Biography and Patronage in Crown Colony Governorships: Sir Arthur Hamilton Gordon and “Personal Administration”

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The topic of patronage in imperial appointments has long been recognised as an important one in studies of Colonial Office administration overseas.¹ The primary meaning of the term in the context of public office has been usually restricted to the “preference” extended by ministers or senior officials to relatives, friends, and those considered for reasons of merit, upbringing, and social status to be worthy of appointment to high administrative posts. Historical biographies of colonial governors, of course, were a favourite Victorian form of eulogy, for family and patriotic reasons. From the end of the nineteenth century, as more original sources became available, complimentary volumes gave way to a more critical analysis. Professional historians used the format to engage in re-assessment of the methods of imperial rule. While the inter-war period saw a vigorous attempt to re-assert the moral case for British forms of administration, as exemplified in the writings and careers of major pro-consuls, the steady decolonisation of the tropical territories after 1947, accompanied by military and police “emergencies,” brought a still more sober assessment of the work of the moral “guardians,”

under pressure from anti-imperial political lobbies at home and assertive indigenous politicians abroad.²

This essay on the use of biography in the historiography of governorships links the much older theme of patronage in public service with an illustrative example of an imperial pro-consul in the mid- to late-Victorian empire, but with the advantage of being able to draw upon the more abundant sources and regional histories that have become available since decolonisation. It begins with a necessary explanation of the reasons for the survival of “preferment” after the 1830s and indeed into a later period of change during which the home civil service and the overseas patronage system were under pressure for selection by examination in the wake of the “nationalisation” of the East India Company [hereafter EIC] under a state council and an India office. There is much to be learned, too, from other forms of imperial “lobbying” by private interest groups, through the exploration of “networks” established by the lobbyists (humanitarians, political notables, colonial office-holders) and, one may add, mercantile and business entrepreneurs seeking imperial support.³ The context in which the lobbyists operated, however, was part of a very disparate collection of imperial territories. The non-specialist in imperial history should be aware that the term “Empire” in the nineteenth century denotes a wide political and social spectrum of imperial possessions. Some, by the late 1830s, were agitating for a form of self-government that would come to fruition within a decade. Others were just emerging from slave-owning, and others had only recently been acquired with their foreign populations, as a result of European wars, or because, as in the case of Fiji, they had been taken over in the name of the anti-slavery campaign and the regulation of indentured labour.

My focus is on the latter two groups of territories, making up the Crown Colonies of the West Indies, the Indian Ocean, and the Pacific, and the imperial techniques used to staff them. In comparison with imperial interest groups pressing successfully for control over land and legislatures in the larger settler colonies, their active missionary and planter lobbyists working through the Anti-Slavery
Society and the West Indian Association were at loggerheads over emancipation, apprenticeship, and sugar duty preference, against a background of slave revolts from the 1830s to the 1860s. The well-known outcome was the demise of representative government in the West Indies where “short-lived radical groups” had little leverage in the imperial Parliament. Unexpectedly, there was a revival of the Crown Colony constitutional format, devised for rule over ceded and annexed territories with alien societies, legal systems, and cultures in the eighteenth century, which served imperial purposes in annexed and protected tropical territories in the West Indies, the Pacific, Africa, and the Far East in the nineteenth.

There are two additional reasons for emphasis on the Crown Colonies. The main one is that the governor I have selected to illustrate techniques of personnel management through patronage, Sir Arthur Hamilton Gordon, was a well-connected Whig of Scottish descent, whose career was mainly in Crown Colonies, but with a post in New Brunswick in the critical period before Confederation, and another in an internally self-governing New Zealand during a time of heightened inter-racial tensions. Gordon was never comfortable with the constitutional limitations to Crown representation in self-governing colonies, and his reputation for a particular style of governance stands or falls mainly on the evidence of his work in colonies with conciliar constitutions “of a rather severe type.”

That official shorthand—a conciliar constitution—for government with an executive council and a small, partly-nominated legislature, is a historical stereotype, and disguises a wide variety of administrative politics. The legislatures of such colonies, while unelected, could make a governor’s life difficult. A plantation colony was not simply an arena for gubernatorial autocracy, as Gordon found out in Trinidad, Mauritius, Fiji, and Ceylon, where there were settler and indigenous hierarchies to be bargained with, and senior judicial officers whose views had to be taken into account. Nor could he fall back on the use of force, if it meant using imperial garrisons. Military coercion for political ends was not cheap, and, as rebellion
in Jamaica in 1865 demonstrated, it was not without risk for a governor’s career.

A second reason for concentrating on examples in the dependent empire is that the methods of staffing in the Crown Colony model in the nineteenth century require explanation, because those methods had a bearing on a governor’s freedom of manoeuvre to use personnel management to push his policies through. Britain’s acquisition of territories, and the 1801 transfer of colonial responsibilities from the Home Office to the loosely combined War Office and Colonial Office, had increased the demand for administrators posted overseas by secretaries of state. By the 1860s, when Gordon’s career began, the total civil establishments in all grades, from clerks to governors, in the twenty-nine British Crown Colonies stood at about one thousand eight hundred. After the electoral reforms of 1832, there had been strong parliamentary pressure to restrict preferment in the home civil service in favour of selection by examination. But for the administration of overseas possessions the eighteenth-century practice of selecting friends, relatives, and competent agents continued as a “much abused source of Government patronage” that made few concessions to more general civil service reforms and the momentous example of changes in the selection of administrators for the Indian Civil Service [ICS] in the 1850s. If the legacy of eighteenth-century patronage was so important, the question arises: why was this historical “hydra” not managed by more bureaucratic methods of recruitment and promotion in the new century? One reason is that, with all its faults, it had worked at many levels for so long:

Patronage was the key to employment and advancement in the public service, the armed forces and the Royal Navy; it oiled the political machine at Westminster and in the shires; it provided an effective means of social control in an age of industrial revolution and class violence; it supported the pleasures of the hunting field, the salon, the gaming room and the brothel; it stimulated technical, scientific and commercial achievement; it encouraged the forces of culture and religion; it was a fact of life.
The characteristics of this “fact of life” at the metropolitan end have been discussed in general terms by J. M. Bourne in his published work. The more detailed analysis of imperial patronage in his unpublished thesis on the EIC explains the precedents that became features of later Colonial Office recruitment for Crown Colonies. First, from 1793 there was a shift from metropolitan candidates for the Indian service to nominations of a growing percentage of locally-promoted soldiers and civilians—“Anglo-Indians”—by directors and by senior officials in Bengal and the other two presidencies of Bombay and Madras. Second, the political department in Calcutta began recruiting men for diplomatic and advisory work under treaty relations with princely states. Military men were turned into civil officials and moved into administration and diplomacy, as the need for control and influence increased in Rajputana, the Western States, and the North-West Provinces. These features of imperial administration, the recruiting of experienced settlers and local notables, became standard practice throughout the nineteenth century in societies with effective political elites.

The demise of the EIC, however, under pressure from the company’s political and commercial enemies, gave rise to one major contrast between company and Colonial Office methods of recruitment for overseas posts. The privilege of patronage was removed from directors under the Charter Act of 1853, and the ICS at its most senior level was opened to competitive examination, favouring metropolitan entry. This change was confirmed by the India Act of 1858, when EIC powers passed to a council of India in London and to the governor general and governors of presidencies in India. Importantly, final confirmation of civil service appointments after examination was left to the secretary of state, along with unique patronage power to nominate officials to governorships. Secretaries of State for the Colonies also appointed governors, but did not adopt competitive examinations for lesser appointments overseas.

Thus, it is possible to see in these changes surrounding the end of the EIC two of the techniques—local promotions, and use of resident political officers—employed by the Colonial Office on other
expanding frontiers, as well as the important contrast in methods of entry for British candidates through preferment or selection by examination. After 1858, there was a dividing line between the “Covenanted Civil Service” of India, together with its offshoots (Ceylon and the Straits Settlements), termed “the Eastern System,” for which cadetships through examination were mandatory, and colonial recruitment by an evolving combination of patronage selection and professional or academic qualifications for the rest of the dependent empire. From 1872, a special Eastern department in the Colonial Office dealt with Asian Crown Colonies taken over from the ICS, and added others, such as Hong Kong, later.

The important point is that the Colonial Office survived investigation of its establishment procedures in the 1840s and 1850s; the influential, but limited, recommendations of the report by Stafford H. Northcote and C. E. Trevelyan on the civil service in 1854 did not lead to parliamentary legislation that might have forced it to follow the Indian system of examinations and cadetships. Traditional techniques of patronage appointments continued alongside a small amount of internal civil service regulation. Like most other home departments, the Colonial Office introduced a very perfunctory system of recruitment by “examination” for its own clerical posts from 1856, whose candidates were routinely approved by senior officials. There were further metropolitan reforms from 1870, leading to the division into executive and administrative grades that passed easily into the bureaucratic hierarchies of colonies. But, at home, the Colonial Office resisted promotion after examinations from a lower to a higher grade for overseas posts.

Part of the reason was that, for local recruitment in the colonies, there was a division of the “distribution of the patronage of the government” between secretaries of state and governors, formally spelled out in 1862, according to the salary scales of candidates for promotion. The system was applied, too, in colonies of European settlement moving towards representative and responsible government, and continued, for example, “from 1786 to 1895” in New
South Wales, as patronage passed to governors and then to local politicians.18

From these cases, and from the example of the EIC’s imperial “nationalisation,” a preliminary conclusion might be that the “hydra” continued to survive for sociological and political reasons, except where it was curtailed by statute, as in India. The emerging middle class of the United Kingdom had few other avenues for advancement, outside of business and the professions, with the constant risk of loss of genteel status.19 Or, as Bourne puts it, “in real life the problem for many during this period was to avoid the disastrous fall back into the great ocean of the labouring poor, from which it had been the work of generations to escape.”20

In political terms, the search for improved status by preferment can also be discussed as a form of “association” (to borrow a term from political anthropology) between a superior and his nominee. The few detailed studies we have of earlier United Kingdom departments suggest that friends, relatives, electoral agents, and supporters were chosen by ministers for clerical executive posts in the Admiralty or the Colonial Office primarily for political reasons before 1832, and even after.21 There was an expectation that successful candidates should perform with competence. But this was a quality that Sir James Stephen, as permanent under-secretary at the Colonial Office from 1836, found in short supply, complaining that preferment operated mainly “to gratify the political, the domestic, or the personal feelings of their patrons, that is, of successive Secretaries of State.”22 Official brokers and ministers could find the association burdensome to work, and tiresome to continue, as petitions for further advancement accumulated. But, despite moves for reform, both Lord Goderich and Earl Grey in the 1830s and 1840s ignored claims based on seniority or examinations; and for important overseas governorships in Canada, the Australian colonies, or Cape Colony, they remained in favour of personal estimates of experience and character.23 Such associations between governor and minister, as in the case of the eighth Earl of Elgin and Earl Grey, who, as governor and secretary of state, respectively, presided over the introduction of responsi-
ble government in Canada, could remain strong and constructive in the direction of “entrusting the remote Dependencies…with the largest powers of Self-Government.”\textsuperscript{24} In Crown Colonies, that example was not followed until much later, but the selection process was.\textsuperscript{25}

Gordon, therefore, in his Crown Colony career engaged in a form of administration that was remarkably flexible in the 1860s. There were strict rules for financial accounting, despatch writing, and respect for judicial opinion and legal drafting. But for a governor with initiative, there was room for managing his secretariat and legislature politics, if suitable allies were associated with his policies. Gordon was, in short, like most of his immediate predecessors in his Crown Colony posts, heir to a tradition of preferment by secretaries of state that adapted easily to use by civilian governors, rather than military men, from the 1840s. The predecessors he followed consisted of one viscount and a son of a viscount, the son of an admiral, and the son of the president of the Royal College of Surgeons, plus an assortment of seven end-of-career senior civil servants and politicians. The rarest case was that of one official promoted from within a colonial establishment.\textsuperscript{26}

\textbf{Models of association in Crown Colonies}

Any consideration of selection by preferment for colonial service employment in Crown Colonies requires refinement of the patron-client model of association that Bourne and others have analysed in its metropolitan context, for two reasons. The main one is that there must be an appreciation of the considerable literature produced by anthropologists and political scientists exploring systems of indigenous patron and client relations between individuals and social groups of different status in colonial and post-colonial societies.\textsuperscript{27} That additional stratum of offices and obligations in the political structures of Crown Colonies, particularly those with state hierarchies, chieftaincies of segmentary lineages, and planter oligarchies, widened the scope of influence and control through clients in subsidiary agencies. It also raised the possibility of such elites using administrators for their own political ends, something that the Colonial
Office had been well aware of in the cases of “family compact” oligarchies in Upper Canada, or the seductions of plantation ownership for senior officials in the West Indies.\textsuperscript{28}

The second factor that dictates a revision of a simple patron-client model is the improved access since the 1960s to secretariat records preserved in many of the national archives of former dependencies, as a supplement to metropolitan collections. Evidence for the operation of patronage within the Colonial Office and in colonial secretariats is much less abundant, of course, than routine administrative records. As a recent study of the first secretary to the Admiralty (1809–1830) noted, “patronage correspondence does not tend to survive, at least in concentrated form.”\textsuperscript{29} There are reasons for optimism, however, if the focus shifts from metropolitan officials to Crown Colony governors in their role as patrons. A great deal can be learned about recommendations for promotion at territorial levels in the Colonial Office “Individuals and Offices” records in the National Archives, in the “Confidential Prints” series not intended for parliament, and from administrators who have left private papers.\textsuperscript{30}

These sources support the conclusion offered by N. D. McLachlan in 1969 in his re-assessment of an early secretary of state: namely, that “Bathurst’s liking for secret correspondence with governors… developed what amounted almost to a dual system of administration. [D]espatches announced official decisions and ostensible reasons for them, private letters went to the heart of the matter.”\textsuperscript{31} That observation can be extended to the politics of patronage pursued by colonial governors in sociologically structured contexts. Both metropolitan officials and administrators in the field were engaged in greater or lesser games of power politics to have their policies carried through, extend their influence, and control and advance their careers by protecting themselves against administrative failures through loyal and effective clients. Such “dualism” between public and private action has been familiar ground for the study of patronage in the social sciences, especially in many of the territories where both indigenous leaders and colonial officials were engaged in adapting and constructing the institutions of elementary states in the colonial period.\textsuperscript{32}
Historians and social scientists working in the areas of Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Pacific consider different types of evidence, but there is considerable overlap in their fields of interest, and a shared knowledge of duality in methods of governance.

From the 1960s on, the social sciences have more clearly defined patronage and clientage as forms of administrative association, and have shown a greater awareness of the longevity of patrimonial and lower-order systems of personal administration that operated through individuals of unequal status, and that preceded, and in many ways outlasted, periods of European rule overseas. The inadequacy of conflict models to explain the politics of administrative power required models of accommodation, in order to account for continuities in chieftaincy and its incorporation into imported systems of government. Imperial historians were slow to take up the theoretical advantages and insights of social science case studies. Where they did, their main tool was imperial biography, in forms that were a great advance on the numerous imperial hagiographies listed alongside the useful collections of correspondence and memoirs in the bibliographies of Cambridge History of the British Empire volumes covering Crown Colonies. But the terminology of “clientelism,” “dyadic relations,” “action-sets,” or “informal clusters” sat uneasily alongside the rather simplistic and preferred model of “Indirect Rule,” even as that model was increasingly questioned by some of its practitioners and the historians of new states. Yet, there was a sound historical basis for common ground between these different disciplines. The social sciences explored the topics of indigenous legal systems, land tenure, methods of taxation, chiefly succession, and provincial government within older state frameworks and new embryonic states—all of which were frequent subjects in administrators’ correspondence and reports. And, from the 1940s, administrators themselves sometimes wrote on social science topics, in addition to writing historical surveys. Above all, in the Hausa-Fulani states where the orthodoxy of “Indirect Rule” had its origins in Sir Frederick Lugard’s memoranda to his resident officials, private correspondence between those officials after a decade of British occupation re-
reveals awareness of the limitations of prescriptive orthodoxies and centralized bureaucratic control pursued by their high commissioner. Residents in charge of emirates were clearly engaged, not in the management of a hegemonic system under direction from a central secretariat, but in the gradual reform of very decentralized emirate governments that raised and kept a large proportion of their revenues, and maintained, through the emirs’ councils, traditional patrimonial offices of local government. As M. G. Smith’s study of the Zaria emirate made clear, patron-client analysis provided a better starting-point for understanding colonial over-rule than bureaucratic prescription. By the 1940s, British administrators were engaged, too, in the political process of regional accommodation within the wider structure of a federation. And, in a “Nigerianised” civil service, James C. Scott’s observation that a bureaucrat’s authority “is likely to depend more on his personal following and extrabureaucratic connections than on his formal post” is as pertinent to that period of colonial disengagement in the early 1960s in Africa as it has been for India and Southeast Asia.

The topic of state formation, moreover, has pertinent historical precedents in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Europe as a process of assertion of monarchical power and authority over regional political and social identity through internal colonialism. The example of early modern France, explored by Sharon Kettering, yields a picture, not of “absolutism” in the marchlands of Languedoc, Provence, or the Atlantic ports of Brittany, but of a quasi-bureaucratic monarchy with clientelist characteristics, whose ministers employed nobles and notables as intermediary officials, intendants, and governors to integrate the territorial periphery with the centre. Intermediary officials were also brokers between ministers and subsidiary notables, who in turn had clients of their own in parlements, provincial intendancies, municipalities, and churches. Remembering this helps to close some of the intellectual gap between internal colonialism in early modern Europe and external colonialism in nineteenth-century Crown Colonies. For both areas, the biographical record is a key source.
The case for extending the investigation of patronage in imperial administration beyond a concentration on Colonial Office organisation or patronage in settler territories advancing to responsible government is thus strengthened by taking into account the contribution made by the social sciences to the study of government in Crown Colonies under some, but not all, governors, and not in all imperial contexts. The complaint that private papers are in short supply is less convincing, when the metropolitan and regional archival records can be examined for patterns of appointment alongside territorial secretariat and outstation records of administration “on the ground.” It is also salutary for historians of empire to be reminded that colonial government was a category in the wider process of state formation—frequently in territories with arbitrary boundaries containing varieties of ethnic groups—and with instructive parallels in the history of containing regional nationalisms in early modern Europe. For both the European and the imperial experience of the politics of administration, the private papers of the brokers are obviously valuable; and, where they exist, it is worth assessing their explanatory potential for both history and the social sciences.

A governor’s progress: the case of Sir Arthur Hamilton Gordon
Sir Arthur Gordon became something of an imperial icon, particularly in Pacific history, with a reputation for having invented his own form of “Indirect Rule” and applying it in Fiji in the late 1870s. It is useful to survey his career as an example of how the arguments advanced above work in different imperial contexts. Initially, his reputation owed much to J. K. Chapman’s pioneering biography, published in 1964, which was based solidly on metropolitan records and access to the collection of Gordon’s private papers lodged later in the British Library. Since then, reasons for disagreeing with Chapman’s laudatory judgment of his governorships have become more obvious, as regional archives in Gordon’s former posts have become accessible, along with sections of his private papers left out of Chapman’s account. For example, Gordon’s chairmanship of the Pacific Islands’ Company, which he was instrumental in establishing on
Ocean Island (Banaba) as part of what was then the Gilbert and Ellice Islands, has been brought to light. There has been a particularly severe verdict on his governorship of Ceylon and his relations with members of the Ceylon Civil Service. His policy of protecting Fijians from social change by reinforcing chiefly controls over their “communal way of life” has been blamed, perhaps unfairly, for reifying “Fijian Administration” within the island state’s system of government.45 There has been a tendency, too, to take at face value Gordon’s own tongue-in-cheek verdict on his methods as “despotic” or “autocratic,” without supplying a more convincing account of the ways in which he operated at different levels and different contexts in imperial administration.46 At the level of the Colonial Office, ministers and officials would soon have questioned any unjustified “autocratic” behaviour; his secretariat personnel would have appealed against “despotism” over his head to their own official mentors in London (as they did in Ceylon); and indigenous chiefs and other useful notables might well have refused to cooperate. Certainly, in his own day, his reputation for control stayed with him to the grave: his 1912 obituary in *The Times* described him as a “strong governor impatient of restraints.”47 That was fair enough in its moderate tone, but it does not explain the substance of his brand of “personal government,” as Colonial Office officials accurately characterised his style of administration. The revisionists who, from the 1970s, began to pick over Gordon’s reputation concentrated, moreover, on sources for his ideas, rather than looking at his methods in the political context of governing in territories with influential planter minorities or even more influential indigenous lineage or caste elites.48

The evidence for the characteristics of his style and method of governance lies in his voluminous private papers in the British Library which have not, I think, been examined systematically since Chapman had partial access to them. Comprising well over fifty bound manuscript volumes, they can be roughly divided into materials relevant to the two main models of “association” noted above: the association between, on the one hand, a governor and his mentors and patrons—persons who advanced his career, monitored his poli-
cies, and gave advice—and, on the other hand, material related to the
governor’s own subordinate client officials, friends, and political allies among colonists, and the leaders and notables of local hierarchies. Outstanding in the first category are volumes of correspondence with secretaries of state, senior Colonial Office officials, W. E. Gladstone and his family, Gordon’s close private confidants—Bishop Samuel Wilberforce, Sir Roundell Palmer, Earl of Selborne and Lord Chancellor from 1872—and close relatives in influential positions, including successive Earls of Aberdeen and Dukes of Abercorn. To these, he added his father-in-law, Sir John George Shaw-Lefevre, from 1865, as well as his wife, Rachael, and other members of her family. His greatest mentor, of course, was his own father, the fourth Earl of Aberdeen, sometime foreign secretary, secretary of state for war and the colonies, and prime minister (1852-1855). As his fourth son, Gordon was schooled in the arts of preferment while a Whig member of Parliament, and as his father’s private secretary. Contacts were solidified then within their circle of aristocratic relatives and friends, especially with his father’s fellow-Liberal, W. E. Gladstone, and they were drawn on for his own career advancement in the colonial service and for his later peerage (he was created Baron Stanmore in 1893). His first post as lieutenant-governor of New Brunswick he owed to selection by the fifth Duke of Newcastle, who had served twice as secretary of state in the Colonial Office, under Aberdeen and then Palmerston. In addition to his father’s circle, Gordon lobbied assiduously with the colonial secretaries of the day, their under-secretaries and clerks, and his special allies, the influential Roundell Palmer, and Samuel Wilberforce. Lobbying for governorships had to be tempered, however, with a cautious appreciation that asking for particular posts could conflict with an unwritten rule that officials were reluctant to promise anything in advance of a vacancy, and that unfinished work in one colony could not simply be left for a successor without the risk of damage to a reputation for competence in administration.

Gordon’s first experience as governor was in the self-governing settler colony of New Brunswick, where he resented the
constitutional limitations of his titular position. He did succeed, however, under pressure from Newcastle’s successor, Edward Cardwell, in making a useful contribution to the local politics of winning acceptance for Confederation. Thereafter, he set his sights on the governments of Jamaica, Ceylon, or even an Indian presidency. His experience in his second post, Trinidad, confirmed his preference for Crown Colonies. There, he thought he discovered within himself “a sort of instinct” for political management of local officials and planter representatives, something Gordon called “selecting & directing” and the Colonial Office preferred to call “personal government.” The discovery engaged him in the second level of social scientists’ model of association, as patron to official and unofficial clients and allies, in short, in the use of “instrumental friendships” in ways that became the hallmark of much of his subsequent career. The basis for reciprocal exchanges rested on promotions in return for loyal and competent conformity with his general ideas for reform in planter colonies and for preservation of Fijian culture in his principal Pacific post. The archival evidence lies in the ten volumes of his letter-books, dating from 1841 to 1912, and in four volumes of special correspondence containing private exchanges with chosen officials that continued well after he moved to new posts and into retirement. A whole volume, 1879-1912, is devoted to his most loyal admirer, Sir William MacGregor. Equally valuable for this category of clientage are the fifteen volumes of Gordon’s journals and diaries, because they contain a record of his guest lists and his unvarnished opinions of people, including those who might have thought they were in favour. Similarly frank opinions are contained in his twenty-five years of correspondence with Rachael, whenever she did not accompany him.

Such a hoard is a supplement to, not a substitute for, the regular secretariat or Colonial Office files covering his posts. These document Gordon’s long arguments on policy issues with his superiors and his frequent competition with secretaries of state in the exercise of patronage in the appointment of colonial officials. They are valuable, too, because he was not given to writing prescriptive
memoranda on his policies, in the manner of some other governors, such as Lord Lugard or Sir Donald Cameron. His views on key policy matters have to be pieced together from his arguments and his complaints to close metropolitan friends and allies, whenever he considered he was being obstructed.

But he did publish, at his own expense, compendious collections of public and private papers for his governorships of Mauritius and Fiji, plus a book on his military campaign in the interior of Viti Levu. His intention is clear enough from a letter in his own hand attached to the inside cover of his *Records* collection deposited in the British Library, intended to enlighten his daughter and his son (later the second Lord Stanmore) on the nature of his career. The puzzle is why he chose to write about only his Indian Ocean post and one of his Pacific posts. Possible reasons are that he took little pride in his governorships in New Brunswick or New Zealand, posts which cramped his style. Full documentation of his work in New Zealand would have revived for him his embarrassing involvement in the celebrated Bryce and Rusden libel case, arising from his unwise communication of material to the Australian historian, G. W. Rusden. Rusden used this information against John Bryce, the minister for native affairs, who successfully sued him in 1886. Omission of Trinidad, one of his more successful governorships, is problematic, and the only reason I can suggest is that Gordon’s very full and honest documentation would probably have required comment on his difficult relationship at that period with his distant cousin and protégé, A. J. L. Gordon, employed as his private secretary, whose scandalous behaviour endangered Gordon’s prospects. Later, under Gordon’s patient tutoring, he settled into a respectable military and administrative career with his moral guardian in the Mauritius and Fiji posts. Omission of Ceylon from his *Records* is not so difficult to understand. By the time the four volumes of documents on Fiji had been prepared and published, the aging Lord Stanmore lacked the energy to labour further.

From the abundant case material, Gordon’s career can be described in narrative, praising or blaming him according to an author’s
preconceptions about ideal administrative behaviour and other contextual information on his colonial posts. The method is satisfactory enough for establishing a framework of events, but less so for explaining the techniques and difficulties of “personal government” at the territorial level, in competition with the official patronage exercised by metropolitan officials.

Personal government, which the Colonial Office found suspect on the grounds that governorships were of short duration, was synonymous with patronage. But the Colonial Office, whether officials liked it or not, shared that form of preferment with governors, as laid down by regulation from 1862. Nominally, the responsibility for finding and promoting personnel was divided between London and the head of a Crown Colony: appointment of all local magistrates, unofficials in the legislature, and clerical posts below £100 in salary were in the gift of the governor, while his nominations for posts up to £300 were reviewed in London, and usually approved. Higher posts in the secretariat, and especially judicial, military, ecclesiastical, and specialist appointments in public works and health, were the business of the Colonial Office, with the assistance of other government departments. That bureaucratic division of patronage on the basis of occupation and seniority still left a grey area, however, over local promotions, especially for those born in the colony, and over Colonial Office promotions by “poaching” senior personnel for transfer to other colonies. For a strong-minded governor like Gordon, such potential conflicts of purpose could, and did, lead to wrangles with stubborn secretaries of state.

For example, he first encountered this problem in Trinidad, when Lord Carnarvon promoted his receiver-general (treasurer) to a lieutenant-governorship in Dominica. Gordon was seriously annoyed, and countered by promoting his auditor-general to the vacant post, filling the audit post with his private secretary for a few months, and then promoting an accountant friend to fill the gap. Selection of a new (and in Gordon’s opinion unsuitable) registrar of courts from London, on the recommendation of the lord advocate, he managed to stop through his friend, Sir Roundell Palmer. Unable to touch the ca-
reer of a senior official such as his Trinidad attorney-general—a local notable and leader of the island’s minority Anglican establishment who blocked his labour and educational reforms—Gordon employed the services of alternative legal draughtsmen from among his client local magistrates. By 1868, he had managed his appointments of unofficial allies in the legislative council in ways that “politically checkmated” his attorney-general. These allies outvoted the attorney-general’s objections to policies of Gordon that were aimed at settling former slaves on crown lands and undermining the ascendancy of the Anglo-Protestant community so as to favour the education of the island’s majority of Catholics. When Gordon lost a contest of wills with the secretary of state over appointment of a competent surveyor-general, essential to his plans for legal settlement of landless squatters, he revived a defunct court of intendancy, inherited from Spanish administration, to increase his own judicial powers and those of his client commissioner of crown lands, and appointed a junior official of his own as crown surveyor. Trinidad and Mauritius taught him, too, that he could transfer official clients cultivated under previous governorships to increase his personal entourage, a technique that he used when he took with him some seven of his senior officials and confidants to Fiji.

It was not always certain that a governor could control a legislative council simply by playing the autocrat and using his executive council to issue regulations. By its composition, and its division between official and unofficial members, a Crown Colony’s legislature was bound to become a political arena weighted mostly in a governor’s favour by the usual majority of officials. Unfortunately for Gordon, Mauritius was different. As he complained to Lord Kimberley, then secretary of state for the colonies, “the executive power has practically slipped from the hands of the Governor into those of the unofficial members of the Council of Government whose ‘standing committees’ regulate almost every branch of the administration.” This was so much so that Gordon indulged himself at first in some frantic lobbying for another post, until Kimberley called his bluff about hints of resignation, and told him politely to stick it out and use
his acknowledged talents to push through reform of the condition of time-expired indentured labourers who had been forced back onto plantations by the political strength of planters.

In order to prevail, Gordon, by 1872, had increased the number of his official allies in the council, and found supporters among a few of the Catholic unofficial members to concentrate on ending the police corruption that lay behind the forced re-indenture of Indian labourers, and to frame new regulations for their protection. By some adroit political manoeuvres in council—largely through the support of his planter client, (Sir) Auguste Célicourt Antelme—he persuaded the legislature to agree to receive a royal commission, on the model of those used in the West Indies to reform plantation inspection and conditions of labour immigration. For the first time, too, Gordon used another technique to pave the way for this investigation, and “packed” his own commission of enquiry into police methods, in order to frame new regulations covering the trial of labourers. These initiatives dovetailed into the work of the royal commission whose two investigators, William Frere and Victor Williamson, Gordon skilfully influenced into producing the immigration reforms he sought. But the findings of the royal commission were delayed. All of that political manoeuvre entailed staying on longer in Mauritius than he wished. In the face of a stubborn rear-guard action by planter opponents in the legislature, Gordon resorted to use of his authority in his executive council to make further changes, using his power to modify labour regulations. Most of these new regulations found their way into a new labour code enacted on the basis of the royal commission’s work, four years after he had left the island in 1874.

Well before then, he prepared his exit by lobbying through members of the British cabinet for the governorship of Fiji, before it was annexed in 1874. The new secretary of state, Carnarvon, agreed, and began preparation of his draft commission in November and December 1874. Gordon was permitted a say in the drafting of this commission, as well as a voice in the choice of official personnel. In many ways, therefore, Gordon was better prepared by experience and by his enthusiasm for the post than he had been for any of his other
governorships. He and Rachael were in agreement about moving there, after making their own enquiries on climate and living conditions. On his return to London in 1874, he had immersed himself in Colonial Office material on the background to the rise and fall of the experiment in settler-Fijian government between 1871 and 1874, and the reasons for annexation; and he had begun, as his private papers reveal, his own study of Fijian language and customs. Moreover, due to a delay of some months in the protocols required for his formal installation, because key officials had not arrived, he could tour and make inspections, and select from among the settlers in the temporary administration set up by Sir Hercules Robinson at annexation. There was time “for sifting over the bad from the good among officials of the old Government.” The delay enabled him to appoint locally and from previous posts, after argument with the Colonial Office, a higher percentage of his personal clients than in any other of his Crown Colony governorships.

From the outset he was aware, too, that the new Crown Colony administration had inherited from its bankrupt predecessor the need for cooperation with a highly conservative and contentious set of rival Fijian chiefdoms warily engaged in the process of state formation, but unwilling to agree among themselves to a patrimonial chiefly paramountcy or to any loss of regional and territorial autonomy. They had “given” Fiji to the British monarch in the 1874 Deed of Cession, with reservations concerning their land rights and their treatment. The queen’s representatives would be judged on how far they adhered to its terms. Gordon was impressed with the intelligence and manners of the chiefs he met, their respect for diplomacy, and their ability to oppose with force, if required, any policies running counter to the Deed of Cession or chiefly interest in preserving status, privilege, and order in a ranked society. Moreover, like his predecessors in the Cakobau-settler government, he needed Fijian chiefs to support with armed contingents his “pacification” of the interior of Viti Levu, where Kai Colo clans had never come under control of coastal chieftaincies. He took the view, therefore, that his role was one of preservation of what he termed “the communal system of
administration,” without ever analysing too closely the longer-term implications of that policy, or resolving the contradiction between respect for guarantees about Fijian lands in the Deed of Cession and the second major policy aim of his administration. That aim was based on his experience in Trinidad and Mauritius, and Carnarvon’s orders to raise revenue through trade and taxes. There would have to be expansion of Fiji’s small plantation economy by outside investment in large-scale concessions, and imported labour from India to decrease reliance on Pacific islands recruitment, and to keep Fijian village communities intact. That requirement accorded, too, with a necessity to meet the wishes of a small, but vocal, settler community for speedy recognition of land claims and assurance of indentured labour. Compared with his public despatches in which these aims were set out and debated with Lord Carnarvon and his officials, Gordon’s private correspondence and journals reveal just how little he was fully in command of events, and how much he was in the hands of his Melanesian client hierarchy.

Gordon was won over by two initiatives arranged by the leading high chiefs of Bau and surrounding provinces of eastern Fiji. The first was at the end of June 1875, when the former nominally paramount chief, Cakobau, made a “personal, feudal submission in proper style” at the seat of government on Ovalau; and the second was staged on 11 September, when a much larger assembly of chiefs also made their obeisance and incorporated the new governor as their “high chief,” to rule by observing local custom and upholding the old order and their status. Gordon clearly thought in his address in reply that he was retaining and employing “the native agency” by confirming provincial chiefs in office. In fact, they were confirming him, and setting a precedent for an annual council of chiefs in which they passed resolutions, framed, if approved, by a committee of the executive council, into revisions of the Na Lawa Eso—the Fijian Code—begun under Cakobau.62 He went too far in boasting to Selborne that the chiefly council was “one of the most successful of my experiments,” when, in fact, it was an elaboration of occasional provincial councils and Cakobau’s Privy Council, which had met between 1871
and 1874, adapted to meet changed circumstances and to secure a di-
rect line of influence, through the queen’s representative, to the ex-
ecutive of the new government.\(^{63}\) Certainly, the formal regulation de-
fining the role of that unusual representative institution summed up
its relationship with the executive: “the Governor is the root of the
Council” because he summoned it annually.\(^{64}\) But, essentially, the
invention of a novel structure of Fijian representation by the chiefs
entailed an adroit incorporation of the governor. Their initiative was
immediately accepted because the innovation meant much personally
to Gordon, satisfying both his strong sense of hierarchy and the need
for what anthropology has identified as the use of “co-ordinate units”
in administrative clientage.\(^{65}\)

So Gordon fell in with a system of privileging rank, more es-
pecially among the leaders of political coalitions in eastern Viti Levu
and Cakaudrove, and in islands east of Vanua Levu, through stip-
pended posts for chiefly administrators, financed with a share of land
 rents, and through his policy of “preserving” local councils and a
central council of chiefs with powers to pass regulations. That con-
cession to Fijians, in the form of retaining a separate legal code ex-
panded by “resolutions,” was at odds with Wesleyan missionary in-
fluence over conduct and near-monopoly of elementary education.
But for the short period of five or six years when he was in a position
to exercise personal control, Gordon’s policy of ethnic conservation
was underpinned by his personal authority as a “high chief” incorpo-
rated into the hierarchy of Fijians that managed territorial politics and
expressed its wishes through Fiji’s annual council of chiefs. That co-
operation enabled him to wage a successful campaign in the Viti
Levu highlands in 1876; it made possible his successful revival of a
Fijian produce tax; and it supplied him, through resolutions and defi-
nitions made in the council of chiefs, with a debatable interpretation
of local land tenure through *mataqali* clan members. The chiefs’ in-
terpretation enabled Gordon to respect the Deed of Cession and re-
strict land alienation by law, once he had secured a contract for con-
cessions in return for investment in sugar production from the Colo-
nial Sugar Refining Company in Sydney.\(^{66}\)
In short, by securing Fijian lands as part of his deal with the company, before restricting land alienation in accord with pledges made at annexation, Gordon reconciled his high moral position with economic expediency. He was very frank in his Records on this point, arguing that, in the end, a governor had to make a political decision that might not be entirely equitable to mataqali useholders.\textsuperscript{67} By “political” in this context of the tension between development of resources and preservation of a Fijian way of life, Gordon meant not just bargaining with chiefs, but drawing on the residual powers he was familiar with from Trinidad and Mauritius to take over land for “public” works. This was stretching the term to include plantation concessions, and was contrary to the view of his close adviser, John Thurston, that, whenever possible, dispossessed landowners should be compensated. It was also contrary to the pledge made by Des Voeux who, as lieutenant-governor during Gordon’s leave, favourably received resolutions from the council of chiefs in December 1878, expressing concern about European land claims, making suggestions for division of the proceeds of lands sold, and detailing Fijian tenurial rights among clan members.\textsuperscript{68} But Gordon chose to ignore much of this on the grounds that chiefs’ resolutions had no standing in law until approved by the governor. Moreover, nowhere in his public or private papers for his period in Fiji does he give thought to directing funds into secular education for Fijians, or for training chiefs in managing provincial accounts. Much later in his life, when in retirement he was chairman of the Pacific Islands (Phosphate) Company, he had little compunction about making much harder choices and sacrificing the rights of Banabans on Ocean Island without compensation or provision for their future.

But, to Gordon, Fiji was different, and he intervened successfully with the Colonial Office from his position in the House of Lords in 1906 for withdrawal of legislation making alienation of Fijian lands by lease or sale easier. At a deeper level, he never really resolved the tension between his concern for populations under indigenous leadership (socially structured in agnatic descent groups) and his knowledge that colonial “protectorate” in a moral sense had
to come to terms with the business methods of mining or plantation agriculture. Hence his confession in 1877 to his friend and mentor, Lord Selborne, that he had serious doubts “whether our Colonial system is compatible with the preservation of the native population.”

This growing disillusionment with the long-term effectiveness of his policies in Fiji also stemmed from other problems arising from his difficulties as high commissioner of the Western Pacific. He had very limited success in bringing labour recruitment offences to trial; he failed to understand why Samoans refused to construct a paramountcy easy to negotiate with; and he was unwilling to believe that the very real paramountcy constructed by Taufa’ahau (King George) in the independent kingdom of Tonga by using Tongan custom and imported constitutional and legal methods was in the best interests of Tongans. He left Fiji for the internally self-governing colony of New Zealand with unresolved anxieties about his successor, Des Voeux, only to face the frustrations inherent in a constitutional role in what was fast becoming a ritual and diplomatic job. And Gordon, without clients and allies to give him influence over government methods of selling off confiscated Maori land, made a very poor diplomat.

Apart from taking on an unpalatable governorship, and combining it with an unworkable agreement to go on acting as Pacific high commissioner, Gordon also continued to lobby in vain for a higher position in the hierarchy of colonial governorships, and even a Colonial Office under-secretaryship. After New Zealand, he was lucky to be awarded the relatively prestigious post of Ceylon, which suited him well enough at first; however, over the course of six years he encountered major problems in exercising his style of personal governance.

These problems arose from a number of factors he had not encountered before. Ceylon, as part of the group of possessions known as the “Eastern colonies,” had an administration that was still patterned to some extent on that of British India. Entry into the Ceylon Civil Service was by examination, and cadetships and promotions were made according to rules of seniority that gave preference to length of service over a governor’s judgment of an official’s merits.
From the outset, therefore, Gordon was unable to form a substantial personal coterie of official clients, though he did manage to win over the loyalties of a few, and move them to more senior positions, against formal protests of other senior officials. In particular, he relied heavily on his assistant colonial secretary, (Sir) George O’Brien, later rewarded with a governorship of Fiji. But in a country with a population of nearly three million, Gordon encountered a relatively decentralised administrative structure in which the provinces were firmly managed by long-serving government agents with the status of Indian or Nigerian residents with well-staffed offices and their own subsidiary levels of Sinhalese officials. A governor was expected to supervise these quasi-residencies through the elaborate ceremonial of occasional tours of inspection, but not to closely control them through chosen officers. The paradox of administrative hierarchy in Ceylon was that patronage certainly operated in the provinces below the level of the European agents and down to the village level, but the governor was not permitted to operate a system of his own among more senior officials.

Gordon was left, therefore, with supervision of the Colombo secretariat, where he had his hands full with reform of a corrupt judiciary, a banking crisis, and a battle to save Ceylon’s revenue by cutting defence contributions and using them, instead, to improve the island’s water conservation and irrigation. This was useful work, but not personnel management as Gordon understood it. His frustration was made worse by his failure to understand Sinhalese elite leadership among caste notables strongly entrenched in the executive ranks of central and provincial administration. Gordon never got to grips with reforming conditions of entry by Sinhalese into the Ceylon Civil Service, and he made the mistake of relying too heavily himself on notables from one particular caste for the few offices under his patronage, thus offending rivals from other castes. Although he used the expedient of promoting to “temporary” administrative posts Sinhalese and local Europeans, this was frowned upon by senior officials in Ceylon and London keen to preserve the “Eastern” system. So nothing was done to ease promotions from executive to administra-
tive grades until 1907, long after Gordon had left. In short, his habitual methods of official patronage in small island groups were no match for entrenched bureaucracy in an administrative structure on a larger scale backed by officials in the Colonial Office.

**Conclusion**

Sir Arthur Gordon’s private papers, when read in conjunction with other sources, throw considerable light on the “dual system of administration” operating between governors and Colonial Office officials that N. D. McLachlan identified in Lord Bathurst’s sources. Both sets of administrators shared the privilege of patronage, and they used it more covertly than Parliament or the public were permitted to know, despite the growing trend towards bureaucratic regulation, both before and after the limited reforms arising from the Northcote-Trevelyan Commission’s report on civil service departments in 1854. Historical investigation of this phenomenon in imperial governance has lagged behind investigation of the precedents and contrasting procedures established by the EIC; and it has had difficulty in absorbing advances made by the social sciences in African, Asian or Pacific history. The best examples of identification of imperial patronage and networks of influence and control so far have arisen in studies of India under the IEC and of some colonies of European settlement, either in their imperial administrative history or in their domestic political history. But the range of settler landed and mercantile interests and the demography of settlement in the continental territories are hardly matched in nineteenth-century Crown Colonies and protectorates in the West Indies, the Indian Ocean, the Far East, West African enclaves, or the Pacific islands. Colonial government in the small tropical territories was of a different order until the end of partition in Africa. Their plural societies, stratified by property-owning, culture, and history were concerned with the politics of limited resources, the legacy of slavery, and the injustices of indentured bondage. And these were the location of most of Gordon’s posts.
Gordon’s case study provides an explanation for the success or failure of his “personal administration” in those posts in dealing with the basic problems of poverty and abuse of power in under-skilled and under-resourced economies. Biographical focus on his methods indicates that a range of comparative examples from each of his posts is required in order to understand the career of one individual. His methods cannot simply be stereotyped as “despotic,” because the imperial contexts in which he worked had important differences in their political structures. In Gordon’s career, his two colonies of European settlement can be ruled out almost altogether as examples of “personal government,” with some exceptions in the case of New Brunswick.\textsuperscript{74} In his other posts, his success or failure in personnel management, important for his control of legislatures and implementation of his policies, depended on the number of his instrumental friendships. By that measure, his most effective administration was in Fiji, followed by Trinidad and Mauritius, with Ceylon last. Other factors, such as public revenues and transfers of senior officials by the exercise of patronage from London, have to be added into the evaluation of his relations with his subordinates. But, on the whole, a stubborn personality like Gordon could work his way around these problems, unless, as in the case of Ceylon, he encountered for the first time an entrenched bureaucratic structure supported from London. In Fiji, on the other hand, he had a framework for an indigenous and settler administration inherited from the failed model of the Cakobau government of the early 1870s, and overhauled on Crown Colony lines by Sir Hercules Robinson at annexation. That continuity gave him the necessary support and compliance of a Fijian hierarchy that “managed” the governor, won a line of influence into his executive with power to suggest local government legislation, helped to raise taxes, and recruited a militia to keep order.

His timing was fortunate. If it had not been for the need to annex Fiji in 1874 in order to have a base to regulate the Pacific labour trade and control settlers, it might have been administered as a protectorate. Gordon’s relations with his Fijian hierarchy were closer to that imperial format than was usual in Crown Colonies, though
Gordon’s techniques had precedents in residents’ relations with courts in the princely states of India, and would become more usual later in Africa, even in the establishment of the settler territory of Kenya as a “Crown Protectorate.” What his private papers reveal, however, is that his methods were his own, at the date he served, and that he was not given to formulating prescriptions that could be taken up and transferred elsewhere as a model for “Indirect Rule” in other political contexts.

Other governors might well have found different solutions, though Gordon already stood in a long line of tradition—stretching back to India in the 1760s—of using a governor’s power of patronage. One of the more insightful studies of an early nineteenth-century Crown Colony administrator (prepared without the benefit of access to private papers) classified Sir Thomas Maitland simply as “an autocrat” who ruled Ceylon, Malta, and the Ionian Islands, between 1805 and 1824. But C. Willis Dixon was obliged to note that this army officer turned governor did not have “absolute” power; and, in his relations with his subordinates, he rewarded good work with promotions, using his own patronage options or recommending officials to his superiors in London. Like Gordon, Maitland was a younger son of a Scottish aristocrat, a member of Parliament, a determined reformer of corrupt practices, and distrustful of representative government. Unlike him, Maitland relied on prescriptive and detailed instructions to have his policies carried out. That was not Gordon’s style. Gordon instead used personal briefing and the formation of an entourage within his secretariat, among administrative subordinates in outlying areas, and among enlightened planters or chiefs with political agenda of their own.
Notes


5 After his 1861-1866 term as governor of New Brunswick, Gordon’s career took him successively to Trinidad, 1866 - 1870, Mauritius, 1871 - 1874, Fiji 1875 -1882 (and the high commissionership of the Western Pacific), New Zealand, 1880 -1882, and Ceylon, 1883 -1890. As Lord Stanmore, he was chairman of the Pacific Islands Company (Pacific Phosphate Company) between 1897 and 1907.


Bourne, *Patronage and Society*, 22-23; the process of appointments in Crown Colonies can be documented in detail from: *Colonial Office Lists comprising Historical and Statistical Information respecting the Colonial Dependencies of Great Britain, with an Account of the Services of the Officers of the Several Colonial Governments, with Maps* (London: Edward Harrison and others, 1862–1925). The total excludes military and ecclesiastical appointments, but includes all local executive or administrative grades.

Pugh, 117; and for internal recruitment for the Colonial Office establishment, National Archives, Kew [hereafter NA], CO 878/2, minutes 1836-1859.


15 Pugh, 714-717.
16 Pugh, 739-740.
17 Colonial Office List (London, 1862), 79.
18 McMartin, 43.
23 Williams, 146.
25 The division between “Eastern” methods of recruitment and those of other dependencies of the British Empire remained in practice until 1932, when open competitive examination for entry into the “Eastern” administrative services was abolished in favour of appointment by selection after a degree from an approved university.


29 Hamilton, 50.

30 For example, in addition to the Lugard Papers, see the Bodleian Library, Rhodes House catalogues for an extensive Colonial Records Series of administrators’ private correspondence.


32 For a useful extension of this theme to colonial contexts, based on parallels with patronage as a technique of state formation in seventeenth century France, see Sharon Kettering, “The Historical Development of Political Clientelism,” Journal of Interdisciplinary History 18 (1988): 419-447.

33 Scott, “Patron-Client Politics,” 91-2. Nevertheless, the use of force under colonial rule has too many examples to be discounted. But it came at a cost that governments preferred to avoid. Donald Featherstone, Colonial Small Wars (Newton Abbot: David & Charles, 1973).


Newbury, Patrons, Clients, & Empire, for limitations to the model, 262-4, 277-8.


Wiener, An Empire on Trial, 73; Laurence Brown, “Arthur Gordon in Trinidad, Mauritius and Fiji,” in Colonial Lives across The British Empire: Imperial Ca-

For a short list of the Stanmore Papers, Newbury, *Patronage and Politics*, 229. The detailed list is obtainable on line from the manuscripts catalogue of the British Library.


For the details, Newbury, *Patronage and Politics*, 140.

Newbury, *Patronage and Politics*, 51. Chapman does not mention Arthur in his Trinidad chapter of Gordon’s biography. Arthur John Lewis Gordon was most likely the offspring of one of Sir Arthur Gordon’s five uncles on his father’s side, the Gordons of Haddo.

For further details, Newbury, *Patronage and Politics*, 37-41.

For a brief survey of the structure and powers of councils at the period of Gordon’s career, Martin Wight, *The Development of the Legislative Council 1606–1945* (London: Faber & Faber, 1946), 100-124. Leaves of absence could also upset the balance of power.


British Library [cited as BL], Add 44230, Gordon to Gladstone, 29 April 1870.


For a brief survey of the structure and powers of councils at the period of Gordon’s career, Martin Wight, *The Development of the Legislative Council 1606–1945* (London: Faber & Faber, 1946), 100-124. Leaves of absence could also upset the balance of power.

British Library, Stanmore Add 49225, Gordon to Rachael Gordon, 22 December 1868.

For a brief survey of the structure and powers of councils at the period of Gordon’s career, Martin Wight, *The Development of the Legislative Council 1606–1945* (London: Faber & Faber, 1946), 100-124. Leaves of absence could also upset the balance of power.

British Library, Stanmore Add 49214, Gordon to Kimberley, 30 May 1871, encl. in Gordon to Wilberforce, 1 June 1871.

British Library, Stanmore Add 49262, Journal, June to October 1874.

Stanmore, *Fiji: Records*, vol. 1, 189. Fijian words follow the usual local convention in orthography and pronunciation: b as in mb; c as in th; d as in nd; g
as in ng; q as in ngg. Gordon was very discriminating in his judgments on Fiji’s settler community of about 1,700 colonial Britons, distinguishing between genuine planters, secretaries to provincial chiefs and the noisier group of drifters stranded by the collapse of the “cotton boom” in Ovalau’s trading settlement before 1874. Cf. Wiener, 73-94. He processed planters’ 1,600 claims through his land claims commission with commendable speed. For a detailed analysis of European settlers see John Young, Adventurous Spirits. Australian Migrant Society in Pre-Cession Fiji (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1984).


63 BL, Stanmore Add 49218, Gordon to Selborne, 28 April 1880.

64 Newbury, “Bose Vakaturaga,” 82.


66 For the details of this complex area of Gordon’s policies, Newbury, Patronage and Politics, 103-104.


68 National Archives of Fiji, “Proceedings of the Native Council or Council of Chiefs,” December 1878. In effect, the chiefs framed legislation for registration of mataqali lands (sub-tribal, co-residential lands) and much else that found its way into Fiji’s early land law, beginning the process of prescribing the tenurial system of eastern Viti Levu for other provinces. Des Voeux promised in return “to preserve the native custom,” as they had detailed it. France, The Charter of the Land, 110-113. Des Voeux was never “a Gordon man” as claimed by Wiener, 79, because of their rift over Gordon’s attempt to continue his Western Pacific high commissionership from New Zealand.

69 BL, Stanmore Add 49217, Gordon to Selborne, 18 January 1877.

70 Newbury, Patronage and Politics, 123-130.

71 BL, Stanmore Add 49205, Gordon to Gorrie, 28 March 1879.

72 Notably by Charles Lucas, private secretary to Sir Robert Herbert, permanent under-secretary who may also have disapproved of Gordon’s tactics.

73 Bourne, Patronage and Society, 31-41.

74 For Gordon’s limited influence over politics through his executive council and assembly politicians in New Brunswick, Newbury, Patronage and Politics, 23, 25, 29, 31, 34.

Dixon, 39, 255.