inter-colonial federation and that he would not be averse to a more formal federation of the empire as a whole, he did not overtly press for its realisation. Eventually, in 1905, a confederated Australia emerged and today some few affective ties remain, as demonstrated by the facts Australia has yet to become a republic and that its monarch is also the British queen.

As for South Africa, it was during Carnarvon's second term as Colonial Secretary, in the 1870s, that he tried on the one hand to consolidate and strengthen Britain's position there, and on the other to encourage the British colonies and Boer republics to collaborate, in their own and Britain's interests, in a locally appropriate form of federation. He consulted widely. He negotiated the settlement of the Orange Free State's claims to Griqualand West and, with the knowledge of his Prime Minister and a commission from the Queen, he master-minded the peaceful annexation of the Transvaal. However, in his broader aim, a federation of the colonies

⁴ Carnarvon, 'The Cape in 1888', pp. 867, 868 and 880. By 'races' Carnarvon meant the Dutch and the English, and, as already noted, he often used 'English' where today one would use 'British'.

and states in South Africa, he failed – but, as has been demonstrated, not for the reasons that some previous commentators have advanced. A closer examination of the available evidence does not bear out their claims that he acted ruthlessly and impulsively or that he failed to recognise that the circumstances in South Africa differed markedly from those that had obtained in the Canadian colonies in the 1860s. Newbury comes closest to the mark when he describes Carnarvon's attitude to the South African questions as 'impatient', for Carnarvon certainly did not want to miss any opportunity to bring the several South African territories closer together and, crucially, to harmonise relations between the settlers of Dutch origin (the major white community) and those originally from Britain. Hence his decision to introduce in the British parliament a permissive bill within which a federation could be established when the opportunity arose, his attempts to persuade the leaders of the Dutch and English settlers towards federation, and the annexation of the Transvaal when it was in danger of becoming in today's parlance a 'failed state'. Carnarvon's efforts in the 1870s to integrate South Africa were publicly recognised when he visited the Cape in 1887 and where he again tried to improve relations between the Dutch and the English (as he called them). But it was only in 1910, after two Anglo-Boer wars, that the Union of South Africa within the British Empire was achieved and Carnarvon's policy was realised.

So, while Carnarvon's imperial philosophy would have been broad and robust enough to cope with the emergence and development of the quasi-independent but still British dominions of Canada, Australia and South Africa – territories which had been under his care while Colonial Secretary – its application was not and would not have been sufficient to keep the nascent Grand Lodges in those territories within the fold of the Grand Lodge of England.⁵ By the early years of the twentieth century, the vast majority of the originally 'English', 'Irish' and 'Scottish' freemasons in Canada and Australia, British subjects all, had chosen to follow the example set in 1855 by a few freemasons in what were then 'the Canadas'. They had formed and transferred their masonic allegiance to locally-based Grand Lodges, independent of each other and of the three original Grand Lodges in the British Isles, and in which their

⁵ It will be recalled that 'quasi-independent' was the term Carnarvon used while in Canada in 1883 to describe the status of the Anglican church there. (*The [Toronto] Globe*, 19 September 1883.)

previous masonic identities were fused into a local and unified body.⁶ Each of these new bodies immediately became fully-fledged and an equal member of the world-wide community of Grand Lodges, linked only by its members' common origins and their adherence to the same basic principles. Their new relationship with their masonic origins was epitomised at the meeting of the UGLE in London after the announcement of the formation of the Grand Lodge of South Australia, when the presiding officer wished 'God speed' to this 'promising addition to the Grand Lodges of the world.'⁷ Indeed, far from consolidating the British Empire, their formation presaged by decades its dissolution. Only in South Africa (of the three countries considered in this thesis) has a significant majority of the lodges remained within the jurisdiction of a Grand Lodge based in the British Isles.

From the attention that Carnarvon paid to the disestablished Anglican churches in the colonies, as evinced, for example, by the addresses he gave when he attended synods in Canada and South Africa in 1883 and 1887 respectively, this thesis has demonstrated that he considered those churches to be critical for the realisation of his philosophy of empire. Though both the colonial churches and the secessionist Grand Lodges in the same colonies were indeed independent of any institution at the imperial centre, it was Carnarvon's view that the churches' ecclesiastical quasi-independence 'did not in the least affect' their 'unbounded loyalty to the great Mother Church', headed as it was by the British monarch. (The new Grand Lodges owed no such loyalty to any 'Mother' Grand Lodge in the British Isles, nor was there any masonic forum even remotely equivalent to the Lambeth Conferences – for churches within the Anglican communion – that began in 1867.) Thus it was that while Carnarvon did not hesitate to promote his imperial policy on the platforms provided by the colonial churches' synods, he avoided any imperialist matter in his encounters with freemasons in Canada, did not exploit freemasonry while in South Africa for the promotion of specifically colonial or imperial ideas, and, at the one masonic meeting in Australia where he described freemasonry as an imperial 'bond of union', he made no mention of such specifics as the Imperial Federation League, the Imperial Institute, or any form of imperial or intercolonial federation.

⁶ The report of the Canadians' attitude in 1857 will also be recalled: '[the] sentiment was uttered by many, "England, with all thy faults, I love thee still!", but, as Canadians, they could not forget that they must love Canada better'. (*Freemason's Magazine*, 1 August 1857, p. 674.)

⁷ *Victorian Freemason* (Supplement), 6 December 1886, p. 4.

Thus although the evidence does not support Harland-Jacobs' description of Carnarvon as an 'imperialist freemason', freemasonry, like the Anglican church and the monarchy, definitely had a place in Carnarvon's philosophy of empire. Freemasonry for him was one of the 'great pillars of order and liberty', like the Anglican church and the monarchy. Indeed, he described it as a strong supporter of 'social order and religion'. He had appreciated the value of the UGLE's lodges in Canada and Australia as informal links – but certainly not the essential link as Harland-Jacobs claimed – between the metropolis and the periphery of the British Empire, but could not then prevent their secession. He praised the way in which freemasonry in South Africa was able to provide a bridge between the two major white communities. And while he too would have preferred to have found a way to maintain what the Prince of Wales termed 'the unity of the Masonic Empire', his address to the only secessionist Grand Lodge he visited (that of South Australia, in 1887) indicates that he appreciated and encouraged the continuing loyalty to the British Crown – though no longer to the UGLE – of the overwhelming majority of the members of that colonial Grand Lodge.⁸

Carnarvon and freemasonry: a re-evaluation

This thesis has argued that Harland-Jacobs has overestimated freemasonry's role in the latter half of the nineteenth century in the colonies in British North America and Australasia – the colonies upon which (according to Knox) Carnarvon's "imperialism" was primarily based'. It has also argued that a closer examination of the available evidence suggests that Harland-Jacobs, like Cooper before her, has exaggerated the relevance of freemasonry to Carnarvon's activities as an imperial statesman. A re-evaluation of the significance of freemasonry to Carnarvon the man and the statesman is therefore required here.⁹

There is no doubt that as soon as Carnarvon became a freemason he took up the cudgels between 1856 and 1859 on behalf of those 'English' freemasons in Canada who sought an increase in the powers delegated to them by the UGLE in respect of their domestic administration. Similarly, although that early intervention failed, and although while in Canada in 1883 he seems to have avoided contact with the resultant Grand Lodge of Canada (and with

⁸ As seen in his attempts to keep lodges in the Canadas within the UGLE's fold in the 1850s, and to find a formula by which the Grand Lodges in the Australian colonies might still look to the Grand Master of the UGLE as their final court of appeal in the 1880s.

⁹ Bruce A. Knox, 'The Earl of Carnarvon, Empire, and Imperialism, 1855-90' *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* (1998) vol 26, 2, p. 51.

the Supreme Council for Canada whose warrant of authority he had signed), he did have meetings with freemasons while there, and a number of masonic meetings were programmed into his visits to South Africa and Australia in 1887/88. Moreover, while in Victoria and New South Wales, with the approval of his Grand Master, the Prince of Wales, he took the steps that ensured the eventual union of the lodges under the several jurisdictions in each colony and the unions' subsequent acceptance by the UGLE as regularly formed Grand Lodges. It is also true that in 1875, while Secretary of State for the Colonies, he added his advice to the petition of those 'English' freemasons in South Africa who were seeking to fragment the masonic province of the Cape into (geographically) smaller administrative bodies and thereby to stifle any demand for masonic independence. But that was the sum total of his direct involvement with freemasonry in those British colonies. With that one South African exception, Carnarvon as a freemason became directly involved with freemasonry in the colonies in but four brief periods: September 1856 to December 1858 (the secession of the UGLE's lodges in the Canadas), 1873/74 (the secession of the Supreme Council's chapters in Canada), September 1883 (his visit to Canada), and August 1887 to December 1888 (his visit to South Africa and Australia and its aftermath). This analysis indicates that freemasonry in the empire was not Carnarvon's primary interest either before or after he emerged as a prominent statesman and leading freemason.

A crude analysis of the number and the nature of the masonic meetings Carnarvon attended between 1856 and 1890 provides further information. Bearing in mind on the one hand that in the Craft a lodge meets at least four times a year, a Provincial Grand Lodge at least once, and Grand Lodge at least four times in addition to investitures, and on the other hand that Carnarvon, by the time he died, had been a member of several lodges (and their equivalents in other masonic orders), a Provincial Grand Master in the Craft and in Mark Masonry, the head of two masonic orders and the second-in-command of the UGLE, Carnarvon did not actually attend many masonic meetings – the records show his attendances to have been about 85 in 34 years of membership. After an initial flourish in 1856-58 (c. 25 visits), the bulk of Carnarvon's attendances occurred between 1870 and 1889, 18 of which were at Grand Lodge in London as either the Deputy or the Pro Grand Master, 15 at the (Craft) Provincial Grand Lodge of Somerset as its head, and ten at the Supreme Council as one of its nine members. Set against those figures, Carnarvon's attendance at only about eight meetings of Westminster and

Keystone Lodge after his initiation there in 1856 (his last being in 1859), and at only two or three meetings of the Grand Master's private lodge (Royal Alpha) after he joined it in 1870, is a further indication that Carnarvon did not make much time available for what might be termed private freemasonry, or for meetings at which the traditional ceremonies of initiation and advancement were performed. On the contrary, it strongly suggests that after entering the Craft and a few years in the hurly-burly of debates in Grand Lodge he preferred presiding or taking a leading role at freemasonry's highest levels, particularly in the Craft, whether by chairing business meetings in London and Somerset, or, for example, installing the Prince of Wales as Grand Master of the UGLE in the Royal Albert Hall.¹⁰ That view of his attitude to freemasonry is reinforced by the hitherto unreported fact that in 1874 he prematurely grasped at the possibility of becoming the Grand Master of the UGLE in succession to the Marquess of Ripon, only to have to recover the evidence of his bid for that ultimate office before it became publicly known and before the Prince of Wales, the rightful successor, was offered and accepted the position.

But other facts do not support this image of a man driven by an overweening ambition to achieve the highest offices in freemasonry, even if in 1857 he had already decided that 'Out of the sphere of public life there is...no position in society which carries with it so high an honour, and at the same time so high a responsibility' as the Grand Mastership of the UGLE.¹¹ Whatever Carnarvon's motives for becoming a freemason – which certainly included his antiquarian interests and his friendships with WWB Beach and GR Portal, and may have included Lord Zetland's treatment of actual and potential masonic secession in the Canadas – he remained a freemason because freemasonry in his view primarily fulfilled a valuable social role, and he accepted speedy promotion into its upper echelons as befitting his social rank and the moral and social duties his rank entailed. He must presumably have enjoyed presiding over grand masonic occasions, but that enjoyment was surely not sufficient to explain why, even after his appointment to the senior offices of Deputy and then Pro Grand Master of the UGLE, he stayed in the subordinate office of Provincial Grand Master for Somerset and attended one

¹⁰ 'Particularly in the Craft' because he appears to have taken no further interest in the Supreme Council of the Ancient and Accepted Rite or in the Grand Lodge of Mark Masonry (except to receive a Past Grand Master's jewel from his friend George Portal) after resigning as Sovereign Grand Commander of the one in 1877 and Grand Master of the other in 1862.

¹¹ From a typed transcript of an article in the *Masonic Observer* of June 1857, datelined 20 May 1857, filed on CP BL Add 60945.

provincial meeting as such in most of the years between 1869 (when he was first appointed) and 1890 (when he died, still in office). And if ambition had been Carnarvon's driving force as a freemason he could have refused the Prince of Wales' request to serve as his Pro Grand Master, his masonic *alter ego*, once it became clear that his chance of becoming Grand Master himself had disappeared.

No, Carnarvon remained a freemason because the philosophy and practice of the UGLE (and of other Grand Lodges that followed its basic principles) squared with his own. As he put it in his defence of 'English' freemasonry against the charges levelled against all freemasons by Pope Leo XIII in 1884, 'social order and religion have no stronger friends, no truer pillars to rest upon than the Masonic bodies of England', whose rules and constitutions he described as 'one and all breathing a spirit of religion and of obedience to the law', and whose existence provided a bulwark against the growth of atheism, 'Sedition, Revolution, Socialism, and Communism'.¹² Carnarvon lived most of his days fearing the forces of radicalism, the onset of democracy, and the breakdown of social order. He disliked extremism in religious and political affairs, and had little appetite for partisan politics. He had a high sense of his moral duty and of the need to establish and maintain his honour as the head of a noble family. 'English' freemasonry, which had become 'a very effective expression of the wider moral, cultural and political consensus which underpinned the British Empire', fitted Carnarvon like a glove.¹³ It had a moral and social purpose; it set its members high standards; it supported religion and condemned atheism; it linked men across party lines and across oceans; it was conservative (with a small 'c') and loyal. Thus, for example, Carnarvon, a Tory, could serve as Deputy Grand Master to the Marquess of Ripon, his Grand Master and a Liberal; he could proudly engage in its charitable works and in such public acts as laying the corner-stone of a cathedral tower and installing the Prince of Wales as Ripon's successor in the Albert Hall; in South Africa he could praise freemasonry's role in bringing white settlers of different origins closer together, and in Australia encourage freemasonry as one of the colonies' links with 'home'. But the respectability of the UGLE needed to be maintained, and the UGLE needed to protect itself from any association with the sort of freemasonry against which Pope Leo XIII had warned the world. Carnarvon therefore took decisive action on both fronts, for it was he

¹² *Proceedings*, 4 June 1884, p. 240.

¹³ Andrew Prescott, 'A History of British Freemasonry 1425-2000' (2006), p. 13.

who set up and chaired the committees that promptly dealt with the embarrassment of the collapse of UGLE's bankers (*o tempora o mores*) and the scandal of the falsification of the result of a ballot in Grand Lodge in 1878, the same year in which the UGLE accepted his advice to break off relations with the Grand Orient of France when it ceased to require belief in God as a condition for membership.¹⁴

The close fit of the aims and practices of 'English' freemasonry with Carnarvon's general philosophy, and Carnarvon's apparent willingness to preside at grand masonic meetings do not, however, fully explain why he took the charge of Somerset (as its Provincial Grand Master) so seriously and why he was prepared to serve as second-in-command to Lord Ripon and then to the Prince of Wales (as Deputy to the one and Pro Grand Master to the other). In both cases the most likely missing element of the explanation is Carnarvon's sense of his civic, loyal and personal duties.¹⁵ Though his main residence was Highclere Castle in the county of Southampton, Carnarvon was also a major landowner in Somerset, with a residence at Pixton Park, and it was in that capacity that he was first proposed and later nominated for the office of the county's masonic Provincial Grand Master.¹⁶ As a nobleman and local landowner, and given his popularity with Somerset freemasons, it is surely likely that he felt it his duty, and becoming to his station in life, to preside over the local branch of what he considered to be one of the pillars of social order. That Carnarvon agreed in 1874 to serve the Prince of Wales as his Pro Grand Master can also be partly ascribed to his sense of duty to the monarchy, for though no evidence has been found that he was a personal friend of the Prince, and though sycophancy was not part of his nature, he obviously supported the institution of the monarchy as the key unifying factor in the nation and the empire, and he would therefore have been unlikely to

¹⁴ *Proceedings*, March and September 1878.

¹⁵ There is some evidence, however, that Carnarvon was also aware that politically his local masonic audience shared his broadly conservative views, for on 16 September 1884 he wrote in his diary: 'I held my Gd. Lodge at Yeovil...My welcome was as usual an extraordinarily hearty one – heartier even than usual – and when some allusion was made, though of a very passing kind, to my political work during this autumn it brought out a storm of applause, showing very plainly what the political tendencies & feelings of my audience were. Alas that the class which they for the most part represent, & which I believe they truly represent in this, so played with liberalism during the years previous to 1867 that they have now brought about a state of things which they never intended, which they now dread, and which is likely to end badly.' (BL Add. 60923).

¹⁶ See the 'memorial' of the Royal Cumberland Lodge, Bath, dated 17 December 1860 in that lodge's file (Lodge File SN 142) at the Library and Museum of Freemasonry, London, and R G Walker, *Freemasonry in the Province of Somerset 1725-1987* (1987).

decline a request from the heir to the throne.¹⁷ Carnarvon's earlier agreement (in 1870) to serve as Ripon's Deputy Grand Master is less easy to explain, for although they were both members of the Queen's Privy Council (of which Ripon was the president) they seem rarely to have met privately and, in the House of Lords, they sat opposite each other on the front benches. It would seem, therefore, that Carnarvon felt a duty to accept the deputy's position in an empire-wide organisation whose moral and social aims he supported – but it is also possible that Carnarvon and Ripon were brought more closely together by the murders of Ripon's brother-in-law and Carnarvon's favourite nephew by Greek brigands in a bungled kidnapping attempt shortly before Ripon succeeded Zetland as Grand Master in May 1870 and announced his intention to appoint Carnarvon as his deputy.¹⁸

The analysis in this thesis of Carnarvon the freemason has produced a clearer picture of his reasons for becoming and remaining a freemason and of his activities as such. However, Carnarvon's attitude towards and his role within freemasonry still needs to be compared with those of other prominent figures of his time (such as the Lords Hartington, Panmure and Ripon) to enable a better assessment of the relevance of freemasonry to their lives and to those of their ilk whose masonic membership is normally cited as an indication of the extent to which freemasonry as an institution was involved in public affairs in the Victorian period.¹⁹ On the other hand, the question as to what 'English' freemasonry gained from their membership may be indicated by the general attitude it displayed towards Carnarvon. From its origins in the early eighteenth century the Grand Lodge of England had always sought and usually found noblemen to head its ranks, presumably in the belief that the higher the status of the noblemen who took prominent roles in the institution, the greater the institution's perceived

¹⁷ While at Wildbad in 1869 Carnarvon wrote in his diary: 'The Prince & Princess of Wales arrived later in the evening. The D & Dss de Chartres are also here – rather too much royalty at the same time.' (CP BL Add 60901, 3 August 1869.)

¹⁸ See Carnarvon's diary entries for the period 14 April – 1 June 1870 in CP BL Add 60902.

¹⁹ Lord Hartington, a leading Whig politician, later the 8th Duke of Devonshire, was the Provincial Grand Master for Devonshire for 50 years from 1858; the 1st Earl of Lathom, described as Queen Victoria's favourite courtier, was a successor of Carnarvon as Pro Grand Master of the UGLE; Grand Master of the Mark Grand Lodge, and Sovereign Grand Commander of the Supreme Council of the Ancient and Accepted Rite; Lord Panmure (the 11th Earl of Dalhousie), Secretary of State for War during the Crimean war, was Deputy Grand Master of the UGLE (1857-61) and then the Grand Master Mason of the Grand Lodge of Scotland; and, as has been seen, Lord Ripon, *inter alia* the Secretary of State for India in the 1860s, later the 1st Marquess of Ripon, ended his masonic career as Grand Master of the UGLE from 1870 to 1874.

respectability.²⁰ Carnarvon's high social rank, his academic prowess and his early successes in the House of Lords ensured that from the moment of his initiation into freemasonry he was marked out as a potential leader of the Craft – which, despite initially damaging his chances by being cast as the figure-head of what the then leaders of opinion within the UGLE considered to be a disruptive and party-politically inclined faction, he eventually became. For similar reasons, and despite his relative masonic inexperience, the recently formed Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons elected Carnarvon as its second Grand Master, the Knights Templar made him their Great Seneschal, and so on. Indeed, generally speaking, and in keeping with the times, 'English' masonic institutions preferred noblemen at their head.²¹ Some noblemen treated their masonic offices as sinecures, particularly provincial grandmasterships. Carnarvon did not, and he fulfilled his appointments, both provincial and central, in a manner that he presumably considered commensurate with his social standing, his other obligations and interests, and the value he placed on the institution. It might be a worthwhile sociological and historical exercise to see how many others of his ilk followed his example – and why – but that too is beyond the scope of this thesis.

Freemasonry and 'the great Anglo-Saxon colonies' reviewed

We must now revisit freemasonry's role in the British Empire – specifically in Carnarvon's 'great Anglo-Saxon colonies' – and review what the research into aspects of Carnarvon's careers as a statesman and a freemason has revealed about it.

No doubt the masonic lodges in British colonies in British North America, South Africa and Australia, while they were still under the Grand Lodges of England, Ireland and Scotland, provided for freemasons emigrating there from the British Isles a link with their masonic 'homes', in much the same way as British-based churches and associations such as the Orange Order did. The same must also have been the experience of Dutch freemasons who

²⁰ See, for example, the *Masonic Year Book Historical Supplement 1964*, published by the UGLE and printed at the Oxford University Press in 1964, which lists the UGLE's officers, including its Provincial/District Grand Masters, from 1717.

²¹ Further and clear evidence of the preference of Grand Masters of the UGLE to appoint noblemen to its senior offices can be found in the correspondence between William Kelly (the commoner appointed as Provincial Grand Master of Leicestershire in 1869 in succession to Lord Howe) and John Hervey, the UGLE's Grand Secretary, where the Grand Master's wish was made clear that he would have preferred to appoint 'Earl Ferrers or any other nobleman' and expected Kelly to stand down if a nobleman became available. (See Aubrey Newman, 'William Kelly, Mason Extra-ordinary', *AQC* 110, 1997, p. 78.)

emigrated to South Africa and joined 'Dutch' lodges there. But that link would have become weaker for them as time passed, and for those who became freemasons after emigrating or who had been born in those territories it may have meant less anyway. Moreover, for both colonial-born and recently arrived freemasons from the British Isles, the masonic link to 'home' was normally not a personal one but to the office of the Grand Secretary of one of the three 'home' Grand Lodges, and, in the case of 'English' members, through the secretary of their Provincial/District Grand Lodge.

Each of the three 'home' Grand Lodges had its own traditions and none was renowned for its regular communications with the other two. They respected each other's traditions, and their practices were based on the same principles, but apart from a long-standing agreement among themselves not to set up lodges in another's jurisdiction within the British Isles, no such concordat applied to their activities in British colonies.²² As a consequence, lodges of all three constitutions jostled against each other in colonial settlements. Four principal factors then combined to cause the lodges in British North America and Australia to meld together and form their own Grand Lodges in each colony: the 'home' Grand Lodges' neglect of their colonial lodges; the colonial freemasons' wish for self-government at least commensurate with the responsibilities and authorities already granted to colonial governments by the imperial government; their wish to achieve greater uniformity in their practices; and the 'home' Grand Lodges' stipulation that to be recognised as regular members of the world-wide family of Grand Lodges the new Grand Lodges would have to have been formed by the 'practical unanimity' of all the lodges in the territory, whatever their original masonic allegiance.²³ For freemasons in the Canadian colonies the increasing visibility of the Grand Lodges in the adjoining United States gave an additional stimulus, and, in due course, the formation of Grand Lodges in the Canadian colonies encouraged a similar but later development in their Australian counterparts.

²² While Harland-Jacobs usefully draws attention to the tripartite 'International Compact' of 1814, her quotations from it omit the phrase 'that the present practice with respect to Lodges established in distant parts under either of the Three Grand Lodges shall continue on the present footing.' Moreover, it appears that the Compact's eighth resolution, viz 'That these Resolutions be reported to the Three Grand Lodges, entered on the Records thereof and printed and circulated to all the Lodges holding of them respectively.', has never been carried out. See Harland-Jacobs *Builders of Empire*, p. 149; UGLE's *Proceedings*, 3 September 1930.

²³ Though the term 'practical unanimity' does not appear to have been used by the UGLE until 1890, the principle it describes was applied from 1858 onwards. (See UGLE's *Proceedings*, 3 September 1890, and Daniel, 'Grand Lodges in British Colonies', *AQC* vol. 119 (2006), p. 23.

The first breakaway Grand Lodge in a British colony, the so-called Grand Lodge of Canada, was formed in 1855, a few months before Carnarvon's initiation, but it did not meet that last stipulation until 1858. By the time of Carnarvon's death, Grand Lodges had also been created in Nova Scotia (1866), New Brunswick (1867), Quebec (1869), British Columbia (1871), Manitoba (1875), Prince Edward Island (1875), South Australia (1884), New South Wales (1888) and Victoria (1889). These Grand Lodges, though based in British colonies, were independent of each other and of their sponsors, *de jure* and *de facto*. From the moment of their creation any formal link with the three 'home' Grand Lodges was forever broken, and correspondence practically ceased. While the initial reaction of the Grand Master of the UGLE in the 1850s, Lord Zetland, to the first Canadian declaration of (masonic) independence reflected George III's to the American colonies' in the previous century, and although Zetland's successor but one, the Prince of Wales, briefly tried in the 1880s to keep the nascent Australian Grand Lodges subordinate to the UGLE, they were unable to stem the tide of independence in these colonies, and the UGLE, like the Grand Lodges of Ireland and Scotland, bid farewell to its progeny. As Carnarvon told the UGLE, 'we are losing nothing that we could possibly have retained for one moment against their wish' – but he deluded himself when he went on to say that 'we are following the analogy of Imperial Administration', because the new Grand Lodges belonged to 'the Grand Lodges of the world' and did not owe allegiance to any superior masonic body. He could claim, perhaps, that 'the ties of Masonic affection have not in the least been weakened', but the masonic link with the UGLE had been broken for ever and the new Grand Lodges in effect sank beneath the UGLE's horizon.²⁴

Given these facts it should not any longer be claimed that 'British freemasonry' – which is in itself a misnomer – had an 'imperialist' agenda: complete independence was ceded to the several Grand Lodges in what were to become the Dominions of Canada and Australia, in several cases before the dominions were created, and in all cases before the dominions achieved constitutional independence from Britain.²⁵ Similarly, no evidence has been found to support the claims that in the period under review the leaders of 'English' freemasonry used the

²⁴ *Proceedings*, 5 December 1888.

²⁵ In her article 'All in the family' Harland-Jacobs argued that 'The achievement of fiscal and administrative independence did in fact strengthen British North American Freemasons' sense of belonging to an extended British Masonic family...Once their frustrations were resolved, their sentimental ties remained and in fact strengthened.' But the evidence she cites is the rhetoric used at the time of separation, not the subsequent practice.

institution to advance the imperialist cause (other than Carnarvon's short-lived and generally deprecated attempt, on behalf of the Prince of Wales, to encourage freemasons at home and abroad to make donations to the proposed Imperial Institute) or, indeed that the UGLE took a party-political line. After all, it was the avoidance of party politics and of topics of religious debate that helped to keep at least the core of the masonic family together in the British Empire, though it must swiftly be added that the family often failed to live up to the Victorian ideal and sometimes more closely resembled the fragmented family of the 21st century. The claim that freemasonry, even just the freemasonry practised by the three 'home' Grand Lodges, was one happy family cannot be substantiated: not only did the new Grand Lodges in the colonies quickly lose touch with their origins, but such difficult jurisdictional problems arose between them and their parents, and even among the parent Grand Lodges themselves, that communications between the parties in disputes were even occasionally formally suspended, sometimes for several years.²⁶ Indeed, it may even be the case (though to examine it is beyond the scope of this thesis) that such was and is the determination of the Grand Lodges formed in British colonies in the second half of the 19th century to hold on to the territory over which they claimed jurisdiction at the time of their formation that they may not have advanced the cause of their respective host nation's eventual political unification and should not therefore be described as 'proto-nationalist.' It would, however, appear certain that the two factors that have prevented the formation of a Grand Lodge in South Africa that is representative of the majority of the lodges working there are the inability of those under the three 'home' Grand Lodges to meld together and, secondly, their failure to meld with those of 'Dutch' origin – an example of the occasionally dysfunctional nature of the masonic family.²⁷

Carnarvon, the statesman

The examination of Carnarvon's imperial philosophy and of his masonic career conducted for this thesis has also thrown up evidence which argues for a more nuanced view of him as a statesman than that presented by many post-Hardinge commentators. True, the examination has

²⁶ See, for example, the disputes between the Grand Lodges of Canada and Quebec mentioned in the section 'Carnarvon and Canada' (1883-84) above, and the decision of the Supreme Council of the Ancient and Accepted Rite for England and Wales to break off relations with its Scottish counterpart from 1877 until 1889 over claims to Gibraltar, included in the section on 'Carnarvon the freemason' (sub-section 'Sovereign Grand Commander' 1875-78).

²⁷ For his comments on a 21st-century view of the empire as a family see Andrew Porter's introduction to the *OHBE*, vol. 3, p. 21.

relied to a considerable extent on what Carnarvon wrote about himself, and on his speeches, and a historian needs to be aware that his subject may be writing for posterity. Conversely, diaries and personal papers not apparently written for such purposes can provide useful parts of the biographical jigsaw – and Carnarvon was well aware of the risk he was running by not destroying or ordering the destruction of his own papers, for when Lord Ellenborough's diaries were published in 1888, Carnarvon wrote in his diary that they should never have been made public, adding: 'It shows the risk of leaving papers behind me – & yet this is what I have done: for I shall leave a gt mass both public & private.'²⁸ It is also the case that the few incidents from Carnarvon's public life which have been considered here were selected from that mass for this particular thesis and cannot therefore present anything approaching the full picture of Carnarvon the statesman. Nevertheless, it is contended that the examination of this necessarily partial evidence has at least made the case for looking at Carnarvon in the round, rather than just from the perspective of his actions as a minister in the imperial cabinet.

The most striking revelation is that, on the evidence, Carnarvon was not the aggressive imperialist depicted by some scholars, let alone one who at first did not know what the term imperialism meant.²⁹ Carnarvon, and others before and after him, found it difficult to define imperialism, as his letter of 24 October 1878 to Robert Phillimore indicates, but the important paper he presented in Edinburgh the following month shows that although he was wary of the 'uncomfortable Continental associations' the neologism conjured up he had a clear idea of what constituted 'true' imperialism rather than imperialism in 'its jingo sense'.³⁰ In connection with British North America and Australia one searches in vain for signs of aggressive imperialism on Carnarvon's part. He viewed 'the acquisition of territory... as a rule [as] the last resource', calling the annexation of Perak, for example, 'an outrageous act.'³¹ The exception to this rule, and one seized on not only by those historians who portray Carnarvon as an 'ultra-imperialist' but also by Carnarvon's erstwhile cabinet colleagues who sought to exculpate themselves for its consequences by loading all the blame on to him, was the annexation of the Transvaal in 1877 which Carnarvon master-minded. But Carnarvon did not act with the 'doctrinaire

²⁸ CP BL Add 60930, 22 April 1888.

²⁹ On the first point see, for example, Goodfellow, *op. cit.*, pp. 217-19; Hyam, *op. cit.* (1976), pp. 303-4. On the second see James Morris *op. cit.*, p. 388; Martin Walker, *op. cit.*, pp. 13-20.

³⁰ CP BL Add. 60861, f. 98, Carnarvon to Phillimore, 24 October; Carnarvon, 'Imperial Administration', p. 761.

³¹ Carnarvon, 'Imperial Administration', p. 759. On Perak, see CP BL Add. 60903, 22 November 1875, and PRO/30/6/43, f. 235.

enthusiasm' alleged by Blake or, according to Salisbury, 'without reflexion'.³² Instead, Carnarvon had first sought the advice of his officials in South Africa, then brought his cabinet colleagues (including Disraeli and Salisbury) into the picture, obtained their approval for the commission that Queen Victoria then signed, and, finally, he had instructed Shepstone to execute it with caution, and only when certain conditions obtained.³³ The evidence in fact bears out Boisfeuillet Jones' conclusion that 'South African problems were too complex and intractable to be traced to isolated individuals'.³⁴

The other significant insight – apart from that provided by the full details of his imperial philosophy – concerns what other commentators have described as Carnarvon's 'incurable fidgetiness', 'oversensitiveness', 'proclivity for resignation in unpleasant situations', 'highmindedness to the point of priggishness', or simply 'weakness', and which, in their view, spoiled his chances of 'political success'.³⁵ Invariably these comments have been made in the contexts of the events that led to Carnarvon's three resignations from the cabinet between 1867 and 1886. A review of the evidence in each case suggests that such judgments are harsh and that from his first ministerial appointment onwards Carnarvon acted in accordance with what Gordon identifies as 'his firm adherence to principles'.³⁶ No lesser figures than Salisbury and Derby accompanied Carnarvon to the backbenches in 1867 and 1878 respectively, yet the same descriptions have not been applied to them. And, when Queen Victoria herself criticised Carnarvon for resigning from the cabinet in January 1886, he politely but firmly wrote to her to put the record straight. As that letter presents Carnarvon rather differently than some commentators' descriptions of him it is perhaps worth quoting from it at some length here:

³² Blake, *op. cit.*, pp. 665-66. A. Roberts, *op. cit.*, p. 830 and chapter note no. 17.

³³ See, for example, Goodfellow, *op. cit.*, pp. 124-128; Disraeli to Carnarvon, 20 September 1876 (quoted in Hardinge, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, p. 234); Carnarvon to Shepstone, 4 October 1876 (PRO 30/6/23 f.2); Carnarvon to Disraeli, 15 October 1876, and Disraeli's reply of 16 October 1876 (Hardinge, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, pp. 219-20; Queen Victoria to Carnarvon, 21 November 1876 (CP BL Add. 60757, f. 40); and Carnarvon to Frere, 12 September 1877 (Hardinge, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, p. 291).

³⁴ Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 44. Jones reached this conclusion when he decided that Robert Herbert's reputation had not been irreparably damaged by the South African events that occurred after Carnarvon's resignation. His conclusion applies equally well to Carnarvon.

³⁵ George Hamilton, *Parliamentary Reminiscences and Reflections*, (1916-22), as cited by Peter Gordon in his article on Carnarvon in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* ['ODNB'] (on-line edition, 2004-8), pp. 697-703; *The Times*, 30 June 1890, p. 10; Corinne C. Weston, 'Disunity on the Opposition Front Bench, 1884' *The English Historical Review*, vol. CVI (1991), p. 85; Knox, 'Conservative Imperialism', pp. 335 and 357; Bentley, *op. cit.*, p. 128.

³⁶ Gordon, *op. cit.*, p. 697.

... It grieves Lord Carnarvon to observe at the end of Your Majesty's letter Your Majesty's remark as to his leaving for the third time the government with which he has been serving. He had hoped and indeed fully understood after his conversation with Your Majesty at Windsor that Your Majesty approved of the course wh. he was about to adopt, and was quite aware that it was distinctly agreed with Lord Salisbury that Lord Carnarvon should not remain in Office longer than the Elections or the meeting of Parliament. When the Elections were over Lord Carnarvon was on grounds of health very anxious to be relieved of his office, but the Cabinet pressed him so strongly to retain office for another month or six weeks that he put all question of health aside and consented. The unexpected announcement of his retirement in the newspapers anticipated that retirement by a short time, but also forced him to delay no longer...³⁷

That Carnarvon occasionally found himself out of step with the leaders of the Tory party and indeed with the majority of his cabinet colleagues is a matter of fact. He himself testifies that while he was out of office between 1878 and 1885 he did not feel that he belonged to either the Tories or the Liberals. As he put his political position in 1880, 'My sympathies as well as my misgivings as regards the two parties are very equally balanced. Tory democracy on the one side, Radicalism on the other do not leave much to choose from.'³⁸ But principles, for Carnarvon, outweighed political loyalties and even his long-standing friendship with Salisbury, a friendship which had broken while Carnarvon was in Dublin and which Salisbury's appointment of him as Lord Lieutenant of Hampshire in 1888 did not repair. Carnarvon's stands on matters of principle do not appear to have been generally interpreted as signs of weakness during his lifetime, or to have reduced his popularity in England or in the colonies of white settlement. As the *City Jackdaw* commented on Carnarvon's resignation over the 'Eastern problem' (which Bentley attributed to his 'weakness'):

Though Tories rage and Royalty may frown,
And *Pall Mall* wax indignant,
Though venal hirelings write you down
And foam with hate malignant,
Yet we thank Heaven that in this time
One Minister is honest;
And rather than commit a crime
Becomes in Council *non est*.³⁹

³⁷ CP BL Add 60757, f. 96, Carnarvon to Queen Victoria, 20 January 1886. According to Hardinge, *op. cit.*, vol. 3, p. 211, the *Standard* had leaked the news of Carnarvon's impending retirement on 13 January 1886.

³⁸ CP BL Add 60861, f. 111, Carnarvon to Phillimore, 30 March 1880.

³⁹ *City Jackdaw*, 1 February 1878. Bentley, *op. cit.*, p. 128.

That Carnarvon does not appear to have exhibited the same ambivalence (or the negative characteristics identified by some previous commentators) towards either his church or freemasonry, is surely significant for an understanding of the man. Though he engaged in their internal debates (for example, in the church over ritualism and the Athanasian creed, and in freemasonry over the UGLE's handling of colonial lodges and its stance on the 'persecution' of its Roman Catholic members by Catholic priests), he never seems to have doubted his membership of either body, and his early friendships in both (for example with the Canons Liddon and Portal, and with WWB Beach) lasted until death.

Epilogue

Sir Frederick Rogers, writing in 1866, forecast to Carnarvon that 'responsible government' would ultimately lead to the dissolution of the Empire. He likened it to a disease, adding that a 'disease is mortal though it may last with us till we die of old age.' Carnarvon, publicly at least, claimed that the British Empire, unlike previous empires, would not dissolve, partly because of the cultural and sentimental ties between what became the dominions and Britain, but especially because of its subjects' allegiance to the monarchy. He foresaw not imperial dissolution but a confederated partnership of closely-related equals. Rogers' forecast was the more accurate. By the end of the twentieth century the Empire had dissolved into the (no longer 'British') Commonwealth, a voluntary association of more than fifty sovereign independent states, only sixteen of which still had Queen Elizabeth II as head of state; the last constitutional ties between Britain and its former settler colonies had dissolved; and Britain's overseas territories had been reduced to a few small islands (plus Gibraltar and the British Arctic Territory), scattered over the face of the globe.

Strangely enough, however, England's masonic empire (as it was called by Albert Edward, Prince of Wales) has fared rather better, despite the fact that some of its parts chose complete independence from Britain as early as the latter half of the nineteenth century, and despite the absence of a masonic equivalent of the Commonwealth or even of the Lambeth Conference. There are still significant numbers of 'English' lodges in (for example) Africa, the Caribbean, India, South East Asia, New Zealand and Hong Kong, all still owing allegiance and paying their dues to the United Grand Lodge of England,

whose jurisdiction they still accept and whose head is still a member of the British royal family. Today, very few of their members are British in any sense of the word, yet they have so far chosen not to form their own Grand Lodges and thus not to declare masonic independence. The difference between the fate of the British Empire and England's masonic empire may be worth further exploration, but that lies beyond the scope of this thesis. Within the 'English' masonic empire, however, much has changed, and there is hardly a member of either of the British Houses of Parliament to be found in the current list of the senior members of the UGLE.⁴⁰ But a full sociological study of the changes in its membership since Carnarvon's time and of the nature of the cultural bond that holds its members together has yet to be undertaken.

⁴⁰ See *United Grand Lodge of England Masonic Year Book* (2008-2009), pp. 106-202.

APPENDIX A

Some key dates and events in Carnarvon's life

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>EVENT</u>
1831	24-Jun	Carnarvon born
1839		The Durham Report on British North America
1841		Upper and Lower Canada amalgamate to form united province of Canada
1849	October December	Matriculated at Christ Church, University of Oxford Succeeded as the 4th Earl of Carnarvon on the death of his father, the 3rd Earl.
		Canadian self-government confirmed
1852	November	BA (Oxon): 1st class in Literis Humanioribus.
1854		Outbreak of Crimean War
1855	10-Oct	Grand Lodge of Canada formed
1856	05-Feb May 23-Jun 01-Oct	<i>'Initiated' in Westminster & Keystone Lodge, London</i> <i>Appointed Senior Warden of Westminster & Keystone Lodge</i> End of Crimean War Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons formed <i>In an address to Grand Lodge, set out his policy on colonial matters.</i>
1857	08-Jan 18-May 20-May 16-Jun 10-Sep 12-Oct 11-Dec	<i>Addressed Royal Cumberland Lodge, Bath, on Country Lodges, Canada, Grand Lodge as Parliament: imperial role; freemasonry & the colonies; federation; etc</i> <i>'Exalted' in Alfred Chapter (Royal Arch), Oxford</i> <i>Installed as Master of Westminster & Keystone Lodge</i> <i>'Advanced' in Bon Accord [Mark] Lodge</i> Ancient' Grand Lodge of Canada formed <i>Invested as Provincial Senior Grand Warden in the Provincial Grand Lodge of Hampshire.</i> <i>Appointed as Deputy Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Mark Masons</i>
		Anglican Church disestablished in Canada

- 1858** 20-Feb **Lord Derby (Con.) succeeded Lord Palmerston (Whig) as Prime Minister**
 27-Feb Appointed as Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies in Lord Derby's government
 April *Re-elected Master of Westminster & Keystone Lodge*
 14-Jul **Union of the two Grand Lodges of Canada**
- 1859** 04-Apr **Derby's government fell. Parliament dissolved.**
 June **Palmerston (Lib.) again Prime Minister**
 13-Oct High Steward, University of Oxford
 November **Darwin's *Origin of Species* published**
- 1860** 20-Jun *Installed as Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons. 'Perfected' [18°] in Metropolitan Chapter (Ancient & Accepted Rite), London*
 08-Oct *30°, Ancient and Accepted Rite.*
 09-Oct *30°, Ancient and Accepted Rite.*
 13-Nov *'Installed' as a Knight Templar in Melita Encampment, Valetta, Malta*
- 1861** 12-Apr **American Civil War started**
Appointed Great Seneschal of the Knights Templar
 12-Jun *Re-elected as Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons*
- 1862** 18-Jun *Announced forthcoming retirement as Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons*
Re-appointed Great Seneschal, Knights Templar
- 1863** 10-Jun *Installed Viscount Holmesdale as his successor as Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons*
- 1865** 09-Apr **American Civil War ends**
 October **Death of Palmerston. Lord John Russell (Lib.) succeeds**
- 1866** 28-Jun **Lord Derby (Con.) appointed Prime Minister following resignation of Russell on defeat of Reform Bill**
 05-Jul Privy Counsellor
 06-Jul Sworn in as Colonial Secretary
- 1867** 19-Feb Moved 2nd Reading of the Bill for the Confederation of the British North American Provinces
 2/3 Mar Resigned as Colonial Secretary over the Reform question, before BNA Bill became law
 September **British North America Act; creation of Dominion of Canada**
First Lambeth Conference

- 1868 February **Disraeli (Con.) succeeds Lord Derby as Prime Minister**
15-Aug *Appointed Provincial Grand Master, Somerset*
- Colonial Society founded in London**
Dilke's Greater Britain
- December **Tory government fell. Gladstone (Lib.) appointed as Prime Minister**
December *Prince of Wales initiated into freemasonry in Stockholm*
- 1870 28-Feb Took seat on the Opposition [Tory] Front Bench in the House of Lords
Appointed Deputy Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of England, and, ex officio, Second Grand Principal of the Supreme Grand Chapter of England [Royal Arch]
- April
19-Jul **Outbreak of Franco-Prussian War**
- 1871 February *31°, 32° and 33° and Member of the Supreme Council of the Ancient & Accepted Rite*
Paris Commune
- May **Treaty of Frankfurt between France and Germany**
October **Annexation of Griqualand West**
- 1872 03-Jun *Installed as the first Master of Friends in Council Lodge, London*
- Cape Colony granted self-government**
- 1873 *Master of Royal Alpha Lodge, London*
Continued as Master of Friends in Council Lodge for a second year
- 1874 February **Gladstone (Lib.) lost General Election; Disraeli (Con.) again Prime Minister.**
21-Feb *Received Seals of Office as Colonial Secretary*
14-Jul *Elected as Sovereign Grand Commander of the Supreme Council of the Ancient & Accepted Rite*
16 Jul? *Warrant issued to set up Supreme Council of the A&A Rite for Canada*
14-Oct *Appointed as Pro Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of England by the Prince of Wales, its Acting Grand Master*
02-Dec *Invested as Pro Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of England*
12-Dec *As Sovereign Grand Commander of the Ancient & Accepted Rite, installed the Prince of Wales as its Grand Patron*
- 1875 25-Jan Death of Evelyn, his first wife
06-Apr FRS
Installed the Prince of Wales as Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of England at the Royal Albert Hall, and was re-appointed Pro Grand Master
28-Apr *Appointed [ex officio] Pro First Grand Principal of the Supreme Grand Chapter of the Royal Arch.*
05-May

- 1877 10-Feb *Resigned from the Supreme Council of the Ancient & Accepted Rite*
 12-Apr **Annexation of the Transvaal proclaimed locally by Shepstone**
 Moved 2nd Reading of the South African Confederation Permissive Bill in the House of Lords
 23-Apr
 07-May Announced the annexation of the Transvaal in House of Lords
 10-Aug **South Africa Bill received Royal Assent**

 First Australian Grand Lodge formed (GL of NSW)
- 1878 24-Jan Resigned as Colonial Secretary

Presided at meeting of the UGLE when it accepted his committee's advice to break off relations with the Grand Orient of France
 06-Mar Addressed the Edinburgh Philosophical Society on 'Imperial Administration'
 05-Nov
 December Married his cousin, Elisabeth Catherine Howard
- 1879 Jan-Sep **Anglo-Zulu War**

Retired from the office of Provincial Grand Master for the [Mark] Province of Somerset (first appointed in 1858)
- 1880 April **Gladstone appointed Prime Minister after fall of Con. govt.**
 October **Outbreak of 1st South African (Anglo-Boer) War**
- 1881 05-May Returned to the [Tory] Opposition Front Bench
- 1883 23-Aug Left England for visit to Canada
 10-Oct Returned to England

Seeley's Expansion of England
 2nd Australian Grand Lodge formed (GL of Victoria)
- 1884 **Imperial Federation League formed**
 3rd Australian Grand Lodge formed (GL of South Australia)
- 1885 June **Gladstone's government defeated over Irish Home Rule Bill**
Salisbury (Con.) appointed Prime Minister
 Appointed as [interim] Viceroy of Ireland
- 1886 January Resigned as [interim] Viceroy of Ireland
 28-Jan **Salisbury's administration ended**
 30-Jan Left Ireland
 01-Feb **Gladstone (Lib.) again Prime Minister**
 20-Jul **Gladstone government falls**
 25-Jul **Salisbury (Con.) again Prime Minister**

- | | | |
|-------------|--|---|
| 1887 | Late Aug
mid-end
September
20-Oct | Left England for visit to the Australian colonies, via South Africa
In South Africa
Arrived in Tasmania |
| 1888 | 17-Feb
August | Left Australia for England
United Grand Lodge of New South Wales formed |
| 1889 | March | United Grand Lodge of Victoria formed |
| 1890 | 28-Jun | <i>Died - still in office as Pro Grand Master of the UGLE and its Provincial Grand Master for Somerset, and as Pro First Grand Principal in the Supreme Grand Chapter of the Royal Arch</i> |

APPENDIX B

Glossary of masonic terms used in this thesis

[For a fuller glossary see Frederick Smyth, *A Reference Book for Freemasons* (1998)]

Ancient and Accepted Rite

See Appendix D.

Board of General Purposes

The executive committee of a Grand Lodge.

Craft

The term 'the Craft' is a synonym for the three fundamental degrees of freemasonry ('Entered Apprentice', 'Fellow Craft' and 'Master Mason') which are 'worked' in lodges of freemasons. A 'Craft' lodge owes ultimate allegiance to and receive its authority to work these degrees from a 'Grand Lodge', which may delegate some of its powers to a Provincial or District Grand Lodge.

Grand Lodge

The masonic body that has the ultimate masonic authority over a group of lodges. The first Grand Lodge, the Grand Lodge of England, was formed in 1717 by four London lodges. Since its amalgamation with its rival Grand Lodge in England in 1813 it has been known the **United Grand Lodge of England**, and today it has about 8,500 lodges within its jurisdiction and a membership of about 230,000. The senior offices in the UGLE today are those of the Grand Master, Pro Grand Master, Deputy Grand Master, Assistant Grand Master and the Senior and Junior Wardens, together with the forty or so Metropolitan, Provincial and District Grand Masters to whom the Grand Master has delegated some of his powers. Within the British Isles there are two other Grand Lodges that control 'Craft' freemasonry, namely the **Grand Lodges of Ireland and Scotland**, established in 1725 and 1736 respectively. All three Grand Lodges have had lodges under their jurisdiction throughout the British Empire. In France, the oldest such body is known not as a Grand Lodge but as the **Grand Orient of France**. In the Netherlands the equivalent body is the **Grand East of the Netherlands**.

Knights Templar

See Appendix D.

Lodge

A lodge (or 'Private Lodge' as it is termed in the UGLE's *Book of Constitutions*) is the smallest yet most important unit or group of freemasons in the Craft, authorised to meet as such, and to work the three degrees of Craft freemasonry by the Grand Master of the Grand Lodge. Its principal officers are the Master, and the Senior and Junior Wardens.

Mark Masonry

See Appendix D.

Master

One who presides over a lodge. In the 'English' Craft he has to be a Master Mason (ie to have taken the third of the three degrees of Craft freemasonry, the preceding two being those of Entered Apprentice and Fellow Craft) and to have served as a warden in a lodge for at least one year.

Pro Grand Master

In the 'English' Grand Lodge the office of Pro Grand Master can be filled only when the Grand Master is a prince of the blood royal, and, until 1976, its holder had to be a peer of the realm. The office is second only to the Grand Master's, and its occupant is the royal Grand Master's right-hand man, a masonic elder statesman to whom he can leave the oversight of the Craft's internal and external affairs, and who represents him when he is unable to preside over meetings of Grand Lodge or to carry out public ceremonies, such as laying the foundation-stone of a cathedral with the appropriate masonic ritual.

Royal Arch

See Appendix D.

T. G. A. O. T. U

The Great Architect of the Universe, a masonic expression meaning God.

APPENDIX C

**The Structural Organisation of the United Grand Lodge of England,
1850 - 1900***

GRAND LODGE

Grand Master
(Pro Grand Master)
Deputy Grand Master
Senior and Junior Grand Wardens
Grand Secretary
etc.

PROVINCIAL OR DISTRICT GRAND LODGES

(created by and reporting to the Grand Master of the UGLE)

Provincial / District Grand Master
Provincial / District Deputy Grand Master
Provincial / District Grand Wardens
Provincial / District Grand Secretary
etc

PRIVATE LODGES

(A Private Lodge is the basic unit of the organization. Its authority derives from the Grand Master of the UGLE, and it works the three degrees of Entered Apprentice, Fellow Craft and Master Mason. Most Private Lodges come within the immediate jurisdiction of a Provincial or District Grand Lodge, which in turn reports to the Grand Lodge)

Master
Wardens
Etc.

* For further information about freemasonry see the UGLE's booklets, *Freemasonry: Your Questions Answered* and *An Approach to Life*, both published in 2001 and available via telephone number 0207 831 9811.

APPENDIX D

Other masonic orders/degrees referred to in this thesis

In 'English' freemasonry there are many masonic orders or degrees which are not controlled by the United Grand Lodge of England but which require that a candidate for membership is already, and has been for a number of years, a 'Master Mason' (ie that he has taken his third degree in a Craft lodge - see Appendix B: Glossary). Four of these are mentioned in the thesis – the Ancient and Accepted Rite, the (masonic) Knights Templar, the Mark, and the Royal Arch – and their essential details are as follows:

1. The Ancient and Accepted Rite

The full title today of the rite which Carnarvon joined in 1860 is 'The Ancient and Accepted Rite for England and Wales, and its Districts and Chapters Overseas.' The Rite comprises thirty-three degrees, the first three of which are not practised as the three degrees of Craft masonry are considered as their equivalents. It is headed by a 'Supreme Council' of nine members of its 33rd degree, and the Rite under its direction has been exclusively Christian since the Supreme Council was established in England in 1845 with authority from the Supreme Council of the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction in the USA (where the first 'Supreme Council' was formed, in Charleston, in 1801). The senior member of the nine-man 'English' Supreme Council is called the 'Sovereign Grand Commander', and the basic units under its jurisdiction are called 'Chapters'.

2. The (masonic) Knights Templar

The full title today of the order which Carnarvon joined in 1860 is 'The United Religious, Military and Masonic Orders of the Temple and of St John of Jerusalem, Palestine, Rhodes and Malta of England and Wales and its Provinces Overseas'. Its governing body was called the 'Grand Conclave' from its foundation in 1791 until 1872 (today its title is 'the Great Priory'), and its three senior offices when Carnarvon was made 'Great Seneschal' in 1861 were the 'Grand Master', the 'Deputy Grand Master' and the 'Great Seneschal'. Its basic units were then called 'Encampments', but today are known as 'Preceptories'. Candidates for admission to the order are required to be members of the Royal Arch (see below) as well as Master Masons in the Craft.

3. The Mark

Although the Mark degree(s) are known to have been practised in England from the middle of the eighteenth century, the first 'Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons' was not formed until 1856. Its organisation is modelled on that of the Craft's Grand Lodge (see Appendix C), its senior offices being the 'Grand Master' and the 'Deputy Grand Master', and its basic units are called 'lodges'. Carnarvon was appointed Deputy Grand Master in the same year that he joined (1857), and he was elected Grand Master in 1860. He also held the office of Provincial Grand Master for Somerset from 1858 to 1879.

4. The Royal Arch

'Royal Arch' freemasonry can be traced back to the early eighteenth century. From 1817 the governing body of the order in 'English' freemasonry has been styled 'The Supreme Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of England'. Its basic units are called 'Chapters'. The order is the closest masonic organisation to the United Grand Lodge of England, whose senior office-bearers (Grand Master, Pro Grand Master, Deputy Grand Master and Grand Secretary), if members of the Royal Arch, hold the equivalent offices in its Supreme Grand Chapter, namely the First, Pro and Second 'Grand Principals' and 'Grand Scribe E'. Carnarvon, who joined the order in 1857, thus became its Second Grand Principal in 1870 (having been appointed Deputy Grand Master of the UGLE), and its Pro First Grand Principal in 1875 (when the UGLE's Pro Grand Master).

Aide memoire:

Name	Smallest unit	Supreme body in 'English' freemasonry	Senior offices
Royal Arch	Chapter	Supreme Grand Chapter	First Grand Principal (Pro First Grand Principal) Second Grand Principal
Knights Templar	Encampment (now 'Preceptory')	Grand Conclave (now 'Great Priory')	Grand Master Deputy Grand Master Great Seneschal
Mark	Lodge	Grand Lodge	Grand Master Deputy Grand Master
Ancient & Accepted Rite	Chapter	Supreme Council	Sovereign Grand Commander & eight other Members

APPENDIX E

A note on maps

It has not yet proved possible to obtain permission from the publishers of the *Atlas of British Overseas Expansion* (1991), edited by A.N. Porter, to reproduce those from that important source. Readers are therefore referred to those on pages 69, 73 and 113 in that *Atlas*, namely and respectively those showing the expansion of settlement in Upper and Lower Canada, the Australian colonies and their expansion to the 1850s, and Britain and the partition of South Africa, 1854-1910.

However, acting on advice from the University of Sheffield that it is permissible to include maps that are technically subject to copyright in the paper version of a thesis (but not in the electronic version), and with the assistance of the Map Department of the Library of Congress, copies of contemporary maps of Canada, South Africa and Australia have been included at the end of the paper version of this thesis. (The one of Australia entitled 'Centenary of New South Wales' was actually published in *The Sydney Morning Herald* on 24 January 1888, while Carnarvon was in the city.)

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BRITISH AMERICA



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 With
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 & TRANSVAAL.**

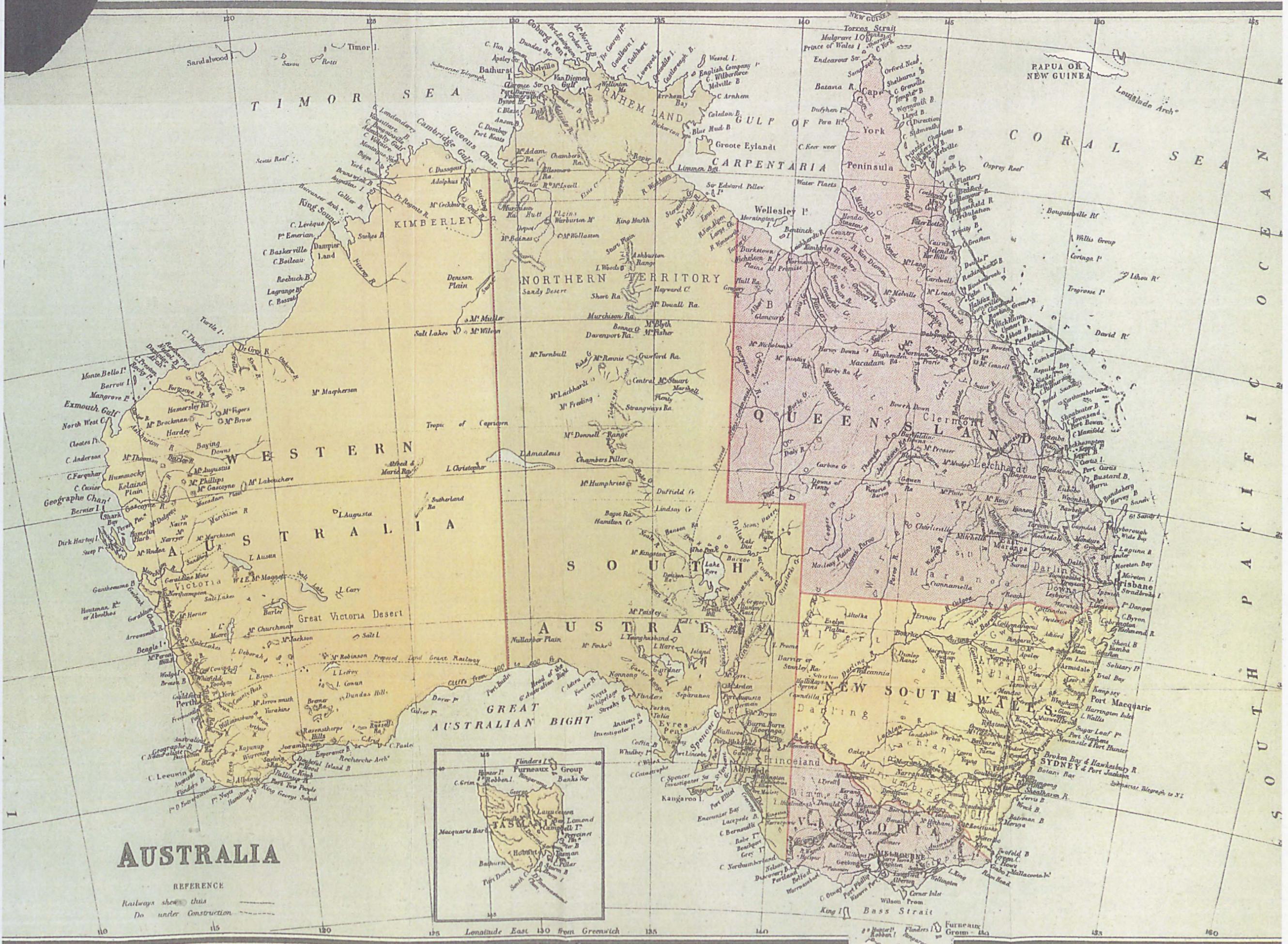
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CENTENARY OF NEW SOUTH WALES.

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