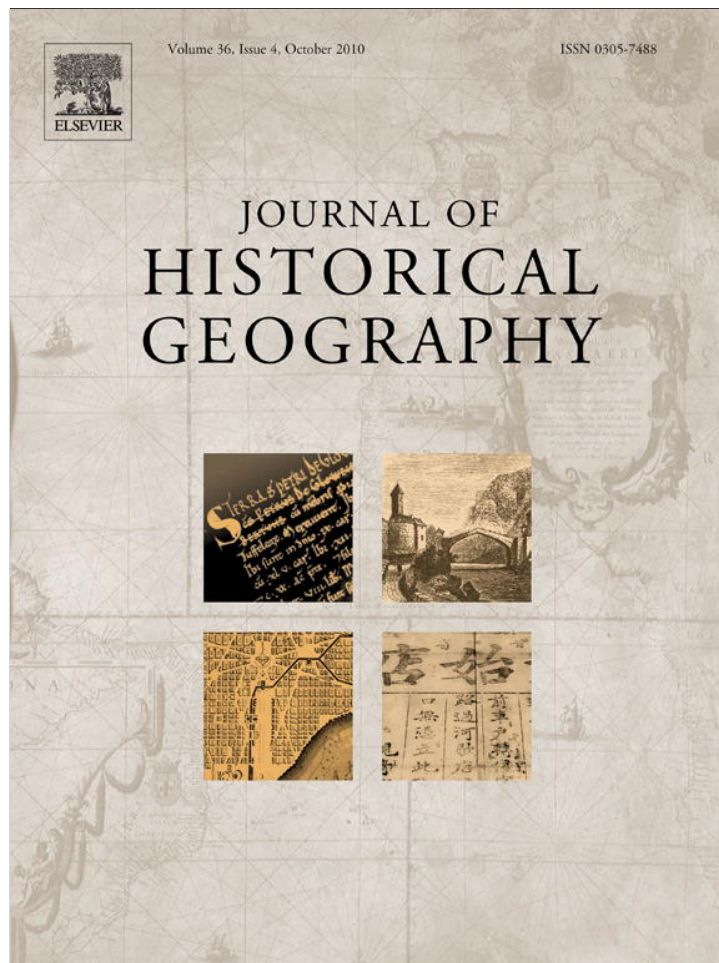


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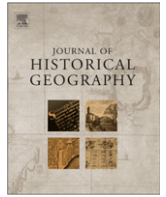
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## Wandering scholars? Academic mobility and the British World, 1850–1940

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## Abstract

At the Allied Colonial Universities Conference, held in London in 1903, delegates from across the universities of Britain's settler empire professed the existence of a British academic community, defined not by location, but by shared culture, shared values and shared ethnicity. This article examines the extent to which these claims reflected actual patterns of academic mobility in the settler empire between 1850 and 1940. By mapping the careers of the 350 professors who served at the Universities of Sydney, Toronto, and Manchester during this period, it concludes that, between 1900 and 1930 especially, there existed a distinctly British academic world within which scholars moved frequently along different migratory axes. Though not as united, extensive and uncomplicated as that in which the 1903 Conference delegates believed, this world nonetheless shared more in common with their vision of an expansive British academic community than it did with the image of an unconnected and isolated periphery that has characterised portrayals by subsequent university historians.

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**Keywords:** Universities; Mobility; British Empire; Professors; Migration; Britain; Australia; Canada; British World

## Introduction

In 1924 at the Home Universities Conference in London, A.N. Whitehead, then Professor of Applied Mathematics at Imperial College, spoke of the attempt to revive what he called 'one of the best institutions of the Middle Ages, the wandering scholar'. Referring to the movement of students and teachers throughout Medieval Europe, Whitehead hoped that in the twentieth century the universities of Great Britain might replicate this tradition by establishing 'something which could be understood because of its uniformity, even of nomenclature, in every country which looks in any way to Great Britain as a centre of culture'.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, his idealised image of the wandering medieval scholar was one shared by many educationalists and politicians interested in British imperial unity in the early part of the century. They evoked this kind of past as a way of advocating a certain kind of future in which students and teachers might move between the universities of the British Empire, tightening its bonds in what they thought would be a form of imperial union less controversial than tariff reform or the Royal Navy; a form of imperial union that relied on personal connections and informal association.

Yet the *Proceedings* of the Allied Colonial Universities' Conference, held in London in 1903, suggest that this world of academic mobility was not merely an imagined one. Several delegates highlighted the large extent to which they believed the movement of scholars between the universities of the British Empire already existed. Sir Henry Roscoe, for example, then at the University of London, assured the meeting that he could 'give a long list of scholars who are now distinguished, who hold professorships in various parts of the Empire'.<sup>2</sup> The lives of many of the Conference delegates were themselves testament to academic mobility. A large contingent of them had travelled from Britain to academic positions in various colonies and the careers of men like Samuel Alexander, Gilbert Murray and Ernest Rutherford were cited as examples of the migration of scholars from the new world to the old.<sup>3</sup> Recognising that '[a]lready we have a considerable interchange of professors' and that '[t]hese universities are already connected', the Conference in 1903 sought to institutionalise what it saw as already existing imperial ties and to 'make [them] effective for practical purposes'.<sup>4</sup>

However, the extent to which this belief in the existence of a spatially diverse imperial university community in fact reflected

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<sup>1</sup> Quoted in E. Ashby, *Community of Universities: An Informal Portrait of the Association of Universities of the British Commonwealth 1913–1963*, London, 1988, original edition 1963, 22–23.

<sup>2</sup> Official Report of the Allied Colonial Universities Conference, *The Empire Review* 6, 31 (1903) 85.

<sup>3</sup> Official Report of the Allied Colonial Universities Conference (note 2), 101.

<sup>4</sup> James Bryce and F.H. Chase in Official Report of the Allied Colonial Universities Conference, *The Empire Review* 6, 31 (1903) 74, 78.

actual patterns of academic mobility within the British Empire before the Second World War, is less clear. The claims advanced in studies focussing on the history of universities have generally tended to reflect the national historiographical traditions from which they spring. In the first part of the twentieth century, university historians sought proudly to situate independent colonial universities as British institutions.<sup>5</sup> However, with the wider historiographical shift in writing about empire in the second part of the century a more nationalist picture developed. In Britain, the universities of the settlement colonies disappeared from view.<sup>6</sup> Interest shifted towards questions of educational development (and later exploitation) in India and Africa.<sup>7</sup> Meanwhile, in the former Dominions university historians began to emphasise the distinctive qualities of colonial universities. Yet even as they did, many also exhibited the 'conceptual confusion' spoken of by Douglas Cole: emphasising the national dimension of their histories also entailed distancing these institutions from an earlier iteration of the national story: one that had been not only Canadian or Australian, but also British.<sup>8</sup> As a consequence, at the same time as they traced the successes of colonial universities in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, these volumes also portrayed them as derivative institutions, staffed by 'second-rate' professors who moved uni-directionally, travelling from Britain to the colonies and staying there.<sup>9</sup> In the opposite direction flowed the best and brightest colonial graduates who were 'lost' to British – or in the case of Canada, American – universities: a phenomenon that has been dubbed 'the brain-drain'.<sup>10</sup> It was not until after World War Two, so this story usually ran, that this pattern changed and circulation began to occur.<sup>11</sup>

Only in recent years have scholars – many of whom are geographers – begun to look more closely at this question. Motivated perhaps by the mobility of the academic profession at the start of the twenty-first century, a literature examining its historical manifestations has begun to emerge. Aware of the persistence of

inequality in the post-imperial era, and influenced by the post-modern turn to language, culture and discourse as constituents of power, since the late 1990s a wide spectrum of commentators have sought to denaturalise the inherently spatial categories of centre and periphery, long fundamental to the study of empire.<sup>12</sup> Instead they have emphasised the importance of connection and mutual constitution in the shaping of lives and identities, both at 'home' and abroad.<sup>13</sup>

One strand of this scholarship has focused upon the idea of a 'British World'. Taking up J.G.A. Pocock's call in 1973 for a 'new British history' that included the story of the 'neo-Britains' 'set going' by mass migration, these historians have argued that the British settler world was one held together by a common 'cultural glue' that 'consisted not only of sentiment and shared institutional values but also of a plethora of networks' and they have sought to examine the real and imagined commonalities among these communities.<sup>14</sup> However, the boundaries of the world this project identifies remain ill-defined and its emphasis on shared culture has sometimes serve to disregard the real power disparities and uneven connections that characterised both it and the imperial project. Much of its focus has been on the influence of the British connection on the various national communities of the former Dominions.<sup>15</sup>

Yet some studies have also sought to examine the British World as a whole. Following in the wake of Christopher Bayly's examination of intelligence gathering in India, work by Alan Lester, Zoe Laidlaw, Tony Ballantyne and Simon Potter has sought to trace the systems of communication, knowledge movement and exchange that helped knit the empire together.<sup>16</sup> Their analyses of missionaries, colonial governors, orientalist and the denizens of the print media, respectively, are inherently spatial in their approach, seeing the empire as best conceived in terms of webs or networks that, despite their gaps and fissures, linked the 'edges' with each other as well as the metropolitan 'centre'.<sup>17</sup> Building upon this work, David Lambert and

<sup>5</sup> See R.A. Dallen, *The University of Sydney: Its History and Progress*, Sydney, 1925; J.C. Beaglehole, *The University of New Zealand: an Historical Study*, Auckland, 1937, esp. viii–ix; *The University of Toronto: A Brief Outline of Its History and Its Administration*, Toronto, 1924.

<sup>6</sup> Colonial universities do not figure in any of the major studies of British academia: A.H. Halsey and M.A. Trow, *The British Academics*, London, 1971; A.H. Halsey, Oxford and the British Universities, in: B. Harrison (Ed), *The History of the University of Oxford, Vol. 8: The Twentieth Century*, Oxford, 1994, 577–606; A.H. Halsey, *Decline of Donnish Dominion*, Oxford, 1995; S. Rothblatt, *The Revolution of the Dons: Cambridge and Society in Victorian England*, London, 1963.

<sup>7</sup> See E. Ashby, *Universities: British, Indian, African*, London, 1966; D. Nicol, Politics, nationalism and universities in Africa, *African Affairs* 62, 246 (1963) 20–28; J.M. Fletcher, The universities in the age of western expansion. The colonial factor in research and higher education: Leiden, 27–29 September 1991, *History of Universities* 11 (1992) 268–269.

<sup>8</sup> In the settlement colonies, argued Cole, what 'nation' meant was deeply problematic. D. Cole, The problem of "Nationalism" and "Imperialism", in British settlement colonies, *The Journal of British Studies* 10, 2 (1971) 160–182. This bind was the subject in 1971 of the Frank Gerstein Lectures held at York University in Toronto. See E.V. Rostow, J. Harney, A. Côté and E. Sirluck, *Nationalism and the University*, Toronto, 1973.

<sup>9</sup> See D. Fleming, Science in Australia, Canada and the United States: some comparative remarks, in: *Proceedings of the Tenth International Congress of the History of Science*, Paris, 1964, x; J.J. Auchmuty, *The Idea of the University in its Australian Setting*, Melbourne, 1963, 164–165; W.J. Gardner, *Colonial Cap and Gown: Studies in the Mid-Victorian Universities of Australasia*, Christchurch, 1979, 10; Gardner quoted R.J.W. Selleck, *The Shop: the University of Melbourne 1850–1939*, Melbourne, 2003, 26.

<sup>10</sup> Symonds, *Oxford and Empire: The Last Lost Cause?* Hampshire and London, 1986, 274–276. See also Fleming, Science in Australia, Canada and the United States (note 9), x; E.T. Williams, The Rhodes Scholars, in: B. Harrison (Ed), *The History of the University of Oxford, Vol. VII: Nineteenth Century Oxford, Part 2*, Oxford, 1994, 717–726. The term 'brain drain' was coined by the Royal Society to highlight the migration of scientists from the UK to the US in the 1950s. *Emigration of Scientists from the United Kingdom*, London, 1963.

<sup>11</sup> Auchmuty, *The Idea of the University* (note 9), 146; G. Blainey, *The University of Melbourne: a Centenary Portrait*, Melbourne, 1956, 34. Exceptions are S. Macintyre, *History, the University and the Nation*, London, 1992, 8 and F.B. Smith, Academics in and out of the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, in: F.B. Smith, P. Crichton (Eds), *Ideas for Histories of Universities in Australia*, Canberra, 1990.

<sup>12</sup> See L.J. Proudfoot and M.M. Roche, Introduction: place, network, and the geographies of empire, in: L.J. Proudfoot, M.M. Roche (Eds), *(Dis)placing Empire: Renegotiating British Colonial Geographies*, Aldershot, 2005, 1–15.

<sup>13</sup> See especially P. Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness*, London, 1993; M. Sinha, *Colonial Masculinity: The 'Manly Englishman' and the 'Effeminate Bengali' in the Late Nineteenth Century*, Manchester, 1995; A. Burton, *Burdens of History: British Feminists, Indian Women, and Imperial Culture, 1865–1915*, Chapel Hill, 1995; C. Hall, *Civilising Subjects: Metropole and Colony in the English Imagination, 1830–1867*, Oxford, 2002.

<sup>14</sup> C. Bridge and Fedorowich, Mapping the British World, in: C. Bridge, K. Fedorowich (Eds), *The British World: Diaspora, Culture and Identity*, London, 2003, 6.

<sup>15</sup> See P.A. Buckner, R.D. Francis (Eds), *Canada and the British World: Culture, Migration, and Identity*, Vancouver, 2006 and the essays collected in Bridge, Fedorowich (Eds), *The British World* (note 14).

<sup>16</sup> C.A. Bayly, *Empire and Information: Intelligence Gathering and Social Communication in India, 1780–1870*, Cambridge, 1996; A. Lester, *Imperial Networks: Creating Identities in Nineteenth-Century South Africa and Britain*, London, 2001; Z. Laidlaw, *Colonial Connections 1815–45: Patronage, the Information Revolution and Colonial Government*, Manchester and New York, 2005; T. Ballantyne, *Orientalism and Race: Aryanism in the British Empire*, Hampshire and New York, 2002; S. Potter, *News and the British World: The Emergence of an Imperial Press System 1876–1922*, Oxford, 2003.

<sup>17</sup> S.J. Potter, Webs, networks and systems: globalization and the mass media in the nineteenth- and twentieth-century British empire, *Journal of British Studies* 46 (2007) 622.

Alan Lester have explicitly taken up the question of imperial mobility, suggesting that one way of overcoming the pull of the nation might be to study the lives of those individuals who themselves moved between the spaces of empire. Examining 'imperial careerings', they propose, might help historians 'gain insight into the dynamic trajectories and networks of knowledge, power, commodities, emotion and culture that connected the multiple sites of the empire to each other, to the imperial metropole and to extra-imperial spaces beyond.'<sup>18</sup> Yet the essays they gather trace the lives of various individuals – colonial governors and their wives, missionaries, a nurse, a civil servant and a mercenary – and it is unclear how much these lives reveal about broad patterns of career mobility.

Another strand of the scholarship has investigated these complex imperial interactions in the context of science and the production of knowledge. For example, Michael Heffernan has examined the effect of imperial involvement upon cultural and intellectual inquiry in France, Felix Driver has outlined the uncertainty of the frontier between travel, tourism and exploration in the production of geographic knowledge, and Kapil Raj has emphasised 'circulation itself as a 'site' of knowledge formation'.<sup>19</sup> Studies like these have been propelled by the belief that 'processes of circulation like travel produce scientific knowledge and change geographies'.<sup>20</sup> In their wake a more systematic analysis of academic mobility has recently begun to be undertaken.<sup>21</sup>

Some of this work has direct implications for understanding academic mobility in Britain and its Empire. Taylor, Hoyler and Evans' 2008 'geohistorical' study of the career paths of one thousand European scientists between 1450 and 1900, for example, points to the *lack* of connection between universities in England and continental Europe during the nineteenth century.<sup>22</sup> By contrast, Katrina Dean's research on settler physics detects significant disciplinary ties between Cambridge and Australian universities.<sup>23</sup> **When set against Heike Jöns' identification of an erosion, beginning in the 1930s, of the previously close connections between British and colonial academics and their replacement by growing ties with the United States (and, after 1945, also with Europe), this work begins to sketch the outline of a picture of imperial academic mobility very different to that drawn by the university historians outlined above.**<sup>24</sup>

Yet it is an image that is still hazy.<sup>25</sup> Large questions remain concerning the extent and nature of academic mobility in the British Empire before the Second World War. What were the careers of academics like during this period? How many of those

who worked in colonial universities were from Britain and what parts of Britain were they from? What about those who worked in universities in the United Kingdom? How important was colonial experience for them? And in both cases, what role did European and American experience play? How frequently did academics move and is it possible to identify patterns that might inform our understanding not only of the nature of empire, but also of the generation of knowledge in this period? These questions grow even more pertinent when the present scholarly concern with networks and connections is considered.

Claims about mobility were central to the 1903 delegates' belief in the existence of an imperial academic community that straddled the distances of empire. This, they held, was a community of shared culture, shared race, shared values and shared interest. It was a community not defined by location but rather by association. Alfred Hopkinson, for example, Vice-Chancellor of the Victoria University of Manchester, called it a 'great commonwealth in learning and in science', and the Liberal MP and historian, James Bryce, spoke of the universities of the 'British World'.<sup>26</sup> These men saw academia in the United Kingdom and the settlement colonies as one extended, though by no means homogeneous, British sphere. For them, the wandering of scholars was both proof of its existence and a force that would bind it together.

By mapping the patterns of movement of professors at the Universities of Sydney, Toronto, and Manchester between 1850 and 1940, this paper assesses the extent to which the 1903 Conference delegates' talk of imperial academic mobility reflected a lived reality. By examining the regions of empire together in one 'single analytic field' it argues that, between 1900 and 1930 especially, there existed a distinctly British academic world, within which scholars moved frequently along different axes.<sup>27</sup> In doing so it both contributes to a still emerging literature on the imperial currents of academic mobility, and provides the foundation for further work that might consider the relationship between this mobility and the production of knowledge.

#### *The Universities of Toronto, Sydney and Manchester*

The Universities of Toronto, Sydney and Manchester were founded within two years of each other at the mid-point of the nineteenth century in three different parts of the British World. Developing in similar ways, they might all be thought of as what A.H. Halsey has called 'provincial' universities. According to Halsey, Oxford and

<sup>18</sup> D. Lambert and Lester, Introduction: imperial spaces, imperial subjects, in: D. Lambert, A. Lester (Eds), *Colonial Lives Across the British Empire: Imperial Careerings in the Long Nineteenth Century*, Cambridge, 2006, 24.

<sup>19</sup> M.J. Heffernan, A state scholarship: the political geography of French international science during the 19th century, *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 19 (1994) 21–45; F. Driver, *Geography Militant: Cultures of Exploration and Empire*, Oxford, 2001; K. Raj, *Relocating Modern Science: Circulation and the Construction of Knowledge in South Asia and Europe: Seventeenth to Nineteenth Centuries*, Delhi, 2006, 21. See also P. Howell, *Geographies of Regulation: Policing Prostitution in Nineteenth-Century Britain and the Empire*, Cambridge, 2009.

<sup>20</sup> K. Dean, *Settler Physics in Australia and Cambridge, 1850–1950*, Phd thesis, Cambridge, 2004, 1.

<sup>21</sup> See, for example, H. Jöns, *Academic mobility and collaboration across the Atlantic: experiences in the humanities and the social sciences*, in: H. Foundation (Ed), *What Factors Impact the Internationalization of Scholarship in the Humanities and Social Sciences?* Bonn, 2005; D. Epstein, R. Boden, R. Deem, F. Rizvi, S. Wright (Eds), *Geographies of Knowledge, Geometries of Power: Future of Higher Education*, New York and London, 2008; T. Kim, *Shifting patterns of transnational academic mobility: a comparative and historical approach*, *Comparative Education* 45 (2009) 387–403.

<sup>22</sup> P.J. Taylor, M. Hoyler and D.M. Evans, A geohistorical study of 'the rise of modern science': mapping scientific practice through urban networks, 1500–1900, *Minerva* 46 (2008) 402.

<sup>23</sup> Dean, *Settler Physics in Australia and Cambridge* (note 20).

<sup>24</sup> H. Jöns, *Academic travel from Cambridge University and the formation of centres of knowledge, 1885–1954*, *Journal of Historical Geography* 34 (2008) 338–362. See also, H. Jöns, *Transnational mobility and the spaces of knowledge production: a comparison of global patterns, motivations and collaborations in different academic fields*, *Social Geography* 2 (2007) 97–114; M.J. Heffernan and H. Jöns, *Degrees of influence: the politics of honorary degrees in the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, 1900–2000*, *Minerva* 45 (2007) 389–416.

<sup>25</sup> Work is also emerging on the migration patterns of other professions. Marjory Harper, for example, has been undertaking a systematic study (not yet published) of the doctors who trained under Joseph Lister at the Universities of Glasgow and Edinburgh.

<sup>26</sup> Official Report of the Allied Colonial Universities Conference (note 2), 109, 73.

<sup>27</sup> Cooper and Stoler, *Between metropole and colony: rethinking a research agenda*, in: F. Cooper, A.L. Stoler (Eds), *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World*, Berkeley and London, 1997, 15.



Cambridge functioned as the only truly 'national' British academic institutions, feeding and fed by 'the national elites of politics, administration, business and the liberal professions'. All the rest, including the University of London, were in Halsey's view 'provincial' – aiming 'to meet the needs of the professional and industrial middle classes ... [and taking] most of their students from their own region'. Though the London School of Economics, with its close connection to metropolitan elites, may be an exception, this description fits Sydney and Toronto just as well as it does Manchester.<sup>28</sup> As such, these three universities offer excellent points of comparison.

At all three universities a professorial Chair was the most senior tenured appointment in any department. Its holder took responsibility for the running of that department, a role which usually involved significant amounts of teaching, but which often extended to the appointment of staff and the establishment of the curriculum. Additionally, the professors played a crucial role in the administration of the university. At Sydney they constituted the membership of the Council, and at Toronto they formed a powerful lobby group against government interference. At Manchester after the governance reforms of 1870 the professors were incorporated into a Senate that in principle (and largely in practice) oversaw all academic matters.<sup>29</sup> Moreover, in all three locations professors held considerable influence within the wider community, seen as both moral leaders and as individuals who possessed valuable expertise.<sup>30</sup> This was a position of sufficient status to lure individuals to leave other institutions for the opportunity of advancement, similarly qualifying them for employment elsewhere. It was also a discrete and identifiable group, clearly and consistently demarcated from other university positions throughout this period. In contrast to more junior positions, which were often filled from the ranks of recent graduates who moved on to other employment after a year or so of service, professors usually also were career academics. Their life trajectories offer a way of tracking the development and character of the profession during this period.

#### Tracking the professors

Between 1850 and 1940 there were 90 professors at the University of Sydney, 99 at the University of Toronto, and 161 at Manchester. While a staff list of the University of Sydney has been collated by Turney, Bygott and Chippendale in their 1991 study, *Australia's First: A History of the University of Sydney*, and records for University of Manchester are available in H.B. Charlton's *Portrait of A University*, none exist for the University of Toronto.<sup>31</sup> No register appears in any of the official histories and neither is one possessed by the University itself. The annually published *Calendars* do, however, record the entire staff of the University in any one year.<sup>32</sup> But the federal structure of the

University, the accession to it in the twentieth century of various independent religious colleges resulting in the multiplication of professorial chairs (particularly in the liberal arts), together with the affiliation of various professional schools, significantly complicate the process of compiling a list of Toronto professors. The list used here has been created by aggregating the names of those professors listed in the *Calendars* and affiliated to either the University of Toronto or to University College between 1850 and 1930.

The lives and careers of the 350 individuals from these three universities are traced through the use of primary and secondary biographical resources.<sup>33</sup> Using this material, the various places of birth, study and employment for each individual has been recorded. Based on the date of appointment, this information has then been divided into five periods that broadly align with the history of these universities: 1850–1880 (the foundation period), 1880–1900 (settler nationalism and the absorption of the professions), 1900–1918 (expansion and war), 1919–1930 (post-war reconstruction) and 1930–1940 (depression and consolidation). This facilitates a comparison of the ways in which patterns of mobility changed over time and differed according to place. In particular, attention is paid to the national origin of professors, to their education and work experience (which is considered to be degrees taken and formal appointments – sabbatical leave, lecture tours and consultancy work is *not* counted, although formal secondment is), and to the number of relocations made.

The varying availability of biographical information does, however, in part limit the comprehensiveness of this study. Although it aims to trace the careers of all professors at all three universities, in Toronto's case some individuals may have been omitted. Additionally, it has not been possible to find career details for all professors appointed during this period, with those of Toronto professors during the 1930s notably absent. Some individuals do not appear in any of the primary or secondary bibliographic sources and, when the number of appointments in any given period was small, as it was in the 1900s and 1910s, this missing information has the capacity to distort results.<sup>34</sup>

Other factors also must be considered when analysing the significance of this data.

Focussing only on professors has entailed the exclusion of the diverse participations of both junior academics and women. The professionalisation of academia in this period witnessed the multiplication of lecturers, readers, demonstrators and assistant professors whose experiences are not captured by this survey. Work on academic mobility at the end of the twentieth century suggests that its geographies do vary according to career stage and it is clear that in this earlier period junior academics also moved, not just between universities, but also in and out of them.<sup>35</sup> When women held university positions it was often in these sorts of roles. Though admitted as students to Sydney, Toronto and Manchester in

<sup>28</sup> Halsey, Oxford and the British Universities (note 6), 575, 580.

<sup>29</sup> H.B. Charlton, *Portrait of a University: 1851–1951*, Manchester, 1951, 34–35.

<sup>30</sup> This was in contrast with the system in operation in Oxford and Cambridge where the title 'Professor' referred to the holders of endowed offices that did not entail teaching responsibilities or the power of patronage. It was also different to the situation in the United States where, rather than denoting seniority, the title indicated that its holder was pursuing an academic career generally.

<sup>31</sup> C. Turney, U. Bygott and P. Chippendale, *Australia's First: A History of the University of Sydney, Vol. I: 1850–1939*, Sydney, 1991, Appendix 3, 639–641; Charlton, *Portrait of a University* (note 29), Appendix 7, 172–182.

<sup>32</sup> *Annals of Kings College Toronto*, Toronto, 1850–51; *University College Toronto Calendar*, Toronto, 1856–57, 1868–69, 1877–78; *Calendar of the University of Toronto*, Toronto, 1887–88, 1891–92, 1908–09, 1918–19; *University and University College Calendar*, Toronto, 1898–99; *University of Toronto Directory*, Toronto, 1928–29.

<sup>33</sup> Sources used include: *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Bright Sparcs website, *Who's Who, Australia, Canadian Dictionary of Biography Online*, *Who's Who in Canada*, *Nature*, *Obituaries of Fellows of the Royal Society*.

<sup>34</sup> With the exception of the 1850–1880 period in Toronto, I was unable to find information for less than 10% of the total number of appointments in each period. In this period I was unable to fully account for 12.5% of new professors.

<sup>35</sup> B. Bekhradnia and T. Sastry, *Migration of Academic Staff to and from the UK*, Higher Education Policy Institute Report, London, 2005.

the early 1880s, it was not generally until after the Second World War that they were appointed to professorial positions.<sup>36</sup> Though not in the same numbers as men, academic women also travelled, taking up scholarships and work opportunities away from their country of origin. Moreover, and particularly in the early period, many women informally participated in academic work by assisting their husbands or fathers, transcribing articles, ordering research and conducting correspondences that maintained both personal and professional networks.<sup>37</sup> Certain disciplines, too, perhaps lent themselves to career mobility more than others. The Natural Sciences, Forestry, and, indeed, Geography itself, all placed a premium on certain types of located knowledge and colonial universities were perhaps likely to more readily foster these kinds of disciplines within their walls.<sup>38</sup> Compounding this, university policy and local exigency determined which subjects were accorded chairs and which not. Though similar, this was by no means uniform across these three institutions.

The extent to which these three universities were representative of others in Canada, Australia and Britain is also contestable. As a secular university with a federal structure, Toronto was unlike many of the small, denominational universities elsewhere in British North America. Its location too in Ontario, a mostly Protestant province with a largely British population, set it apart from the French language Université Laval, and the English-speaking McGill University, located in French-speaking Quebec City and Montreal, respectively. Manchester too, at the time of its foundation, was unlike any of the other English universities. Its non-sectarian focus, openness (after 1883) to women, and teaching professoriate set it apart from Oxford or Cambridge and in some respects London. As the first 'provincial' university in England it may have attracted more academics from other of Britain's 'provinces' – the settlement colonies – than its more ancient cousins. Sydney was perhaps most like its fellow Australian institutions, but as evidenced below, its history too was inflected by connection to particular regions in Britain. Additionally, this study's focus on academic appointments obscures the distinction between university hiring policy and the choices individuals made about their careers.

However, despite its necessary limitations, by tracing the movement – across both time and space – of professors from these three universities located in different parts of the British World this paper paints a fascinating – and sometimes surprising – picture of the patterns of academic mobility. In doing so it tells us a great deal about a profession in the process of formation and points to the existence of a geographically dispersed imperial community that had more than merely a rhetorical existence.

### Place of birth

The delegates at the 1903 Conference spoke of a community 'of blood, of language, of laws, of literature'.<sup>39</sup> James Bryce invoked 'the British

people dispersed throughout the world' and the Rev F.H. Chase of Queen's College, Cambridge alluded to 'the sure and aiding foundation of unity of race'.<sup>40</sup> The academic community they believed in was one that, despite its diffuse nature, was nonetheless thoroughly *British*. Yet how far this was in fact the case is not wholly clear.

The biographical information collected here confirms that the universities in the settlement colonies were initially staffed by teachers born in Britain. The exportation of scholars from the old world to the new was a universal aspect of the foundation of new institutions, and of their development. This data also suggests, however, that 'native' or 'home-grown' professors came to replace these British-born appointments at different times in different universities.<sup>41</sup> Whereas at Sydney the balance between British-born and Australian-born appointments shifted in the 1920s, at Toronto this change occurred four decades earlier in the 1880s (see Figs. 2 and 3). In both Sydney and Toronto this shift to a majority of native-born appointments occurred approximately 20 years after nationhood (Canada confederated in 1867 and Australia federated in 1901), a circumstance that perhaps reflected the emerging confidence as well as the developing infrastructure of the growing nation.

However, this shift to the employment of the native-born was also affected by the influence of particular individuals. James Loudon was the University of Toronto's first 'home-grown' professor and, between 1892 and 1906, also its President. In the 1860s and 70s as a graduate he was one of the most prominent figures in a group which promoted the reform of the University of Toronto's practice of recruiting staff from abroad. After extended pressure, he, along with three friends, was elected to the University Senate in 1873, and the group further increased their influence in the years that followed. The 1890s and 1910s were tumultuous decades for the University and Loudon's presidency was marred by controversy and political intervention. He resigned under pressure in 1906, to be followed, after the interim presidency of Maurice Hutton, by Sir Robert Falconer, who implemented the reforms of a Royal Commission and pursued an active policy of recruitment from Britain.<sup>42</sup> Under Falconer's reign, the number of national appointments dropped to approximately the same level as that evident at the same time in Sydney – about 50%. There, the swing in the 1920s reflected the mood at the University in the immediate aftermath of the First World War. Patricia Morison has attributed the increase in 'home-grown' appointments to the surge of national pride consequent with Australia's wartime contributions and the attendant belief that, like the nation, 'native sons' of the University 'were coming into their own while their British 'foster fathers' receded appropriately into the background'.<sup>43</sup> It is possible also that by the 1920s a generational shift had occurred, with the institution of public grammar school secondary education in the 1880s, combined with generous university scholarships, translating into a class of locally born scholars equipped to be university educators.<sup>44</sup> In the 1930s, the proportion of British- to Australian-born

<sup>36</sup> The University of Toronto opened matriculation to women in 1877, permitting them to sit for degrees in 1884, while at Sydney women were first admitted as undergraduates in 1881. In 1932, the percentage of professors who were women in Australian universities was zero. In Canada it was under 1%. Britain, New Zealand and South Africa were marginally higher at 1.5%, 3.8% and 1.4% respectively. F. Perrone, Women academics in England, 1870–1930, *History of Universities* 12 (1993) 339–367.

<sup>37</sup> Academic men also sometimes married their students or assistants; an event that could both aid and abort a woman's academic prospects. At Cambridge, for example, J.J. Thompson, Director of the Cavendish Laboratories 1884–1919, married Rose Paget, daughter of the Regius Professor of Physics and one of the first female researchers in the Laboratory.

<sup>38</sup> Recent works addressing the impact of mobility on the shaping of these disciplines include: S.R. Rajan, *Modernizing Nature: Forestry and Imperial Eco-Development, 1800–1950*, Oxford, 2006; J. Endersby, *Imperial Nature: Joseph Hooker and the Practices of Victorian Science*, Chicago, Ill., 2008; Driver, *Geography Militant* (note 19).

<sup>39</sup> Arthur Balfour at the Conference dinner, Official Report of the Allied Colonial Universities Conference, *The Empire Review* 6, 31 (1903) 109.

<sup>40</sup> Official Report of the Allied Colonial Universities Conference (note 2), 77, 79.

<sup>41</sup> The term 'native' was used at the time to differentiate those settlers who were colonial-born from those who had emigrated from Britain.

<sup>42</sup> M.L. Friedland, *The University of Toronto: A History*, Toronto and London, 2002, 235.

<sup>43</sup> See P. Morison, *J.T. Wilson and the Fraternity of Duckmaloi*, Amsterdam Atlanta, 1991, 325.

<sup>44</sup> J. Horne and G. Sherington, Extending the Educational Franchise: the Social Contract of Australia's Public Universities 1850–1890, Parallel Paper Session A, International Standing Conference for the History of Education, 2008.

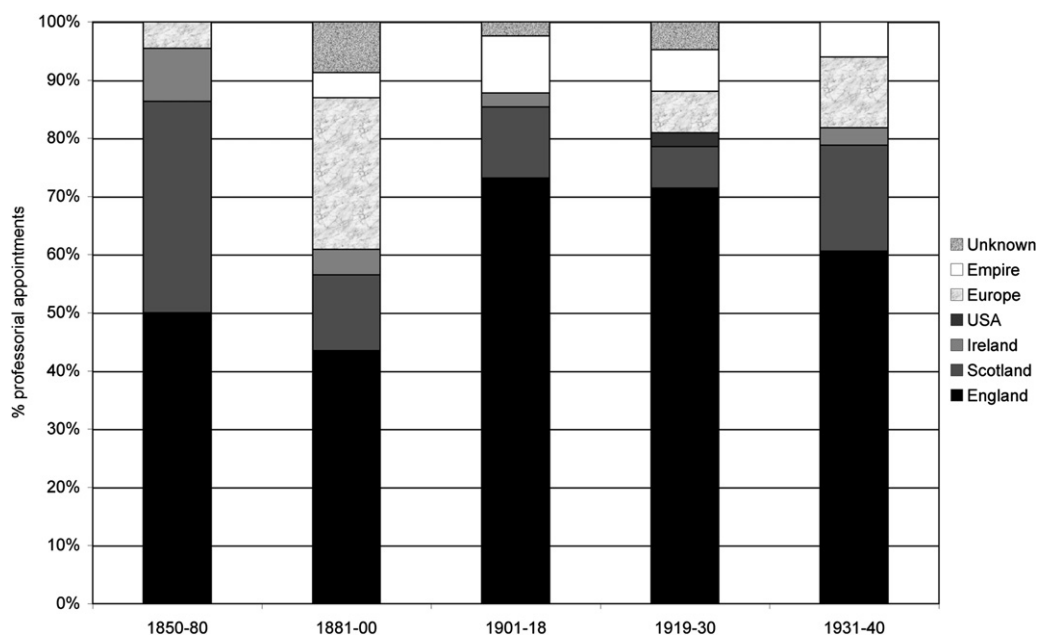


Fig. 1. Place of birth of professors at the University of Manchester, 1850–1940.

appointments stabilised, with 35% of new professors in that decade born in Great Britain and just over half born in Australia.

#### Manchester

However, as Peter Mandler and others have reminded us, Great Britain was and is not an undifferentiated nation.<sup>45</sup> It is interesting therefore, to compare the regional origin of the British-born component of the professoriate at Toronto and Sydney with that at Manchester. As shown in Fig. 1, throughout this whole period the majority of professors at the University of Manchester were born in England, though in the early Owens College period (1851–1880) – when the Church of England still maintained its stronghold on Oxford and Cambridge – there was also a significant Scottish contingent. Additionally, the last two decades of the nineteenth century witnessed an influx of a large number of European-born appointments, particularly to teach language and science subjects. Yet between 1900 and 1918 no Europeans were appointed to the staff of the University of Manchester. Instead, Empire-born candidates were appointed. Though Europeans begin to appear again in the 1920s, they only again outweighed the Empire-born in the 1930s with the influx of refugee academics from Europe. Moreover, although the number of Empire-born professors was never high, they did consistently constitute a larger proportion of the professoriate than those born in Ireland or the United States. Though the Empire-born were never appointed in the same numbers as the Scots or the English, this suggests that between 1900 and 1930 significant numbers of Empire-born academics were working in the University of Manchester.

#### Toronto

At the University of Toronto too, most non-Canadian appointments came from England, with a significantly smaller number from Scotland – outweighed in the early period by Irish-born professors

(all Protestant) largely from Trinity College Dublin (Fig. 2). The number of those born outside Canada or the United Kingdom was never high. However, it is interesting to note that American-born professors were rarely hired at Toronto and that, though individuals born in other parts of the British Empire (excluding Canada and the UK) constituted only a small percentage of the Toronto professoriate, they nonetheless consistently outnumbered the Americans. This was even the case during the First World War when the lack of available candidates in Britain might have impelled the University to look to America.

#### Sydney

At the University of Sydney a similar story emerges. As at Manchester and Toronto, only a small number of professors at Sydney were born in other parts of the Empire. Moreover, at no time in the 90 year period examined here was a European-born professor ever appointed. Neither did American-born candidates figure: only one professor was born there – and he attended school and university in England. However, in contrast to Manchester and Toronto, the British-born professors did not mostly come from England. As demonstrated in Fig. 3, between 1880 and 1918 there were as many, if not more, Scottish-born professorial appointments as there were English. Indeed, the Scottish contingent at the University of Sydney was considerably stronger than that at the University of Manchester. Many of the Scotsmen appointed to Sydney were scientists. Their dominance can in part be traced to the influence of Sydney's first Dean of Medicine and Professor of Physiology, T.P. Anderson Stuart, who arrived at the University from Edinburgh in 1883 and filled a number of appointments with his Edinburgh connections.

#### British subjects

The professoriate at all three of these universities was, therefore, composed almost entirely of British subjects. Only once did the

<sup>45</sup> P. Mandler, *The English National Character: The History of an Idea from Edmund Burke to Tony Blair*, New Haven, 2006; P. Mandler, What is national identity? Definitions and applications in modern British historiography, *Modern Intellectual History* 3 (2006) 271–297.

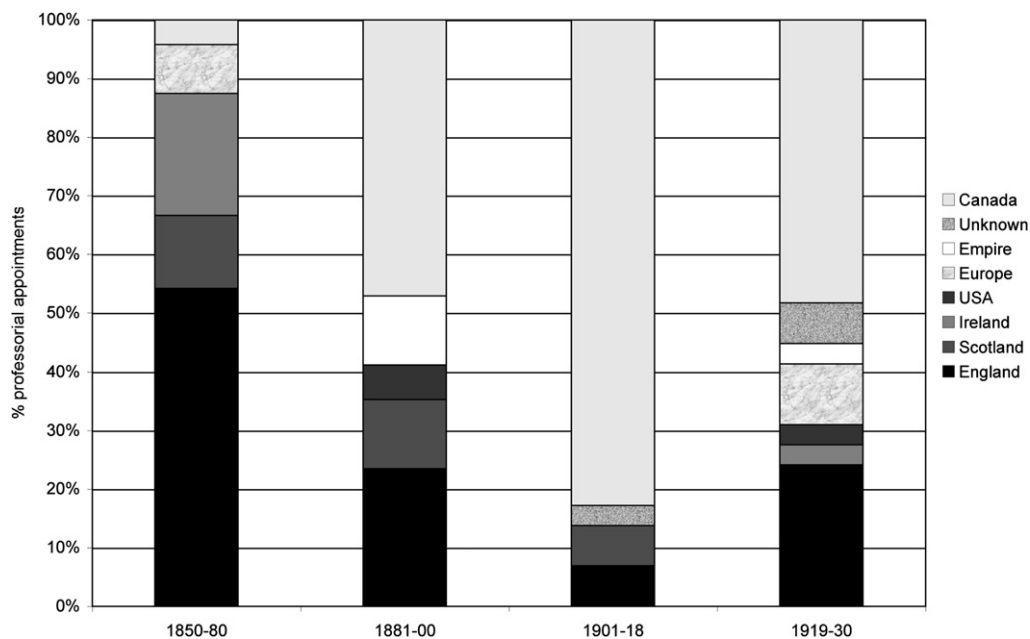


Fig. 2. Place of birth of professors at the University of Toronto, 1850–1930.

total percentage of 'foreign-born' (i.e. European or American) professors exceed 15%, and this was not at Toronto or Sydney but at Manchester during the last two decades of the nineteenth century. After this period Empire-born professors featured as prominently on the Manchester staff as Europeans. By 1940 approximately the same percentage of the professorial staff at Sydney and Manchester were 'native-born' (53% and 60% respectively) and at Toronto in the 1930s it was just under 50%.<sup>46</sup>

While it is reasonable to surmise that these universities wished to recruit English-speaking professors, it does not necessarily follow that they required their staff to be English. These figures suggest that something more than linguistic ability was necessary to secure employment in these three institutions. The marked dominance of British and native-born professors in both Sydney and Toronto, and the absence of other English-speaking nationals such as Americans and other colonials suggests that national identity was also a filter which affected appointment. It indicates the existence of independent axes of migration between these countries and Britain.

### Experience

Birthplace, however, need not necessarily accord with place of education or employment. What sort of educational and work experience did the overwhelmingly British or colonial-born professors at these three institutions have? In 1903 the Conference delegates were still heatedly debating the virtues of research. Yet it was clear, even then, that the tide of opinion on this subject was turning. James Bryce, for example, was well aware of the large numbers of Americans travelling to Germany for further study and thought the British universities could 'go much further than they have yet done in the way of making provision for post-graduate courses'.<sup>47</sup> The Principal of McGill University also felt that, though he did 'not wish

to say that our graduates ought not to go to foreign universities in the prosecution of special work', he did believe 'it would be much better if we could give them all they want within the borders of the Empire'.<sup>48</sup> All delegates were clear that academic interchange would foster imperial feeling: 'There is', asserted Mr. J.A. Ewing of the University of Cambridge, 'no more direct practical means by which association of interest and thought between the various universities may be cultivated, than by encouraging students who have taken their first degree to pass from one university to another'.<sup>49</sup>

This study suggests that an overwhelming majority of the professors at all three of these universities possessed some formal education or work experience abroad. At all times between 1850 and 1940, over 77% of the professoriate at Sydney had spent some portion of their career outside Australia. At the University of Toronto the figure was slightly lower, with over 60% of the professoriate having spent time outside Canada. The professors at the University of Manchester were also a well-travelled group. Nearly 50% of them had at some point studied or worked outside the United Kingdom and between 60 and 80% had gained experience outside England. Yet where was this international experience gained? While there was much talk at the 1903 Conference of the 'British people dispersed throughout the world', there was also an awareness that this British World could have porous borders. W. Peterson of McGill University, for example, knew that 'the United States ha[d] spoilt Canada of many students'.<sup>50</sup> As the comments of Bryce and Ewing evidence, the establishment of a British higher degree was seen as a way of preventing the extra-imperial wandering of academics.

### Manchester

This research shows that European experience featured prominently in the careers of professors at the University of Manchester.

<sup>46</sup> For Manchester this means English.

<sup>47</sup> Official Report of the Allied Colonial Universities Conference (note 2), 75.

<sup>48</sup> Official Report of the Allied Colonial Universities Conference (note 2), 82.

<sup>49</sup> Official Report of the Allied Colonial Universities Conference (note 2), 87.

<sup>50</sup> James Bryce and W. Peterson in Official Report of the Allied Colonial Universities Conference, *The Empire Review* 6, 31 (1903) 77, 83.



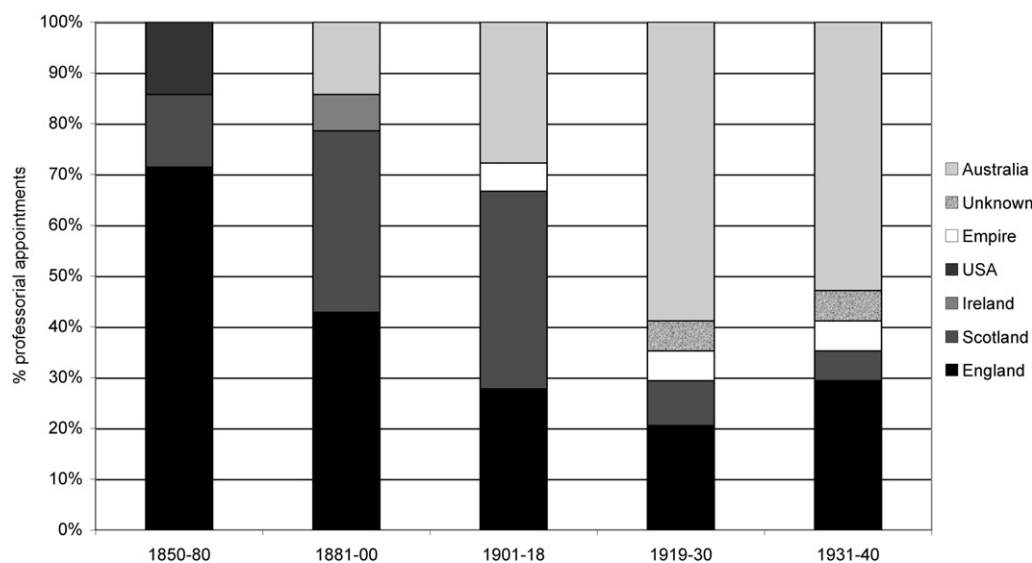


Fig. 3. Place of birth of professors at the University of Sydney, 1850–1940.

However, between 1900 and 1930, experience in the Empire figured just as, if not more, prominently. During this period over 30% of professorial appointments undertook some study or work in the British Empire (between 1919 and 1930 only 20% had European experience). Further, at all times between 1880 and 1930 imperial experience was more important in the careers of professors at Manchester than American, Scottish or Irish experience. As might be expected, a large number of appointments to Manchester (over 50%) had consistently worked or studied in Oxford and Cambridge. Yet Manchester was not, contrary to Halsey's assertions, mainly full of Oxbridge's second-sons.<sup>51</sup> After 1900, between 60 and 70% of professors appointed to Manchester had studied or worked in the English provincial universities or colleges, and between 40 and 50% of them had spent time at the University of London. Just over 25% had experience in Scotland. Between 1900 and 1930, then, the professors at Manchester emerge as a body of academics who's connection to the other 'provincial' institutions – both English and colonial – matched if not superseded their connection to Oxbridge and Europe.

#### Toronto

Overseas experience also figured prominently in the careers of professors appointed to the University of Toronto and, for most of the period between 1850 and 1930, this overseas experience was mostly British. However, over the course of the late nineteenth century, United Kingdom experience declined in importance reaching a low point in the 1910s when less than 20% of professorial appointments had been to Britain. Yet in this decade over 60% of Toronto's new professors nonetheless still had experience abroad. Were they too, like their Manchester colleagues, studying and working in the Empire as often as in Europe?

Until 1918 a significant percentage (30%) of the professors at Toronto had studied in Europe. However, this number declined

sharply following the First World War and did not, in contrast to Manchester, recover during the 1930s. Also unlike their Manchester colleagues, professors at Toronto largely did not work or study in other parts of the Empire. Of the 99 individuals appointed to chairs at Toronto between 1850 and 1930, only five had any experience in another part of the settlement or dependent empire. However, from the 1880s onwards, over 30% of new professors at Toronto had worked or studied in the United States. This trend was especially marked in the 1910s. Affected perhaps by the turmoil in Europe, significantly more professors were appointed at Toronto during this decade with American than with British experience, with twice as many possessing American as British second degrees. Such evidence supports the fears expressed by W. Peterson of McGill when he spoke in 1903 of the drift of Canadian students to the United States. He expressed similar sentiments again in 1912 at the inaugural Congress of the Universities of the British Empire, pointing to the disparate rate of increase in graduate work since the turn of the century in Great Britain as compared with the United States where 'it [had] gone up 250 per cent'.<sup>52</sup> His compatriot, Professor Cappon of Queen's University in Ontario, pointed to the value of graduate degrees, adding that the 'Old Country scholar seeking a University appointment' must now compete 'not only with the born Canadian, but with the well-trained graduate of Harvard and other large American Universities'.<sup>53</sup> This all amounted to what Professor Frank Allen of Manitoba described as the 'stream of students which constitutes a serious leakage from our Empire'.<sup>54</sup> This research suggests that the fears of these Canadian delegates were not baseless. What they wanted, and in this they were joined at the 1912 Congress by the Australians and other Dominion representatives, were practical measures – scholarships, exchange programmes, the institution of British research degrees – to facilitate graduate study in the United Kingdom.

With the return of peace and the introduction of the British doctorate in 1917, the leakage of Canadians to America did indeed

<sup>51</sup> Halsey, *Oxford and the British Universities* (note 6), 592.

<sup>52</sup> A. Hill (Ed), *Congress of the Universities of the Empire, 1912: Report of Proceedings*, London, 1912, 70.

<sup>53</sup> Hill (Ed), *Congress of the Universities of the Empire, 1912* (note 52), 368. James Cappon, who graduated from Glasgow University with an MA in 1879, taught in Europe and Great Britain before he was appointed Professor of English at Queen's University Ontario, in 1888.

<sup>54</sup> Hill (Ed), *Congress of the Universities of the Empire, 1912* (note 52), 59. Frank Allen was appointed Professor of Physics at the University of Manitoba in 1904. He was born in New Brunswick and completed his PhD at Cornell University.

arrest. During the 1920s the number of professorial appointees at Toronto who had taken second degrees in the United States dropped to half the number who had done so in Great Britain.<sup>55</sup> Similarly, after the war the number of new professors who possessed United Kingdom experience increased again to over half. The particularly English character of this British experience at Toronto is important to note. Though Scottish experience predominated in the period between 1880 and 1900, when approximately a quarter of new professorial appointments had completed their undergraduate training in Scotland, after this time, its importance diminished markedly. Similarly, with the exception of the early period, few professors at Toronto had Irish experience. Their experience in Great Britain for the most part was in England: not at London or the civic universities, but at Oxford or Cambridge.

This turn back to Britain was, however, of a peculiar character. Very few of those professors at Toronto who had spent time there had also spent time in the United States. Indeed, before the 1920s very few appointees who had spent time in America had also spent time in Europe. For professors at Toronto, experience in these three destinations seemed to operate for the most part exclusively. In their careers, Europe and America functioned not as destinations that *supplemented* study or work in the Britain, but as *alternate* sites of work or study. Three separate axes of academic migration radiated from Toronto in this period.

### Sydney

A different pattern seems to have characterised the careers of professors at the University of Sydney. Although after the First World War the number of British-born professorial appointments dropped significantly, the vast majority of the Australian-born professors who replaced them continued to travel to Britain for further study. Up until 1940 between 70 and 80% of the professoriate at Sydney had undertaken some work or study in the United Kingdom. Indeed, in the 1930s just under half of all new appointments had taken second degrees in Britain. Therefore, although 'native' appointments increased, British experience remained vital for Sydney professors. Neither were Oxford and Cambridge necessarily the universities in which this experience was most often acquired. Although until 1900 the ancient English universities were dominant, during the period 1900–1918 the number of professors appointed at Sydney with Scottish experience was double that of those who had been to Oxbridge.<sup>56</sup> Additionally, between 1900 and 1940 the percentage of Sydney appointments with experience at the University of London was approximately the same as the figure for Oxford and Cambridge combined. Civic universities too played a role in Sydney professors' careers, particularly in the foundation period. In this respect then, the careers of professors at Sydney bore a much greater resemblance to those of their Manchester colleagues than they did to those of their cousins at Toronto.

However, while an overwhelming majority of Sydney professors had British experience, they had not *only* had experience there. Although its importance in their careers declined over the course of this period, until 1930 between 20 and 30% of the professoriate at Sydney also possessed some experience in Europe. Though very few appointments were born or had taken first degrees in European countries, until the 1920s almost as many new professors had completed further study in European universities as had done so in British institutions. However, at Sydney those professors with European second degrees always also had British experience as well. Although not all second degrees were doctorates and though some academics had more than two degrees, before the advent of the British PhD most academics in Britain with a doctoral degree had completed it in Germany.<sup>57</sup> In Australia the PhD was not founded until after the Second World War and, without a British option, both Australian- and British-born scholars who wanted to pursue doctorates travelled to the universities of Europe.<sup>58</sup> Given that, until the war decade, over three quarters of professors at Sydney were British born, it is perhaps not surprising that there are strong similarities between patterns in Britain and those at Sydney.

The perception – intensified during the First World War – both by politicians and some in the universities, of the strategic and economic weakness of outsourcing Britain's technical training and research to its competitor and enemy, combined with the hope of attracting American graduates to Great Britain, led to the introduction of the PhD in Britain in 1917.<sup>59</sup> The careers of Sydney professors testifies to the effectiveness of this policy.<sup>60</sup> During the 1920s, the number of new recruits who had gone to Europe for further study decreased at the same time as those who had completed further study in Great Britain increased. In the 1930s this gap widened further, with only one of the 17 professors appointed in that decade having taken his second degree in Europe, as opposed to eight in the United Kingdom. However, although no longer a site for further study, Europe remained an important travel destination for many of those, particularly Australian-born students, who did go to Great Britain.

Consideration of the places that were not important in the careers of professors at Sydney is equally instructive as delineating those that were. Small numbers of professors possessed experience in other colonies. Only three of the 90 appointed at the University of Sydney between 1850 and 1940 had Canadian experience while none of the 99 appointed at Toronto (before 1930) had been to Australia. Only nine of the 90 professorial appointments at Sydney had studied or worked in America and all of these were appointed after 1910.<sup>61</sup> Most of these were engaged in disciplines that had been slow to develop in Scotland and England: what would now be called the social or human sciences, and engineering.<sup>62</sup> Additionally, as with European experience, those professors at Sydney who had spent time in the United States had all also studied or worked in the United Kingdom. It seems evident then, that in so far as the United States featured in the careers of professors at Sydney before

<sup>55</sup> Between 1920 and 1946, of 538 DPhils awarded at Oxford, 113 went to students from the Dominions (279 went to British students and 85 to American students). At Cambridge during the same period, out of a total of 1104 PhDs, 204 went to students from the Dominions and 757 and 60 to British and American students, respectively. F. Aydelotte, *The Vision of Cecil Rhodes*, London, 1946, 61.

<sup>56</sup> 10 (of 18) new appointments at Sydney during this period had Scottish experience, seven of whom were Scottish-born.

<sup>57</sup> The first British doctoral students enrolled at Oxford in 1917 and were awarded their D.Phil degrees in 1920. See R. Simpson, *How the PhD Came to Britain*, Guilford, 1983, 135.

<sup>58</sup> British academics did not generally train in the United States, where doctoral degrees were available since Yale imported the model from Germany in 1861.

<sup>59</sup> See Simpson, *How the PhD Came to Britain* (note 57).

<sup>60</sup> The destruction of the war must also have played a part in re-orientating students away from Germany and towards Britain.

<sup>61</sup> One other professor, the foundation Professor of Mathematics and Philosophy, Morris Birkbeck Pell, was born in Illinois; the grandson of an English social reformer and founder of the prairie settlement of Albion, he returned to England with his mother following the separation of his parents at age 7 and attended school and university in England.

<sup>62</sup> Those who had United States experience were the Professors of Botany (2), Engineering, Anthropology, Economics, Public Administration, Psychiatry and Physiology and Bacteriology.

the Second World War, it did so, like Europe, in addition, rather than as an alternative to Great Britain.

International experience was a reality for the majority of professors at all three of these universities. This was despite the dominance, in Canada from the 1880s and Australia after 1920, of native-born appointments. Moreover, Vice-Principal Peterson stands vindicated. The introduction of a British doctorate did help arrest the decline in British experience among professors at Toronto and did help diminish the importance of Europe as a destination for further study for those at Manchester and Sydney. Yet divergent patterns emerge too. Where professors at Toronto went *either* to Britain *or* America, but rarely to both, professors at Sydney could count on all having the same kind of overseas experience. While Toronto professors generally travelled to Britain for higher degrees at Oxford or Cambridge, Sydney professors had a much broader range of experience, working – like their cousins at Manchester – in 'provincial' institutions as well as studying at Oxbridge. The University of Sydney, this study suggests, was significantly more integrated with British academia than was the University of Toronto.

### Return-migration and circulation

Taken together, the nativisation and continuing British experience of the professoriate in Toronto and Sydney suggests that colonial academic mobility during this period was far from uni-directional. However, in an era when colonial universities did not for the most part offer doctoral degrees, it is perhaps realistic to expect that native-born students might have proceeded to the ancient institutions of the metropole for higher study before returning home to take up an academic career in their country of origin. Return-migration of this kind is, after all, very different to the kind of circulatory academic mobility that might be said to characterise the scholarly world at the start of the twenty-first century. Indeed, circulation – understood here as more than two moves – was a subject about which the 1903 delegates did not have much to say, though they did hold up the careers of men like the physicist Ernest Rutherford – who had moved from New Zealand, to Cambridge, to McGill in Montreal – as examples of the kind of world they wished to promote. But how common was his peripatetic life?

Until 1900 professors at Manchester, Sydney and Toronto possessed experience in an average of three different universities. However, between 1900 and 1940 this pattern changed. During this period the average number of universities in which each professor at Manchester had spent time was between four and five, for those at Sydney it was between three and four, and for those at Toronto it was between two and three. To some degree, inter-university circulation thus occurred at all three of these universities, though the Toronto professoriate the least mobile.

In the period 1880–1900 however, Toronto professors had made more international moves than their colleagues in either Manchester or Sydney.<sup>63</sup> This international as opposed to inter-university mobility was short-lived, declining over the period studied here. In contrast though Sydney professors had less inter-university experience than those at Manchester, in the inter-war period their experience was much more often acquired internationally. Between 1919 and 1940 in particular, most professors at

Sydney had, on average, relocated overseas two or more times (*not* including their relocations within Britain or Australia). This figure is striking. It means that for every British-born and trained professor at Sydney (one relocation), there was another who had internationally relocated *three* times, and for every Australian-born and trained professor (no relocations), there was another who had internationally relocated *four* times. These moves were usually, as we have seen, between Australia and Great Britain. Whereas the Manchester professoriate had often acquired their inter-university experience within Britain, Sydney professors had significantly more experience of British universities than they had of other Australian institutions. This suggests not only that there existed between universities in Australia and Britain a *particular* migratory relationship – distinct from that between Canada and Britain – but that for academics in Australia this relationship with Britain superseded connection with other 'national' institutions. Movement along the Britain–Australia axis was more common than movement between the universities of the new Australian nation.

The high level of British experience amongst the Sydney professoriate must include, then, the increasing degree of repeated British experience. This distinction between two-step return-migration, and multi-directional circulation, is important. It suggests that after 1900 those professors appointed to Sydney – more so than those at Toronto – increasingly made career choices within a cross-oceanic marketplace. A ticket to Sydney was not a one-way trip without return, but a migration that was part of the series of migrations that constituted, then as now, an academic life. Though Donald Fleming and others have suggested that until the Second World War the migration of academics from Britain to the colonies was uni-directional, this data suggests otherwise.<sup>64</sup>

It is ironic that the greater distance between Australia and the United Kingdom (compared with between the UK and Canada) may have played a part in contributing not to the isolation of the Australian professoriate, but to the particularly high levels of British experience in their careers.<sup>65</sup> More conscious of their geographic distance, unable to make the journey to Britain for a few months in the summer, and without the nearby alternative of American libraries, academics in Australia necessarily looked more exclusively to British institutions and British academic conversations. Anecdotal accounts of some Toronto professors indicate that short trips to American and European universities were common, enabling academics there to gain experience abroad without obtaining a formal position of the kind tracked here.<sup>66</sup> Perhaps, as a consequence, proximity to America in fact enabled the University of Toronto to be more nationalist in its hiring policies. Either way it is clear that while movement was a feature of an academic life for professors at both Toronto and Sydney, circulation to, from and around Great Britain occurred more frequently in the careers of those at Sydney than it did those in Toronto.

### Conclusion

Taken together, the movement of these 350 individuals points to the emergence – between 1900 and 1930 especially – of a distinct sphere in which academics moved frequently along the various axes of a wider British system. In all three of the universities examined here, the professoriate was comprised almost exclusively

<sup>63</sup> Average number of international moves per professor: 1850–80 – Sydney: 1.71; Toronto: 1.81; Manchester: 0.9; 1881–1900 – Sydney: 1.86; Toronto: 2.19; Manchester: 1.22; 1901–18 – Sydney: 1.83; Toronto: 1.57; Manchester: 1.7; 1919–30 – Sydney: 2.5; Toronto: 1.5; Manchester: 1.25; 1930–40 – Sydney: 2; Manchester: 1.82.

<sup>64</sup> Fleming, *Science in Australia, Canada and the United States* (note 9), 183–184; Auchmuty, *The Idea of the University* (note 9), 146; Blainey, *The University of Melbourne* (note 11), 34.

<sup>65</sup> A recent study by Heike Jöns also suggests that mobility can work to connect rather than isolate national academic communities: 'Brain circulation' and transnational knowledge networks: studying long-term effects of academic mobility to Germany, 1954–2000, *Global Networks* 9 (2009) 315–338.

<sup>66</sup> Rutherford, for example, while at McGill, made a number of visits to the United States.

of British subjects.<sup>67</sup> As the Conference delegates intimated, it was an Anglo-Saxon world, comprised almost exclusively of those they saw as members of the 'British race'.<sup>68</sup> For professors at both Toronto and Sydney, Britain remained the chief overseas destination and, between 1900 and 1930, the empire was as – if not more – important in the careers of Manchester professors as was Europe. It is possible, therefore, to say that a 'British academic world' of the kind identified by delegates at the 1903 Allied Colonial Universities' Conference in fact did exist during this period.

It was a world, however, that was not at all uniform. For professors at Sydney, Europe and America functioned as *supplementary* destinations, with all those who had worked or studied there *also* possessing experience in Britain. In contrast, for the professors at Toronto, American and European universities functioned as *alternate* sites of work or study and, whereas by the time of the First World War, academics in Toronto just as often had United States or European as they had British experience, right up until the Second World War at least 70% of academics working in Sydney had at some point also spent time in Britain. Some strikingly similar patterns, moreover, are evident in the careers of professors at both Sydney and at Manchester. Between 1900 and 1930 professors at both universities, unlike their colleagues at Toronto, possessed approximately the same level of European experience and shared virtually an identical relationship with the United States. Professors at Sydney, it seems, had a significantly different and much more highly integrated relationship with British academia than did their colleagues at Toronto. Indeed, professors at Sydney had more experience in British universities than they did in the institutions of the Australian nation. They were also significantly more internationally mobile than their contemporaries at Toronto or Manchester, showing that in the case of Australian academics, circulation was anything but a post-1945 phenomenon. By 1919

most appointments at Sydney had moved between Britain and Australia two or more times.

Examining together the careers of academics from these three different regions shows that the ideal of the wandering scholar invoked by Whitehead and by others in the early twentieth century was one founded, at least in part, in reality. Though this world of academic mobility was not as united, extensive and uncomplicated as the delegates at the 1903 Conference believed, it nonetheless shared more in common with their vision of an expansive British academic community than it did with the image of an unconnected and isolated periphery that has characterised portrayals by subsequent university historians. Academic mobility was not just a post-war phenomenon. It marked the boundaries of a community that, between 1900 and 1930 especially, extended to different parts of the settler empire and constituted an identifiable 'British academic world', characterised by multiple axes of migration.<sup>69</sup> In tracing these patterns, this study points to the need for historians to examine the ways this sort of mobility helped constitute the knowledge generated within a broadly British university sphere. It suggests that not just individuals, but also their professions, must be considered in the context of 'imperial careering' and, in doing so, casts light on the roots of today's entangled scholarly community.

#### Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank Carl Bridge, Jose Harris and Geoffrey Sherington for their comments on earlier versions of this paper and New College for its financial support.

#### Supplementary material

Supplementary material associated with this article can be found in online version at [doi:10.1016/j.jhg.2010.03.002](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhg.2010.03.002).

<sup>67</sup> Manchester in the period 1880–1900 is a noted exception.

<sup>68</sup> F.H. Chase, Official Report of the Allied Colonial Universities Conference, *The Empire Review* 6, 31 (1903) 71.

<sup>69</sup> On the extent and nature of the 'British academic world' see T. Pietsch, *Universities and Empire: Academic Networks in a British World, 1850–1940*, Manchester, forthcoming.