The Influence of a Poet: Wilfrid S. Blunt and the Churchills

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Winston Churchill’s role in the twentieth century has been exceptionally well-documented, as has his tendency to collect and trust experts in various fields. For instance, there is much evidence to show that Churchill’s unwavering devotion to T.E. Lawrence as an expert on Arabian affairs influenced his tenure at the Colonial Office in the early twenties. However, Churchill’s early political career has received comparatively less academic attention. In particular, his relationship with the poet, orientalist, and anti-imperialist Wilfrid Blunt has received scant consideration. This is an odd oversight, given Winston Churchill’s prominence as a historical figure and Blunt’s friendship with Winston Churchill’s father, Lord Randolph Churchill, whose influence on Winston is well-documented. Additionally, this omission is odd because their relationship raises interesting historical questions, owing to their radically different political beliefs regarding the British Empire. The chances that Blunt, an almost lone voice of anti-imperial dissent in British high society would befriend Lord Randolph and later Winston Churchill, a die-hard imperialist in the 1930s, seem improbable.

This omission may be due to Winston Churchill’s son and first biographer, Randolph Churchill. Randolph’s work covered the earlier portion of his father’s life, from his birth in 1874 until 1914. These early volumes of the biography, volumes one and two, are less well researched and less comprehensive than Martin Gilbert’s later volumes. From Winston Churchill and Blunt’s first meeting in 1903 until 1914, Randolph Churchill only refers to Blunt a handful of times, despite their frequent meetings. While it is difficult to ascertain Randolph’s reasons for casting Blunt as a peripheral character in his father’s life, he may have wanted to downplay his father’s relationship with such a politically radical figure as Blunt. Alternatively, Randolph may have simply not had enough information or evidence regarding the relationship, as much of the work done on Blunt at that time had been heavily biased by his estranged daughter, Judith Blunt-Lytton. Whatever the reason for the marginalization, Randolph’s biography largely ignores Winston Churchill’s relationship with Blunt. Likewise, Blunt receives only scattered mention in later historiography. Historians such as Peter de Mendelssohn in *The Age of Churchill: Heritage and Adventure 1874-1911* (1961), Paul Addison in *Churchill on the Home Front 1900-1915* (1993), Roy Jenkins in *Churchill* (2001), and Richard Toye in *Churchill’s Empire* (2010), have not discussed this relationship in any depth.

Blunt did, however, keep extensive diaries of his political and social affairs, which are widely regarded as both reliable and valuable sources. Indeed, other Churchill biographers, like de Mendelssohn, described Blunt as “a shrewd observer of men and a faithful and reliable recorder of their opinions.”4 Roy Jenkins echoed this, noting that Blunt, “in spite of extravagance of behavior and of opinion, often provides a good window on to Churchill.”5 The diaries reveal how close the two were during the earlier phases of Churchill’s political life. This article seeks to review Blunt’s relationship with both Churchills, in order to explore the possibility that Blunt exerted some influence on Lord Randolph Churchill’s political career, and, through this connection, to a lesser degree on the early phases of Winston Churchill’s political life. This influence was especially im-
important with respect to the issues of prison reform and British imperial policy in Middle Eastern affairs.

Wilfrid Scawen Blunt was born in 1840 near Sussex, England, to a wealthy family. His mother was a newly converted Roman Catholic, and, as a result, Blunt grew up in a very strict Catholic environment. Educated at Stoneyhurst, a traditional Jesuit academy, and St. Mary’s College, Osscot, Blunt joined the Diplomatic Service at the Foreign Office in 1858, staying there until 1869. While Blunt was in the Diplomatic Service, he met renowned Victorian explorer Richard Burton, who stirred in Blunt’s imagination an excitement for exploration. In Florence, Blunt met his future wife, the granddaughter of Lord Byron, Lady Anne Isabelle (“Annabella”) King-Noel. When Blunt left the Diplomatic Service, he focused his attention on his long-standing interest in poetry, publishing *Sonnets and Songs by Proteus* (1875), *Proteus and Amadeus* (1879), and *The Love Sonnets of Proteus* (1881).

The Blunt marriage was not a particularly happy one, as Wilfrid Blunt engaged in numerous affairs. But the couple travelled extensively in the Middle East, often visiting places that few Europeans had ever seen. Lady Anne Blunt recorded their travels in her journal, and published them as anthropological works such as *Bedouin Tribes of the Euphrates* (1879) and *A Pilgrimage to Nejd* (1881). It was on these travels that they obtained pure-blooded Arabian horses, importing them for horse racing, and establishing a breeding farm called Crabbet Park Stud. It was also here that Blunt first became interested in matters of the Islamic world, often writing polemics and political papers from his Egyptian estate, Sheykh Obeyd.

While Wilfrid Blunt has been treated as a serious literary figure—often portrayed as a kind of anti-Kipling—he is usually overlooked as a historical figure. Historians such as Lord Randolph Churchill’s biographer, R.F. Foster, and the Middle East historian Peter Mansfield have dismissed Blunt as “an object of fun” and a man who “greatly exaggerated his political influence.” However, as will be demonstrated, the impact of his relationships with both Lord Randolph and Winston Churchill undercuts this assertion. Moreover,
Blunt’s role as a serious and influential political reformer has been recently re-evaluated in post-colonial, orientalist discourse. Writers in this field, such as Aiman Sanad Al-Garrallah, Ziauddin Sardar, Chris Brooks and Peter Faulkner have explored the literary and cultural implications of Blunt’s poetry and travel literature.⁸

These reassessments by historians, including Elie Kedourie, Kathryn Tidrick, and Geoffrey Nash, also emphasize Blunt’s role as a counter-orientalist political reformer. Kedourie argued that Blunt was a prophetic figure, noting his belief in the fall of the Ottoman Empire and the eventual recognition of Arab Muslim states, concepts that, before 1914, would have been seen as “ignorant and lunatic fancies,” but which, in the early 1920s, “became the ground on which staid Civil Servants and politicians…built their plans.”⁹ Tidrick expanded on this notion, and has differentiated Blunt from other Victorian Arabists such as Richard Burton and Charles Doughty, insofar as Blunt “went beyond admiration, to active pursuit of what he conceived to be their interests,” making him the “first Englishman to take up the lance for the Arabs.”¹⁰ Significantly, the notion that Blunt was different, and perhaps more sincere, than other Victorian travel writers of the time was also expressed by Edward Said, who lamented of other Victorian writers that “in their final analysis they all (except Blunt) expressed the traditional Western hostility to and fear of the Orient.”¹¹ Nash’s recent work From Empire to Orient (2005) explores the significance of Blunt’s associations with prominent Eastern political reformers such as Jamal-al-din al-Afghani and Muhammad Abduh—whom Blunt introduced to Lord Randolph—and illustrates the importance of Blunt’s counter-orientalist discourse. He maintains that:

Blunt’s association with al-Afghani and Abduh… brought a counter-balance that was certainly fortuitous in the sense that his concern with the renewal of Islam coincided with the activism of these seminal figures in Islamic thought. As a result, a seriousness and weight is added to Blunt’s discourse.¹²
By the 1880s, Wilfrid Blunt had become “the avatar for anti-imperial causes” and an active force for the “regeneration of Islam” by means of “agitation and negotiation as well as by poetry and horse breeding.” Blunt’s gatherings devoted to Arabian horse breeding at his fashionable Crabbet Park Estate often became the vehicles through which he spread his political views. The social connections afforded by the influential horse trading community, especially in Tory circles, included George Wyndham, the Lytton family, and even Conservatives as prominent as George Curzon and Arthur Balfour. Blunt has been described by Roy Jenkins as a “rich Sussex squire, Arabist, honorary Irish nationalist and well known coureur,” and by Richard Toye as the “anti-imperialist in chief.”

Blunt was enraged at Liberal Prime Minister William Ewart Gladstone’s second ministry (1880-85) for its intervention into and occupation of Egypt after a nationalist uprising led by Colonel Ahmed Urabi. He believed the interventionist policy to be one of fiscal self-interest and blatant imperialism, which was diametrically opposed to the vision for the Levant that he described in The Future of Islam (1882). Blunt’s far-sighted design interpreted the collapse of the Ottoman Empire as inevitable, due to its excesses and archaic use of the oppressive vilayet system, which split the administration of the Middle East into small manageable regions. Once the Ottoman Empire disappeared, Blunt reasoned, “The Caliphate—no longer an empire, but still an independent sovereignty—must be taken under British protection, and publicly guaranteed its political existence, undisturbed by further aggression from Europe.” Furthermore, he advocated the creation of an Arabian state as home of the new Caliphate. According to Blunt’s design, the English were singular amongst Europeans because they had a “tradition of tolerance towards Islam,” which would result in “Moslems, recognizing this,” and thus looking to “England as their advisor and protector.” According to Blunt, this was already evident in India. However, his faith in the British Empire as a progressive force in the Islamic world waned heavily after he published The Future of Islam. This left Blunt increasingly isolated politically, and on a course which was bound to part company with British politi-
Wilfrid Blunt and Lord Randolph Churchill
Wilfrid Blunt first became connected with the Churchill family after befriending Lord Randolph at a chess tournament in the Strand in 1883. Always on the lookout for political contacts to aid his quest to end the recent occupation of Egypt, Blunt had written to Randolph, a leading Tory, in November 1882, prior to their meeting, to ask if Randolph would “defend the Egyptian nationalists against the charge of complacency in the Alexandria riots.” Blunt had been working for a pardon for Urabi, and was able to convince Lord Randolph to contribute fifty pounds towards the defence of Urabi. According to Robert Rhodes James, Randolph was greatly influenced by Blunt in Egyptian affairs and especially regarding the Urabi revolt. Elizabeth Longford supported this view, arguing that “All through that parliamentary session of 1883 Blunt was impregnating an instinctively sympathetic Churchill with his own ideas for justice and liberty in the East.” Blunt’s letters at the time corroborate this: “Before the session was over I counted him, on those points, already my disciple.” Blunt later recalled Lord Randolph’s conversion to his way of thinking:

Churchill, though an imperialist of the Disraeli school, was a young man full of engaging qualities with generous impulses and large sympathy with the weak and oppressed. I had a fond close friendship with him and had succeeded in interesting him in my Oriental ideas to the extent besides taking up the cause of Egyptian nationalism, he later visited India and on his return in 1885 professed himself converted to Lord Ripon’s policy.

However, in Winston Churchill’s biography of his father, he argued that the conservative Lord Randolph had always seen the interventionist policy of the Gladstone government as a political blun-
der, and that Lord Randolph “sympathized from the beginning with the revolt of Arabi Pasha.” Moreover, “he believed that the popular soldier and minister had been the head of a real national movement directed against one of the vilest and most worthless governments in the world.”

It is also apparent that Blunt guided Winston Churchill in writing *Lord Randolph Churchill* (1906). In writing his father’s biography, Winston borrowed some of Blunt’s papers and letters, and even solicited Blunt’s help as an editor. Blunt recorded in his diary on 31 October 1903 that Winston was “writing his father’s life and told me he had found a number of my letters and asked for any I might have of his father’s, which I was glad to promise him for his book.” Additionally, Blunt met with Churchill in August 1904 to help him with the letters. In his diary, he explained the proceedings:

> He [Winston] took out his father’s letters which I had left him six weeks ago, from a tin box and read them to me aloud while I explained the allusions in them, and gave him a short account of the political adventures of the early eighties in which Randolph and I had been connected.

Winston acknowledged Blunt’s influence over his father in the Eastern matters in his father’s biography, writing that “Lord Randolph had persuaded himself upon the mass of evidence collected for him by Mr. Wilfred [sic] Blunt and others in Egypt that the Khedive Tewfik was indirectly responsible for the massacre of June 11.” Even Lord Randolph’s later biographer, R. F. Foster, who typically maintained that Randolph never took Blunt seriously, noted that on Egyptian affairs, Randolph “maintained a close correspondence with Blunt.”

While there is evidence of Blunt’s influence over Lord Randolph, it is important to note that, despite Blunt’s perceptions in his diary, Lord Randolph also maintained a level of influence over Blunt. When Blunt unsuccessfully stood for the Camberwell seat in Parliament as a “Tory democrat” in 1885, he constantly deferred to Lord Randolph’s opinions. When he first consulted Randolph about
running for Parliament as a Tory, Blunt asked “What will this bind me to?” acknowledging his fear that, while he supported the aristocratic and non-interventionist policies of the Tories, he also knew that his imperial views were perhaps too radical for the party. In an effort to get Blunt to water down some of his more controversial views, Randolph reminded him of the electoral politics of the day, saying, “You know my foreign politics, but at home I am a Catholic and a Tory... [and] in Ireland I am a nationalist.” Randolph also encouraged him not to say he supported Home Rule in Ireland domestically, but rather that he had “wide opinions on the Irish question.”

Moreover, Blunt allowed Lord Randolph to edit his political manifesto, entitled “Am I a Tory Democrat?” before sending it to The Times. Lord Randolph toned down some of the anti-imperial sentiment regarding Irish Home Rule, and did not use the phrase “home rule” in order to “soften down the precision of [Blunt’s] views as regards to an Irish Parliament.”

So, with willingness to compromise on both the part of Lord Randolph and Blunt, a great friendship was born. Longford described Blunt’s fascination with Randolph: Randolph “was a man after Blunt’s heart: ferocious in public attack but frank and natural, even boyish, in private. He seemed ready to learn from Blunt, deferring charmingly to him as a writer and poet.” Randolph often bowed to Blunt’s judgment on matters concerning Egypt and other Islamic regions. He believed Blunt was “an authority on Egypt” who had “a right to be heard.” Blunt, meanwhile, deferred to Randolph on matters of Parliament.

Their friendship also proved to be a useful political alliance, at least for a time. They worked together on several issues involving the British Empire, in which British policy in Egypt, India, and Ireland were major focal points. Lord Randolph championed Blunt’s anti-imperial causes in Parliament, and benefited from Blunt’s social connections and information, which he used as ammunition against the Gladstone government. Additionally, Blunt was a source of great amusement for Lord Randolph. According to Foster, among Churchill and the other renegade Conservatives known as the Fourth Party,
attitudes towards Blunt “wavered from amusement and irritation; [John] Gorst described him as somebody who had only got the right idea about Egypt by accident.” 32 The younger Churchill would also get a great deal of amusement from Blunt, but in a more respectful and mutually understood way. Where Lord Randolph took Blunt’s anti-imperialism with a grain of salt, Winston accepted him as a more serious figure.

In Egyptian affairs, Blunt and Lord Randolph worked to undermine the Liberal government by illustrating the Khedive’s connection to the riots and massacres during the Anglo-Egyptian war of 1882. At Blunt’s behest, Randolph continually tried to encourage Lord Salisbury and the Tory leadership to his way of approaching Egypt. On 30 June 1882, Blunt recorded that Churchill believed he was getting Lord Salisbury “around to our ideas,” and he had come up with a design for Egypt: “Tewfik should be deposed by the Sultan and his son should be put under English guardianship…. There must be a protectorate.” Though Blunt preferred the term “alliance” for their proposed scheme, Randolph thought it best to call “a spade, a spade,” and decided on the term protectorate for Egypt. 33

Their progressive political alliance also extended to India. Blunt had travelled there twice, first in the late 1870s as a vice regal guest and then again in 1883. However, on his second trip, Blunt was no longer the aristocratic guest of the Viceroy, but rather a social and political reformer. In accordance with this role, he stayed with relatively marginalized intellectuals and “distinguished Oriental exiles” with whom he forged relationships due to his sympathies with the Egyptian Revolution. These relationships, according to Blunt, “threw open to me doors and hearts in India which are usually shut to Englishmen.” 34 While in India, Blunt decided to take up a cause that he “specially made [his] own, that of the Indian Mohammedans.” Upon returning, Blunt told Randolph of his new cause and found him “more than half disposed to go with me in my plans for them and to make himself in Parliament the champion of Islam.” 35 Blunt even convinced Lord Randolph to visit India in the winter of 1884, and to look up some of Blunt’s friends while he was there. Blunt recorded
that Randolph was very impressed with India, and especially with the policies of the relatively liberal Viceroy, Lord Ripon.

A year later, Lord Randolph was appointed to the post of Secretary of State for India in the Salisbury government. He and Blunt conspired to enforce the Queen’s Proclamation of 1859, which would allow Indians to become civil servants in the British government of India. Randolph demanded an inquiry into the Indian administration and called for Indian reform to be a part of the Conservative party platform, while Blunt made social calls and collected evidence for these relatively progressive actions. On 30 June 1885, Blunt called on Randolph at the India Office to make sure that the reforms allowing Indians to become civil servants were moving forward. Randolph assured him that, though things were moving slowly in the direction of reform, he would soon have his own way. Explaining the situation to Blunt, he said “If I were to open up the question of civil service examinations straight off there would be a howl all over the office. But I mean to carry the Queen’s proclamation into practice and see that the natives get admitted into the services.”

On 23 July 1885, Blunt even brought one of the founders of an intellectual, anti-imperialist, Islamic movement, Jamal-al-din al-Afghani, who had been staying with Blunt in Britain and who had worked with him and Muhammad Abduh in the Egyptian Revolution, to see Lord Randolph Churchill at the India Office so that “Lord Randolph... might be in closest possible touch with authentic Mohammedan opinion.” Blunt recorded their conversation regarding India, Russia, and the role of Muslims in the “great game,” or the Anglo-Russian imperial rivalry in Central Asia. Afghani insisted that Britain had done harm to the Islamic world by their policies in India. While Russia had not committed similar acts, most Muslims felt that Russia was more dangerous than Britain because “If the Russians remain in Merv for five years, there will be no more Afghanistan... no more Persia... no more Anatolia... and no more India. All will have been swallowed.” In order to avoid this, Afghani argued, “Britain must make an alliance with Islam, with the Afghans, the Persians,
the Turks, the Egyptians and the Arabs.... To make friends with Mo-
hammedans you must leave Egypt.”38

To a lesser degree, Blunt worked with Lord Randolph on the
Irish question of Home Rule. This would also prove to be the point
that broke the alliance between the two. After repeatedly assuring
Blunt privately that he wanted Home Rule, Randolph continued to
alter Blunt’s writings on the matter in his election campaign. Publi-
cally, Randolph grew increasingly opposed to Home Rule. Blunt had
suspected that Randolph was shrinking from the Irish question for
some time, and he attributed this to Randolph’s desire to keep his
place in the Tory party and Cabinet.39 In his diary for 8 December
1885, Blunt recorded, “Whatever course the Tory Party adopt for Ire-
land, my own programme for it shall remained unchanged….. When I
mentioned Ireland to Churchill, an odd mischievous look came over
his face. I fear he will not stick to his flag.”40

Indeed he did not. After Gladstone suddenly came out in fa-
vour of Home Rule before the end of 1885, Randolph wrote to Blunt
saying, “There is no doubt or question about the matter. If you want
Home Rule you must go to Gladstone for it. We cannot touch it.”41
Randolph refused to see Blunt on 12 January 1886, and then again
after his violently anti-Home Rule speech in Paddington on 21 Feb-
uary. Blunt concluded that his “political break with Churchill had
become a necessity,” and he “washed his hands of Churchill and the
Tory Party.”42

Lord Randolph had fallen short of Blunt’s ideals on India as
well. Randolph had called for the Indian inquiry, but also had “vio-
lently attacked” Lord Ripon’s progressive policies, policies which
Blunt privately “knew him to approve.”43 Moreover, Blunt abhorred
Randolph’s approval of the annexation of Burma to the Indian Em-
pire. Blunt’s “champion of Islam” had failed in the ideals Blunt had
expected of him. In March 1886, Blunt recorded in his diary that
“Lord Salisbury and Randolph have falsified all my hopes in them.
They have hardened their hearts against justice in Ireland, Egypt, and
India…. My alliance with Randolph will have been an unpardonable
sin.”44 Blunt and Lord Randolph rarely spoke from that time, even up
to the time of Randolph’s death in early 1895. However, while Blunt’s influence over Randolph had come to an end, he would soon find another “champion” of his positions in Randolph’s son, Winston.

Wilfrid Blunt and Winston Churchill

Despite his Victorian upbringing, young Winston Churchill echoed his father’s ideas about the need for reform in India, even before he met Blunt. In fact, Blunt would later remark on the power of Lord Randolph’s legacy over his son, noting in his diary “There is something touching about the fidelity with which he continues to espouse his father’s cause and his father’s quarrels.” Though Churchill was picking up his father’s banner, his ideas were largely focused on military reforms, unlike those of Lord Randolph, which were primarily political. Churchill had served with the Queen’s Own Fourth Hussars in the North West Territory of India, and had begun to question some of the government’s military policies, such as the punitive “Butcher and Bolt” expeditions licensed by the imperial Forward policy, which dictated that imperial forces had a right to secure frontier regions, often by brutal means, in order to ensure economic stability. Churchill referred to this policy as “undignified” in his The Story of the Malakand Field Force (1898).

However, it was not until Churchill became embroiled in Egypt and the Sudan as a junior officer and war correspondent during the “Anglo-Dervish War” against the Mahdiyya and their leader, the Mahdi, that Blunt became interested in him. In May of 1899, Blunt was informed by George Wyndham that the young Churchill was publishing his new book The River War (1899). Because Blunt hoped that young Churchill would take up the mantle of his father’s progressive tendencies, he assumed the book would “[blurt] out all kinds of inconvenient truths about the Sudan campaign.” The book did just that, and Blunt was impressed that Churchill had even called General Kitchener’s desecration of the Mahdi’s tomb “a foul deed.” On 3 June 1899, Churchill gave Blunt more reason to assume that he was a
young progressive version of Lord Randolph when he gave a speech in the House of Commons which historian Robert Rhodes James entitled “A Brutal Act.” Churchill argued that he would not vote for the award of £10,000 to Kitchener for his victory in Sudan because “it is beyond all contention that the matter in which the dismemberment and removal [of the Mahdi’s body] were carried out was such as to constitute the whole proceeding, a brutal act.” Years later, in 1909, Churchill told Blunt that Kitchener behaved like a “blackguard,” and Blunt informed Churchill that he believed Kitchener still had the head of the Mahdi as a trophy, despite being ordered to return the head to Sudan. To this, Churchill replied, “I made a row about that though they told me it was bad taste for a young Lieutenant to say anything. I always hated Kitchener, though I did not know him personally.”

Wilfrid Blunt met Winston Churchill for the first time in October 1903. Blunt recorded in his diary his impressions of the young Winston:

He is a little square headed fellow of no very striking appearance, but of wit, intelligence, and originality. In mind and manner he is a strange replica of his father, with all his father’s suddenness and assurance…. In opposition I expect to see Winston playing precisely his father’s game, and I should not be surprised if he had his father’s success. He has a power of writing Randolph never had.

After this initial meeting, their relationship would continue to grow during the early 1900s. Churchill did not mind keeping the company of this controversial figure. In 1904, after all, Churchill himself had courted controversy in switching political allegiances from the more traditional, imperialist Conservatives to the relatively less imperialist Liberals. Blunt and Churchill met several times, at first to discuss young Winston’s impending biography of his father, but then simply as friends. On some occasions they dressed in Arab clothing, a tradition Blunt and Churchill would carry on into the twilight of their friendship. After Winston Churchill published the bi-
ography of his father, Blunt recorded in his diary that it was “well done and on the whole a very fair statement of Randolph’s career.” However, Blunt was frustrated by Winston’s underestimation of the extent of “Randolph’s Home Rule dallying in 1885.” Blunt believed Winston might be trying to minimize the sincerity with which his father considered Irish Home Rule. Blunt criticized Winston’s biography and offered a “convincing rebuttle” [sic] in his 1906 article “Randolph Churchill,” in which Blunt also lamented the omission of “his father’s more liberal Indian views.”

However, evidence of Winston Churchill’s more liberal views on imperial matters can be found in the period following his appointment as Colonial Undersecretary in December 1905. In fact, Winston’s reputation as a liberal reformer preceded him. Upon hearing the news of Churchill’s appointment, the ultra-conservative High Commissioner of the Protectorate of Northern Nigeria, Sir Frederick Lugard “just shook his head and called the appointment bad news.” The two men soon came to loggerheads over the Sokoto Crisis in early 1906. Lugard had written to the Colonial Office for permission to go on a punitive expedition against the Munshi tribe in Nigeria because they had destroyed the Royal Niger Company’s depot, an expedition Lugard made standard procedure. Blunt shared Churchill’s antipathy toward Lugard’s tactics. Two years earlier, Lugard had mounted an expedition against the Sokoto tribe, which was an Islamic caliphate in Nigeria, and also against the Kano tribe. Upon learning of Lugard’s actions against the Sokoto tribe, Blunt regretfully noted that “Nothing with less excuse has been perpetrated in the history of British aggression” and all to “gratify Lugard’s ambition.” Churchill agreed with Blunt’s sentiments, as he was weary of such expeditions, having witnessed their brutal and politically self-destructive nature on the North Western frontier of India. Moreover, several members of the Liberal party, including Lord Elgin, the Colonial Secretary, typically frowned on such expeditions. Churchill advised Lord Elgin not to give permission for a punitive expedition. According to Lugard’s biographer Margery Perham, Churchill’s reaction to the proposed expedition was “vigorous and by implication
very critical of Lugard and the whole forward policy for which he stood and upon which he had now been acting steadily for five years.” Lord Elgin did not consent to the mission either, but despite this, Lugard unilaterally moved against the Munshi tribe, and his army was “defeated and annihilated.” As a result, the situation reached crisis level: news of the defeat reached the previously defeated Amir of Sokoto, and Lugard was afraid that the Amir would rise in jihad. Upon learning of the Sokoto Crisis, Churchill continued to argue against the employment of punitive expeditions in this circumstance in the House of Commons on 27 February 1906.

There is further evidence of a convergence of views as Blunt’s friendship with Churchill solidified. This is especially evident in Churchill’s unofficial tour of the British colonies in Africa in 1907. Churchill’s journey first took him to Cyprus in October, where he was met with a “turbulent demonstration in favor of Enosis, or union with Greece.” Unimpressed by the “flag waving,” Churchill addressed the crowd, and assured them that Great Britain would “respect the national sentiments of both races [referring to Greeks and Muslim Cypriots].” In a report made to the Colonial Office, Churchill echoed Blunt’s views once more by remarking on the ridiculous situation created by Lord Salisbury’s promise to the Greek Cypriots that they would never again be under Turkish rule, despite the fact that England was obligated by a treaty to respect the Turkish position. In this way, Churchill began to take up the mantle of a champion of Islam, a position Blunt had tried to inculcate in his father Randolph. Arguing for the protection of the Islamic population of Cyprus by opposing the return of Cyprus to Greece, Churchill insisted:

If that were done, the lives of the Muslims in the island, who constitute more than a fifth of the population, and who have always behaved to us with the utmost loyalty and good conduct, would be rendered utterly intolerable, and they would all be oppressed or frozen out…. Union with Greece means their ruin.
In order to avoid such disastrous consequences, Churchill recommended that a large amount of investment and active participation by the British would help both parties come to an agreement. He also noted the imperative need for success in Cyprus because “British methods were on trial before the tribunal of Europe. Success in Cyprus, as in Egypt, credits Britain in European eyes.” Such notions borrowed heavily from Blunt’s assertion in *The Future of Islam* that the British Empire was a progressive force in Islamic matters.65

Another matter in which traces of Blunt’s thought can be seen is in Churchill’s prescriptions for the protectorate of Somaliland. After his visit there, Churchill understood the issue to be one of fiscal ability. The interior of the country was controlled by the militant and unfriendly Dervish Somali nationalist, Mullah Sheikh Muhammad Abdullah Hassan, and Churchill believed that Britain could not afford the cost of holding the interior of Somaliland with the sufficient number of troops that would be required to repel the Mullah’s advances; the return on the investment could never be repaid. As a result, “Churchill would not seriously entertain the policy of effectively occupying Somaliland and crushing the Mullah.” The alternative course of action, which Churchill thought would be more economically effective, was to move the British forces to the coast, where they could contain the Mullah and control the coast, and thus the custom duties which raised the majority of income.66

This notion of withdrawal and coastal control was first suggested by Blunt in a letter to his old friend George Wyndham, the previous Undersecretary of State for War, which Blunt recorded in his diary on 17 March 1904:

I have written to George Wyndham to get him to stop the Somali campaign, and to provide for the safety of the “friendly tribes” on the Arab principle of paying blood money so as to end the feud between them and the Mullah. The British forces should then retire to the seaports and leave the interior strictly alone. If there are any friendly chiefs who feel themselves compromised they should be given handsome pensions and invited to live at Berbera under English protection. The rest of the tribes will very soon come to terms with the others, *only don’t leave British gar-
risons anywhere in the interior and forbid all travelling and sporting expeditions by our officers for some years to come.  

On 3 October 1909, Blunt recorded in his diary that Churchill “had a scheme for settling the Somaliland folly on the lines precisely the same as those I proposed five years ago.” Eventually, this scheme was adopted after Churchill left the Colonial Office, though it was not until March 1910 that the orders came to withdraw from the interior of the country and hold the coast, as Churchill had advocated. The plan proved to be a total failure, and was characterized by historian Ronald Hyam as “melancholy and even catastrophic.” The interior of Somaliland collapsed into confusion, resulting in starvation for many of the tribes who lived there. The British left, and the Mullah continued to plague the British forces until 1920, when Churchill, by then Secretary of State for War, employed air power to destroy him and his forces. Hyam placed the blame at Churchill’s feet, because Churchill failed to understand the “Mullah’s unique position as a national figure appealing to the patriotic sentiments of Somalis as Muslims irrespective of clan or lineage allegiance.” This concept would have also eluded Blunt, who saw the Somali conflict through an Islamic, or perhaps pan-Islamic lens, and failed to understand the nationalist nature of the Mullah’s movement.

Neither Churchill nor Blunt knew how the Somali strategy would play out, and in the meantime Blunt was very pleased with Churchill’s handling of Cyprus and Somaliland. Churchill even sent Blunt copies of the secret minutes outlining the plans for troop withdrawal in Somaliland and financial aid in Cyprus. Blunt concluded that “all this is excellent and may lead to real imperial reforms.”

Apart from policy decisions, there is evidence that Churchill’s association with Blunt may have affected his personal life, too. In a letter written to Lady Lytton while he was en route to Africa, Churchill displayed an obvious fascination with the orient. He declared, “You will think me a pasha. I wish I were.” Letters to Churchill from his friends also betrayed an awareness of this attraction to Mid-
dle Eastern culture. Before departing, Churchill received a letter from his long-time friend and soon to be sister-in-law, Lady Gwendeline Bertie, who wished him well on his voyage, but, with the fresh knowledge that Churchill had been spending time with Blunt, implored him not to give into his Islamic sympathies:

Please don’t become converted to Islam; I have noticed in your disposition a tendency to orientalism, pasha-like tendencies, I really have; you are not cross my writing this, so if you come in contact with Islam, your conversion might be effected with greater ease than you might have supposed, call of the blood, don’t you know what I mean, do… fight against it.\(^\text{73}\)

As the first decade of the twentieth century came to a close, Blunt and Churchill saw each other socially with increasing regularity. They discussed and agreed on several aspects of imperial reform, such as Irish Home Rule, the topic that alienated Blunt from Lord Randolph. Blunt’s diaries record his faith in Winston Churchill’s pro-Home Rule disposition. Their discussions on imperial reforms did not stop with Ireland. During a luncheon in September 1909, Blunt tried to finesse Churchill into speaking on India. To Blunt’s regret, all Churchill gave him was the admission that “if they ever unite against us and put us in Coventry all round, the game would be up.” Churchill, however, did speak to Blunt about Blunt’s old pursuit, Egypt. To Blunt’s dismay, Churchill exclaimed “We shall continue to hold it whatever happens; nobody will ever give it up—I won’t—except if we are driven out at the end of a war.”\(^\text{74}\) Blunt was fearful that perhaps Winston was like his father, and not really the champion of Islam he had hoped he was. Winston reaffirmed his position a month later while he was spending the weekend with Blunt by calling himself an “Imperialist.” Despite this, Blunt had not given up on Churchill as a defender of the East. Blunt recorded in his diary that “Winston sympathizes much with my ideas about the native question in India, and in general about the enslavement of the coloured by the white race.”\(^\text{75}\) The next day, after a long conversation with Churchill,
Blunt recorded “I think Churchill will come around to my views about India for in all essentials he is at one with me.”

Blunt continued to pressure Churchill to be an imperial reformer in the same way he had done with Lord Randolph. After discussing his latest book, *India Under Ripon*, with Churchill, Blunt concluded that Winston was “much more favourable to my anti-Imperial views than he was two months ago. Indeed he is almost converted to the view that the British Empire will eventually ruin England.” Blunt also recorded that Churchill told him candidly, “I think you may see me yet carry out your anti-imperial ideas.” In fact, he exclaimed to Blunt that the empire was “a lot of bother,” elaborating that “the only thing one can say for it is that it is justified if it is undertaken in an altruistic spirit for the good of the subject races.” According to historian Richard Toye, the second part of Churchill’s answer was far more in keeping with Churchill’s “normal sentiments” regarding the British Empire.

Back home, in September 1909, they also spoke on the question of prison reform, a goal the Liberal party had sought since the 1890s, and an issue that would become another area where Churchill heavily considered Blunt’s opinion. While intellectual currents in the Liberal party in the direction of prison reform undoubtedly kept Churchill informed, it was on this issue that Blunt’s input with Churchill reached its peak. Blunt even recorded that he believed “he could influence the son more creatively than he influenced the father some twenty five years before.” Churchill announced to Blunt that he was “dead against the current system” and, if he were ever appointed to Home Office, he would “make a clean sweep of it.”

When Churchill was handed the position of Home Secretary in 1910, he was true to his word, in contrast to Randolph’s actions with respect to Blunt’s goals for changing the India Office. In a letter dated 15 February 1910, Blunt reminded Churchill of his pledge, and that he was himself a convict in Ireland after being arrested in 1888 for an anti-imperial speech in a prohibited district. Blunt’s imprisonment had only lasted two months, but his sentence was hard labour. He served at two prisons, Galway Gaol and Kilmainham Gaol,
the second of which was far harsher. After Churchill saw John Galsworthy’s play *Justice*, an indictment of the penal system that “made a powerful impact” on him, he telegraphed Blunt asking him for his memorandum on prison reform. Essentially, Blunt wanted better conditions for political prisoners, so that the punishment would take “a form of restraint on liberty without however, the enforcement of conditions calculated to degrade or humiliate dignity or self respect.” These reforms included access to external food, the privilege for prisoners of being able to wear their own clothes, access to a library, and freedom from compulsory work.

Blunt’s recommendations were roundly approved and adopted by Churchill, with the notable exception of compulsory feeding for prisoners who went on hunger strikes. Despite this difference, when Churchill’s reforms were adopted Blunt rejoiced:

> Winston’s pronouncement on prison reform… is everything I could have wished. He is quite thorough about the reforms and said he would like to adopt the whole of my programme only public opinion was not ready for it yet.

Penal historian Alan Baxendale notes, however, that Blunt misread Churchill’s reforms, as he believed that “the Home Secretary would now have full power to mitigate prison treatment and, except in crimes of violence, put all prisoners with a good character (and that will include political prisoners) in the first class of misdemeanants.”

In reality, as Baxendale explains, “Churchill, the Home Office senior officials and the Prison Commissioners, and the Government as a whole adhered rigidly to the axiom that no one had any right to claim exemption from the criminal law on the basis of political motivation for the commission of illegal conduct.” Despite Blunt’s misunderstanding, Churchill’s Rule still represented real prison reform, reform that Blunt, in addition to Galsworthy, helped to create. This represented the apex of Blunt’s influence on Churchill, because, while Blunt did not formulate policy, he was able to use his direct access to influence Churchill’s thinking on prison reform. At the very least, Blunt helped build on Churchill’s existing beliefs, as prison re-
form was one of the staples of Liberal policy at the turn of the century. Alan Baxendale has given the verdict that “[s]ome of his [Blunt’s] proposals… had a bearing on Churchill’s later measures.”

After they had agreed on some aspects of prison reform, Churchill and Blunt’s opinions began to diverge, especially on the question of Empire in Egypt and India. While discussing the Egyptian question at Blunt’s home at Newbuildings on 14 October 1910, Churchill argued that “we should hold on to Egypt as we hold onto India… a necessity of Empire.” Churchill’s last words to Blunt that night were “you must not quarrel with me if I annex Egypt.” Despite this pronouncement, Blunt still believed that Churchill was “shaken on the subject” and that he “produced a considerable effect on him.”

Four days later, upon hearing that Sir Edward Grey, the Foreign Secretary, was contemplating occupying southern Persia, Blunt recorded in his diary that he planned to write to the Turkish government to advise them to join the Triple Alliance, because “it was the only thing left for any Moslem state to do. The Anglo-Franco-Russian Entente intends their destruction.”

Blunt finally accepted that he was losing Churchill’s ear in January of 1911, when he noted in his diary that he “was sorry to find that Winston was getting more and more imperialist.” In early 1911, Churchill became First Lord of the Admiralty, where he was increasingly concerned with the welfare of the Empire, even if imperial goals came at the expense of territories whose interests he had previously been concerned about. With Churchill’s appointment to the Admiralty, Blunt feared that he was becoming too close to Sir Edward Grey, a leading member of the Liberal Imperialist group within the party, and recalled a conversation they had in passing just before Churchill went to the Admiralty:

As I was going away Churchill called to me—“What will you say to our making a large increase in the Cairo garrison and putting the expense of it on Egypt as a result of your inflammatory pronouncement?” “You may keep 100,000 men there if you like,” I said. “It will make no difference in the result.”
After several months of silence between the two, Churchill wrote Blunt a letter in which he suggested that they sit down and have a talk. Churchill also remarked that he was “glad to find that belonging to a government wicked enough to send Lord Kitchener to Egypt has not altered relations” between them. Churchill clearly felt trepidation regarding Blunt’s opinions on Kitchener’s return to Egypt, and in fact Blunt did have strong opinions on it. He noted that “Churchill had abandoned his long feud with Kitchener,” and even speculated that Kitchener, Churchill and Asquith might be planning a coup in Egypt. Blunt’s frustration with Churchill was clear.

Blunt was not, however, accurate in his estimation of Churchill as an anti-Eastern imperialist at this point. One of Churchill’s first actions as First Lord of the Admiralty was to try to bolster a political and strategic relationship with the Ottoman Empire. In the years leading up to the First World War, the Ottoman Empire’s allegiance hung in a delicate balance. Both Britain and Germany had been attempting to sway Turkey to their side since 1911. In fact, Martin Gilbert noted that “Churchill tried to encourage an actively pro-Turkish policy before 1914.” Djavid Bey, the Turkish finance minister, wrote to Churchill in late October 1911 advocating a formal alliance between Britain and Turkey, and Churchill in turn wrote to Sir Edward Grey at the Foreign Office on 4 November 1911 about Bey’s proposal:

I have thought a good deal since the cabinet meeting about an arrangement with Turkey. I could not help feeling that our colleagues were rather inclined to treat a little too lightly the crude overture which the Turkish government has made…. Turkey has much to offer us…. [W]e must not forget that we are the greatest Mohammedan power in the world. We are the only power who can really help and guide her…. [E]ven a gesture might produce a lasting impression on the Mahometan world.

Traces of Blunt’s thought can be observed in Churchill’s relatively pro-Turkish outlook. Of course Grey did not acquiesce to
Churchill’s suggestion on Turkish policy, but Churchill’s intentions suggest, at least, an element of Blunt’s thinking and Churchill’s own fascination with the Islamic world. Despite this, Blunt was increasingly frustrated by their diverging opinions. After one of Blunt’s opulent and orientalist weekend parties, at which everyone dressed in Bedouin robes, Blunt noted in his diary that “Winston is quite changed on these matters from what he was two years ago when I had hopes of encouraging him to better things. How like his father!”

Indeed, the two had diverged politically and intellectually regarding matters of Empire and the Middle East: Churchill’s mindset was increasingly imperialist, and Blunt’s was firmly anti-imperialist. Blunt’s disdain for the British Empire was evident in his diary entry for 22 June 1916, after he had heard of the Arabian revolt against the Ottomans, and he expressed his fear that Britain intended to leave Constantinople with Russia after the war: “I should rejoice at the independence of Arabia but it will be a less misfortune for Islam to have a German garrison on the Bosphorus and in Constantinople than for these to fall into the hands of Russia.” In fact, when he and Churchill met again on 5 October 1916, Churchill was “anxious to get [Blunt] to agree with him in expecting great things from the Grand Sherif of Mecca as replacing the Ottoman Caliph.” But Blunt disagreed, fearing the Russian intervention in the Caliphate question, and concluded that Churchill, “like everyone else, quite misunderstands.”

Nevertheless, these disagreements did not alter their friendship as deeply as had been the case in the relationship between Blunt and Lord Randolph. They continued to see each other into the twilight of Blunt’s life. Churchill even continued to defend Blunt privately, scolding Sir John Edward Bernard Seely, the Undersecretary of State for the Colonies, for being rude to Blunt. Churchill also arranged for T. E. Lawrence to go to see Blunt a couple of times before his death. Blunt never gave up on Winston as his anti-imperial champion. In a letter to Winston’s wife, Clementine, in June 1921 Blunt wrote:
I believe [Churchill] agrees with me in his heart of hearts about the regeneration of the East and the way it should be set about if the British Empire is not to go the road of ruin all other Empires have gone. I used to talk in the same way to his father and it pleases me to find myself, after so many years talking again to Winston, especially now he is in a position to carry out his ideas as his father never was except the few months he was at the India Office. About Egypt he was always with me to the last days of his life. You may tell Winston this with my love.¹⁰⁴

Blunt’s Legacy
Observing traces of Blunt’s influence on Churchill’s later thinking is more difficult and can only be seen in an abstract sense. Suggestions of Blunt’s legacy become clearest during the period that Churchill was Secretary of State for the Colonies in 1921-1922. In this position, Churchill was an advocate and signatory of the Anglo-Irish Treaty of 1921, which created the Irish Free State, a cause pursued by Blunt, but previously rejected by Lord Randolph and the Tories. Blunt and Churchill exchanged letters regarding the situation in Ireland, and Blunt even noted in his diary that it was a relief to him that Irish affairs were in Winston’s hands.¹⁰⁵ However, the most obvious example of Blunt’s legacy can be viewed in Churchill’s solution for the post-war Middle East. After the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, the Middle East was left with Britain, and to a lesser degree France, to determine its fate. Churchill oversaw the creation of a nominally independent Middle East under the direct control of the British ally, the Hashemite family, with King Hussein on his Sherifian throne in Mecca, Feisal as King of Iraq, and his brother Abdullah as King of Trans-Jordan. All of these remained under informal British control.

This so-called “Sherifian solution” was very similar to what Blunt had in mind in his Future of Islam. Britain became the guarantor of a titularly independent Middle East under the control of Islamic leaders based around a sort of special relationship between the Sheri-
fian Bedouin tribes and the British that was forged in the Arab Revolt against the Ottoman Turks. Elements of Blunt’s thinking were evident in Churchill’s speech to the House Commons on 14 June 1921, when he defended this new Middle Eastern policy. Like Blunt, Churchill rejected the Ottoman vilayet system, arguing that it was “cynical,” and that it kept the Arabs divided and discouraged their national aspirations. Instead, Churchill argued, his policy would build “around the ancient capital of Baghdad in a form friendly to Britain and her allies an Arab state which can revive and embody the old culture and glories of the Arab race.”

After the speech, Churchill wrote to Blunt saying, “I knew you would be pleased about Mesopotamia…. The Arabs have a chance now of building up in Bagdad a civilization and prosperity which will revive its long vanished glories.”

Indeed, Blunt was pleased. With the exception of Egyptian home rule, a matter the two had quarreled over for nearly a decade, Blunt noted in his diary, “[t]hey will have adopted my advice for pretty nearly the whole of the Near Eastern question.” While Blunt was satisfied with Churchill’s solution for the Middle East, he still had reservations about uniting all of the Bedouin tribes as one nation, a scheme Blunt felt was impossible because “each tribe had lived as an independent nation since Solomon.” Moreover, Blunt tended to credit the solution not to Churchill, whom he continued to mistrust over imperial matters, but to his famous protégé, T. E. Lawrence, whom Blunt believed “forced his policy on the Foreign Office and Colonial Office” and on Winston Churchill.

Blunt may have been right. Churchill was enamored with the co-author of this Middle Eastern policy. According to Middle Eastern historian Timothy Paris, their relationship was characterized by “deep mutual admiration and respect,” and “Lawrence’s influence on Churchill was considerable,” resulting in “Churchill’s adherence to Lawrence’s recommendations even on issues with which the rest of the Middle East Department dissented.” Interestingly, Kathryn Tidrick described Lawrence as “Blunt’s most devoted…disciple,” and in fact, as little more than a “caricature” of Blunt. While this dismissal of Lawrence’s personality seems extreme, it does illustrate
the extent to which Lawrence (and thus, Churchill) was swayed by Blunt. For Blunt’s part, he was as fascinated with the young Lawrence as Churchill was. After meeting him in 1920, Blunt’s admiration for Lawrence was evident in his diary: he wrote that Lawrence’s service in the Middle East was “an adventure of the heroic kind, carrying out very exactly the old one I had dreamed of attempting myself in 1880.”

Additionally, Tidrick has argued that Lawrence reiterated Blunt’s assertion that the caliphate be moved to Arabia and assumed by nomadic Bedouins, by advocating that the new Arab leader “should come from the family of the Sherifs of Mecca, whose nomad instincts and faultless pedigree made them natural candidates for the rulership of Arabia.” This correlation reveals Blunt’s effect on British Middle Eastern policy in the post-war period.

However, despite the fact that traces of Blunt’s political thought are evident in the Middle Eastern solution, there were major differences between his and Churchill’s designs for the Middle East. Churchill’s scheme did not transfer the caliphate as Blunt had hoped. Instead, the caliphate and, indeed, any pan-Islamic identity was lost. Consequently, rather than revolving around an Arab caliphate, the Arab society was in orbit around the British Empire. As Dominic Green has observed, Blunt’s “vision of Arab nations emerging under Anglo-French supervision came true; though not, as he had envisioned, around an Arab caliphate. Instead, it happened via the imperialism he detested.”

Blunt would have abhorred the exaggerated role of the British Empire originally, but as he began to see the post-war world unfolding, Blunt began to reconsider his view of the British Empire in the Middle East, and actually somewhat realigned himself with his earlier, more imperial-friendly position in *The Future of Islam*. In 1919, Blunt recorded in his diary that the future of Muslim aspirations was “joined with… that of the British Empire and on the whole I am inclined for their less harm the less it is divided among other Christian empires [sic] …Any single control is better than joint control.” So while Blunt was certainly not endorsing British imperialism, he did
conclude that it was probably the least harmful to Islamic aspirations by default. Prophetically, Blunt wrote in 1884 that the British government had already undermined his work in The Future of Islam, written two years earlier, by “adopting” it and “using it for its own purposes.” The great tragedy, then, of Wilfrid Blunt’s legacy may be that he indirectly helped engineer a British imperial legacy in the Middle East.

Blunt’s friendship with both Lord Randolph and Winston Churchill had major historical ramifications. While their ideas were formed in a similar socio-political environment, Blunt’s notions were often vehemently anti-imperial and ultimately proved too radical for the essentially conservative Churchills. Despite this, however, the evidence suggests that Blunt’s relationship with the Churchills itself had an effect on their attitudes and policies. His relationship with Lord Randolph helped inculcate more liberal, if not marginally progressive, values, and Blunt in turn influenced the young Winston Churchill. In this way, Blunt helped shape young Churchill’s Weltanschauung, especially on imperial issues in the East. This is evident in Churchill’s policies as Colonial Undersecretary, demonstrated by his rebuff of Lugard, his handling of Cyprus, and his strategy for Somaliland. But Blunt’s influence was not limited to imperial affairs; it extended to domestic concerns, which was evident in Churchill’s prison reforms as Home Secretary. Moreover, Churchill’s designs for the Middle East after the First World War strongly echoed some of Blunt’s ideals. Blunt’s friendship with Winston Churchill was an enduring and powerful one, which, when explored systematically, reveals a more nuanced understanding of Churchill’s early political decisions and policy objectives, especially in the Middle East.
Notes

1 I would like to acknowledge the comments and suggestions received as this article has gone through its various phases. In particular I must thank Chris Wrigley, Spencer Mawby, Andrew Holt, Matthew Phillips, Mark Storey, and Katie McDade.

2 See Kathryn Tidrick, Heart-Beguiling Araby: The English Romance with Arabia (London: I.B. Tauris, 1989), 126, 181. There are several sources which illustrate Churchill’s fascination with Lawrence. One such source is Col. Richard Meinertzhagen who recorded in his diary that he was “struck by the attitude of Winston towards Lawrence, which almost amounted to hero worship.” Richard Meinertzhagen, Middle East Diary: 1917-1956 (London: Cresset Press, 1959), 33.


6 See R.F. Foster, Lord Randolph Churchill, 110, 120.


10 Tidrick, Heart-Beguiling Araby, 107.


12 Geoffrey Nash, From Empire to Orient: Travellers to the Middle East 1830-1926 (London: IB Tauris, 2005), 85.

13 Foster, Lord Randolph Churchill, 111, 120.


15 Blunt and other early writers referred to him as Arabi, in an effort to connect Urabi to the Arab struggle and to embody the Arab ideal. Dominic Green, The Armies of God: Islam and Empire on the Nile, 1869-1899 (London: Century, 2007), 110. Also see Lucy McDiarmid, “A Box for Wilfrid Blunt,” PLMA 120 (January 2005), 179 n.6. For more information on the Anglo-Egyptian War see


26 Churchill, *Lord Randolph Churchill*, 261. The massacre that Churchill refers to is a riot that occurred in Alexandria on 11 June 1882, in which fifty Europeans were killed. The British officers wrongly thought that Urabi caused the riot, when he in fact tried to stop it.


40 Ibid, 5.
51 Ibid, 488-489.
52 That Churchill dressed in Arab garments with Blunt was first recorded in a letter from Wilfrid Blunt to Lady Anne Blunt, 5 July 1904; British Library Manuscript Collection, Wentworth Bequest, Correspondence between Lady Anne and W.S. Blunt, vol. CCXC, BL, MSS, Add. 54107. Blunt would later record a similar occasion again in his diary for 19 October 1912; Blunt, *My Diaries*, 812. This was corroborated by Clementine Churchill in Jack Fishman, *My

53 Blunt, My Diaries, 538.
54 Blunt, “Randolph Churchill,” 406. Forster believed that Blunt’s article was meant to imply that Blunt had swayed Lord Randolph to be a convert to Home Rule in India, since Winston’s biography did not clearly illustrate this. See Foster, Lord Randolph Churchill, 395; Jenkins, Churchill, 66.
56 Blunt, My Diaries, 461.
57 Perham, Lugard, 248.
58 Ibid, 252.
61 Ibid, 227.
63 Ibid, 5-6.
64 Ibid, 6-7.
65 While there is no proof that Churchill read Blunt’s The Future of Islam (although it is likely, since he read several other books penned by Blunt) it is reasonable to assume that he and Blunt discussed such ideas.
66 For a complete examination of Churchill’s proposal see Winston Churchill, “Somaliland Protectorate,” Colonial Office Memorandum, 14 November 1907, Churchill College Cambridge, Churchill Papers, CHAR 10/41
67 Blunt, My Diaries, 502.
68 Ibid, 693.
70 Ibid, 366.
71 Blunt, My Diaries, 688-694.


Ibid, 690.

Ibid, 693.

Ibid, 702.

Ibid, 698.


Baxendale, *Penal Reformer*, 42.

Ibid, 43.


Ibid, 709.

Baxendale, *Penal Reformer*, 47.

Ibid, 43.


Ibid, 737.

Ibid, 750.

Ibid, 781. The “inflammatory pronouncement” which Churchill refers to is a letter Blunt wrote and sent to press offices in both Cairo and Constantinople, arguing that Muslim states should join the Central Powers. For more information see Blunt, *My Diaries*, 738.


Ibid, 803.


Blunt’s diary, 22 June 1916, Blunt Papers MS 166-1975.

Blunt’s diary, 5 October 1916, Blunt Papers MS 168-1975.


See CHAR 2/118/96.

Blunt’s diary, 11 June, 1919, Blunt papers MS 467-1975.

Blunt to Churchill, 26 December 1921, Blunt papers MS 279-1976.


Churchill to Blunt, 15 September 1921, Blunt Papers MS 244-1976.


Blunt’s diary, 5 June 1921, Blunt Papers MS 467-1975.

Blunt’s diary, 26 February, 1921, Blunt papers MS 465-1975.


Blunt’s diary, 21 August 1920, Blunt papers MS 459-1975.


Blunt’s diary, 15 April 1919, Blunt papers MS 448-1975.