The City and Imperial Propaganda: A Comparative Study of Empire Day in England, Australia and New Zealand, 1903-1914

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The emergence of a vibrant imperial culture in British and colonial society from the 1890s both fascinated and appalled contemporaries. It has also consistently provoked controversy among historians. However, while historians have clashed over the degree to which an imperial popular culture penetrated Edwardian society, few studies have focused on how the meaning of imperial propaganda was shaped by particular social and cultural conditions in the various cities and colonies of the British Empire.¹ Most historians have tended to focus on the ‘cultural end product’ such as the imperial advertisement, theatrical performance or music hall sketch. This article will take a very different approach by exploring how the meaning of Empire Day, a movement that endeavoured to transmit a clear and unambiguous imperial message, was manipulated and transformed through a range of urban institutions before reaching the public at large. In selecting cities in the Antipodean colonies for comparison, the study will explore societies that were closest in urban organisation and culture to Britain’s civic infrastructure. Indeed, in the eyes of imperialists like Lord Meath who founded Empire Day in 1903, the white Anglo-Saxons in Australia and New Zealand cities were deemed to be on the same rung of civilisation as their counterparts in Britain. By adopting this comparative approach, we shall challenge the assumption that a hegemonic imperial ideology was streamed uncontested and unaltered to the urban population at large.² Indeed, we shall argue that due to the significant differences in urban development in Britain and colonial towns, the imperial message was either, in the British context, directed to cure perceived local crises or, alternatively within a colonial setting, came secondary to national priorities. First, we shall contrast the urban and civic development of differing English and Antipodean communities, before investigating how this environment shaped the dissemination and reception of the imperial message in the city. We conclude that, in the case of Empire Day, the urban setting is decisive to understanding how imperial propaganda was transformed to meet the needs of local or national environments.³ Key differences in

the way civic culture and the provincial press evolved in Britain and her colonies ensured that Meath's desire that Empire Day would nurture a unifying and homogenous imperial identity proved an elusive aspiration.

While few historians have focused on Antipodean cities, the nature, impact and importance of Britain's domestic imperial culture has been the subject of intense academic debate for over forty years. During the 1970s, seminal research by scholars such as Richard Price and Eric Hobsbawm challenged the then dominant view that large sections of working class were involved in widespread jingoistic celebrations in Britain during the Boer War.⁴ However, by the 1980s a consistent body of research from leading historians such as J.M. MacKenzie's sought to illustrate the pervasive influence of empire in cultural institutions such as the theatre, music, advertising and the cinema in popular culture.⁵ In recent years another strand of imperial history has challenged both the conceptual and methodological approach of historians of empire. Within the last twenty years, 'new imperial' historians have argued for a broader analysis of empire that questions the concepts of nation and identity by exploring the 'metropole and periphery' through the same analytical perspective. For historians such as Antoinette Burton, who have focused on the formulation of identity, 'Empire and nation were mutually constitutive'.⁶ She challenged a tendency in imperial studies to shore up the nation and re-constitute its centrality.⁷ However, as James Thompson has pointed out, this pre-occupation with the relationship between nation and empire may underestimate the importance of the city and neighbourhood in the formation of imperial attitudes.⁸ Furthermore, Bernard Porter has questioned the new imperial histories' sensitivity to historical contexts and the assumption that an imperial culture influenced peoples' lives in Britain during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. At the height of imperial fervour he maintained that entrenched divisions in social class meant that there was no shared meaning of nation or empire. 'Out of separation arose a very different political culture (or cultures), with priorities and values of its own, which the imperialists were very unlikely to be able to penetrate'.⁹ Empire Day, then, presents an ideal case study to explore how some of these key themes such as imperial propaganda, its adoption and reception were negotiated through English and Antipodean urban contexts.

Surprisingly, for such a long-running event that propagated the extent and strength of Britain's Empire, historians have analysed the Empire Day movement sparingly. Research on Empire Day in Britain is generally contained within broader

Comment [B1]: Recast introduction to address reviewer's comments requesting more clarity and focus on how conditions in cities/colonies transformed the meaning of Empire Day

Comment [B2]: Addresses reviewer's request for more historiographical context on empire and popular culture

studies of imperial movements, particularly with regards to the activities of Lord Meath, the movement's founder.¹⁰ While most histories of empire and popular culture have merely paused to reflect upon the impact of Empire Day, a recent contribution by Jim English made the movement the focus of his study. In a detailed investigation, English draws from working-class autobiographies to chart the impact and development of the Empire Day movement in Britain. He argues that the widespread adoption of Empire Day had a greater social influence on British people than historians have hitherto recognised. According to English, Empire Day was able to 'traverse class lines and establish an imperial consciousness in the minds of working-class children' that performed a 'socialising role that upheld a belief in racial superiority and righteousness of the British Empire'.¹¹ These are strong claims for the importance of Empire Day that are largely based on autobiographical material scattered over Britain. Indeed, these findings contrast sharply with Bernard Porter's recent research which, like English, utilises working-class autobiographies but concludes that Empire Day was largely unsuccessful in inculcating an imperial sentiment. Porter notes that while some, like Robert Roberts, were influenced by the event, most regarded Empire Day as simply an opportunity for a half-day holiday.¹² An attempt to provide a national perspective of Empire Day through drawing evidence from working-class autobiographies from disparate geographical areas is clearly hampered by the problem of selection. This may account for these starkly different conclusions on the success or otherwise of Empire Day. In addition, the selection of a broad range of autobiographies removes the individual from key localised contexts and agencies that may have influenced the dissemination of the imperial message.

The historiography of imperial cultures in self-governing white settler dominions of the British Empire are, according to Angela Woollacott, 'largely unmapped'.¹³ Given the absence of this literature it is perhaps not surprising that a similar neglect of Empire Day characterises Antipodean historiography.¹⁴ Those historians that have focused on Empire Day have tended to focus on Irish, Catholic and Socialist opposition to the movement until it was consumed by ANZAC Day after the First World War.¹⁵ Clearly the growing importance of ANZAC day during the interwar-period dominates recent historiography and over-shadows the historical significance of Meath's attempts to disseminate a binding and cohesive imperial message across the Empire during the Edwardian era.¹⁶ Finally, while there has been

some significant research on the city as a site of imperial architecture, symbolism and ritual, few studies have explored how the city's institutions acted as conduits for imperial dissemination. Nevertheless, analyses of the city, its institutions and the dissemination of citizenship during this period provide perhaps the most consistent test of whether an aggressive imperial culture impinged upon working people's daily urban lives between 1870 and 1939. Indeed, Robert Colls and Richard Rodger have shown that, in themselves, cities and towns added an extra dimension to social, cultural and economic relationships.¹⁷ Historians of empire have begun to map out the way in which cities were interconnected socially, economically and politically and the part they played in an imperial system.¹⁸ Other essays have explored how imperialism imprinted indelible marks on city landscapes, architectures and cultures.¹⁹ However, despite the city acting as a significant cultural landscape for dominant contemporary ideas, the relationship between the modern city, empire and its citizens has largely been neglected.²⁰

Urban Development and the Provincial Press: The Forging of Imperial and civic Identities

When Empire Day was launched in 1903 the cause was quickly championed by imperial movements. Since local agencies were the key propagators of Empire we need to explore the contrasting urban infrastructures of British and Antipodean cities. For this study, three representative English cities were selected and four taken from New Zealand and Australia. The three English communities selected - Portsmouth, Coventry and Leeds - were primarily chosen for their contrasting municipal profiles since a strong civic culture and identity may have acted as a conduit for the imperial message.²¹ While Leeds represented the larger Edwardian city with a population of approximately 500,000, Coventry and Portsmouth were medium sized communities of between 120,000 to 180,000 residents in 1911.²² The significant physical and cultural naval presence in Portsmouth ensured that its local economy and national portrayal were bound tightly to imperial grandeur.²³ Alongside the naval influence, the city possessed a strong civic culture and an increasingly important skilled working-class sector employed in the Royal Dockyard.²⁴ Coventry, on the other hand, had neither an obvious imperial identity nor a strong civic culture. Between 1870 and 1939, the city emerged as an industrial boom town due to the bicycle and car trades employing vast armies of migrant semi-skilled workers.²⁵ Finally, Leeds represented the older

manufacturing city that was at the forefront of disseminating the civic ideal through architecture and schemes of social citizenship.²⁶ The city developed rapidly through the industrial revolution and built its manufacturing base and wealth on the dress trades and mechanical engineering.²⁷ In addition, Leeds had a greater ethnic diversity than both Portsmouth and Coventry since the city accommodated a significant Eastern European Jewish community by 1914.²⁸ There was, however, some similarity in the profile of Councillors in the three communities. While Portsmouth's Council was dominated by professionals and a 'shopocracy' of business interests, Coventry and Leeds Councils reflected both the influential retail body and industrial interests. What united all of these councillors was that their business interests were based in their own communities.²⁹

In contrast to English settlements, Antipodean towns were influenced in their design by post-enlightenment thinking and were, of course, unfettered by European early modern legacies. Thus by the end of the nineteenth century all Antipodean cities had invariably been laid out on a grid system and were far more ordered in their appearance when compared to the English city. Moreover, Edward Gibbon Wakefield's (1796-1862) ideas were highly influential in relation to the appearance of the Antipodean settlements. As the visionary urban planner behind the majority of the New Zealand settlements and the South Australian settlement of Adelaide, he planned, in the words of Erik Olssen, 'to combine the physical environment of the country with the social, cultural and economic opportunities of the town'.³⁰ The vision was summarised in his book, *A View of the Art of Colonization* which appeared in 1849. The American planner Frederick Law Olmsted went as far as to suggest in the 1920s, that Antipodean settlements were the precursor of the Garden City movement.³¹ Indeed, Christchurch eventually became known as 'The Garden City' and, Olssen notes, Antipodean cities were characterised, as possessing a 'generous provision for parks, public institutions, churches, schools and cemeteries'.³²

In both Australia and New Zealand the profile of city elites suggests that those serving on the city council were drawn from the professions and the merchant class.³³ Unlike their English counterparts, shopkeepers were noticeably absent from holding such posts in the antipodes. Many of the councillors had been born in Britain and Ireland and held considerable commercial interests beyond the local economy.

Comment [B3]: Demonstrates how Antipodean towns developed in very similar patterns

From the mid-nineteenth century there was a growing belief among English urban elites that monumental buildings and the dissemination of civic culture could act as a riposte to the bleak view of urban degeneration that had been propagated by novels, parliamentary enquiries and socio-religious pamphlets from the 1870s.³⁴ For the civic leaders in Australia and New Zealand, the urban squalor of English cities was a constant reminder that they could develop new improvement environments modelled on the civic architecture of progressive towns such as Birmingham. Thus, alongside the monumental buildings, civic ceremony was invented and employed to embody a public sense of identity and social position in the city. As Simon Gunn has noted, the public procession culture was very much a nineteenth century phenomenon in which ‘social groups and institutions staked their claim for a place in the social body of the town’.³⁵ The Victorian parade also exuded a sense of social hierarchy with the sequential order of the procession that gave a physical form to the urban elites’ legitimacy and authority. The parade was also designed to engender a sense of inclusiveness by incorporating diverse social identities, though every effort was made to ensure that social hierarchy was not infringed. Moreover, the procession also sent clear signals to onlookers that certain groups or institutions not included in the procession were deemed to have no significant role in the social body or civic culture of the town.

This civic space and monumental building was an unambiguous signal to the populace of where the power, culture and authority lay in a town. By the late nineteenth century, this civic space became increasingly used to celebrate events of empire, fusing both the local civic and imperial messages. For the civic elite, a direct association with empire could only strengthen their own authority and legitimacy within the town and nation generally. This was never so more apparent than during the second Boer War in which, for perhaps the first significant time, the civic arena was officially given over to matters of empire. English cities, to varying degrees, marked troop departures and returns, celebrated victories and commemorated the fallen through the official civic events.³⁶ Moreover, these new civic buildings had become established in the minds of the populace since unofficial celebrations often spontaneously gathered at these recently constructed civic spaces.³⁷

This fusion of civic ritual and imperial culture did not develop to the same intensity in New Zealand and Australia. Antipodean cities (San Francisco, Auckland and Melbourne for example) were located in what could be delineated as a ‘Pacific’ as

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opposed to an 'Atlantic' (London and New York) urban system; the essential characteristics of which were wealth derived from commercial rather than industrial capitalism, smaller population density, lower rise buildings and healthier urban conditions.³⁸ Moreover, the Antipodean cities all functioned as entrepôts with strong links to their hinterlands. 'The cities', Lionel Frost notes, 'provided inputs for primary production, then collected processed and distributed it'.³⁹ He also notes a far lower proportion of non-skilled manual labourers compared to European cities, the workforce enjoying shorter working hours and a higher standard of living.⁴⁰ Whereas the English nineteenth century city invariably became associated with a single industrial product, for example Portsmouth dockyard, Coventry's motor industry and Leeds with textiles, epithets awarded to antipodean cities saw them branded in 'non-industrial' terms. Significantly, in comparison with their British counterparts an imperial civic culture was slower to emerge. In the most extreme case Christchurch's citizens declined to fund the construction of a town hall, the lack of which certainly stifled the emergence of civic ceremony. Auckland's town hall finally opened in 1911. The most notable Edwardian civic celebrations on Empire Day took place in Melbourne. While an evening's entertainment took place on Empire Day at the town hall, even in this location 'Empire' seems to have failed to occupy wider civic space.⁴¹ Melbourne was, for example, one of the last imperial cities to erect a statue to Victoria, eventually doing so in 1907. Existing monuments in the city which reflected the imperial dimension, such as the statue of Charles Gordon of Khartoum, had fallen into neglect by the outbreak of the Great War.⁴² Indeed, at the dawn of the new century Antipodean architects of the built environment increasingly looked to North America for their inspiration. Melbourne was becoming what Miles Lewis calls a 'Queen Anne Chicago'.⁴³ The American influence continued thereafter, the most notable building erected in the interwar period being the Manchester Unity Building on Swanston Street, which imitated the Chicago Tribune Building, constructed in the 1920s.

Those that did look back to the mother country delighted in contrasting the evils of the English industrial city with their own new planned urban developments. Collectively Antipodean cities branded themselves 'Better Britain', their planned topography clearly struck travel writers who published their observations in the later nineteenth and early twentieth century. James Belich, David Hamer and Dominic Alessio among others subsequently shown how notions of 'Better Britain' were used

in literature aimed at enticing migrants to the Antipodes, although comparisons were also made to the cities of Southern Europe. One guide to New Zealand published in 1884 portrayed Auckland as the 'Naples of New Zealand'.⁴⁴ As Alessio has noted in his study of urban booster literature, contemporary commentators such as Edward Wakefield writing in the 1880s, stressed that 'It is very unusual in the colony for more than one family to live in one house'.⁴⁵ Descriptions of Antipodean cities in this period often stressed the fact that they did not reproduce old world evils. Henry Bolitho observed in the 1920 that New Zealand's towns and cities 'have never developed beyond the point of being commercial centres for the farming land behind them'.⁴⁶ Moreover, H. H. Hayter had argued in the 1890s that old world conditions were not likely to emerge in Australia because of their 'great extent' and 'abundance of space, (and) modern developments in transportation' which meant that slums were unlikely to develop'.⁴⁷

Whilst contrasts in the built environment partly explains the differences in the way Empire Day was observed, another important factor was the evolution of the press in each context. By the beginning of the twentieth century the British newspaper press enacted a dual role in a local community. At one level, the newspaper provided day-to-day coverage of the town's events and activities. However, at another level, the press also created multiple identities about community and disseminated a sense of the interconnected loyalties of town, nation and Empire. The newspapers, then, played a significant role in reflecting and projecting a sense of locality and identity in a community.⁴⁸ The late nineteenth century marked a watershed in working-class reading habits with the arrival of a cheap daily popular press that focused attention more keenly on creating a sense of local identity. From the 1870s a new style of journalism seized upon regional news and particularly sport as a way of distinguishing themselves from older provincial or national publications. Significantly, through an emphasis on personal and local news, newspapers were able to tap into a new and growing market of working-class readers. This played well with working-class readers who, by the late nineteenth century, had developed a narrow sense of place that accentuated the importance of local and regional identities.⁴⁹

The local press in New Zealand grew rather differently to its British counterpart since Antipodean city dailies remained wedded to a rather conservative style of journalism. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, there was little coverage of local news and sport and therefore empire celebrations tended

to be reported within national rather than provincial contexts. As Sybil Nolan has noted of Melbourne's Liberal daily *The Age*, first published in the 1850s, the style of journalism had changed but little by the turn of the century. Nolan notes of *The Age*'s appearance that 'the typography and column settings changed little, and photographs were used sparingly, and often as single column blocks with little regard for understanding of their interest or appeal'.⁵⁰ A journalist subsequently employed on the paper looked back at the format of *The Age* in early twentieth century with disdain. 'Who could get a sense of urgency from a front page made up of classified ads?'⁵¹ There was a similar style used by a leading competitor, *The Argus*, which also retained a rather dated format, but tried a little harder to include on its pages a more attractive grouping of photographs. This staid journalism remained unchallenged in the antipodean context until the early 1920s, when papers such as the *Sun News-Pictorial* appeared; chief features of this paper being a more sensationalist tabloid style of new presentation with large photographs, the greater obsession with 'celebrity' and the championing of sport, especially Australian Rules Football, which symbolised an emerging national identity.⁵² The coverage of Empire issues judging by a comparison of the *Argus* and the *Sun News-Pictorial*'s indexes demonstrate a comparable coverage of Empire on the part of the latter publication. The *Argus*' Empire news was placed under one of 6 categories: 'Empire Day' 'The Empire' 'Empire Marketing Board' 'Empire Press Conference' 'Empire Reciprocity League' and 'Empire Shopping Week' in the inter-war period. In 1930 for example, Empire news garnered 28 entries whilst the *Sun News-Pictorial*'s index contained, 26 entries under two headings, 'Empire' and Empire Day.'

Empire Day: Dissemination and Reception in the City

The initial idea of marking a day to commemorate the British Empire was first taken-up by Canadian schools in the 1890s. Inspired by this celebration Lord Meath, the great imperial enthusiast, founded Empire Day in 1903 to remind citizens in Britain and her colonies of their duties and responsibilities to the largest empire the world had ever seen. He chose 24 May, the birthday of the late Queen Victoria to commemorate the event which continued in Britain to 1958 when it was renamed 'Commonwealth Day'.⁵³ Meath's objective was to establish a movement that would exult the

‘magnificence and power of the Empire’ and create a bond between its 400 million imperial subjects. In 1905, Meath claimed that six self-governing Colonies, 22 Crown Colonies and Schools in 39 British local authorities had observed Empire Day.⁵⁴ The Empire Day movement itself represents an interesting case study in imperial dissemination since Meath by-passed central government to rely on the civic elites in British towns and cities to take-up the cause. Similarly, in the colonies an appeal was made to those in local governance to adopt Empire Day rather than to central administrators.

In England, there can be little doubt that during the Edwardian period Empire Day grew to become an annual event in many schools. Taking the Empire Day Movement’s own figures, the number of state schools marking Empire Day seems substantial. By 1907, 12,544 out of a total of 20,451 council schools celebrated Empire Day and by 1919 only four Local Educational Authorities refused to adopt it.⁵⁵ While Meath had been largely successful in writing to local authorities requesting that Empire Day be observed in schools, his campaign to secure the day as an official holiday was met with less enthusiasm by the Liberal government. In 1908, the House of Commons rejected the proposal for Empire Day to become an official ceremony and only amidst the Great War’s recruitment crisis of 1916 did the plan receive government support.⁵⁶

Empire Day was recognised swiftly in New Zealand, being welcomed by Prime Minister Richard Seddon, and marked from its inception in 1903. However, in Australia national political considerations undermined initial attempts to commemorate the day. Empire Day was initially rejected by Edmund Barton, first premier of Australia, but eventually adopted by the Federal parliament in 1905. Until this point, fear of alienating Labor members that were required to maintain a stable government steered politicians away from its implementation. The ministry of George Reid, which adopted it in 1905, saw it as a means uniting various parliamentary factions against the socialist threat.⁵⁷ One of the most prominent groups to lobby for its introduction in New South Wales was the British Empire League (BEL). B.E.L.s call to mark Empire was backed at the town hall by a succession of Lord Mayors, with Charles Pleasance holding the position when Empire Day was first introduced. It was also promoted by groups such as the Australian Women’s National League (AWNL) formed in 1904 and the Victoria League, where a Victorian branch operated from 1907. In New Zealand Empire Day was initially marked by the laying

of a foundation stone of the Ranfurly veterans home in Auckland, while Christchurch unveiled its statue of Queen Victoria. As the day wore on some cities provided entertainment some of which had an imperial theme.⁵⁸

On 17 June 1904, Lord Meath issued a circular to the press outlining the values that underpinned his new Empire Day movement. Within his original declaration, Meath emphasised the importance of instilling a sense of patriotism within the civic realm. He believed that 'patriotism and the sense of civic duty should find their first expression at home, and then afterwards extend themselves to the furthest limits of the Empire'.⁵⁹ He added that civic duty could only flourish if class and selfish interests were subordinate to the national interest. The weight placed on civic duty was attractive to local elites who, after all, were charged with implementing Empire Day in their respective communities. The local authorities in Portsmouth, Coventry and Leeds all adopted Empire Day but planned the event to target differing civic issues. By the Edwardian period, Portsmouth's civic elite and local press regarded the city with its rich naval heritage as 'the gateway to the Empire'.⁶⁰ A successful national campaign by John Fisher, the First Sea Lord, to increase public expenditure on the navy and build the powerful *Dreadnought* battleships in the Portsmouth dockyard, intrinsically linked the town with the expansion and protection of the British Empire.⁶¹ Portsmouth schools already enjoyed a close relationship with the military and were widely perceived as pioneering military drill practices in 1900.⁶² With such a significant stake in maintaining the security of the empire, one might expect that Portsmouth's council schools were among the first 12,000 schools in England to enthusiastically adopt Empire Day in 1905. However, in contrast with Coventry and Leeds, the implementation of Empire Day in Portsmouth met with some resistance and was not systematically adopted until 1913.⁶³

From its inception in 1903, Empire Day had struggled to gain a foothold in Portsmouth's council schools. While the private and religious schools in the town embraced the event, teachers in the council schools resisted attempts by the municipal authorities to join a civic and military procession for Empire Day. It was significant that the Grammar School and St. Luke's (Church of England) were eager participants in early Empire Days as their respective Cadet corps and Drum and Fife band helped stamp a military character over the proceedings. St Luke's began celebrating Empire Day in 1906 when teachers gave lessons on empire and patriotism and pupils then paraded around the play-ground.⁶⁴ However, by 1908, the town's authorities were

eager to establish a civic and military ceremony and invited both local schools and military personnel to mark the occasion. According to the Mayor's plan outlined in the local press:

At three o'clock a procession will be formed and the Cadet Corps with the band playing and colours flying will march to the reserve enclosure on the Common. Arriving at the Arena, the Cadet Corps will fall in line with the School children in alphabetical order from the right. At 3.30, the Cadet Corps will troop the colours at the saluting base, the School children and Cadet Corps will march past and give three cheers and sing "God Save the King".⁶⁵

Matters came to a head in May 1908 when the Mayor stated that, having secured permission from the local education committee, all children over 10 years of age attending Portsmouth council schools were to take part in the ceremony.⁶⁶ This was the first time that the civic elite had drawn council schools into the event, and it was an invitation that was not entirely welcome. Such was the palpable disquiet among Portsmouth's council teachers, the Mayor convened a large, well attended meeting in the Town Hall to discuss the Council School's contribution to Empire Day. The Mayor opened the meeting 'warmly commending the scheme' and hoped the teachers would approve the patriotic and 'inspiring spectacle.' Clearly aware that some teachers were uncomfortable with marking Empire Day in this fashion, the Mayor confirmed that there was no compulsion for teachers to attend and those not participating were granted a half-day holiday. The teachers unanimously rejected the proposal. The most damning criticism of the programme, and one which perhaps revealed the underlying hostility by some teachers, was aired by one headmistress who believed that 'the spectacle would be lowering to the tone of school life'. Met with this hostility, the Mayor had no choice but to withdraw the council school sector from Empire Day parade, though urging they be included in the parade in the following year.⁶⁷ Portsmouth council school teachers, however, did mark Empire Day in a less militarised fashion since lessons on Britain and her colonies were taught in the morning prior to the half-day holiday in the afternoon.⁶⁸ Moreover by 1913, teachers diluted the event further by merging it with a prize-giving day for pupils with the best attendance. Prior to the First World War, a militarised civic parade, however, appears to have been a step too far for many Council school teachers in the town.⁶⁹

Comment [B5]: Response to reviewer's request for more evidence and analysis on Portsmouth Council teacher's reluctance to engage with Empire Day.

The local press who, along with the civic elite, had pressed for the council sector's inclusion, did not take too kindly to the Mayor's very public defeat.⁷⁰ After surveying Empire Day around the country, an angry *Evening News* editorial asked:

And what is Portsmouth doing – Portsmouth, one of the gates of the Empire, proudly boasting that it is the greatest naval port in the world? Well, Portsmouth is not quite sure what it will do on Empire Day. There may be a distribution of prizes in the schools by members of the education committee – if the books are ready in time what is officially considered rather doubtful. After that the children will have a half-holiday, which they may spend at their sweet will, with no necessary obtrusion of any thoughts of Empire and its meaning. If that is all that Portsmouth is going to do, it certainly fall far short of what Portsmouth might do.⁷¹

This rather haphazard adoption of Empire Day in Portsmouth continued until the First World War when the event was nationally recognised.

In contrast to Portsmouth, Coventry's Empire Day celebrations emphasised the moral duty of the imperial subject, toning down the militarised overtones that were evident in the south coast town. The absence of military-style parades in Coventry may have been instrumental in avoiding the problems that Portsmouth encountered and was sufficient to placate council school teachers wary of imperialism. In 1907, there were no official activities to mark the event, with only the *Midland Daily Telegraph* noting that thousands of schools in the country were celebrating Empire Day. The newspaper was a lead advocate for the Empire Day movement in Coventry as the editor lamented that 'our children in the present day are taught too little about the Empire as it now exists...the introduction of "Empire Day" should lead to the dissemination of wider and more perfect information on our colonies'. However, whereas the Portsmouth press saw Empire Day as a valuable education for children destined for military service, the Coventry newspapers stressed the importance of balancing an imperial education with social welfare at home. The *Midland Daily Telegraph* was alert to contemporary anxieties that industrial strife and poor urban social conditions could adversely effect the future stability of the empire, arguing that 'if there be rot at the core the Empire must pine and perish'.⁷² It was not until 1909 that the Coventry civic authorities organised a comprehensive programme of Empire Day celebrations.⁷³ The town council shunned any form of parade or militarised spectacle through the city and instead private, religious and council

schools followed a similar programme of events. The *Midland Daily Telegraph* described Empire Day as ‘largely a children’s festival’, though there were many more flags displayed on public and private building than the previous year.⁷⁴ School children would receive a special lesson on the British Empire, followed by a visit and a speech from a local dignitary such as the Mayor, Councillor or member of the clergy. In the speeches delivered to the children, local dignitaries not only outlined the significance of the British Empire but also emphasised the importance of obedience and discipline. In Hale Street School (Church of England), Reverend E.B. Saunderson warned pupils against being ‘idle, self-indulgent, cruel, disrespectful and disobedient to their parents and those in authority’ since ‘it was the morality of the people which would be the determining cause of the stability or downfall of the Empire’.⁷⁵ At the same time, the *Midland Daily Telegraph* reminded its readers that the key to a stable and prosperous empire was fostering security and social cohesion at home ‘disease and discontent at the centre do not make for the healthfulness and happiness of the peoples on the borderland of Imperial rule’.⁷⁶ The civic elites’ stress on obedience and social welfare was perhaps a response to the turbulent industrial relations that had beset Coventry’s new staple industries. The city was paralysed by an engineering strike in 1899 and, though official trade unionism was relatively weak, the motor and bicycle sectors were regularly hit by unofficial strikes and industrial disputes throughout the Edwardian period.⁷⁷

In Leeds, the large influx of Jewish immigrants that had settled in the Leyland part of the city had effectively created Jewish-dominated council schools. The Leyland and Darley Street schools, which were run by the local authority, had a catchment area in the heart of the Jewish quarter of Leeds. In line with most schools in Leeds, Leyland and Darley Street schools were visited regularly by civic elites and industrialists. However, children in these schools were undoubtedly monitored more closely for ‘degenerative traits’ and for their commitment to the civic, nation and empire. Indeed, just as Empire Day in Portsmouth and Coventry attempted to counter local anxieties, the movement in Leeds endeavoured to address concerns about racial and urban degeneration. For example, the growth of slum conditions in Leyland, the Jewish district of Leeds, was consistently attributed to the racial characteristics of the Jewish community. Alderman Ward, the Sanitary Committee Chairman, believed that in the Jewish quarter of Leeds ‘the people that work in these sweaters’ shops are very filthy. You only have to go into the district where they live to discover this. This

Comment [B6]: Clarification of council run schools in Jewish districts of Leeds.

is not surprising seeing that they come from parts of Russia which are almost beyond the pale of civilisation'.⁷⁸ The town council's Inspector for Jewish Workshops helped confirm this view noting a year later that Jews were 'not notorious for their cleanliness and order'.⁷⁹ Alongside a civic consensus that the new Jewish immigrants were responsible for increasing urban squalor, the *Leeds Mercury*, a liberal leaning newspaper, commented in 1900 that:

Were it not for the dirt which seems to dog the habitation and life of every Eastern native, and of the Israelite in particular, the Jew would be almost a model citizen. One thing will strike the visitor to any Jewish colony - whether it be in Whitechapel or in Birmingham, or that "delightful" district of Leeds, the Leylands - and that is the number of children possessed by each family. The streets swarm with little members of the "Chosen People" to an extent which will simply surprise him...⁸⁰

The assumption that an inferior and uncivilised race was multiplying and perpetuating Leeds' slum districts triggered fears that Britain's urban Anglo-Saxon stock would be irreparably damaged.⁸¹

In 1903, the Leeds Local Authority invited Dr Hall, a medical researcher, to examine 100 children for a study investigating the perceived decline of the Anglo-Saxon race. He found that 30 of the 50 working-class children had rickets compared to 10 out of 50 children from the more affluent areas of Leeds.⁸² Working-class and Jewish children were identified as requiring additional instruction in healthy activities and moral guidance. For the Leeds educational authorities, physical exercise through activities such as school drill would not only physically improve children but also reveal the extent to which working-class pupils suffered from physical deficiencies. Moreover, alongside its physical benefits, military drill was adjudged to be an effective method in instilling patriotism within Jewish scholars and help foster a commitment to both city and nation. For example, in a bid to demonstrate how military drill could improve physical health and cultivate a loyalty to their locality and nation, the Leeds council invited the Inspector of Schools from London to Darley Street School. In June 1904, Darley Street School's entire 600 pupils performed a military drill prompting the Inspector to note that drill helped introduce scholars to 'the subject of "duty"' in 'aspects of school life, the home life and citizenship'.⁸³ Indeed, it appears that the Jewish children were subjected to regular scrutiny by the authorities who were keen to detect any signs of degeneracy. Later in 1904, Darley

Street School was visited by the MP, and former Vice President of the Education Committee, Sir John Gorst and his daughter to inspect the health and well-being of the pupils.⁸⁴ It was reported that the school 'is attended by several hundred Jewish children, whom Sir John was interested to see in the light of recent comments as to the physique of the races as compared with Christian children'.⁸⁵

Not surprisingly, then, Empire Day was also seen by the local authority as a vehicle to inculcate loyalty into a Eastern European Jewish community deemed unreliable and unpatriotic. Leeds Jewish council schools were some of the first in the country to observe Empire Day since they were already marking the importance of empire before Lord Meath's movement was established. Commenting on the development of Empire Day, the *Yorkshire Evening Post* noted that 'Leeds stands creditably prominent in this matter' as the city's Jewish schools had acted as 'pioneers of the movement'. The pupils of Darley and Leyland Council schools, who were almost entirely Jewish, received intensive instruction on the British Empire far earlier than their contemporaries in other Leeds council schools. Prior to the Empire Day Movement, the pupils of Leyland School received lessons on the Empire and were instructed to write letters to children in the Australian, New Zealand, Indian, South African and Canadian colonies. The lessons were designed to cultivate 'loyal and dutiful citizens and true patriots' and 'foster friendship and true understanding between children of the colonies and the mother country'.⁸⁶ There was a particular emphasis on race as the Jewish children were instructed that the Anglo-Saxon race possessed 'firmness of ambition, self sacrifice and adventure'.⁸⁷ Likewise on Empire Day in 1905, the scholars of Darley Street School assembled to hear an address from the headmaster 'on the Empire and the duty of Jewish children to England'. The headmaster also stressed that the children should appreciate the religious tolerance that the English man afforded to them after which patriotic songs were sung. Thus, in both schools, values that Jewish children should aspire to were cast as racial characteristics of the Anglo-Saxon race. Only by adopting the values of loyalty, duty and patriotism to their adopted country and empire could the Jewish community successfully emulate the English race and assimilate into British society.⁸⁸ In supporting the Empire Day Movement, the *Yorkshire Evening Post* also reminded readers that it was the innate qualities of the Anglo-Saxon race that was the driving force behind imperial successes. The editor noted that 'the Empire is at once the

monument and the living expression of the dauntless courage, the dauntless determination, and the adventurous spirit of the Anglo-Saxon race'.⁸⁹

Comment [B7]: Response to reviewer's request for more evidence on Jewish schools and Empire Day

While the civic elites were preoccupied with the two Jewish schools, the remaining council schools appear not to have celebrated Empire Day during the early stages of the movement. For example in 1907, the *Yorkshire Evening Post* noted that Empire Day had 'slipped by practically unnoticed in Leeds', adding that only the two Jewish schools celebrated the event 'by decorating the rooms with Union Jacks' and by 'organising patriotic tableaux'.⁹⁰ In the non-Jewish council school log books surveyed, the first account of Empire Day appears in St Peter's Square Council School in 1916. This is not to claim that Empire Day was not marked in council schools until 1916, but it was significant that the event did not merit an entry until the First World War. Such was the low-key nature of Empire Day in 1908, the *Yorkshire Evening Post* decided to investigate whether the working-class man in Leeds was conversant with the event. After interviewing a variety of characters in Leeds, a thoroughly dispirited journalist concluded that Empire Day was an exercise in providing Jewish children with an imperial education, while the rest of the population remained ignorant of the celebration.⁹¹

Like the English case studies, the transmission of Empire Day was beset with problems from its inception, though in the Antipodean towns the casting of the celebration within vague national terms evidently failed to excite either urban elites or the public at large. Australian and New Zealand cities also had a more fundamental issue of whether to observe Empire Day on either the 24th May or the Prince of Wales' birthday on the 6 June which had been observed as public holiday since the 1860s. Tradesmen and shopkeepers were especially reluctant to observe two public holidays due to the potential loss of revenue. Other interest groups had more ideological reasons for failing to promote Empire Day. Monarchists wanted to observe the Prince of Wales' birthday, as they believed the monarchy was the truer symbol of colonial union with the mother country than the more recently instigated Empire Day. The BEL favoured Empire Day and vigorously backed its introduction in Sydney, being an association with political and economic Empire integration as its goal.⁹² In reality it appears that neither the winter holiday of the Prince of Wales birthday nor the King's Birthday, marked later in the year, were treated as anything but an opportunity for pleasure seekers to find fun in the city or the country. Horse racing and regattas were popular events staged on both these public holidays.⁹³

Indeed, the idea that Empire Day might be discontinued was broached on the pages of the Melbourne dailies, but continued into the inter-war period although. At no stage however was it staged as a public holiday in that city.⁹⁴

On the other side of the Tasman opinion was also divided over which day should take precedence. *The Press* looked forward to closer bonds of Empire (possibly federation of the Empire) and the establishment of a regularly observed Empire Day, whilst Auckland's *New Zealand Herald* also preferred to see Empire Day observed rather than the Prince of Wales' birthday, but it favored looser bonds of sentiment. Amongst the wider populace there appears to have been a lack of interest in Empire Day. Descriptions provided in the local press indicated a rather indifferent attitude toward the remote concept of imperial unity. In its coverage of Empire Day in 1908 Wellington's *Evening Post* provided a description of celebrations in New Zealand's major centres. In Dunedin it noted that 'there was nothing to especially indicate Empire Day', whilst Christchurch 'Empire Services were conducted in the churches, and a patriotic concert was held in King Edward barracks and choral hall'. In Auckland, 'rainy weather and a tramway strike' had put a dampener on potential celebrations whilst in Wellington 'flags are lying limp on land and sea in honour of the Empire, but the popular sentiment is as listless as the bunting'. According to the paper this was 'not because the people are not Imperialist, but because there is confusion about the observance of two holidays within a week of each other'.⁹⁵ Ultimately the decision was taken to abandon the observation of the 24th May as Empire Day in New Zealand and the years after 1910 witnessed its demise. The Prince of Wales' birthday on the 6th June was then declared a public holiday and was to be celebrated at the same time as Empire Day.⁹⁶

While public indifference seems to have been a common attitude to the celebration, how was Empire presented in the provincial press before 1914? Unlike English towns, the Empire Day movement was not employed by urban elites to solve the social and cultural 'problems' of the modern city. This was evident when *The Press*, the leading Christchurch daily, noted on Empire Day 1907.

The whole essence of the celebration of Empire Day lies in the fact that it induces us to look outward and not inwards. Local patriotism is an admirable thing, and we have more than once urged that in the celebration both of the anniversary of the province and of the anniversary colony some remembrance

should be accorded to the builders of New Zealand. But the celebration of which to-day is the occasion have for their subject, not the creation and development of any single unit of the Empire, but the world wide Empire.⁹⁷

Thus the antipodean dailies looked not unsurprisingly to a rather vague and bland conception of imperial unity based around, trade and defence interests or a looser Empire based on sentiment. The vagueness of Empire Day was taken-up by the *The Argus* journalist and imperialist Donald Macdonald. From 1907 onwards Macdonald was responsible for providing editorial reflection on Empire. On more than one occasion he stressed a common heritage and the historical evolution of the British Empire.⁹⁸ In 1909 in the midst of the German 'naval scare' it projected national rather than city interests on to the celebrations. It noted that 'A federated Canada, a federated Australia and a federated South Africa move along the broad paths to individual greatness, yet each of them is destined to become more and more a buttress to the island home which is the centre of them all'.⁹⁹ By 1913 MacDonald began his reflections of Empire by asking 'What is the Empire? The question is being asked thousands of times in these days of empire, and answered in almost as many different ways'. His own answer was in itself the rather vague notion of 'the material expression of the spirit of the race'.¹⁰⁰ In Sydney, the British Empire League (B.E.L.) took a lead role in organising celebrations. Archdeacon F.B. Boyce president of the League advocated the 24 May as a kind of 'Empire Christmas Day' where British heritage would be commonly appreciated.¹⁰¹ An organisation which advocated imperial preference, the B.E.L. also used the day to advise businesses and businessmen to display the union jack on their premises and on their persons.¹⁰² The vision of Empire projected in the *Sydney Morning Herald* suggested that 'in the increasing purpose of Empire the dominions come to count for more and more and in recognition of that fact the parliament at Westminster is willing and sometimes anxious to give them a greater share in the councils of Great Britain than they have ever yet possessed'.¹⁰³

Imperial culture was not, however, confined to the 'public' sphere of streets, town halls, and the pages of the city press. Given that Empire Day was not observed as a public holiday in the majority of antipodean cities, one of the most important arenas for marking the day occurred in the school environment.¹⁰⁴ The *Argus* had realised this shortly after the introduction of Empire Day, noting that, 'Here in

Melbourne the day will be above all things the children's day. The children of the metropolitan area will have deeply impressed on their susceptible minds the principles and duties of imperial citizenship'.¹⁰⁵ Directors of Education in both Australia and New Zealand were indeed, enthusiastic supporters of the Empire Day and instructed teachers to promote Empire. School newspapers in both contexts were launched and in the years before 1914 a significant proportion of their content was devoted to describing and celebrating the British Empire.¹⁰⁶ The *School Paper* was distributed to Melbourne's schools began in 1897, while the New Zealand the *School Journal* was established in 1907. In Australia during the Edwardian period, teachers were instructed by directors of state education on the pages of the education gazettes to promote values of Empire on the 24th May.¹⁰⁷ A sense of imperial citizenship was to be developed through lessons in geography, history, poetry and reading.¹⁰⁸ It is evident however, from a close scrutiny of both the New Zealand and Australian school publications and also extant school log books that local patriotism or civic boosterism did not find a place in this arena any more than amongst the adult population. Since the urban environment and provincial press had evolved differently to that of England, Empire Day was not conceived as an antidote to the social and cultural crises of a modern European city. As Malone notes of the New Zealand *School Journal*, it was introduced partly because there was a lack of uniformity as far as school text books were concerned. 'Its treatment of Empire was essentially a romantic concept, the ideology of Empire was not notable for its logical consistency'.¹⁰⁹ Whilst *The Argus* had hoped Empire Day would be a key date in the calendar to impress school children with the duties of imperial citizenship, the paper was forced to admit in 1913 that this hope had largely been unrealised. Editorial comment under the heading 'A Divided Festival' noted:

Perhaps the feature which most appealed to the infantile mind was the fact that there were no lessons during the afternoon. The school committee, aided by the district councils, arranged all sorts of little entertainments; free cinematograph, shows, sports, and distribution of sweets and fruits and cakes... Perhaps the greatest visible expression of rejoicing is that which will be seen tonight by many thousands of people. Each year the whole of the suburbs extending from Surrey Hills to Canterbury and Camberwell are

illuminated....Bonfires will be lit and fireworks will be let off by the citizens.¹¹⁰

It is not entirely clear from this report how far these celebrations were linked to a sentiment of Empire citizenship or whether this description is more suggestive of a carnival than a patriotic observance. In fact it appears Empire Day became a night of revelry much sooner than historians have believed.¹¹¹

In the Southern hemisphere, then, opinion formers used Empire Day as a reminder to colonial citizens of where Australia and New Zealand stood in the British Empire. Unlike English cities, imperial propaganda was not seen as the antidote to social and urban problems. Thus in contrast to Leeds where Empire Day was employed to instill loyalty in 'inferior races', New Zealand schools did not target the event to non-white indigenous communities. A survey of extant Pakeha and Maori school log books suggests that Empire Day was given a very low profile, despite school teachers being instructed to observe the Day.¹¹² The celebrations were further obstructed by the fact that school children were often on a winter break when the celebrations were supposed to occur.¹¹³ Where Empire Day was marked, it often appears to have taken the form of a holiday granted to the children without any lessons in the meaning of Empire being provided.¹¹⁴ T. B. Strong, Chief Inspector of primary schools for New Zealand provided further guidance in an issue of the *Education Gazette* in 1921.¹¹⁵ Yet a perusal of School log books reveals a lack of evidence of Empire Day observance and is rather supportive of Roger Openshaw's observation that patriotism in wider society did not find its way into schools because 'a number of New Zealand primary school teachers were inadequately trained'.¹¹⁶ From 1916 Anzac Day commemorations further eclipsed Empire Day as the annual observance of New Zealand's place within Empire. Teachers in some instances appeared to resent 'celebration' days, as they obstructed teaching. A comment made in the log book of Kaiwhara school, for example, in relation to the marking of Dominion day which had been introduced in 1907 to mark New Zealand's new position within the Empire noted a few years later that, 'it is about time the Dominion Day farce was put an end to, for it serves no useful purpose whatever and only provides another opportunity for needlessly interrupting'.¹¹⁷

Conclusion

The history of Empire Day from its inception in 1903 to the outbreak of the First World War provides an interesting case study on the complexities of endeavouring to transmit a uniform celebration of empire across the England and her colonies. Despite its creation through a single movement led by Lord Meath, local contexts informed and shaped the character and transmission of Empire Day. In England the celebration was seized upon by the civic authorities to help resolve perceived social problems in their respective cities. The more uniform introduction of Empire Day via national parliament in both the Australia and New Zealand and the better urban conditions which existed in the antipodean cities helped foster a national rather than local dimension to the event. In addition, the city councillors, who often made their wealth from international exports and imports, did not have the vested interests in local communities that their English counterparts possessed in British cities. To assume that the creation and impressive adoption of Empire Day by governments at national and local levels in English and colonial cities was an indication of successful imperial inculcation underestimates the importance of *how* the event was diffused through differing national civic agencies. Meath's Empire Day was perhaps the most successful imperial event in terms of its adoption in the Empire. However, it was filtered through a myriad of national and local contexts which ensured that the central imperial message was recast by those in governance to address the immediate concerns of day in urban or national contexts.

¹ Richard Price, "One Big Thing: Britain, Its Empire and their Imperial Culture", *Journal of British Studies*, 45 (2006): 610.

² Jim English, 'Empire Day in Britain, 1904-1958', *Historical Journal*, 49 (2006): 248, 275.

³ Price, "One Big Thing," 603.

⁴ R. Price, *An Imperial War and the British Working Class. Working-Class Attitudes and Reactions to the Boer War* (London, Routledge, 1972), p. 216; E.J. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Empire, 1875-1914* (London: Abacus, 1987, 1997 edn), pp.160-1; This

position of distancing working-class communities from the jingoism of the Boer War has been repeated in a number of studies, most recently by Bernard Porter and Andrew August see B. Porter, *Absent Minded Imperialists. Empire, Society and Culture in Britain* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2004, 2006 edn), p.216; A. August, *The British Working Class 1832-1940* (Harlow, Longman, 2007), p. 151.

⁵ J.M. Mackenzie, *Propaganda and Empire* (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1986); J.M Mackenzie (ed) *Imperialism and Popular Culture* (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1986); C. Hall (ed), *Cultures of Empire. Colonizers in Britain and the Empire in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries: A Reader* (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2000); J. Richards *Imperialism and Music. Britain 1876-1953* (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2001).

⁶ E. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (London, Vintage, 1993). See for example, G. Russell, 'Entertainment of Oddities', in K. Wilson (ed), *A New Imperial History: Culture, Identity and Modernity in Britain and Empire 1660-1849* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 48-70.

⁷ A. Burton, 'Who needs nation? Interrogating "British" history', *Journal of Historical Sociology*, 10, 3, September 1997, p. 229, 231.

⁸ J. Thompson, 'Modern Britain and the new imperial history', *History Compass*, 5/2, 2007, p. 459.

⁹ Porter, *The Absent-Minded Imperialists*, p. 224.

¹⁰ John Springhall, 'Lord Meath, Youth and Empire', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 5 (1970): 97-111; John M. MacKenzie, *Propaganda and Empire*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1986), 232-33. See also Anne Bloomfield, 'Drill and dance as symbols of imperialism', in James A. Mangan ed., *Making Imperial Mentalities* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990), 83-4;

Benjamin. J. Lammers, “‘The citizens of the future’: Educating the children of the Jewish East End, c. 1885-1939”, *Twentieth Century British History*, 19 (2008): 417.

¹¹ English, “Empire Day in Britain”, 248, 275.

¹² Bernard Porter, *The Absent Minded Imperialists. Empire, Society, and Culture in Britain*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 210. Porter effectively confirms Rose’s view that Empire Day failed to instil imperial fervour among the population, Jonathan Rose, *The Intellectual Life of the British Working Classes* (Yale: Yale University Press, 2001), 338.

¹³ Angela Woollacott, ‘White colonialism and modern sexual modernity: Australian women in the early twentieth century metropolis’, in A. Burton ed. *Gender, Sexuality and Colonial Modernity* (London: 1999): 49-50.

¹⁴ Robert S.M. Withycombe, ‘Australian Anglicans and imperial identity’ in *Journal of Religious History*, 25: (2001): 286-305.

¹⁵ Maurice French, ‘The ambiguity of Empire Day in New South Wales, 1901-21: Imperial consensus or national division?’ in *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, 24 (1978): 61-74.

¹⁶ Graeme Davison, Graeme Davison, ‘The Habit of Commemoration and the revival of ANZAC Day’, *The Journal of the History of Culture in Australia*, Jan 2003, 22, 73-82

¹⁷ It has been shown that cities and towns themselves added an extra dimension to social and economic relationships, see Robert Colls and Richard Rodger eds., *Cities of Ideas: Civil Society and Urban Governance in Britain 1800-2000. Essays in Honour of David Reader* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), 1.

¹⁸ Sherlylyne Haggerty, Anthony Webster, Nicholas White, eds., *Empire in One City? Liverpool's Inconvenient Imperial Past* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2008).

¹⁹ Catherine Hall ed. *Cultures of Empire. Colonizers in Britain and the Empire in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries: A Reader* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000); Felix Driver and David Gilbert eds., *Imperial Cities: Landscape Display and Identity*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003).

²⁰ Driver and Gilbert, *Imperial Cities*, p. 4.

²¹ Deborah .S. Ryan, 'Staging the imperial city: the Pageant of London, 1911' in Driver and Gilbert, *Imperial Cities*, 117-35.

²² VisionofBritain.org.uk; Statistics for Coventry, Leeds and Portsmouth.

²³ John Field, "Wealth, styles of life and social tone amongst Portsmouth's middle class 1800-75", in Robert J. Morris ed., *Class, Power and Social Structure in British Nineteenth Century Towns* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1986).

²⁴ Kenneth. Lunn and Roger Thomas, 'Naval Imperialism in Portsmouth, 1905-1914', *Southern History*, 10. (1988): 142-159.

²⁵ Brad Beaven, *Leisure, Citizenship and Working Class Men in Britain, 1850-1945* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005), 2.

²⁶ Robert J. Morris, *Class, Sect and Party: The Making of the British Middle Class, Leeds 1820-1850* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990).

²⁷ Simon Gunn, *The Public Culture of the Victorian Middle Class. Ritual and Authority and the English Industrial City, 1840-1914* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 12.

²⁸ Joseph Buckman, *Immigrants and the Class Struggle. The Jewish Immigration in Leeds, 1880-1914* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1983).

²⁹ A. J. Taylor, 'Victorian Leeds: An Overview', in Derek Fraser ed., *A History of Modern Leeds* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1980), 405; Viv Fulda, "Space, Civic Pride, Citizenship and Identity in 1890s Portsmouth" PhD diss., University of Portsmouth, 2006, p. 43; Brad Beaven, 'Challenges to civic governance in post-war England: the Peace Day disturbances of 1919', *Urban History*, 33 (2006): 382.

³⁰ The exception being Auckland; E. Olssen, 'Mr Wakefield and New Zealand as an Experiment in Post-Enlightenment Experimental Practice' in *New Zealand Journal of History*, Vol 31:2 (1997), p. 207.

³¹ Ibid., p. 207.

³² The phrase "Marvellous Melbourne" was first coined by the English journalist George Sala after a visit he made in 1885, after noting the booming conditions in the city. Christchurch was known in the nineteenth century as the 'city of trees' and in the twentieth was given the epithet the 'Garden City' a phrase first used it is believed, by Sir John Gorst, High Commissioner to the international exhibition of 1906; Olssen, 'Mr Wakefield and New Zealand as an Experiment' p.207.

³³Profiles are provided in J. Smith, *Cyclopedia of Victoria: Descriptive and Biographical, Fact Figures and Illustrations* 1903 (Melbourne: 1903): 310-328; the *Cyclopedia of New Zealand: Industrial, descriptive. Historical, biographical, facts figures, illustrations vol 1. Wellington Province* (Wellington: Cyclopedia Company, 1897): 271-286; *Auckland Province* (1902): 115-122; *Canterbury Province* (1903): 100-104.

³⁴John R. Griffiths, "Civic Communication in Britain: Study of the Municipal Journal c.1893-1910", in *Journal of Urban History*, 34 (2008): 777.

³⁵Gunn, *Public Culture of the Victorian Middle Class*, 174.

³⁶Brad Beaven, "The provincial press, civic ceremony and the citizen-soldier the Boer War 1899-1902: A study of local patriotism", *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 27 (2009), 217-228.

³⁷Beaven, *Leisure Citizenship and Working-Class Men*, 139.

³⁸Miles Lewis, Philip Goad and Alan Mayne, *Melbourne: The City's History and Development* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1994): 7.

³⁹Lionel Frost, *The New Urban Frontier: Urbanization and City Building in Australasia and the American West*, (New South Wales: University Press, 1991): 65.

⁴⁰*Ibid.* 71-75.

⁴¹*Argus*, 19 May 1906.

⁴²See *Argus*, 19 May 1909.

⁴³Lewis et al, *Melbourne: The City and its Development*, 7.

⁴⁴ David Hamer, *New Towns in the New World: Images and Perceptions of the Nineteenth Century Urban Frontier* (New York: Colombia University Press, 1990), and Dominic Alessio, “Coloured Views: Images of the New Zealand City and Town 1880-1930” PhD diss, Victoria University of Wellington, 1992. An early example of this being Charles Hursthouse’s *New Zealand, The Britain of the South* (London,: Edward Stanford, 1861).

⁴⁵Alessio, *Coloured Views*, 53.

⁴⁶H. Hector Bolitho, *The New Zealanders* (London: J.M. Dent, 1928): 21, cited in Alessio, *Coloured Views*, 57.

⁴⁷H.H. Hayter “The Concentration of Population in Australian Capital Cities”, Report of the Fourth Meeting of the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science (Hobart: 1892), cited in Hamer, *New Towns in the New World*, 150.

⁴⁸ Jeffrey Hill, “Rite of Spring: Cup finals and community in the North of England” in Jeffrey. Hill and Jack Williams eds., *Sport and Identity in the North of England* (Keele: Keele University Press, 1996), 86.

⁴⁹ Beaven, *Leisure Citizenship and Working-Class Men in Britain, 1850-1945*, 44-87.

⁵⁰*Ibid.*, 35-6.

⁵¹Ibid., 36.

⁵²*The Sun News-Pictorial* was founded by Keith Murdoch and edited by Monty Grover. See Micheal Cannon ed., *Hold Page One: Memoirs of Monty Grover, editor* (Victoria, 1993), 27-31.

⁵³Springhall, "Lord Meath, Youth and Empire", 105.

⁵⁴MacKenzie, *Propaganda and Empire*, 232.

⁵⁵Andrew S. Thompson, *The Empire Strikes Back? the impact of imperialism on Britain from the mid-nineteenth century* (Harlow: Longman, 2005), 118.

⁵⁶MacKenzie, *Propaganda and Empire*, 232-23.

⁵⁷French, "The Ambiguity of Empire Day", 63.

⁵⁸'Our First Empire Day' URL <http://www.nzhistory.net/nz/politics/empire-day/our-first-empire-day> (Ministry for Culture and Heritage).

⁵⁹Earl of Meath, *Brabazon Potpourri* (London, Hutchinson, 1928), 99.

⁶⁰*Hampshire Telegraph*, 30 July 1926.

⁶¹*The Times*, 24 May 1909.

⁶² *The Times*, 2 November 1900.

⁶³*Portsmouth Times*, 24 May 1913.

⁶⁴ Portsmouth City Archives (hereafter PCA), SA/CC/DS/39/3/A/2, St Lukes School log book 1901-1919, May 24 1906.

⁶⁵ *Evening News*, 18th May 1908.

⁶⁶ *The Evening News*, 18 May 1908.

⁶⁷ *The Evening News*, 19 May 1908.

⁶⁸ PCA, AS/CC/DS/26/36/1/A/2, Portsea Infant School log book 1905-1929, 24 May 1908.

⁶⁹ *Portsmouth Times*, 28 May 1910, 27 May 1911, 25 May 1912, 24 May 1913.

⁷⁰ *The Evening News* 22 May 1908.

⁷¹ *The Evening News*, 7 May 1909.

⁷² *Midland Daily Telegraph*, 24 May 1907.

⁷³ *Midland Daily Telegraph*, 24 May 1909.

⁷⁴ *Midland Daily Telegraph*, 28 May 1909.

⁷⁵ *Midland Daily Telegraph*, 28 May 1909.

⁷⁶ *Midland Daily Telegraph*, 24 May 1909.

⁷⁷ Brad Beaven, "Shop-floor culture in the Coventry motor industry, c.1896-1920" in David Thoms, Len Holden and Tim Claydon eds., *The Motor Car and Popular Culture in the 20th Century* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998).

⁷⁸ *Leeds Mercury*, 11 June 1888.

⁷⁹ Quoted in Buckman, *Immigrants and the Class Struggle*, 48, 49.

⁸⁰ *Leeds Mercury*, 8 September 1900.

⁸¹ The evidence from Leeds contrasts sharply with Lammers interpretation of how the authorities perceived the Jewish community. See 'The Citizens of the future: Educating the children of the Jewish East End, c. 1885-1939', *Twentieth Century British History*, vol 9, 4, 2008, pp. 393-418.

⁸² LCA, LC/ED17/4, Darley Street Council School, 1898-1935', log book, 11 June 1904; see also *Jewish Chronicle* 11 June 1904.

⁸³ LCA, LC/ED17/4, Darley Street Council School, 1898-1935', log book, 11 June 1904; see also *Jewish Chronicle* 11 June 1904.

⁸⁴ G.R. Searle, *The Quest for National Efficiency. A Study of British Politics and Political Thought, 1889-1914*, (London, Ashfield Press, 1971, 1990 edition), p.210

⁸⁵ This evidence differs from Lammers' recent interpretations on Jewish immigration that claims that the London County Council was accommodating to Jews in their schooling. B.J. Lammers, 'The Citizens of the future'.

⁸⁶ *Yorkshire Evening Post*, 23 May 1907; 22 May 1908.

⁸⁷ *Yorkshire Evening Post*, 22 May 1908; *Leeds and Yorkshire Mercury*, 25 May 1906.

⁸⁸ Leeds City Archive (hereafter LCA), LC/ED17/4, Darley Street Council School log book 1898-1935, May 24 1905; 24 May 1906.

⁸⁹ *Yorkshire Evening Post*, 23 May 1908.

⁹⁰ *Yorkshire Evening Post*, 24 May 1907.

⁹¹ *Yorkshire Evening Post*, 23 May 1908.

⁹² In Melbourne Empire Day was boosted by the Imperial Federation League and the Australian Women's National League, whilst in Sydney the British Empire League was the major pre-1914 booster of Empire Day Celebrations. For Sydney see Maurice French, 'One people one destiny' a question of loyalty: the Origins of Empire Day in New South Wales, 1900-1905, in *Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society* 61 (1975): 236-246.

⁹³ For Prince of Wales' birthday celebrations of Bertie and George respectively, see for example *Sydney Morning Herald*, 4 November 1893 and 4 June 1908. For the King's Birthday see *New Zealand Herald*, 10 November 1908.

⁹⁴ *Argus* 24 May 1910. The letter writer argued that three winter public holidays were excessive (both King George V and the Prince of Wales', the future Edward VIII celebrated birthdays in June). It also suggested the King's Birthday was the appropriate day on which to demonstrate the unity of the Empire. For a discussion of

the competing versions of Empire see Aaron Paul, "One King to Bind Them All: The Imperial Federation Movement, The Imperial Monarchy and the Triumph of Sentiment" in *Melbourne Historical Journal* 32 (2004): 72.

⁹⁵See *Evening Post*, 25 May 1908.

⁹⁶This was confirmed under the terms of the New Zealand Public Holiday Act 1910. See *Public Acts of New Zealand 1908-31*, vol. III (Wellington: Government Printer, 1932), 721. As result of the imperial conference of 1911 it was decided that the King's Birthday would become a public holiday 'throughout the Empire (but) Empire Day was discussed but nothing was decided upon' *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 15 June 1911. The description of the King's birthday celebration in Auckland 1920 is revealing, demonstrating that the day was used by the majority of city dwellers for pleasure seeking and sport rather than observing Empire loyalty in any sense. The Empire dimension to the day consisted of a military parade and noon salute. Empire Day fell into neglect. In Christchurch the day was commandeered for university capping. This city used the Prince of Wales birthday as its Empire Day a day defined for example by Professor James Hight of the University College, Canterbury. He noted that 'we have been accused of bad judgement in choosing the Prince of Wales' birthday as the day for our Empire celebrations, but we can justify our choice by other means than by the necessities of school terms and vacations. It has historical sanction. It is not altogether inappropriate that we celebrate the power, the virility and the vigour of our Empire on a day that recalls the creation of Edward of Carnarvon as Prince of Wales in the first year of the 14th century'. It is unlikely that the Earl of Meath would have agreed. See James Hight Papers MB 242 A1-2 'Addresses and Lectures' undated letter (c. 1927) Macmillan Brown Library, University of Canterbury. For Hight's career see N.C. Phillips, 'James Hight' in *Dictionary of New*

Zealand Biography, Vol. III 1901-1920, (Auckland: Auckland University Press 1996): 217-218 and William James Gardner et al , *A History of the University of Canterbury 1873-1973* (Christchurch: University of Canterbury, 1973).

⁹⁷Only one example of the confluence of local and Empire patriotism has been located in the research for this article, which was the unveiling of the statue of John Logan Campbell city father of Auckland on Empire Day 1906. Narratives written in the press suggested city progress with intermittent slumps which had been overcome. *Auckland Weekly News* 24 May 1906.

⁹⁸Donald Macdonald had been the first Australian war correspondent at the South African War and his reports were subsequently published as 'How We Kept the Flag Flying' (1900). See the entry by Hugh Anderson for 'Donald Alaster Macdonald' in *Australian Dictionary of Biography 1891-1939*, Vol. 10. (Melbourne: University of Melbourne Press, 1986), 249.

⁹⁹'Australia and the Empire' *Argus* 24 May 1909 and 'The Link Between' 24 May 1912.

¹⁰⁰*Argus*, 24 May 1913.

¹⁰¹See for example Boyce's collected statements about Empire Day in F. D. Boyce *Empire Day* (Sydney: Christian World Print, 1927), 8.

¹⁰²See for example *Sydney Morning Herald*, 25 May 1908.

¹⁰³*Ibid.* 24 May 1911.

¹⁰⁴For a general discussion of imperial propaganda in Australian schools see Bob Bessant, *British Imperial Propaganda in Australian Schools 1900-1930*, Working

Papers in Australian Studies No.98. (London: Sir Robert Menzies Centre for Australian Studies, 1995). The Director of Victorian education in the years immediately before and after the Great War was Frank Tate, an Empire enthusiast. See Robert J.W. Selleck, *Frank Tate: A Biography*, (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1982).

¹⁰⁵*Argus*, 24 May 1905.

¹⁰⁶For Australia see Anthony W. Hannan, 'Patriotism in Victorian State Schools 1901-45', MA diss, La Trobe University, 1977. For New Zealand, E.P. Malone, 'The New Zealand School Journal and the Imperial Ideology' in *New Zealand Journal of History*, 7 (1973):12-27.

¹⁰⁷ Shortly after Lord Meath had written an open letter to schools in the Empire outlining how Empire Day should be marked, New South Wales' Department of Public Instruction suggested that Empire Day contain the following themes. 1. The Extent of the Empire, 2. The variety of races in it. 3. Its wide commerce and varied industries. 4. Its navy, its merchant fleet. 5. Communications between its parts. 6. the significance of the flag. 7. Heroic deeds in war in exploration, in the alleviation of human suffering, in the early settlement of colonies. 8. Abolition of slavery. 9. Some of the great names in literature and science. 10. How Australia is connected with the Empire. 11. The King as head of Empire. Reported in *Sydney Morning Herald* 7 May 1907. For Meath's letter see Bessant, *British Imperial Propaganda*, 5-6.

¹⁰⁸ See Bob Bessant, “Empire Day, Anzac Day, The Flag Ceremony and All That” in *Historian*, 25 (1973): 36-43. A.W. Hannan, ‘Patriotism in Victorian State Schools 1901-45’, (MA thesis, La Trobe University, 1977), 332, Appendix 4a. Victorian Education Department Regulations and Instructions Issued in 1905.

¹⁰⁹ Malone, “New Zealand School Journal”, 12-15. See also Roger Openshaw, ‘The Highest Expression of Devotion: New Zealand Primary Schools and Patriotic Zeal during the Early 1920s’ in *History of Education*, 9: (1980): 333-334. Teachers in New Zealand were obliged to swear an oath of allegiance from 1921. We are indebted to Rebecca Sanders for her research in the Public Record Office of Victoria. No significant local issues seem to have attached itself to Empire Day in schools the Melbourne region.

¹¹⁰ *Argus*, 24 May 1913.

¹¹¹ For example Firth and Hoorn, who suggest it degenerated in the period after 1945, See Stewart Firth and Jeanette Hoorn “From Empire Day to Cracker Night” in Peter Spearritt and David Walker eds., *Australian Popular Culture* (Sydney, Allen and Unwin, 1979), 35.

¹¹² Native School teachers were instructed to observe the Day from 1910. Noted as such in John M. Barrington, *Separate but Equal? Maori Schools and the Crown 1867-1969*, (Wellington: Victoria University Press, 2008), 114. The author’s evidence for imperial culture in schools is taken from sources cited in the next footnote.

¹¹³Maori school log books are held at the National Archives, Auckland branch, Pakeha Schools at the Wellington branch. Of the log books held, very few contained entries for Empire Day. This evidence is at odds with the assertion made in Judith Simon et al *Nga Kura Maori: The Native School System 1867-1969* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1998) that ‘there was much attention given to the celebrating those occasions which highlighted the might and power of the British Empire’, p.91.. Perhaps significantly there is no entry for Empire Day in the index of Judith Simon and Linda Tuhiwai’s subsequent monograph, *A Civilising Mission? Perceptions and Representations of the New Zealand Native School System* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2001).

¹¹⁴Noted as such for example in the log books of Whitemans Valley School for 1899-1911 in 1904 and Taratahi West School 1895-1912, in 1909. See National Archives Wellington Branch, ABDM W359 430 and ABDM W3569, 418.

¹¹⁵T. B. Strong, ‘The Inculcation of Patriotism’ in the *Education Gazette*, 1 November 1921, 4.

¹¹⁶See Roger Openshaw, ‘Patriotic Observance in the Primary School Curriculum 1900-1930’ in *Delta*, 24 (1979): 46.

¹¹⁷Entry for Dominion Day, 24 September 1913 in Kawhara School Log Book, National Archives, ABDM W3569 Wellington branch 1913-1963.