Friedrich von Holstein and the attempt at an alliance between Great Britain and Germany in 1901

Larry Dean Klein

University of Nebraska at Omaha

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/studentwork

Recommended Citation
Klein, Larry Dean, "Friedrich von Holstein and the attempt at an alliance between Great Britain and Germany in 1901" (1964).

Student Work. 406.
https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/studentwork/406
FRIEDRICH VON HOLSTEIN
AND THE
ATTEMPT AT AN ALLIANCE
BETWEEN GREAT BRITAIN AND GERMANY
IN 1901

A Thesis
Presented to the
Department of History
and the
Faculty of the College of Graduate Studies
University of Omaha

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

by
Larry Dean Klein
August 1964
Accepted for the faculty of the College of Graduate Studies of the University of Omaha, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Master of Arts.

Chairman

Graduate Committee

Name  Department

[Signatures]
PREFACE

Friedrich von Holstein, a Vortragender Rat in the Berlin Foreign Office, influenced German foreign policy during the Wilhelminian Era. He appeared as the controversial and mysterious figure who guided the Second Reich through the era of Weltpolitik. Holstein's contemporaries, as well as historians, asserted that his influence was a contributive factor in causing Germany to fight World War I. To ascertain the extent of his influence, one must consider his actions in a particular instance. The purpose of this study, therefore, is to examine a specific diplomatic incident and, at least in this instance, place in proper perspective Holstein's influence on German foreign policy. A significant problem, which permits an examination of his influence, is the attempt at an alliance between Great Britain and Germany in 1901.

Germany, since the Bismarckian Era, had always expressed an interest in concluding an alliance with Great Britain. Her leaders realized that the geographic position of Germany exposed her frontiers to French and Russian attack and that only a British alliance would provide the protection against possible invasion. The possibility of Germany concluding such an agreement arose during 1901, but the proposal failed to materialize. Failure to conclude an
alliance supposedly resulted from the actions of none other than Friedrich von Holstein.

* * * * *

For matters of simplification and clarification the following changes have been carried out through the entire text. In place of umlauted German letters an "e" has been inserted, and all headings on diplomatic exchanges have been limited to the surname of the correspondent.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author wishes to express his sincere appreciation to Dr. A. Stanley Trickett, Chairman, Department of History, University of Omaha, for his guidance and counsel during the author's attendance at the University of Omaha. This study would not have been possible without the valuable advice and assistance of Dr. Trickett. I am also grateful to Dr. Ert J. Gum for his constructive criticism on this study. Special thanks are due the Inter-Library Loan Service of the Gene Eppley Library, University of Omaha, for aid in obtaining materials used in the research.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</th>
<th>v</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>TABLE OF CONTENTS</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PREFACE</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. FRIEDRICH VON HOLSTEIN AND THE BISMARCKIAN ERA</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holstein's Earlier Life</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Earlier Diplomatic Career of Holstein</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Influence and Position of Holstein</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under Bismarck</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holstein and Bismarck's Foreign Policy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. FRIEDRICH VON HOLSTEIN AND THE BISMARCKIAN ERA</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Influence and Power of Holstein After 1890</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holstein, the Kaiser, and German Foreign Policy 1890-1895</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holstein and Anglo-German Relations 1895-1901</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. FRIEDRICH VON HOLSTEIN AND THE FIRST PHASE OF THE 1901 ATTEMPT AT AN ALLIANCE</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holstein and the Alliance Negotiations in January</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Alliance Negotiations and the Far East</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holstein and the Alliance Negotiations in February</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. FRIEDRICH VON HOLSTEIN AND THE SECOND PHASE OF THE 1901 ATTEMPT AT AN ALLIANCE</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holstein and the Alliance Negotiations in March and April</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holstein and the Alliance Negotiations in May</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holstein and the Postponement of the Alliance Negotiations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I

FRIEDRICH VON HOLSTEIN AND THE BISMARCKIAN ERA

On April 24, 1337, Friedrich von Holstein was born at Schwedt an der Oder.\(^1\) As a member of an old Mecklenburg family, Holstein inherited, along with a tradition of military service, a fairly substantial fortune. His parents, Karoline and August von Holstein, provided their only child with the normal upbringing due a son of the lower Prussian nobility.\(^2\) He spent his first eleven years at the country estate of Krebsow with occasional journeys to Berlin.\(^3\)

Young Friedrich had, for the most part, a happy childhood, but at times he exhibited a withdrawn and quiet side to his character. His tendency to withdraw, which later contributed to his gloomy disposition, he inherited from his father.\(^4\)

When Revolution came in 1343, the elder Holstein

---


4Rogge, Lebensbekenntnis, pp. xvi-xvii, l.
sold his estate and moved his family to Karlstein, the home of his sister, Minne von Holtzendorff, near Zehden an der Oder. At Karlstein Friedrich formed a close friendship with his cousin and lifelong correspondent, Ida von Stuelpnagel, nee Holtzendorff. During the 1860's, as their friendship grew, the family circle expected Friedrick and Ida to marry, but they remained only confidential friends.

The Holstein family, when not in Karlstein, resided in Berlin or traveled in France, Switzerland, and Italy. On the family trips abroad Friedrich developed a great facility in foreign languages which later contributed to his rapid rise in the diplomatic service.

Holstein's education was under the supervision of a private tutor until 1853, when he entered the University of Berlin. He concentrated his studies in the area of law, but his real interest was for a military career. Holstein, while at the university, attempted to enter the army but failed to pass his medical examination. He soon obtained his law degree.

---

5 Holstein Papers, III, 3n. 3.

6 Throughout his life, Holstein maintained an avid correspondence with Ida von Stuelpnagel to whom he revealed a great deal of information concerning his role in the Foreign Office. These letters provided one of the first major, reliable sources dealing with Holstein as published in Rogge, Lebensbekenntnis.

7 Rogge, Lebensbekenntnis, p. xiv.

8 Holstein Papers, I, x.

9 Gooch, Holstein Oracle, p. 391. 10 Holstein Papers, I, x.
gree, and in 1856 he entered the Prussian civil service. For the next four years he served as an official in the City Court of Berlin. It was during these years that Count Alfred von Schlieffen, later Chief of the Prussian General Staff, introduced him to Berlin society.

Apparently dissatisfied with the civil service, Holstein, in 1860, applied for a transfer to the Prussian diplomatic service. He received a provisional transfer but only as a result of the influence of Count Otto von Bismarck. His first diplomatic appointment followed on December 6, 1860, when he became an attaché in the Prussian Embassy at St. Petersburg. At the time Bismarck was the Prussian Ambassador. Thus began Holstein's thirty year period of association with the future German Chancellor. Bismarck reported that Holstein was eager, industrious, intelligent, though awkward in society, and somewhat dominated by prejudice.

---


12Gooch, Holstein Oracle, p. 391.

13Holstein Papers, I, x.

14Ibid., III, 3.

The Ambassador introduced him to the Russian Foreign Minister, Count Karl Nesselrode, as "a future diplomat!"  

Holstein, while in Russia, developed a close and intimate relationship with Bismarck's family. He appeared to the family as merely another one of its members. Both Herbert and William, the Ambassador's two sons, looked upon him as a comrade. During the 1870's there were even rumors of a possible marriage between Holstein and Marie von Bismarck, the Ambassador's only daughter.  

In April, 1863, Holstein returned to Berlin to take his final diplomatic examinations. Ill-health and the tragic death of his father postponed the examinations until May, 1863. His next appointment was to the unstimulating Embassy at Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, where he remained only a year. Holstein's next assignment came during the war against Denmark in 1864, when he accompanied Field Marshall Wrangel, the Commander-in-Chief of the Austro-Prussian forces, as the assistant to the diplomatic representative of the Foreign Office. That same year Holstein served as a member of the Prussian delegation at the London Conference, called to solve

---

16 Gooch, Holstein Oracle, p. 391.
17 Ibid., pp. 391-92.
18 Holstein Papers, III, 3, 21.
19 Gooch, Holstein Oracle, p. 393.
the Schleswig-Holstein question. The Conference failed, and
Holstein remained in London as a regular member of the Prus­
sian diplomatic staff.20 His stay in Great Britain was un­
fortunate. He disliked both the weather and British snubbing
of Prussians due to the antagonism resulting from the Danish
war.21

Holstein, in the summer of 1865, took a holiday in
the United States. He was so taken with America that he re­
quested and received an appointment to the Prussian Embassy
in Washington. Holstein was impressed by his visits to New
York City and an excursion into the West, but he showed a
particular interest in the legislative form of government,
which he deemed as the future political system of Germany.22

In Washington, Holstein developed a romantic attach­
ment for the wife of United States Senator Charles Sumner,
the Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.23
The romance reached such a serious nature that the Prussian
government recalled Holstein from his post. Possibly the
romantic incident influenced his future life as, supposedly,

\[\text{20 Holstein Papers, I, xi.} \]
\[\text{21 Cooch, Holstein Oracle, pp. 392-93.} \]
\[\text{22 Ibid., pp. 393-94. Rogge, Lebensgeister,}\]
\[\text{pp. 49-64.} \]
\[\text{23 For further details concerning the romantic affair see George W. F. Ballgarten, "Fritz von Holstein Geheimnis,"}\]
\[\text{Historische Zeitschrift, CLXXVII (1954), 75-83.} \]
happened with the controversial Arnis affair of the 1870's. 24

In 1867 Holstein returned from the United States and never again left Europe. He received immediately a post in the Prussian Embassy at Copenhagen, where his dissatisfaction rivaled that experienced in London. The legation suffered strict social isolation, as Danish society hated the Prussians as a result of the recent war. 25

Early in 1868, Holstein began a three year leave of absence from the diplomatic service. 26 He and a number of his Belgian friends formed the Rhine Towing Company with hopes of gaining considerable financial benefit from an investment in a new method of canal transport. 27 Holstein invested heavily in the project, which eventually proved unprofitable. In fact he lost a substantial portion of his fairly large inheritance. 28

Holstein returned to active diplomatic service in July, 1870, when war threatened with France. 29 Bismarck,


25Gooch, Holstein Oracle, pp. 394-95.

26Holstein Papers, II, 29.

27There was some speculation that Holstein's absence from the diplomatic service indicated that he was conducting some secret assignment for Bismarck. Gooch, Holstein Oracle, p. 395.

28Holstein Papers, III, 21.

29Gooch, Holstein Oracle, p. 395.
who desired to know the position of the Italian government in the Franco-Prussian War, dispatched Holstein on a secret mission to Italy for the purpose of discovering the attitude of certain Italian political groups. He successfully completed his assignment and once again confirmed Bismarck's belief in his ability and usefulness.

For a brief time in 1870 Holstein served in the Political Division of the Foreign Ministry, but he disliked the dull office work, particularly when war raged in France. He again attempted to enter the army but failed. In January, 1871, he appeared unsolicited at Bismarck's headquarters in Versailles, where he hoped to gain an assignment. Bismarck allowed him to remain in Paris and eventually attached him to his personal staff. Following the war, Holstein remained in France and served in minor positions, including an appointment to the staff of Count Alfred von Waldersee, who later served Holstein as an intermediary with Kaiser Wilhelm II.

The nature of Holstein's life changed after he received the appointment of Second Secretary in the Imperial Embassy at Paris in November, 1871. He appeared to have adopted the life of a diplomat as he proved successful in his Paris post and solved, though tragically, his problems with

---

30 Holstein Papers, I, 42-45.
31 Ibid., III, 29.
32 Ibid.
33 Ibid.
the towing company. In 1873 the towing venture proved completely unprofitable, and he withdrew from its Board of Directors. He suffered further financial loss in the economic crash of 1873, when he lost the remainder of his fortune. His financial losses forced him to depend solely on his small official salary and resulted in the frugal existence that characterized the rest of his life.\footnote{34}{Ibid., III, 29-30.}

Supposedly more influential on Holstein's life was his involvement with Count Harry von Arnim-Suckow.\footnote{35}{Norman Rich, "Holstein and the Arnim Affair," The Journal of Modern History, XXVIII (March, 1956), 38. Hereafter cited as Rich, "Arim Affair."} In 1871 Count Arnim, influential in court circles and a favorite of Kaiser Wilhelm I, received the appointment of ambassador to France.\footnote{36}{Gooch, Holstein Oracle, pp. 399-400.} Arnim, who desired to become chancellor, disagreed with Bismarck's policy toward the French government and instituted his own policy.\footnote{37}{Holstein Papers, II, 32n. 2.} The Chancellor knew that Arnim disregarded his instructions, and in 1874 he obtained the Count's removal. Arnim's successor, Prince Chlodwig zu Hohenlohe-Schillingsfuerst, reported that certain documents were missing from the embassy files. Bismarck requested Arnim to return the documents, but he declined. The Chancellor followed by charging Arnim with illegally removing documents.
In the ensuing trial Arnim's defense counsel charged that Holstein, under official orders, reported the activities of the Ambassador to Bismarck. The Chancellor immediately summoned Holstein as a witness for the government. Thereupon Arnim's counsel withdrew the charge stating it was made on insufficient information. Holstein was innocent of the spy charges and testified that he remained on good relations with Arnim until 1873, when it became evident that the Ambassador actually worked against official policy. Holstein said that he then requested a transfer, but Arnim refused and kept him at his Paris post. The trial finally ended with Arnim receiving a short jail sentence, which he avoided by fleeing to Switzerland where he soon died.

On the basis of Holstein's testimony his only responsibility for Arnim's removal was that he wrote various critical letters in which he commented on the Arnim-Bismarck quarrel and recommended the transfer of the Ambassador.

38Gooch, *Holstein Oracle*, pp. 399-400.
40Ibid., III, 36-37.
41Ibid., III, 36-37.
Holstein was lawfully guiltless, but those in opposition to Bismarck—the court circle, Armin's many friends, ultramontanes displeased with the Kulturkampf, and gossips—clamored and spread the rumor that Holstein was a dishonorable, vile spy. Later when Holstein achieved greater control and influence, his contemporaries and enemies interpreted his role in the Armin affair as an explanation for his twisted nature, which verged on a persecution-mania; his tendency for intrigue; the reason for opposing Bismarck after 1890;

---

44 Neither the Foreign Ministry files, the records of the Armin trial, nor the four volumes of The Holstein Papers indicated that Holstein's role in the Armin trial was morally wrong, dishonorable, or that his life was greatly affected by the incident. Holstein Papers, I, xii.

45 One of the central problems involved with the study of Holstein is what was the true nature of the man, and how did this affect his influence on German foreign policy, if it did at all. All the specific studies or illusions made to Holstein, until the publication of his letters, pictured him, predominantly because of his implications in the Armin trial, as a man of evil influence, and an intriguer, suffering from partial mental derangement. For a possible exception see Trotha, Holstein als Mensch.

46 Trotha, in her sympathetic treatment, Holstein als Mensch, p. 33, argued that Holstein was not pathologically disturbed, sullen, crabby, odd, or basically eccentric.

47 When Bismarck fell from power in 1890, Holstein remained at his post and obtained influence over foreign policy. The degree of his influence corresponded to that of the succeeding Chancellors under whom he served. These facts caused some speculation, now disproven, that he was involved in an intrigue to remove the Chancellor. His contemporaries and historians claimed that behind the fall of Bismarck were the workings of Holstein's revenge for having been used as the scapegoat in the Armin trial. As far as Holstein was concerned, he did not blame Bismarck for involving him in the Armin episode, but as he wrote in his memoirs in 1907, Count Joseph Radowitz, Vortragender Rat in the Foreign Office
and the factor that forced him to withdraw from society and become a recluse. Highly exaggerated, his contemporaries declared that he was transformed from a "debonair" young diplomat into a social outcast. Holstein, however, suffered no more from social ostracism than any other adherent of Bismarck.48

His social difficulties were no greater than those of most Germans, when considering the nature of the 1870's--the opposition to Bismarck and the treatment received by Prussians in Paris.49 Holstein's anti-social orientation appeared much earlier in his life,50 well before the Arnim affair, and as early as his stay in St. Petersburg.51 His father wrote him in Russia admonishing him for not taking a more active part in society.52 It was not that society

from 1872 to 1874, was responsible for his involvement in the trial. Holstein felt that possibly Radowitz held some secret with which he blackmailed Bismarck into forcing the trial. According to Holstein, Radowitz favored the dismissal of Arnim, not Bismarck.

This raises the question where did Holstein obtain his information for labelling Radowitz as the culprit? From Bismarck, who possibly hoped to keep Holstein in the dark as to how he, the Chancellor, was responsible for summoning him from Paris to testify? There is also the fact that Holstein hated Radowitz, who helped implement Holstein's removal as one of the secretaries at the Congress of Berlin. Holstein Papers, I, 94-98.

49Holstein Papers, I, xii.
50Ibid., III, 24-28.
52Holstein Papers, III, 3-23.
avoided him but more that he avoided society. His friends, though few in number, were close and never was he socially isolated. Holstein wrote in 1876 of how lonely and uncheerful his life was; however, he made no connection between his solitary existence and the effects of the Arnim affair. After his appointment to the Berlin Foreign Office in 1876, his social relations continued to decline, but this fact must not be over-exaggerated in light of his enormous correspondence with all types of acquaintances and his associations with many political figures. Once questioned on his unsociable nature, Holstein replied, "I am the civil service"

53 Ibid., I, xii.
54 Trotha, Holstein als Mensch, p. 98.
55 Holstein Papers, III, 40, no. 21. In 1877 he wrote "You know my passion for society. I never go out at all, because beyond what I have now, I want nothing and aspire to nothing, not even a wife." Ibid., 48.

Interesting and of unknowable significance, Holstein wrote in 1877 that one Robert Keudell, was blackmailing him, or at least threatening to, and that the incident may damage his relations with Bismarck as "at all events this much is certain, that the whole business, with the annoyance it has caused me ... has had consequences affecting my whole life." Just exactly what Holstein meant by the above statement is not known or the nature of the quarrel with Keudell. Ibid., III, 45n. 1.

57 Rich stated, in his astute article on Holstein and the Arnim trial, the best argument against the Arnim affair changing the nature of Holstein's life and character. He said if Holstein possessed a somewhat unnatural character and made mistakes in his political judgments, "it was not for want of contact with other people or with 'reality.'" Rich, "Arnim Affair," p. 52.
has destroyed me as a human being." Whatever the reason for Holstein's anti-social tendencies, the effect of the
Arnim trial, at least in a subconscious sense, cannot be dis­
regarded as having molded his strange character. 59

Holstein drew closer to Bismarck during the 1870's. In these years the nature and degree of his influence de­
pended upon his personal relations with the Chancellor and
the latter's confidence in his ambitious assistant. 60 The
Chancellor possessed valid reasons for employing Holstein in
matters that dealt with both internal and foreign affairs. 61
He was a meritable drafting officer, proficient in the nec­
essary technical skills, 62 reliable, conscientious, 63 and
possessed a superb knowledge of languages, 64 as well as an
immense capacity for work. The Chancellor employed him as
his personal secretary at both Berlin and Varzin, the country
estate of Bismarck. At times he appointed him to the vacant
positions of officials who were on leave from the Foreign

58 G. F. Gooch, "Baron von Holstein, the Mystery Man
of the German Foreign Office 1890-1906," The Cambridge His­
torical Journal, 1, (1923), 71n. 2. Hereafter cited as
Gooch, "Mystery Man."


60 Holstein Papers, II, xi.

61 Gooch, Holstein Oracle, pp. 403-405.

62 Craig, From Bismarck, p. 35.

63 Buelow, Memoirs, IV, 282.

64 Ibid., 548.
Ministry. Bismarck, in return for Holstein's services granted him the privilege of conducting an extensive private correspondence, through which he supplied information not usually found in official communications. It was an indubitable fact that he served as a remarkably well-informed assistant.

Bismarck, in 1875, appointed Holstein First Secretary in the Paris Embassy. That same year he received the offer of posts as First Secretary at St. Petersburg and Constantinople. He refused these positions, preferring to stay in Paris and wait for an appointment in Berlin, where he was nearer the center of affairs. In 1876 the appointment came, and Holstein returned to Berlin, where he remained for the next thirty years. It was not long before he was a part of the exclusive circle that was the center of Bismarck's foreign ministry. He held the rank of Legationsrat and easily won Bismarck's praise as "'the faithful Fritz.'"

At the Congress of Berlin he served a portion of the meeting

---

66 Holstein Papers, II, xi.
69 Craig, From Bismarck, p. 35.
70 Gooch, Holstein Oracle, p. 407.
71 Ibid., p. 403.
as a secretary, for which he received a lower grade of the French Legion of Honor. Holstein was even at the side of Bismarck when he signed the Dual Alliance in 1879. In 1880 he advanced to his highest position, that of Vortrager Rat, Assistant Under-Secretary, or Senior Counsellor in the Political Division of the Foreign Ministry.

The Vortrager Rat enhanced his position, particularly during the 1870's by his continued intimate relationship with Bismarck's family. Johanna von Bismarck, wife of the Chancellor, looked upon Holstein with special favor. She always provided a cheerful welcome on his various visits and holidays spent at Varzin. Bismarck especially enjoyed the discussions with Holstein, and Herbert felt he was one of his closest friends. His connections with the family were also interwoven with his official position. He, along with Herbert and William, functioned as the Chancellor's private secretary. In such capacity they maintained the link between the Chief at Varzin and the Foreign Ministry in Berlin.

By the late 1870's Holstein began to withdraw from the intimate social life of the Bismarck family. In 1878 Marie

---

72Holstein Papers, II, xi.
75Holstein Papers, II, xii.
von Bismarck married the ambitious Count Kuno zu Rantzau, who joined Holstein and the Chancellor's sons as personal secretary at Varzin and Friedrichsruh. Holstein hated Rantzau, whom he found offensive as well as incompetent. Eventually his hatred caused him to break relations with the Count, and slowly he decreased the number of his visits to the Bismarcks. In 1334 the Rantzau-Holstein antagonism went so far that Holstein challenged the son-in-law to a duel. Rantzau refused to accept and the matter ended. Holstein's social relations with Bismarck's family almost ceased to exist, but even so, the incident failed to damage his official or personal relations with Bismarck and Herbert.

Holstein, during the late 1370's and 1380's, continued to increase his influence and power. He demanded that every document and report pass through his hands. With his complete knowledge of the Foreign Ministry files, he always provided a ready explanation of any negotiation and gave freely of his advice as to the wisest policy. More impor-

76 During the 1370's there were strong indications that Holstein would marry Marie. Fogge, Lebensbefenntnis, p. xvii.

77 Holstein Papers, I, 24.
78 Ibid., II, 96-98.
79 Ibid., 151-52.
80 Ibid., I, xiii.
81 Gooch, Holstein Oracle, p. 111.
tant was his control and direction of policy through diplomatic channels. Bismarck permitted Holstein, as did the next three Chancellors, to correspond directly with German diplomatic representatives, as well as with a number of foreign contacts.\textsuperscript{82} Such communications were not officially filed by the Foreign Office, nor were they submitted to the Chancellor or Foreign Secretary. Besides obtaining valuable information through his correspondence, the Vortragender Rat communicated, quite unofficially, the German position on a pending question or the attitude that he desired a certain government to believe as reflecting German policy. By such means he influenced, if not controlled, the outcome of diplomatic issues.\textsuperscript{83} In actuality Holstein conducted a secret diplomacy, independent and sometimes contrary to the policies of the four Chancellors under whom he served.\textsuperscript{84} Other officials conducted private correspondence, but it was not so advantageously employed as was the case with Holstein.\textsuperscript{85}

Intrigue was another means whereby Holstein increased

\textsuperscript{82} Holstein Papers, I, xix. It was Joseph Chamberlain, Hermann von Eckardstein, Alfred Rothschild, and the Duke of Devonshire, the so-called foreign contacts who conducted the sporadic negotiations for an Anglo-German alliance from 1898 to 1901. This type of diplomacy led to the problems and discrepancies of the alliance talks.

\textsuperscript{83} Ibid., III, ix-x.

\textsuperscript{84} Gooch, Holstein Oracle, p. 449.

\textsuperscript{85} Holstein Papers, III, ix-xi.
his power and multiplied his influence. His suspicious nature and personal likes and dislikes led him to remove individuals from both high and low positions. The fact that he possessed such a great amount of compromising knowledge merely intensified his passion for intriguing against those he felt were incompetent or who offended him. In many instances Holstein sacrificed the proper execution of foreign policy in order to avenge what he construed as constituting an insult. Intrigue, however, was not particular to Holstein. Bismarck made use of it and quite effectively in conducting the affairs of the Second Reich.

In spite of his intrigue and special privileges, Holstein supported and worked for the implementation of the Bismarckian system. Since the creation of the Second Reich in 1870, Bismarck worked for an enduring European peace based on


39 Craig, From Bismarck, p. 40.


91 Gooch, Holstein Oracle, p. 418.
an intricate system of alliances and alignments. The geographic position of Germany, with her unnatural defensive frontiers, required binding alliances to insure any lasting protection. Any form of an alliance with France remained impossible because of the French desire for revanche over the loss of Alsace-Lorraine. Bismarck, therefore, turned to Austria and gained protection of the German rear with the signing of the Dual Alliance in 1879. The Chancellor negotiated the Triple Alliance in 1881 between Germany, Austria, and Italy, but the Second Reich still faced the possibility of war on two fronts. Germany required, at the very least, the assurance of Russian neutrality, which appeared impossible to obtain in light of Russian and Austrian antagonism over the Balkans. Bismarck felt Germany lacked any particular interest in the Balkans; therefore, he placed himself as mediator between Austria and Russia by forming the Dreikaiserbund of 1872. The agreement functioned until 1879 when it collapsed as a result of the near eastern crisis. The three Emperors revived the agreement in 1881, only to have


It again collapse in 1887. Bismarck then negotiated the secret Reinsurance Treaty with Russia and supported the Mediterranean Agreement between Italy, Austria, and Britain. Peace resulted as long as Bismarck refrained from favoring Russia or Austria more than the other, and as long as Britain continued antagonistic toward Russia and friendly to the Triple Alliance. Success depended upon how well Bismarck manipulated the alliances and the real or unreal ententes.\textsuperscript{95}

In 1885 Holstein began to disagree with Bismarck's policy. He opposed Bismarck and his son, Herbert, who became State Secretary in 1885, on personal grounds. Holstein hated the domineering manner typical of the family and more specifically the unorthodox manner in which Herbert ran the Foreign Office.\textsuperscript{96} In the area of foreign policy, he opposed Herbert's pro-Russian tendencies, with which the Chancellor increasingly seemed to agree. More incomprehensible was the purpose behind Bismarck's ever increasing system of alliances and treaties. As far as Holstein discerned the Chancellor endangered the existence of the Triple Alliance by incessantly vacillating between Russia, Austria, Britain, and even France.\textsuperscript{97} Germany appeared to lack a consistent policy or

\textsuperscript{95}Langer, Diplomacy, II, 459-60.
\textsuperscript{96}Gooch, Holstein Oracle, p. 110. Holstein Papers, II, 272-73.
\textsuperscript{97}Ibid., I, xii, II, xiv-xv.
any reliable allies, who would promise support in case of war. 98

Holstein first began to inaugurate an independent foreign policy over the proposed marriage of the Prince of Bulgaria. 99 In 1884, the pro-British Crown Princess Victoria, daughter of Queen Victoria, began a campaign to marry her second daughter to the anti-Russian Prince of Bulgaria, Alexander von Battenberg. Bismarck had no intention of antagonizing Russia for the sake of a royal marriage. Such an act implied German support for Prince Alexander’s plans to halt the Russian design of extending her influence in Bulgaria. Holstein worked against the aggressive advances of Russia and simultaneously attempted to gain the support of the future Kaiser, Crown Prince Friedrich Wilhelm, for the continued existence of Bismarck as Chancellor. He hoped to achieve his two objectives by encouraging the support of the Battenberg marriage in Vienna and London by means of his correspondence with the German ambassadors. In Berlin he attempted to gain support by intriguing with Count Hugo von Radolinski, the Crown Prince’s Court Chamberlain. Radolinski proposed that Herbert should condone the marriage, thereby winning the favor of the Crown Prince. Holstein remarked that went too far. The Chancellor would never voluntarily

98 Ibid., II, xiii.
99 Ibid., I, xiii.
accept the possibility of such a fait accompli. His proposal would only alienate the Crown Prince and Bismarck, which must be avoided if the Chancellor was to continue at his post under the new Kaiser. Holstein stated: "I have sometimes gone beyond the intentions of the Big Capo, have occasionally even used my ways in reaching his goals. But I have never consciously gone directly counter to his intentions." He believed that some other way must be devised to oppose the pro-Russian policy.

The Rattenberg marriage failed to occur, but Holstein continued to oppose Bismarck's pro-Russian policy. From 1886 to 1890 Holstein worked constantly with Paul von Hatzfeldt, his life-long friend and Ambassador to Great Britain, attempting to bring Germany and Britain closer together. They believed that Anglo-German friendship would create a counterweight to the Chancellor's pro-Russianism. Holstein felt absolutely that

we cannot let Austria be destroyed by Russia because we should then stand helpless between Russia and France; but that if we hinder Russian designs on Austria we must as a result be prepared to face her hostility instead of


100 Ibid., II, xv-xvii.
101 Ibid., III, 192.
102 Ibid., II, xvii.
103 Ibid., xiv, xvi.

For a detailed account of Holstein's independent policy with Hatzfeldt see Helmut Krausnick, Holsteins Geheimpolitik in der Ara Bismarck, 1886-1890 (Hamburg: 1941).
flattering her in a way that disheartens the other
Powers—England as well as Austria—and increases Rus­
sian arrogance. 104

Both Holstein and Hatzfeldt failed to comprehend the
purpose behind German policy. The Chancellor moved toward
Russia to win the Czar’s friendship, thereby the peace of
Europe. If forced to a decision, Germany must always side
with Austria over Russia, geographic position demanded it as
did the French desire for revanche. 105 Holstein would never
have misconstrued the Chancellor’s policy if Bismarck had
kept his subordinates informed as to the purpose of his ac-
tions. 106

The pro-Russian policy led to the negotiation of the
Reinsurance Treaty. Signed in 1887, Germany assured Russia
of support in the Balkans and benevolent neutrality in case
Russia had to defend Constantinople. 107 Holstein exerted
his limited influence against the concluding of the Treaty
but without success. He definitely felt it contradicted the

104 Holstein Papers, II, 326.

105 Ibid., xiv-xv.

Alfred Francis Pribram, England and the Inter-
national Policy of the European Great Powers 1871-1914 (Ox-
ford: At the Clarendon Press, 1931), pp. 32, 34-35. Here-
after cited as Pribram, England and Europe.

106 Holstein Papers, I, xii.

107 Harold Temperley and Lillian M. Ponson (ed.),
Foundations of British Foreign Policy: From Pitt (1792) to
Salisbury (1901) or Documents Old and New (Cambridge:
At the University Press, 1938), p. 154. Hereafter cited as
Temperley, Foundations.
Triple Alliance and constituted a major mistake by Bismarck, but he supported and helped conclude the Mediterranean Agreement with Britain in the same year. The latter provided that Great Britain, Italy, and Austria should maintain the status quo in the Mediterranean. At least the Russian advances received a partial counterweight in the tenuous British agreement.

During the last three years of Bismarckian rule, Holstein persisted in violently criticizing the Chancellor's foreign policy. No matter how much he criticized, he acted on the basis of what he understood as the best interests of the Reich. His patriotism cannot be doubted. Holstein "loved Prussia, loved the German Reich like a mother and like a bride." Whatever actions Holstein took, he felt he was justified. The object was the welfare of Deutschland.

The death of Kaiser Friedrich Wilhelm in 1888 brought to the throne the immature and vain Kaiser

108 Holstein Papers, I, 127, II, xii-xv.
109 Sontag, European Diplomatic, pp. 11-42.
110 Holstein Papers, II, xv.
111 Trotha, Holstein als Mensch, pp. xvii, xv.
113 Trotha, Holstein als Mensch, p. 96.
Wilhelm II.\textsuperscript{114} The personality of the new Kaiser indicated that a conflict was inevitable with Bismarck over who was to control Germany. In 1890 the fatal crash came, and Wilhelm II dismissed Bismarck as German Chancellor.\textsuperscript{115} Holstein realized that the Kaiser was the more powerful; therefore, he remained at his post instead of resigning with the Chancellor and his followers.\textsuperscript{116} Both Herbert and Bismarck expressed surprise when they learned that Holstein planned to remain, but they suffered a greater shock when they learned that the Vortragender Rat worked against the renewal of the expiring Reinsurance Treaty.\textsuperscript{117}

With Bismarck’s dismissal there existed little opportunity of renewing the treaty. In the Foreign Office only Holstein remained fully aware of the nature and history of the treaty, and he opposed it.\textsuperscript{118} At the basis of Holstein’s arguments

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{115}Nichols, Caprivi, pp. 13-14.
\item \textsuperscript{116}There was some controversy over whether or not Holstein was directly involved in any intrigue to cause the fall of Bismarck, but apparently Holstein was cleared from any direct involvement. See Ibid., pp. 263-65.
\item \textsuperscript{117}Gooch, Holstein Oracle, pp. 415-18.
\item \textsuperscript{118}Langer, Diplomacy, I, 3-5.
\end{itemize}

There is a great deal of controversy over whether or not the Reinsurance Treaty was inconsistent with the Triple Alliance, and if the failure to renew led to the Franco-Russian Alliance. Supposedly the German-Russian split began
against renewal and of his foreign policy was the maintenance of the Austrian alliance and the benevolent neutrality of Great Britain.\footnote{119}{The Reinsurance Treaty violated both these principles. By supporting Russia in the Balkans Germany antagonized the British and contradicted its obligations to Austria under the terms of the Triple Alliance. Russia, he felt, possessed control of German policy. The Russians forced Germany to follow their dictates by threatening to reveal the secret treaty to Vienna. Once the Austrians discovered the nature of the agreement, they would drop the Triple Alliance, and no power in Europe would trust Germany.} Holstein's arguments convinced the new Chancellor, Count Leo von Caprivi, and the Kaiser not to renew the treaty.\footnote{120}{The Bismarcks were furious and never forgave Holstein,\footnote{121}{but by that time the opinion of the Bismarck family was of less significance. The dismissal of the first at the Congress of Berlin, when Bismarck failed to recognize and support the claims of Russia, not in 1890. Also the Mediterranean Agreement seemingly made the Reinsurance Treaty non-operative. If the Reinsurance Treaty was ineffective by 1890, the strong criticism against Holstein for having used his influence in seeing that the Treaty lapsed would appear as being somewhat unjustified. See Temperley, Foundations, pp. 454-55, and Herbert Henry Asquith, The Genesis of the War (New York: George H. Doran Co., 1923), pp. 27-28. Hereafter cited as Asquith, Genesis.} 122
\footnote{122}{Holstein Papers, I, 131-32.}
Chancellor and the lapsing of the Reinsurance Treaty ended Bismarckian rule and inaugurated the sixteen year period known as the "Holstein Era."^{123}

^{123}Eyek, "Bismarck's Critic," p. 265.
CHAPTER II

FRIEDRICH VON HOLSTIEN AND GERMANY 1890-1901

After 1890, Holstein exerted his greatest influence on the direction of German foreign policy. His power had suffered under the limitations established by Bismarck, but following the old Chancellor's dismissal, Holstein became an active formulator of policy. The Vortragender Rat, as the most competent official held over from Bismarck's administration, provided the knowledge necessary to conduct the affairs of the German Foreign Office and insured the continuity of the traditions of German foreign policy.

1 Gooch, Holstein Oracle, p. 420.


3 Holstein Papers, III, xi.


5 Gooch, Holstein Oracle, p. 426.
lor Caprivi and the new State Secretary, Adolf Hermann Mar-
schall, lacked any extensive knowledge of foreign affairs and
were forced by circumstances to depend upon Holstein for ad-
vice and guidance.\textsuperscript{6} The three Chancellors, who followed
Bismarck, depended not only upon Holstein's knowledge and ex-
perience, but, much more significantly, they relied upon his
ideas and guiding principles.\textsuperscript{7} Though he lacked breadth and
flexibility in his judgments,\textsuperscript{8} his superiors always consulted
him on important questions of policy before final action.\textsuperscript{9}
Holstein, by drafting and revising memoranda, influenced and
advised officials ranging from German ministers and ambassa-
dors to the Chancellor and even the Kaiser as to questions
of foreign policy.\textsuperscript{10} His varied personal contacts, his quick
apprehension, and his cunning\textsuperscript{11} made Holstein indispensable
to the German Foreign Office.\textsuperscript{12}

Holstein, though he exercised considerable power, al-
ways felt that his influence was extremely limited. His pow-

\textsuperscript{6}Gooch, Studies, p. 130.

\textsuperscript{7}Holstein Papers, III, xi.

\textsuperscript{8}Raymond James Sontag, Germany and England, Background
of Conflict 1848-1894 (New York: D. Appleton Century, Co.,

\textsuperscript{9}Haller, Eulenburg, II, Appendix I, 298.

\textsuperscript{10}Ibid., 297.

\textsuperscript{11}Gooch, Holstein Oracle, p. 448.

\textsuperscript{12}Craig, From Bismarck, p. 36.
er, he said, mainly consisted of correcting, guiding, and restraining policies previously inaugurated. He believed he had very little opportunity to initiate any independent action and was far from the director of German foreign policy. Whether Holstein was correct or not, he employed various means for maintaining his position in the government. This was best exemplified by his estrangement from Bismarck and insane fear of the old Chancellor’s return to power. Holstein had won the antipathy of Bismarck when he had remained in the Foreign Office following the old Chancellor’s dismissal and when he had failed to gain renewal of the Reinsurance Treaty. Holstein reasoned that if Bismarck ever returned, he would immediately lose his post and power. His apprehension was real, but he still employed the threat of

14Haller, Fulenburg, I, 26h.
15Holstein Papers, III, 333-37.
16Gocch, Holstein Oracle, pp. 142-27.
17Haller, Fulenburg, I, 23h.
18In 1893-4 Holstein went almost insane with fear that the Bismarcks would return when the comic journal Kladderdeutsch ran a series of articles satirizing Holstein and two other foreign officials as being the motivators of German policy. Holstein always despised to be in the public eye and was positive that Bismarck was behind the articles, since the old Chancellor was the only person who hated him so violently. He was so taken with fear that he challenged Herbert to a duel which never took place. Gocch, Holstein Oracle, pp. 142-29. Kuerenberg, Eminenz, pp. 115-17.
Bismarck's return as a reason for submitting his resignation. Holstein would only consent to withdraw his resignation if the government adopted an anti-Bismarckian attitude or complied with his views on policy. The Chancellors, except in 1906 when Holstein's resignation was unexpectedly accepted, complied with his demands since the Foreign Office was too dependent upon the Vortragender Rat to even consider his resigning. The result was that Holstein remained an influential force in the direction of policy.\(^19\)

After Bismarck resigned, Holstein was expected to obtain a higher position in the German Foreign Office. He was asked to succeed Herbert Bismarck as State Secretary but refused on the basis that he was unqualified to perform the parliamentary and social duties required of the post.\(^20\) Holstein never desired to appear in the public eye,\(^21\) and felt he could best serve the Reich by remaining an Under-Secretary.\(^22\) His aversion to public and special distinction was so strong that not until 1898 was he willing to accept the title of Wirklicher Geheimrat and Excellence.\(^23\) Title and rank meant very little to him as he derived satisfaction from

\(^{19}\)Holstein Papers, I, xv. Gooch, Holstein Oracle, pp. 432-33.
\(^{20}\)Ibid., p. 417.
\(^{21}\)Ibid., p. 430.
\(^{22}\)Trotha, Holstein als Mensch, p. 73.
\(^{23}\)Gooch, Holstein Oracle, p. 427.
involvement in the important work of the German Foreign Office. From 1890 until his death in 1909 Holstein's dominant concern was with the direction of German foreign policy.

In 1894 Bismarck had inaugurated the imperialistic policy of Weltpolitik. The Chancellor had reluctantly entered the colonial race and he had always maintained that Germany was first a continental power. Nevertheless, Germany, during the later years of Bismarckian control, became increasingly engrossed with obtaining territory in Asia and Africa. Bismarck and his successors realized that the success of German colonial expansion depended upon the willingness of Britain to condone Germany's imperialistic desires. They also perceived that British support would maintain peace and guarantee German security in Europe. No one realized this more than Bismarck and Holstein.

During 1889 Bismarck had hoped to gain Great Britain's support by offering her a defensive alliance. The

---

27 Langer, Diplomacy, I, 4-5, II, 700, 797.
29 Brandenburg, From Bismarck World, pp. 33-34.
30 Trotha, Holstein als Mensch, p. xix.
British had rejected the offer, though they had realized the need of German support. Britain always felt that an alliance was not mandatory to the maintenance of peace and the success of her struggle with Russia in the Far East and France in Africa. Both Germany and Britain needed the support of the other, but the British felt they needed it less since isolation and naval power still had its merits. Nevertheless, the question of the success or failure of Anglo-German co-operation dominated European diplomatic affairs between 1890 and the outbreak of World War I.

In 1890 Germany's refusal to renew the Reinsurance Treaty emphasized her need of British friendship. Caprivi, the Kaiser, and Holstein recognized the truth of Bismarck's comment that Germany's proper relation with Britain was one of "traditional friendship." Caprivi and his successors duly sought British support to strengthen the Triple Alliance.

British policy was to support those powers with whom

---

31 Gonza, European Diplomatic, p. 46.
33 Schoch, Holstein Oracle, p. 455.
34 Holstein Papers, IV, 371.
she had least to quarrel. In 1890 the British had no dispute with the Triple Alliance\textsuperscript{37} and agreed to conclude a number of colonial agreements with Germany.\textsuperscript{38} On this basis Anglo-German relations appeared satisfactory though the two governments were not without disagreement. Distrust and ill-feeling developed from an inability to agree on terms of colonial agreements. The Germans believed that Britain's refusal to grant greater colonial concessions resulted from her desire to impede German ambitions for a colonial empire.\textsuperscript{39}

German dissatisfaction with Britain over colonial affairs drove her in 1894 to attempt to regain Russia's friendship.\textsuperscript{40} The Germans had difficulties in regaining Russia's support as the Russians had moved closer to France since 1890. Russia had sought French support since the failure to renew the Reinsurance Treaty and the growth of Anglo-German friendship. The result of the Franco-Russian friendship was the conclusion of the Dual Alliance of 1894.\textsuperscript{41} France, no longer isolated, possessed an unwilling ally in Russia and once again threatened Germany's western border.


\textsuperscript{38}Pribram, England and Europe, pp. 48, 52.

\textsuperscript{39}Brandenburg, From Bismarck to World, p. 50.

\textsuperscript{40}Pribram, England and Europe, pp. 54-55.

\textsuperscript{41}Gooch, Studies, p. 63.
Germany could only obtain protection of her borders by ac-
tively courting Russian friendship.\(^2\)

In 1896 Prince Bismarck, who replaced Caprivi as Chancellor, Kaiser Wilhelm II, and Holstein inaugurated a
policy of maintaining Russia's support by co-operating with the
Russians in the Far East.\(^3\) The Sino-Japanese war of 1894
and the following Peace of Shimonoseki in 1895 brought the
Far Eastern question to the immediate attention of the pow-
ers. Britain attempted to mediate between the Japanese and
Chinese and avoid the partition of China.\(^4\) Germany, siding
with Russia and France, refused to support mediation. The
Germans hoped to divert Russian designs on the Balkans to-
ward possible division of China.\(^5\) The position of the pow-
ers changed when Japan won a tremendous victory over the
Chinese. Russia, for reasons of self-interest, reversed her
policy and demanded the integrity of China. The Russians,
along with France and Germany, succeeded in preventing Japan
from imposing her demands for Chinese territory.\(^6\) Germany's
support of Russia's Far Eastern policy only antagonized the

\(^2\) Brandenburg, From Bismarck World, p. 37.

\(^3\) Brooh, Holstein Cradle, p. 134.

\(^4\) Pitturus, England and Europe, pp. 55-56.

\(^5\) Mingehien Joshua Bau, The Foreign Relations of Chi-
na: A History and a Survey (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co.,
1921), p. 121. Hereafter cited as Bau, Foreign Relations
China.

\(^6\) Pitturus, England and Europe, pp. 55-56.
Japanese and the British, who maintained cordial relations with Japan, and failed to weaken the Dual Alliance.\textsuperscript{47}

German foreign policy indicated by 1895 that Germany had failed to win British friendship, isolate France, or obtain any real hope of Russian friendship.\textsuperscript{48} Much of the responsibility for the German failure resulted from the interference of the Kaiser in foreign affairs and the lack of coordination between the four major instigators of policy—the Kaiser, the Chancellor, the State Secretary, and Holstein.\textsuperscript{49} No individual was more aware of this fact than Holstein who placed the blame on the meddling Kaiser.\textsuperscript{50}

Holstein supported the Kaiser during the early years of his reign and hoped that Wilhelm II would restrain the power of the Bismarcks. The Vortragender Rat was soon disappointed and became one of the Kaiser's most violent critics.\textsuperscript{51} He condemned Wilhelm II for interfering in foreign affairs, inaugurating policies contrary to those in existence, and not informing the German Foreign Office of any policy change.\textsuperscript{52} The impulsiveness of the Kaiser and his indiscre-

\textsuperscript{47} Brandenburg, From Bismarck World, pp. 69-71.

\textsuperscript{48} Ibid.


\textsuperscript{50} Craig, From Bismarck, p. 37.

\textsuperscript{51} Holstein Papers, II, xvii-xix. \textsuperscript{52} Ibid., III, 612.
tions in private conversations, as well as emotional speeches, only damaged the position of the Reich by creating feelings of suspicion and distrust among the European powers. Holstein stated, "The Kaiser is a conceited child; he is not within the realm of reality" and

the chief danger in the life of Kaiser Wilhelm II is that he is and remains absolutely unconscious of the effect which his speeches and actions have upon Princes, public men, and the masses. The life work of every Government of Wilhelm II must be to counter this danger and as far as possible to nullify these effects. A task which soon wears one out.

Holstein attempted to curb the interference of the Kaiser and to rectify the lack of unity in foreign affairs by forming a number of friendships with individuals from whom Wilhelm accepted advice. Through such friends, Holstein discovered the attitude of the Kaiser on important diplomatic questions and hoped by advising these intermediaries, who in turn advised the Kaiser, to win acceptance of Foreign Office policies. The first such intermediary was Count von Waldersee who was followed by the more important Count Philip Eulenburg, "the Kaiser's Friend." Eulenburg enjoyed the confidence of Wilhelm II for most of the 1890's only damaged the position of the Reich by creating feelings of suspicion and distrust among the European powers.

---

53Holstein, I, 190. 54Ibid., IV, 200.
55Kuerenberg, Eminenz, p. 122.
57Craig, From Bismarck, p. 37.
and was replaced by Count von Buelow in 1897, when the latter became State Secretary.  

During the middle 1890's Holstein became more concerned about the increasing interference of the Kaiser and initiated new methods for limiting Wilhelm's actions. Holstein favored strengthening the position of the Chancellor in opposition to the Kaiser, but Eulenburg continued to favor curbing the powers of Wilhelm II by indirect advising. In opposition to Eulenburg the Vortragender Rat directed Hohenlohe to take a strong stand against the Kaiser hoping that such action would create a balance of power between the Chancellor and Wilhelm II. Holstein's plan failed, and the Kaiser continued to disrupt foreign affairs, particularly Anglo-German relations.

The years 1890 to 1894 marked the highpoint in Anglo-German friendship, but succeeding events and the actions of the Kaiser caused constant tension and mistrust between the

---

60Ibid., II, 83.

61Ibid. It was this difference of opinion on the part of Eulenburg and Holstein that eventually led to the dissolving of their friendship in 1899.


two governments. Though the Kaiser attacked the British in his violent tirades, he continued to hope that Britain would join the Triple Alliance or at least consent to an Anglo-German alliance. He always desired the best of relations with the British in spite of his actions to the contrary. His jealousy of Great Britain, her empire, and her fleet was a cardinal reason both for his being constantly attracted to England and for his desiring to become her colonial and naval rival.

The fact still remained that the Kaiser increased world tensions. Holstein criticized the Kaiser for creating world tensions, but he agreed with Wilhelm II that an alliance with Great Britain was for the best interests of Germany. Holstein felt that in 1894 an Anglo-German alliance was not im-

---

67 Ibid., p. 160.
mediately mandatory. The formation of the Dual Alliance, which created a counterbalance to the Triple Alliance, had minimized the need of Britain to maintain the European balance of power and assured Europe of relative security. In these circumstances Germany was able to follow the policy of the "free hand" and, for the time being, was less concerned with the threat of a European war and free to follow an imperialistic policy.

Holstein perceived little danger in Germany's policy of pursuing imperialistic ambitions in Turkey, Africa, and the Far East if Germany maintained firm support to the Triple Alliance and friendly relations with both Britain and Russia. In fact he advocated support of Russia in the Far East. Such a policy might gain Russian friendship and emphasized British isolation, which had increased with the formation of the Dual Alliance. More important, Holstein felt, was that when Britain realized her isolation, her leaders might be more willing to support the Triple Alliance, possibly more apt to conclude an Anglo-German alliance, and

---


71 Becker, Fuerst Fueley, pp. 57-58.

consent to German demands for colonial concessions in return for German friendship. 73

By 1894 Holstein asserted that Germany was no longer obliged to court the support of the British, but that Britain was obliged to court the support of the German Empire. The British, he believed, would eventually recognize their isolation and seek German support for which Britain would have to pay in the form of significant colonial concessions and by joining the Triple Alliance. Until Britain sought German assistance, Germany was merely to wait as the British must eventually seek German support. Germany, in the meantime, could make the best of her position by increasing her colonial possessions, winning Russia's friendship, and perhaps bettering relations with France. 74

Holstein, by December, 1895, realized that Britain had failed to move any closer to Germany. He hoped to gain British support by threatening Britain with a Continental League thereby forcing her to realize the need of German support. 75 The Kaiser had earlier threatened the British with a Continental League, but the Vortragender Rat had developed the idea and first gave it official formulation in a

73 Becker, Fuerst Buelow, pp. 57-58.


75 Gooch, Holstein Oracle, pp. 436-37.
memorandum dated December 30, 1895. Holstein argued that Britain would never solve her differences with Russia and France. Since Britain would always refuse to forsake India without a fight, she would always be opposed by the Dual Alliance. Because in India, Britain faced the threat of Russian advances in Persia and French advances in Egypt. Britain's differences with the Dual Alliance would force her to support the Triple Alliance if peace was to prevail and if Britain hoped to maintain her colonial dominance in Africa and the Far East. The problem was how to force Britain to perceive her isolation and dire need of the support of the Triple Alliance. Holstein felt that the threat of a Continental league was the necessary means for pressuring the British into seeking the assistance of Germany. The ideas of Holstein on Anglo-German relations contained a number of mistaken judgments and fallacies. His fundamental fallacy was the unshakeable belief that Britain would never conclude an agreement with France and Russia.

---

76 Langer, Diplomacy, I, 233.
78 Holstein Papers, III, 482n. 1. Hammann, World Policy, p. 111.
Hatzfeldt warned Holstein that Britain very possibly could work out an agreement with the Dual Alliance, but the Vortragender Rat failed to heed the Ambassador's advice. A second fallacy was the idea of coercing Britain into the Triple Alliance. Instead of gaining support, the policy of pressuring the British backfired, and Germany lost any hope of Britain's friendship.

Holstein's hope for an alliance was also doomed to failure because the Kaiser's interference in foreign affairs caused Germany to appear to shift her support from first one power then to another. This appearance of vacillation created only feelings of mistrust on the part of other powers and eventually led to Germany's isolation.

The foreign policy of Lord Salisbury was another factor that prevented an Anglo-German understanding. Salisbury distrusted the Germans and hoped to avoid an alliance with Germany unless there appeared no other means for insuring British security. The Prime Minister also possessed unbounded confidence in Britain's ability to maintain her inde-

---

79 Gooch, Holstein Oracle, p. 457.
80 Pinson, Modern Germany, p. 303.
81 Langer, Diplomacy, I, 251.
pendence by relying upon her powerful navy. With such views, Salisbury prevented Britain from joining the Triple Alliance and frustrated Holstein's hope for a British alliance.

In addition to the Prime Minister's opposition the views of Hohenlohe, Buelow, and the actions of the Kaiser prevented the conclusion of an Anglo-German understanding. The two Chancellors, Buelow and Hohenlohe, in opposition to Holstein and Hatzfeldt, favored better relations with Russia rather than with Britain. A British alliance was desirable, they thought, but not a necessity as Hatzfeldt and Holstein believed. Buelow also supported the German naval program, which only antagonized the British, and refused to curb the outbursts of the Kaiser or his interference in foreign affairs.

The actions of the Kaiser particularly prevented a British alliance and resulted in unnecessary damage to Anglo-German relations. He caused significant damage in 1895.


during his visit to Great Britain. The Kaiser, while in Britain, had several discussions with Lord Salisbury at Cowes. During these discussions a personal antagonism developed between the two leaders from a misunderstanding over when one of their meetings was to occur. The antagonism of Salisbury and the Kaiser created distrust between the two countries and disturbed Anglo-German relations until the Prime Minister resigned in 1902. 86

Kaiser Wilhelm II caused unrepairable damage to Anglo-German relations when he despatched the Kruger telegram. 87 In 1896 the Jameson raid on the Boer Republics led the Kaiser to send a telegram congratulating the President of the Boer Republics, Paul Kruger, on the Boers defense of their country from invasion. The Kaiser and the German public believed that the raid was authorized by the British government and constituted an act of aggression. Britain was furious over the telegram and asserted that Wilhelm II had interfered in the internal affairs of the British Empire. The incident caused such antagonism that both Britain and Germany were never able to restore their previous state of good relations. 88

---

86 Brandenburg, From Bismarck World, pp. 73-76. Holstein Papers, IV, 122-23.
87 Brandenburg, From Bismarck World, p. 85.
Following the Kruger incident, Holstein believed that the problem facing German foreign policy was how to regain Britain's lost friendship and ultimately obtain an Anglo-German alliance. Holstein and the German Foreign Office realized that the threat of a Continental league was ineffective in winning British friendship. The Germans, therefore, modified their antagonistic policy toward the British by refraining from any unfriendly action until the effects of the Kruger telegram had passed. They even made an attempt to win Britain's friendship by adhering to benevolent neutrality in South Africa and Egypt. Though German policy succeeded in obtaining British support, much of Britain's friendship was lost or at least limited by Germany's support of Russia in the Far East.

After the Sino-Japanese War, the Far Eastern question dominated international relations as China, instead of Turkey, became the "sick-man" of the world. In 1897 the Germans took the initiative in the threatened partition of China by concluding a confusing agreement with Russia. Germany, in return for her support of Russia in the Far East, obtained a

---

89 Holstein Papers, IV, 22.

90 Ibid., 35-36, 37, 61, 22-24, 641, 659. Holstein expressed his support for a greater consideration of the British in letters on the above pages.


92 Taylor, Mastery, p. 391.
coaling station at Kiau-Chow. The Russians followed by occupying Port Arthur. The events emphasized Britain's isolationist position, and led Salisbury in 1898, in order to protect British Far Eastern interests, to enter negotiations with Russia to hinder further partition of China. The Russians refused Salisbury's suggestion having no reason to conclude an agreement that restricted Russia's imperialistic aims in the Far East. It appeared that Holstein's policy was working. Germany gained concessions in the Far East and Russia's friendship, while Britain became more aware of her isolation. Holstein believed that if Germany continued to adhere to the "free hand", Britain would eventually seek German assistance.

The British, though they sought the support of Russia in 1898, adhered to the strong belief that isolation was not as great a threat as was asserted by the Germans. Salisbury believed that British isolation was a possibility but was not a fact in 1898 or as long as he was Prime Minister.

---

95 Holstein Papers, IV, 10. Langer, Diplomacy, II, 499.
96 Ibid., 791.
97 Cecil, Salisbury, IV, 85-86.
If Britain maintained a strong navy and worked to preserve the balance of power, Salisbury felt, peace and the best interests of Britain were possible of attainment. The Prime Minister, in order to avoid isolation and the conclusion of an alliance, hoped to obtain the support of other powers by concluding limited agreements over specific issues. He refused to conclude any indefinite, general alliance based upon future, undeterminable contingencies. A general understanding was impossible in light of the unobtainable sanction of Parliament and public opinion. The Prime Minister asserted, "the possibilities of the situation must decide" British policy. The result of Salisbury's policy was that Britain appeared to vacillate between support to the

---


99 Gooch, Studies, p. 62.


102 Cecil, Salisbury, IV, 87.

Dual Alliance and the Triple Alliance. This wavering of support caused the other powers to distrust the British, but Salisbury's policy succeeded in preventing Britain from concluding a German alliance and avoided upsetting the balance of power.

Other members of the British cabinet were more apprehensive than Salisbury over the position of Britain. Chief among these was Joseph Chamberlain, Colonial Secretary and a strong advocate of an alliance with Germany. In 1898 Chamberlain and the cabinet ministers, the Duke of Devonshire and to a lesser degree the nephew of Lord Salisbury, Arthur Balfour, felt Britain was in eminent danger of isolation and should consider concluding an alliance. The British, because of differences with Russia in the Far East and France in Africa, decided to consider an alliance with Germany.

The discussions for an Anglo-German alliance took

---

104 Ibid.
106 Langer, Diplomacy, II, 530.
107 Garvin, Chamberlain, III, 254-55.
place between March and May, 1898.110 The proposed understand- standing was for a defensive alliance with mutual agreement as to a common policy in China but also in other areas. Once the British and Germans had stated the general terms, the remaining discussions concerned the arguments for and against the conclusion of an agreement.111

More important than the detailed discussions was the manner in which the negotiations were conducted and the influence of the individuals involved upon the discussions.

110There was and still is a great dispute as to who exactly inaugurated the alliance talks, the British in the person of Chamberlain or the Germans in the persons of Eckardstein and Hatzfeldt. According to Chamberlain, it was Eckardstein who first suggested an alliance. Garvin, Chamberlain, III, 278-79. Hatzfeldt attributed the idea to Chamberlain. G. P., XIV, Part I, 202-204. Pribram stated that it was of little significance who offered the alliance since both states desired some form of an agreement. Pribram, England and Europe, p. 69. However, it was very important for those historians who felt that if Germany refused a British offer the German government was at least indirectly responsible for not accepting it and possibly avoiding World War I. Even more important was the real possibility that an alliance was never offered and that what developed into the consideration of an alliance was a result of the actions of an individual not directly connected with either government. Langer, Diplomacy, II, 531. Such an individual was the mysterious Freiherr von Eckardstein, who worked behind the back of and with Hatzfeldt trying to maneuver both governments into the concluding of an alliance. As the negotiations from 1898 to 1901 progressed, the secret diplomacy of Eckardstein becomes more evident and more condemnable. For a condemnation of Eckardstein's role in the 1898 negotiations see the significant note of Balfour in Blanche Elizabeth Campbell Dugdale, Arthur James Balfour, First Earl of Balfour (2 vols.; New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1937), I, 187-191. Hereafter cited as Dugdale, Balfour.

111Langer, Diplomacy, II, 494-96.
Chamberlain served as the leading British negotiator instead of Salisbury, who was ill in the South of France, or Balfour, who was acting as Foreign Secretary. The Colonial Secretary conducted the negotiations with his close friend and wealthy financier, Alfred de Rothschild, who desired to protect his Far Eastern Interests, and Hermann von Eckardstein, an extreme Anglophile and avid supporter of an alliance. Eckardstein, with the support of Rothschild, served as the intermediary between Chamberlain and Hatzfeldt, the German representative in the alliance negotiations. In agreement with Rothschild and Chamberlain, Eckardstein arranged a meeting between the Colonial Secretary and Hatzfeldt to discuss the possibility of an agreement. The discussions began and throughout their duration Eckardstein agitated vehemently for an understanding, so much so, that he exaggerated the desirability of Britain and Germany for an alliance.

112 Garvin, Chamberlain, III, 255.

113 Baron Hermann von Eckardstein was not in active diplomatic service of the German Government until 1893 but was, nevertheless, active in German diplomacy. In 1898 he was appointed Counsellor of Legation and First Secretary in the London Embassy between 1899-1902. Holstein Papers, IV, 113n. 3. The German Foreign Office relied upon Eckardstein because of his social connections with the British cabinet. His wife was the daughter and heiress of the millionaire furniture manufacturer Sir Blundell Maple, who supplied Eckardstein with his social connections and supported his speculation on the stock exchange. In 1906 following a scandal, Eckardstein was divorced. Buelow, Memoirs, II, 46-47.

115 Ibid., 256-57.

116 Ibid., 254-78.
During the alliance negotiations Hatzfeldt became suspicious of Chamberlain's actions and disliked his forward business-like manner of conducting diplomatic affairs. Hatzfeldt's suspicions were also shared by the directors of German policy in Berlin.\textsuperscript{117} Bue low, who had become State Secretary in 1897 and near director of German policy, was never enthusiastic about an alliance with Britain and tended to accept the advice of Holstein,\textsuperscript{118} who, at this time, advocated a policy of listening to the British suggestions but not to make any definite commitment.\textsuperscript{119} Bue low argued against an alliance since it would antagonize the Russians and hinder Germany's imperialistic policy in the Far East. For an alliance to be acceptable, he felt, the British Parliament must approve the measure, which was impossible due to the antagonism of public opinion. Present circumstances indicated that the best policy was to wait as Britain would eventually return seeking an alliance. In the meantime Germany was to continue to express interest in an alliance but only in order to avoid antagonizing the British.\textsuperscript{120} The policy of the "free hand" was still the most profitable and remained Bue low's

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{117}Ibid., 257.
  \item \textsuperscript{118}Otto Hammann, Zur Vorgeschichte des Weltkrieges (Berlin: Reimar Hoppinig, 1919), p. 73. Hereafter cited as Hammann, Zur Vorgeschichte.
  \item \textsuperscript{119}Bue low, Imperial Germany, p. 53.
  \item \textsuperscript{120}G. p., XIV, Part I, 201-207, 227-29. Langer, Diplomacy, II, 497, 503.
\end{itemize}
policy during the alliance discussions between 1898 and 1901.121

The Kaiser agreed with Buelow on the alliance question, even though he had personally pressed Salisbury in 1896 to conclude an alliance.122 As the Kaiser stated, the chief concern was for a British alliance that would protect Germany’s European position and not protect Britain’s interests in the Far East. He felt that Germany had no desire to antagonize the Russians and the French by concluding an agreement with Britain. Germany was not in need of an alliance; therefore, Hatzfeldt was to refuse the offer but to do so without antagonizing the British. The Ambassador was to emphasize the hope for a future British alliance and express a willingness to conclude minor colonial agreements.123

The Kaiser and Buelow also agreed with Holstein,125 who was just as skeptical of Chamberlain’s offer. Holstein always distrusted the British126 and felt they desired only

---

121 Becker, Fuerst Buelow, p. 65.

122 For the interesting details of this almost attempt on the part of the Kaiser to work out an alliance see the following. Benson, Kaiser and England, p. 122.

123 Langer, Diplomacy, II, 500-501.


125 Becker, Fuerst Buelow, p. 270.

126 Holstein Papers, IV, 77.
to involve Germany in conflicts with the Dual Alliance.\textsuperscript{127} At the present time, he believed, British support was unnecessary and would not be needed as long as friendly relations existed with Russia. He was also certain that Britain, at some future time, would conclude an alliance with Germany since Anglo-Russian antagonism required Britain always to seek German support. The "free hand" was still the legitimate policy. He declared, "Germany was and would remain for a reasonable time the arbiter mundi, that is as long as she preserved her independence by not siding with any other power."\textsuperscript{128} Germany must continue to work for the removal of the small colonial disputes between the two countries\textsuperscript{129} and simultaneously "preserve the existing desire for friendly relations for the purpose of a possible later rapprochement."\textsuperscript{130}

The British were more eager for an agreement than the Germans, but they failed to agree on a common policy toward a German alliance. The differences between the British leaders arose over how far Britain was willing to go in the protection of her Far Eastern interests.\textsuperscript{131} Chamberlain expressed a desire, plus an equal amount of eagerness, to conclude a binding alliance that proposed to protect the two nations colonial and European interests.\textsuperscript{132} Even so, the unwilling-

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{127}Ibid., 75.
\item \textsuperscript{128}Ibid., 63n. 1.
\item \textsuperscript{129}Ibid., 68-69.
\item \textsuperscript{130}Ibid., 72.
\item \textsuperscript{131}Langer, Diplomacy, II, 509-510.
\item \textsuperscript{132}Garvin, Chamberlain, III, 255.
\end{itemize}
ness of the Germans and the refusal of Salisbury to conclude
such an encompassing alliance led Chamberlain to realize
that an agreement was impossible.\textsuperscript{133}

Salisbury, though he desired to protect Britain's Far
Eastern interests, believed Britain was strong enough that
she would not have to conclude a German Alliance.\textsuperscript{134} There
was no reason to forsake British freedom of action by binding
herself to Germany. As Salisbury stated to Hatzfeldt, "You
ask too much for your friendship." The Prime Minister also
opposed an alliance with Germany because of the manner in
which the Germans and Chamberlain conducted the negotiations.
Salisbury never condoned the alliance discussions even though
Chamberlain kept the Prime Minister informed of the negotia­
tions.\textsuperscript{135} Like Balfour, who termed the negotiations "ama­
teur," Salisbury expressed little faith in the secret diplo­
macy of\textsuperscript{136} Eckardstein, Rothschild, and Chamberlain. He
preferred that all discussion be conducted through regular
diplomatic channels.\textsuperscript{137} Since Salisbury opposed an alliance,

\textsuperscript{133}Ibid., 291, 294-95.

\textsuperscript{134}Pribram, \textit{England and Europe}, p. 70. Langer,
\textit{Diplomacy}, II, 505-506.

\textsuperscript{135}Ibid., 514.

\textsuperscript{136}Aigdale, \textit{Balfour}, II, 189-191. Balfour gave one of
the most humorous and probably most accurate pictures of the
diplomacy of the 1898 alliance negotiations. It also appeared
that his version was generally the manner in which all the
alliance talks from 1898 to 1901 were conducted.

\textsuperscript{137}Ibid., 189-190.
Chamberlain and Eckardstein had little hope of concluding an agreement.\(^{138}\)

The Kaiser, before the alliance discussions ended, committed another one of his blunders that damaged Anglo-German relations. Both Germany and Britain stipulated that the alliance negotiations were to remain secret, but the Kaiser informed Czar Nicholas II that Britain had offered Germany an alliance. To the Kaiser's surprise, the Czar replied that Britain had offered Russia an alliance in January, 1898. The incident reaffirmed the danger involved in Wilhelm's interference in foreign affairs and increased Germany's distrust of the British. Britain's distrust of the Germans also increased when she learned that the negotiations had been revealed to the Russians.\(^{139}\)

In spite of the Kaiser's blunder, the alliance negotiations ended on a positive note. Both nations expressed a sincere desire for better relations in the future.\(^{140}\) The major task was to remove the ill-feeling between the two governments by solving their colonial disputes.\(^{141}\) Such was predominantly the opinion of the Germans, who hoped to gain

\(^{138}\)Ibid.


\(^{140}\)Taylor, Mastery, 378.

colonial concessions.\textsuperscript{142} The British, because they faced the threat of Russia in the Far East, France in the Fashoda crisis, and the Boers in South Africa,\textsuperscript{143} consented to grant Germany colonial concessions in return for support. The British, therefore, agreed to negotiate an Anglo-German agreement over the Portuguese African colonies.\textsuperscript{144}

In 1898 Portugal faced possible financial collapse, which raised the question of the disposal of her African colonies. On Germany's request Great Britain and Germany concluded an agreement in August, 1898, partitioning the Portuguese African colonies.\textsuperscript{145} Germany, soon after the conclusion of the understanding, became dissatisfied with the British because they refused to implement the agreement. The British had failed to enforce the understanding because Portugal and Britain had concluded a secret treaty which invalidated the agreement with Germany.\textsuperscript{146} The manner and circumstances revolving around the conclusion of the Anglo-German

\textsuperscript{142}Brandenburg, From Bismarck World, pp. 103, 106, 111.
\textsuperscript{143}Gooch, Studies, p. 61.
\textsuperscript{144}Ibid., 569.
\textsuperscript{145}Ibid., 569.
\textsuperscript{146}Langer, Diplomacy, II, p. 119.

agreement provided only superficial means for bettering the
two governments relations.\textsuperscript{147}

Another area for Anglo-German co-operation arose from
difficulties in Samoa. In 1893 civil war broke out between
native claimants for the Samoan throne. The islands, at the
time, were under the administration of Germany, the United
States, and Great Britain. The Germans perceived an opportu­

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{148} Gooch, \textit{Holstein Oracle}, p. 456.
\item \textsuperscript{149} Langer, \textit{Diplomacy}, II, 620-24.
\item \textsuperscript{150} Brandenburg, \textit{From Bismarck World}, p. 129.
\item \textsuperscript{151} B. D., I, 130.
\item \textsuperscript{152} Langer, \textit{Diplomacy}, II, 621f. Pribram, \textit{England
and Europe}, pp. 77-79.
\item \textsuperscript{153} Langer, \textit{Diplomacy}, II, 624.
\end{itemize}

ity to gain colonial possessions and demanded partition
of the islands. Salisbury opposed such drastic action and
desired to frustrate the opportunistic demands of the Kaiser.
In spite of Salisbury's objections an agreement was signed,
but not before the Kaiser's violent attacks against the Prime
Minister had delayed the negotiations\textsuperscript{148} and unnecessarily
strained the two governments relations.\textsuperscript{149} The Germans felt
the Samoan Agreement indicated the ability of the two nations
to co-operate, but in actuality the pressure and method of
German foreign policy only hindered better relations.\textsuperscript{150}

In October, 1899, the Boer War broke out and empha­
sized Britain's need of German neutrality.\textsuperscript{151} The British,
in order to assure Germany’s friendship, invited the Kaiser to visit Britain during November, 1899.\textsuperscript{152} Wilhelm II agreed to the visit not having been in Britain since the disastrous meeting at Cowes in 1895.\textsuperscript{153}

Before the Kaiser departed for Britain, he and Fueelow, who was to accompany the Emperor, received detailed instructions from the German Foreign Office as to the policy toward the British. The German Foreign Office believed that possibly the British, as a result of the Far Eastern and South African situations, might offer an alliance. Holstein was particularly apprehensive and advised that if Chamberlain suggested an agreement not to act too optimistic. Fueelow and the Kaiser were only to remind the British that from the present situation circumstances might develop where cooperation would be useful for both governments.\textsuperscript{154} As in the past, Holstein believed,

\begin{quote}
Germany, now that the agitation for revanche has lost its immediate political importance, faces no visible danger of war from any direction, and would endanger her peaceful security and make her own position worse if she undertook to support England, whether by participation in war or by alert neutrality. . . as long as Germany’s relations with Russia remain unchanged, she will not accept an agreement which is visibly directed against Russia.\textsuperscript{155}
\end{quote}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{152}Anderson, First Morocco, p. 61.
\item \textsuperscript{153}Langer, Diplomacy, II, 656.
\item \textsuperscript{154}Buelow, Memoirs, I, 365-66.
\item \textsuperscript{155}Holstein Papers, IV, 166-77.
\end{itemize}
Holstein's position and German foreign policy was merely a repetition of the views held during the alliance negotiations of 1898. 156

While in Britain, Wilhelm II and Buelow met at Winds­
sor with Chamberlain instead of Salisbury, who was absent due to the recent death of his wife. Chamberlain, as the British representative in the following alliance discussions, proposed, 157 probably with some encouragement from Eckard­stein, 158 a defensive alliance directed against Russia be­
tween Great Britain, Germany, and the United States. 159 Buelow and the Kaiser responded by following Holstein's ad­vice 160 and reaffirmed the desire for limited agreements over particular issues. Chamberlain was kept friendly so as not to endanger a future British alliance and the possibility of gaining colonial concessions. The alliance negotiations were unsuccessful, but the Windsor meetings were a success in bettering Anglo-German relations and demonstrating to the British public Germany's friendship and neutrality in the

---

156 Gooch, Studies, p. 65.
157 Langer, Diplomacy, II, 656-57.
159 Brandenburg, From Bismarck World, pp. 137-38.
Boer War. 161

The alliance discussions were far from ended when the Kaiser had returned to Germany. Chamberlain, supposedly under the impression that Buelow and the Kaiser desired an understanding, 162 announced in a speech at Leicester on November 30, 1899, that the peace of the world depended upon the "natural alliance" between Britain, Germany, and the United States—"a new Triple Alliance." Public opinion in both countries expressed astonishment and condemned the absurd idea. It was generally felt that the Colonial Secretary had committed another blunder by continuing to interfere in foreign affairs. 163

Holstein and the German government were just as shocked as public opinion by Chamberlain’s suggestion and agreed with Buelow’s views, as expressed in his Reichstag speech of December 11, 1899. 164 Buelow, possibly fearing German Anglophobia and desiring the passage of the Second Naval Bill, commenced on Germany’s friendly relations with

162 Garvin, Chamberlain, III, 510-11. Garvin argued in his biography of Chamberlain that the Colonial Secretary had been led to believe by Buelow that he desired him to speak publicly on the alliance question. Thus Chamberlain was acting in accord with the wishes of the German government. For the opposite view see Buelow, Memoirs, I, 370-71.
163 Garvin, Chamberlain, III, 506-509.
164 Eckardstein, Ten Years, p. 146.
Britain. He made no mention of the Leicester speech. Chamberlain was furious and felt Buelow and the Kaiser had misled him as to their intentions as expressed at Windsor. The incident, as in so many past instances, strained Anglo-German relations. 165

During December, 1899, the Bundesrath affair occurred to mar the relations of Britain and Germany. The British had stopped the German mail steamer Bundesrath in an attempt to halt supplies from going to the Boers. The Germans were outraged, particularly the Kaiser who protested violently. Eventually, the British released the steamer, and the strain in relations passed. 166

In May, 1900, the problem of the Far East returned to dominate the concern of the world powers. 167 Groups of Chinese nationalists, known as Boxers, feared the partition of China and had rebelled against the foreigners. 168 The world powers interpreted the Boxer Rebellion as an indication of the collapse of China and an opportunity for gaining colonial concessions. The major European powers, plus Japan, Russia, and the United States, on the pretext of protecting

165 Garvin, Chamberlain, III, 510-11.
166 Langer, Diplomacy, II, 660-62.
167 Ibid., 692.
168 Feng-Chen Chang, The Diplomatic Relations Between China and Germany Since 1898 (Shanghai, China: The Commercial Press, 1936), p. 63.
foreign interests and foreigners threatened in the legations at Peking, agreed to send Count von Waldersee as Commander-in-Chief of the military forces to crush the Boxer Rebellion. During the lengthy struggle to suppress the Chinese, the powers soon became aware that Russia was primarily interested in increasing her influence in China, particularly in Manchuria. Even Germany perceived Russia's plans and attempted to work more closely with the British.169

By August, 1900, Russia's aggressive policy led Germany to seek an Eastern agreement with Britain. All indications pointed to the conclusion of an agreement since both governments were on good terms and, to a degree, desired a formal alliance. Only Salisbury voiced a skeptical note, but he eventually agreed to conclude an agreement. The result was the Yangtze Agreement of October 16, 1900.170

The terms of the Yangtze Agreement were confusing, but the two countries agreed to maintain the open door in China, particularly in the Yangtze Valley. The Germans interpreted the agreement as applying only to the Yangtze. Germany's interpretation limited the effectiveness of the understanding for the British, who hoped to employ German support in halting Russian aggression in all of China.171 Holstein agreed with the German interpretation and felt the under-

169 Langer, Diplomacy, II, 694-95, 696-700.
170 Ibid., 700-701.
171 Taylor, Mastery, p. 393.
standing would better relations with Britain.\footnote{172}{Holstein Papers, IV, 209.} By the end of 1900 Anglo-German relations indicated the continuation of closer co-operation between the two governments. In Great Britain the Marquis of Lansdowne, who had recently become Foreign Secretary, desired the best of relations with Germany and was more receptive than Salisbury toward an alliance.\footnote{173}{Halévy, Imperialism, V, 121-22.} In Germany Buelow had become Chancellor in October, 1900,\footnote{174}{Gooch, Holstein Oracle, pp. 452-53.} and, though he was more pro-Russian than British, he still favored an alliance with Britain.\footnote{175}{Buelow, Memoirs, I, 55.} At the same time Oswald von Richthofen had become State Secretary and was easily dominated by the pro-British Holstein.\footnote{176}{Gooch, Holstein Oracle, pp. 453-55.} By the beginning of 1901 Anglo-German relations indicated a real prospect of Britain and Germany concluding an alliance.\footnote{177}{Halévy, Imperialism, V, 121-22.}
CHAPTER III

FRIEDRICH VON HOLSTEIN AND THE FIRST PHASE OF THE 1901 ATTEMPT AT AN ALLIANCE

In January, 1901, relations between Great Britain and Germany were of an exceptionally friendly nature and reflected hopes felt in both nations for increased co-operation.1 The Marquis of Lansdowne, the new British Foreign Secretary, Buelow, and Richthofen, the German State Secretary, all expressed hope of maintaining and strengthening present relations by some form of a future alliance. Responsible parties in both countries hoped to continue their co-operation through solving the questions that faced the powers in the Far East2 and particularly the problem of Russian aggression in China.3

Russian occupation of Manchuria, as a result of the Boxer Rebellion, had caused the world powers to express apprehension over the frequent rumors that Russia planned to make Manchuria a protectorate. The Russians had denied the

1Meinecke, Geschichte, p. 177.
3Meinecke, Geschichte, p. 176.
rumors and claimed that when the Boxer threat ended, Russian troops would be removed from Manchuria. The Times reported on January 3, 1901, that Russia had concluded a secret agreement with China providing for special concessions, if not a protectorate, in Manchuria. The report caused the European powers, Japan, and the United States to express greater apprehension over Russian aggression and the possibility of an impending partition of China. The involved powers immediately inquired as to the validity of the rumored agreement and attempted to form a policy to halt Russia. The British planned, if it was necessary, to rely upon the Yangtze Agreement of 1900, which they felt assured German support in stopping Russian aggression.

The tense situation in the Far East caused the British and German governments to consider for the third and final time the possibility of concluding an alliance. As the 1901 attempt at an alliance was the last such attempt caused many German historians, following World War I, to believe that the War could have been avoided if Germany had been more receptive to an alliance in 1901. Meinecke, Fischer, and the Anglophilic Eckardstein held the above view.

4B. D., II, 1.
5Great Britain, British and Foreign State Papers, XCVI (1902-1903), 582, 596. Hereafter cited as E. F. S. P.
6G. P., XVII, 311-12n. *.
8The fact that the 1901 attempt at an alliance was the last such attempt caused many German historians, following World War I, to believe that the War could have been avoided if Germany had been more receptive to an alliance in 1901. Meinecke, Fischer, and the Anglophilic Eckardstein held the above view.
9Gooch, Holstein Oracle, p. 549.
In 1898 and 1899 the situation in China served as the basis for the discussion of an understanding. The danger to Britain's Far Eastern interests led Chamberlain and the Duke of Devonshire to discuss the possibility of an understanding with Eckardstein and, through him, with Hatzfeldt and Berlin.

Eckardstein was First Secretary in the German Embassy in London and had served as an intermediary between Britain and China.

---

10 Langer, Diplomacy, II, 741.
11 Brandenberg, From Bismarck to Wilson, pp. 137-38.
12 Julian Amory, in his biography of Joseph Chamberlain, stated that the Chamberlain Papers contained no trace of the 1901 negotiations. Amory, Height of Power, p. 137 n. 1. This raises the question of whether Chamberlain really had much to do with the 1901 negotiations, since his papers deal quite extensively with the alliance questions of 1898 and 1899 and the only information on Chamberlain's role in the 1901 attempt comes from the highly unreliable record of Eckardstein. In fact Eckardstein made only slight reference to Chamberlain in the negotiations, particularly after March, 1901.

The only reference to the 1901 discussions in the Balfour biography—the source of this reference was not given—stated that Chamberlain was "chiefly" responsible for initiating the talks. Balfour, Balfour, p. 276. Though unreliable in most areas, Fischer stated that Chamberlain, because of his earlier failures at an alliance, was not particularly interested in an alliance in 1901 and that the pro-German Lansdowne was then Foreign Secretary and in control of foreign policy. Fischer, Nein, p. 211. The few documents in B, D, on the alliance question also made only a few references to Chamberlain. B, D, I, II.

13 Holstein Papers, IV, 113n. 4.
and Germany during two previous attempts to reach an agreement. 14 Eckardstein, while sincerely desiring an understanding between Germany and Britain, was an ambitious individual with strong hopes of replacing Hatzfeldt as Ambassador. 15 During the 1901 negotiations, Eckardstein served as the chief German negotiator and acted as the unofficial head of the German Embassy. The First Secretary obtained his influential position because the illness of Hatzfeldt prevented him from fulfilling his duties as Ambassador and forced him to rely upon Eckardstein. In such a position Eckardstein worked for an alliance by altering diplomatic correspondence 16 and distorting the views of both the British and German governments on the question of an understanding. 17 The foreign offices in both Berlin and London viewed him with suspicion.

14 Young, Harden, p. 161.

15 Amery, Height of Power, IV, 142. Holstein Papers, IV, 236.

16 It has been firmly established that Eckardstein changed dispatches that Hatzfeldt instructed him to send to Berlin. The problem is knowing how much, and when did Eckardstein make these changes since he always signed Hatzfeldt’s name. There is also the fact that many of the dispatches sent were signed by Hatzfeldt, but Eckardstein wrote them. For a more detailed discussion and examples of Eckardstein’s forging of documents see G. P., XVII, 14-15n. *; Drever, Deutschland, pp. 7-6, 67n. 1, 71-72, 110-11. Ritter, Leman, pp. 28-29. Eckardstein, Ten Years, p. 199.

but failed to curb his actions. In these circumstances Eckardstein played a major role in the 1901 negotiations and was probably responsible for initiating the alliance discussions.

On January 16, 1901, Eckardstein met with Chamberlain at Chatsworth, the country estate of the Duke of Devonshire. The two men discussed the world position of Great Britain and Anglo-German relations. Chamberlain stated his views that the British policy of "splendid isolation" was obsolete and said that Britain must obtain allies, either France and Russia or from among the Triple Alliance powers. An agreement with Germany, he said, and an association with the Triple Alliance was preferable; however, if such an arrangement proved unlikely, an agreement with Russia was a real possibility. Chamberlain told Eckardstein that he would work for a German understanding, but for the present an Anglo-German

---


19 Gooch, Before the War, II, 8. Amery, Height of Power, IV, 152-53.


21 In light of the British Documents, in which Lansdowne stated that Eckardstein offered an alliance on March 18, 1901, and that there are no records of a suggestion, discussion, or negotiation of an alliance until March 18, 1901, there is the possibility that there was no discussion of an alliance at all in January, 1901, and if there was, it was offered by Eckardstein, who is the only source of information for the negotiations from January to March, 1901. B. D., II, 76-79. The fact that Eckardstein desired an alliance to the
agreement over Morocco would serve as a basis for a later alliance between the two governments. Negotiations would be possible as soon as Salisbury lifted for the South of France, after which he and Lansdowne would be in control and could conclude an agreement. The Colonial Secretary, except for his suggestion of a Moroccan agreement, wished that his comments be considered as academic in nature and as a possible subject for further discussion.22

Eckardstein informed Hatzfeldt of his conversation with Chamberlain and followed the Ambassador's instructions by notifying Berlin that the British were interested in concluding an alliance with Germany.23 Eckardstein and Hatzfeldt point that he would disrepresent individual opinions and documents and as a result of his part in the negotiations in March and May, cf. Chapter IV, only furthers the idea that Eckardstein possibly suggested the idea of an alliance to Chamberlain. Eckardstein may have even manufactured his entire record of the negotiations during January to March, 1902, since he was the only individual on the German side who talked with the British. Whatever the role of Eckardstein, those sentiments expressed as those of Chamberlain seemed to correspond with what would have been the opinions of the Colonial Secretary. Langer, Diplomacy, II, 717.


23 It must be remembered that Eckardstein was the sole intermediary between the British Foreign Office and Hatzfeldt and the German Foreign Office until May 20, 1901, when Hatzfeldt talked with Lansdowne. In such circumstances all the information concerning the position of Germany and Britain on the alliance question depended upon the unreliable reporting of Eckardstein. What Lansdowne and the British understood as the position of Germany depended upon what Eckardstein told them just as what Hatzfeldt, Holstein, and the German Foreign Office believed of the British position also depended on what Eckardstein reported.
feldt, according to the former, were enthusiastic over the possibility that events might lead to an alliance. With such a hope in mind, Hatzfeldt sent Holstein a private telegram, which he composed in such a manner as to avoid arousing the Hotagendcr Rat's suspicious nature. The ambassador had no desire to provoke Holstein's distrust of Chamberlain and Salisbury, who, he felt, would never consent to an alliance. Hatzfeldt telegraphed that Chamberlain had confirmed his belief that the British would eventually seek German assistance if the latter continued to express an interest in better relations. If, however, an agreement proved infeasible with Germany, the British would very possibly turn to Russia. He knew that Holstein would agree that at present an alliance was premature, but Chamberlain seemed to concur with this view and hoped that a special agreement over Morocco might lead to a future alliance. For a time with the departure of Salisbury to the South of France Chamberlain, Lansdowne, and the pro-German members of the cabinet would be in control of British policy. In such a situation, Hatzfeldt stated in closing, the British might seek an alliance.

The German Foreign Office was skeptical about the possibility of an understanding. Buelow advised that, for the present, Germany should continue to wait until the Brit-
Buelow agreed with Holstein in the latter's belief that Britain would not seek an understanding with France or Russia. Such an idea, Holstein felt, was a complete fraud and nonsense. He asserted that possible concessions to France and Russia in return for support would merely confirm the declining power and prestige of the British Empire. At the present time, he felt, an Anglo-German alliance was impossible as Britain was unwilling to concede the necessary concessions to obtain Germany's support and such an agreement would imply the involvement of Germany in a British war.

As in the past, Holstein said, Salisbury was of the opinion that the Germans asked too much for their friendship. He believed that, before consideration of an understanding was possible, Salisbury's ill-treatment of Germany must be removed, in spite of the friendliness of the always suspect Chamberlain. Adhering to the policy of the "free hand",

Holstein stated, "we can wait, time is on our side." 27

Richthofen, the State Secretary, agreed with Holstein's views on Eckardstein's report of a possible alliance. He told Buelow, "Let England come to us. The spectre of a Russo-English alliance appears to me, after numerous conversations with Holstein, nothing but a spectre." 28

The alliance negotiations were suddenly halted by the fatal illness of Queen Victoria. The Kaiser, on hearing the news of his grandmother's illness, rushed to London against the wishes of both the Foreign Office and members of the German royal family. 29 The Foreign Office feared that the Kaiser would antagonize the British and, more important, accept or offer an alliance. Holstein, hoping to curb the Kaiser's actions, telegraphed Eckardstein to caution the Emperor against discussing an alliance or any other major problems with the British ministers. Eckardstein met the Kaiser on his arrival on January 20, and related the substance of his conversation with Chamberlain, as well as the warning of Holstein. The Kaiser was quite optimistic about the possibility of an alliance; however, he agreed only to discuss Anglo-German relations in general terms. 30


28 Gooch, Holstein Oracle, p. 460.

29 Eckardstein, Erinnerungen, II, 239-240.

The Kaiser, following his arrival, telegraphed Buelow that his reception in Britain was overwhelming. Both the British public and royal family were greatly touched by his rushing to the bedside of his ill grandmother. He was also pleased with Eckardstein's report that Britain desired an alliance and agreement over Morocco. On the basis of Eckardstein's reporting, the Kaiser believed, contrary to the views held in the Foreign Office, that Britain would reach an understanding with France and Russia if an agreement with Germany proved improbable. The Kaiser felt, however, that an Anglo-German alliance appeared quite possible.31

The Kaiser's optimistic report increased the apprehension of Buelow and Holstein that Vilhelm II might concede or offer an alliance. Holstein and the Chancellor, to avert any rash action by the Kaiser, dispatched telegrams to Wilhelm II, Eckardstein, and Count Paul von Metternich, the Foreign Office representative traveling with the Kaiser, counseling against appearing too optimistic if the British hinted at the possibility of an alliance.32 Buelow advised the Kaiser, employing the arguments of Holstein in a lengthy and subtle dispatch,33 that he was correct in believing that

31G. F., XVII, 19.
the British were considering a German alliance and pointing out the need for such an offer to come from London. To obtain an understanding, the Chancellor advised that the Kaiser should appear interested but not too eager in the conversations with the British. The British, he argued, would, in future months, feel their growing isolation and be willing to grant greater concessions in return for German support. The Kaiser, he suggested, should remain optimistically non-committal.34

Holstein added, in a dispatch to Eckardstein, that he should do his "best with the British Ministers, or anyhow see that something is at once done to make them insist on courteous treatment for the Kaiser."35 The Vortragender Rat always distrusted the British and felt that much of the opposition to the Kaiser came from the British royal family and Salisbury.36

The Kaiser complied with the wishes of the Foreign Office and conducted himself in the proper manner throughout his stay in Britain.37 Even so, the Kaiser hoped for an immediate alliance and told Metternich that he disliked the policy of waiting. He quipped prophetically, "he gained

35Eckardstein, Ten Years, p. 190.
37Brandenburg, From Bismarck World, p. 158.
nothing by continually vacillating between Russia and Great Britain. He would lose his balance and fall between the two stools."38

During his lengthy visit to Britain the Kaiser had several discussions with British cabinet ministers and the new king, Edward VII, who, at this time, favored an understanding with Germany.39 Wilhelm II, in his conversations with the British, refrained from discussing an alliance except in general terms and restricted his comments to requests for better relations between the two nations. He also attacked the Russians for their Far Eastern policy and emphasized, as much as possible, the isolated position of Britain. The British must realize, the Kaiser said, that the balance of power resided in Germany's twenty-two army corps. The British, in spite of the Kaiser's statements, welcomed the presence of Wilhelm II as an indication of better relations between the two countries.40

The suspicious Holstein, even with the positive reports of the Kaiser's visit, commented on January 30, that he hoped Wilhelm II would not remain too long in Britain, thereby avoiding a possible alienation of the British as had

38 G. P., XVI, 295.


resulted at Cowes in 1895. Holstein warned Eckardstein against
some English politician or other, for example Salisbury (of whom I shall always have a lively recollection on account of Samoa, the mailsteamers, etc.), if it oc­
curred to Salisbury for example, to exploit the candour and compliance of His Majesty in order to secure some
binding promise. It is your [Eckardstein] business, dear Friend, to watch carefully for every indication of
this in London official circles in order that proper precautions may be taken in time.\footnote{41}

In closing his dispatch, Holstein indicated the great extent
to which the German Foreign Office depended upon Eckardstein's
reporting, when he said, "but what the British ministers may
be concocting, if we [the Berlin Foreign Office] can't see—
you probably can."\footnote{42}

The effect of the Kaiser's visit, regardless of Hol­
stein's reservations, resulted in the friendliest relations
between Great Britain and Germany since the Kruger telegram.\footnote{43}
Both the British and Germans took advantage of their friendly
relations by co-operating in solving the growing difficul­
ties in the Far East.\footnote{44} By the end of January Japan, Britain,
and Germany were still unable to ascertain the validity of
the reported January 3 agreement between China and Russia.
The three powers continued to wait for further developments
until\footnote{45} February 7, when the British received the terms of

\begin{flushright}
\footnote{41}{Ibid., p. 194.}\footnote{42}{Ibid., p. 193-94.}\footnote{43}{Langer, Diplomacy, II, 718.}\footnote{44}{Ibid., 719.}\footnote{45}{B. F. S. E., XCIV, 1048-49.}\end{flushright}
the Russian-Chinese Agreement from the Japanese Ambassador, Count Hayashi. The Japanese government also requested that a joint declaration be sent to China warning her against concluding agreements with any power, unless approved by the remaining powers involved in the Boxer hostilities. The Japanese felt that such a move would prevent Russia from pressuring China into concluding any agreements. 46

Lansdowne communicated the Japanese request to Eckardstein, who was to ascertain whether or not Germany would send a similar declaration. Both Eckardstein and Hatzfeldt dispatched telegrams to Berlin relating Lansdowne's message and advised the Foreign Office to comply with the British and Japanese request. If Germany sent a direct refusal, Hatzfeldt telegraphed, Britain could very easily seek an understanding with the Dual Alliance and end all prospects for an Anglo-German alliance. 47 Hatzfeldt sent another warning and recommended compliance with the British and Japanese wish but not to the point of antagonizing Russia or appearing to support, too strongly, the British in the Far East. Nothing must occur to endanger Germany's alliance policy, which Hatzfeldt reaffirmed as follows: "we must wait until the British will support us unconditionally, and in the meantime Germany should remain on a good footing with

Russia. Buelow agreed unequivocally with Hatzfeldt.  

Holstein, in a series of telegrams to Buelow and London, stated Germany’s policy in the Far East and replied to the British and Japanese request for action against China. The Vortragender Rat agreed to send a mild warning to the Chinese, but, in so doing, Germany, for the time being, must avoid antagonizing Russia over Manchuria. He hoped the German warning would satisfy the British. Buelow agreed with Holstein’s policy and added that any stronger support of the British in China would so inflame public opinion that a future understanding might prove impossible.

On February 11, Holstein developed in more detail his views on German policy in the Far East and on the alliance question. Holstein telegraphed Hatzfeldt that he agreed that relations with Britain required the minimizing of differences between the two nations. He and Hatzfeldt had often discussed the question of an Anglo-German understanding and he felt that

an alliance, in which each party deals with a single aggressor and the casus foederis only arises when there is more than one foe, has many attractions for the thoughtful statesman, but would unfortunately be in direct conflict with German opinion to-day. The systematic campaign against England, which began after Bismarck’s retirement, is largely due to the intolerable personality of Salisbury, whose antipathy to the German Emperor and sympathy for France have shaped English policy during

\[48^\text{Ibid., XVII, 30-33.}\]
\[49^\text{Ibid., 33.}\]
\[50^\text{Ibid., XVI, 315-16.}\]
\[51^\text{Ibid., 316-19.}\]
the last decade. This policy revealed itself as brutal and untrustworthy.\textsuperscript{52}

He also believed that the difficulties over the Samoan question, the Bundesrath affair, and Salisbury's action at Cowes in 1895 exemplified the unwillingness of the British Prime Minister to co-operate with Germany. More harmful to Anglo-German relations, Holstein said, was Britain's refusal to implement the agreement for the partition of the Portuguese African colonies. In addition Britain failed to acknowledge Germany's neutrality in the Boer War. He believed that public discontent, over Britain's failure to co-operate with Germany, diminished the possibility of an Anglo-German alliance. An understanding, he felt, would only increase the public attacks against the Chancellor and the Kaiser for concluding an agreement that yielded little merit and caused German subservience to British interests.\textsuperscript{53} The attitude of the German public, wrote Holstein,

could not be altered by assurance but only by facts, namely if the defensive treaty, apart from a fully-secured reciprocity, carried with it direct advantages, not mere promises. It must be emphasized that the offer of an alliance cannot proceed from Germany. For first, I do not believe that England will make acceptable concessions so long as Salisbury has a say, and I think it unworthy of a Great Power again to be told: You ask too much for your friendship. And secondly, after all our experiences with Salisbury, he could quite well inform St. Petersburg of our offer and its conditions and ask: What do you offer? In spite of Lansdowne's desire


\textsuperscript{53}Ibid.
for an alliance, the opposition of Salisbury demanded Germany to wait until the English guaranteed the terms of complete reciprocity and agreed upon instantaneous concessions—colonial possessions.

Until these terms are met England must be satisfied with the German policy of neutrality which Germany can not go beyond. Such is the position in China. No power desires war and the combined action of England and Japan along with German neutrality will serve to keep Russia in check as far as Russian aggression concerns Germany. There exists no present reason to unnecessarily antagonize Russia and particularly not to save and pro­
tect English Far Eastern interests.

England's position, owing to Japanese co-operation and the certainty of the neutrality of the Triple Alli­
ance, is exceptionally good and can only become worse. Thus an alliance with Germany is unnecessary for the attainment of her present aims. The German people could only be convinced by positive facts that a treaty did not serve English purposes.54

Holstein believed that there was no reason for Britain or Germany to conclude an alliance, but he felt an understanding was desirable and possible, if Britain would meet Germany's terms. The policy of the "free hand" was still the most profitable. Buelow, in his marginal comments on Holstein's dispatch, agreed with the Vertragender Rat's views on the alliance and Far Eastern questions.55

During February the British failed to mention the question of an alliance as they were far more concerned with problems in the Far East.56 One of the many problems that


55 Ibid. Holstein, Buelow, and the Germans expressed similar sentiments in the following: G. P., XVI, 320-25.

56 Ibid. Holstein, Buelow, and the Germans expressed similar sentiments in the following: G. P., XVI, 320-25.

faced Britain and the other powers was the obtaining of an agreement on the amount of the Chinese indemnity, which was to pay the expenses of the powers in suppressing the Boxer Rebellion. Germany hoped to obtain British support for her demands in the indemnity settlement by co-operating with Britain, as much as possible, in the Far East. The British also desired German support but for the more important problem of halting Russian aggression in Manchuria.57

The powers had not learned until February 28, that the notes warning China against concluding separate agreements had failed to prevent Russia from forcing the Chinese to conclude an agreement over Manchuria. To prevent the implementation of the Manchurian agreement, the British and Japanese, who were seriously considering military action against Russia, hoped to obtain the support of Germany in opposing the Russians. The German government replied to the British and Japanese inquiries as to Germany's policy in the Far East by reaffirming the position of neutrality. The Germans were opposed to any action that would antagonize the Russians, but they hoped to influence the Japanese and British to take a strong stand against the Russians. The Germans possibly desired to involve Britain in a Far Eastern war thereby forcing the British to seek German assistance in the form of an alliance. To the dismay of the Germans, the

British failed to take any strong action against the Russians and continued to wait for further developments. 58

The British finally decided to act on March 3. Lansdowne inquired whether Germany, in the interests of peace, would consent to a joint declaration that if war broke out between Japan and Russia that such a conflict would be localized. Great Britain and Germany would remain neutral as long as no other power, meaning France, intervened in the war. The British suggestion resulted from a fear of a possible war and that Japan might conclude a separate agreement with Russia that would leave Britain isolated. In any case the British, as a result of the South African War, needed German support in order to protect their Far Eastern interests. 59

Holstein, in reply to Lansdowne's request, telegraphed Eckardstein that he opposed a special agreement, whereby Germany and Britain would declare neutrality in the case of a Russo-Japanese war, because in all special agreements the danger was greater than the advantage. By such a treaty we take sides against Russia in facilitating a Japanese offensive. Whereas German action against Rus-


sia that would be a breach of neutrality is impossible, so long as we can get no guarantee from the British. For that reason we shall make our declaration of neutrality separately. . . . England is obviously trying to make use of us without binding itself to anything—which it won't succeed in doing.60

In a further comment on Germany's Far Eastern policy Holstein stated:

We can't go beyond benevolent neutrality, as the very restricted agreement of October 16th [Tangte Agreement] provides no Anglo-German solidarity in case the Russians and the French both attack us in Europe on account of our proceedings in Eastern Asia.61

These views of Holstein expressed the attitude of the German government toward the Far Eastern situation.62

In the same dispatch to Eckardstein, Holstein related the circumstances under which Germany would follow an aggressive policy toward Russia and gave a definition of the terms for an Anglo-German Alliance. Holstein stated:

I may observe for your [Eckardstein] personal opinion that the position [benevolent neutrality in the Far East] would be very different if there were a defensive alliance between Great Britain and Germany. This might be to the effect that each contracting party should fight one adversary on its own account, the treaty to come into force as soon as there were two or more adversaries. If in that case, England, probably with Japan, fought Russia alone, we should be neutral unless and until France joined in, which in that case it would certainly not do. Indeed, England and Japan would be so superior to Russia that the latter would give way without fighting when it came to the point.

But, meantime, you must on no account raise this

60 Eckardstein, Ten Years, pp. 202-203.
61 Ibid.
idea. It must come from them, and of this there is no prospect so long as Lord Salisbury is involved.

My personal view is that Germany could more easily accede to such a general defensive agreement than to a special agreement, concerning, say, Morocco, in which the danger would be the same and the advantages less. But I repeat, you must **not** raise this now, if only because I don't trust Lord Salisbury not to make use of a German overture in Petersburg.

If only we could pacify our public opinion with one single real material advantage that we have got from association with Great Britain. The Zanzibar agreement, where England got the lion's share, has left a bad impression, so has the Portuguese agreement which is still unrealized. Freiherr von Richthofen has just been in to show me the savage attacks . . . against Count von Buelow, who is accused of too great compliance with the English proclivities of the Kaiser. For this reason too I **EARNESTLY** hope England will meet us in the Chinese indemnity and customs question. Work for it all you can.63

During March the Far Eastern situation remained unchanged64 until Buelow delivered his Reichstag speech of March 15.65 The Chancellor stated that the October 16, 1900, Yangtze Agreement was "in no sense concerned with Manchuria" and "the fate of that province was a matter of absolute indifference to Germany."66 Until Buelow's speech, the British had interpreted the Yangtze Agreement as including Manchuria under the provision insuring the integrity of China,67 but the German interpretation destroyed Britain's belief that she could depend on German support for halting Russian ag-

---

65 Ibid., 11, 27.
66 Ibid., 26.
67 Ibid., I, 332-33.
gression in Manchuria. The British contested the German interpretation, and a long dispute followed over the proper interpretation of the Yangtze Agreement. The dispute increased the distrust between the two governments, but it was in this atmosphere of distrust and tension that Eckardstein offered Lord Lansdowne a defensive alliance.

---

CHAPTER IV

FRIEDRICH VON HOLSTEIN AND THE SECOND PHASE
OF THE 1901 ATTEMPT AT AN ALLIANCE

On March 19, 1901, Eckardstein telegraphed both the Berlin Foreign Office and Holstein that Lansdowne had offered Germany a defensive alliance.¹ In actuality Eckardstein had offered the British an alliance and, in so doing, had acted against official instructions, which stipulated that Eckardstein was to wait until Britain took the initiative by offering an alliance.² Eckardstein reported that the British had made the offer in order to avoid the suspicion of Holstein, who would have violently condemned him for having gone beyond his instructions.³ As early as March 9, Holstein stipulated that "on no account" was Eckardstein to suggest the possibility of an understanding.⁴ Holstein repeated the warning as late as March 17, the day before Eckardstein for-

¹G. p., XVII, 41-42.

²This March 13, 1901, meeting was the first record in the B. D. concerning the 1901 alliance question. R. D., II, 60-61, 69. Langer, Diplomacy, II, 729-30.


⁴Eckardstein, Ten Years, pp. 203-204.
mally offered an alliance. Holstein said, "I forbid you expressly, my dear friend, even to breathe a word about an alliance. The proper moment, if it ever comes, is certainly not now." Eckardstein had not received Holstein's March 17, warning until after he had offered an alliance, but he knew that he was not even to mention an understanding.5

Before Eckardstein offered an alliance, he attempted to prepare the Berlin Foreign Office for the announcement of a suggested agreement.6 He telegraphed Holstein on March 18, that Chamberlain had informed him that British proceedings with the Germans had been communicated to the Russians; therefore, Salisbury was considering accepting the Russian proposals for co-operation in China. Eckardstein may have felt that by employing the threat of a Russo-British understanding he might obtain the support of the Berlin Foreign Office for a British alliance. Chamberlain continued by stating that, except for the leakage of information to the Russians,7 Britain "would gladly approach Germany with far-reaching proposals which would assure it as great advantages as, or even greater advantages than ourselves."8 The Colonial Secretary still believed in the principle of an alliance.

5Eckardstein, Ten Years, p. 207.
6Ibid., p. 203. Eckardstein, Erinnerungen, II, 280-91
7Ibid., II, 277-78. Amery, Height of Power, IV, 153. Eckardstein, Ten Years, pp. 205-205.
8Ibid., p. 205.
but he would not initiate any action for an agreement, as in 1899, since "he was not particularly anxious to burn his fingers a second time."  

Holstein expressed apprehension over Eckardstein's report of leakages to Russia, but he reaffirmed his belief that Germany must not take the initiative in seeking an alliance with Britain. He informed Eckardstein that

it seems to be very significant that the British Government, while trying to push us forward, [The British desire for German support against Russia in the Far East,] says nothing about any alliance. Salisbury is more than ever the ruler of England.

If the British are driven by Salisbury and Chirnol [The Times reporter who favored a Russo-British agreement] into going with Russia, let them try it. It is the treaty of the wolf and the lamb.

Holstein felt that a Russo-British agreement was improbable and that the possibility of such an agreement was not a sufficient reason for offering the British an alliance.

Eckardstein disregarded Holstein's instructions and offered the British an alliance. Lord Lansdowne was skeptical of the German offer, particularly when Eckardstein stated that his suggestion was not authorized. Eckardstein told the Foreign Secretary that he was speaking with only limited authority. Lansdowne, though with reservations, in—

9The truth of Eckardstein's March 18, 1901, report is doubtful. Ibid.

10Ibid., pp. 205-206. 11 Ibid., pp. 206-207.

12 Ibid. Eckardstein, Erinnerungen, II, 279.
terpreted the offer as being legitimate. In Berlin Holstein and the Foreign Office shared Lansdowne's skepticism and particularly doubted Salisbury's support for an agreement, but, like Lansdowne, they accepted Eckardstein's report as fact. Thus the actions of Eckardstein led both the Germans and the British to believe that the other eagerly sought an alliance. In the official sense there was not a 1901 attempt at an Anglo-German understanding. Once this was known the alliance discussions seemed ridiculous and lessened the importance of the negotiations as the final opportunity for an Anglo-German understanding. This also gives rise to the highly speculative question that possibly there might have been an Anglo-German agreement if Eckardstein had not suggested an understanding in 1901. Whether a later agreement was possible or not, the alliance discussions in 1901 were important for the participants involved, and both nations seriously considered the possibility of an understanding.

13O. P., II, 60-61, '0-83.
14Gooch, Studies, p. 65.
15Amery, Height of Power, IV, 154.
16Gooch, Holstein Oracle, p. 468. Dreyer, Deutschland, passim.
17Langer, Diplomacy, II, 729.
18O. P., XVII, XVIII, passim. B. D., I, II, passim.
During a conversation on March 19, Lansdowne reported that Eckardstein had offered an alliance. Before Eckardstein had suggested an Anglo-German understanding, he and Lansdowne discussed the situation in the Far East—the averting of a Russo-Japanese war, the German interpretation of the Kandts Agreement, and the impossibility of Anglo-German

Eckardstein’s plan for an alliance was even more encompassing. At the same time that he offered Britain an alliance, Eckardstein suggested to the Japanese Ambassador in London, Baron Hayashi, that he offer Lord Lansdowne an Anglo-Japanese-German alliance directed against Russia in the Far East. Germany, said Eckardstein, was interested and would support such an agreement. Eckardstein said in his Memoirs, Eckardstein, Ten Years, p. 210-11, that he had suggested an Anglo-Japanese-German alliance in order to stimulate Lansdowne’s interest in an Anglo-German alliance and to prevent Japan from concluding a Far Eastern agreement with Russia. Baron Hayashi followed Eckardstein’s advice but only suggested an alliance between Japan and Britain to Lansdowne. Eckardstein, Ten Years, pp. 207-11. Japan and Britain eventually reached agreement in the Anglo-Japanese Treaty of 1902. The original idea for an Anglo-Japanese-German treaty came from Eckardstein and raises the question, if Eckardstein had not made the suggestion possibly Great Britain would have been forced to seek support from only Germany instead of Britain concluding the agreement with Japan in 1902.


Eckardstein’s and Lansdowne’s version of the March 19, 1901, conversation are completely different. Both attributed the initiative to the other, but apparently the Lansdowne version of the alliance was the more accurate. Eckardstein’s version was important, however, since it was the basis upon which the Foreign Office and Holstein acted in the 1901 alliance question.
action in the Far East. Lansdowne reported that Eckardstein said that Germany was unable to take any action in China but that she would consider "an understanding of a more durable and extended character" with Britain. Eckardstein stated that such an understanding would be of a purely defensive nature. It was to be directed against the Dual Alliance and would require any adherent of the agreement to provide support when two or more powers attacked an adherent of the alliance. Eckardstein said that Britain would benefit most from the alliance since Germany would be required to defend Britain's scattered Empire. Lord Lansdowne replied that Germany's lengthy frontier with Russia was just as vulnerable.

Lansdowne was receptive to the idea of an alliance, but he felt that several problems would have to be solved before the conclusion of an agreement. He believed that such a contract seemed ... to entail the adoption of an identical foreign policy by both powers in all their external relations, because every complication in which one of the two might become involved might first the other into the quarrel... it was far from easy to distinguish between the case in which a country was acting on the defensive and the case in which it was not. The first blow might be really struck in self-defense; or, conversely, an attack might be brought on by political action of a deliberately provocative character. How were our mutual obligations to be defined so as to meet all such cases fairly?

In addition to these problems, Lansdowne felt, Eckardstein's offer was a novel and very far-reaching one, which would

---

21 Ibid., II, 60-61.
22 Ibid., 61.
23 Ibid., 60-61.
require careful examination." He told Eckardstein that until he consulted his colleagues he was unable to give any encouragement as to the conclusion of such an agreement.\(^\text{25}\)

Eckardstein's record of the March 18, conversation is much more optimistic than Lansdowne's version. Eckardstein telegraphed that, after discussing the situation in the Far East, Lansdowne proposed a long-term defensive alliance. According to Eckardstein, Lansdowne said:

He believed that several of his most influential colleagues would favor the idea. England was now at a turning point and must make up its mind as to what line it would take in the future. But, should such an idea be put into concrete form by the Cabinet, no official proposal would be made to Germany until there was some certainty that Germany would be disposed in principle to accept it.

I replied that I was not in a position to tell him whether and to what extent the Imperial Government would favor such a proposal when made. If he would put forward a definite idea I would not fail to report it to Berlin.

I shall of course sit still and see whether Lord Lansdowne comes forward with anything in the next few days. I should however, be grateful for precise instructions as to my reply as soon as possible.

My impression is that the Cabinet here, including Salisbury, are really now at a parting of the ways as to their future policy in general and as to China in particular, and that in the course of the next few days we shall know definitely.\(^\text{26}\)

Eckardstein's version of the March 18, conversation was not an accurate account, but it was the basis upon which Holstein and the Berlin Foreign Office considered an alliance with

\(^{25}\)Ibid., 61.  
\(^{26}\)Eckardstein, Ten Years, pp. 207-208.  
G. P., XVII, 41-42.
Britain after March, 1901.

Buelow and the German Foreign Office gave serious consideration to Eckardstein's report. The Chancellor was receptive to the idea of an alliance, but he said it would be difficult to obtain the support of the Reichstag for such an agreement. Among the problems involved was the attitude and relationship of Germany's allies in the Triple Alliance toward an understanding. He also objected to Germany having to protect the threatened colonial possessions of Britain while German colonies were in no such dangerous position. Buelow said that the German government was no longer enthusiastic about obtaining colonial possessions, but the German public would be difficult to conciliate if Germany did not receive a share of any future colonial acquisitions by Britain. The discussions should continue, the Chancellor stated, if the proposed alliance assured only the security of present possessions and provided that Germany might receive future colonial concessions from the British. In the meantime Eckardstein was to inform the British to approach the Austrians. If the Austrians were willing, Germany would be ready to negotiate, and possibly Japan might be drawn into the agreement.²⁷

Buelow also agreed with Holstein's views on the possibility of an alliance.²⁸ Holstein informed Eckardstein

²⁷Ibid., XVII, 43-45.
that the present moment was decisive as Germany and Britain were at the parting of the ways. He felt an alliance was possible, but there were obstacles. The current propaganda for a Russo-German agreement in Germany was possible to overcome, but the most difficult obstacle to an alliance was the distrust between Germany and Britain. The British, he said, had recently become distrustful, but Germany has had such cause since Bismarck offered the British an alliance in 1887.

Holstein stated that German policy since 1887 had favored neither Russia nor Britain more than the other. The natural allies of Germany were Austria and Britain, but until the support of both were obtained it was necessary to maintain friendly relations with Russia.

Holstein then informed Eckardstein of Germany's terms for an alliance. He said:

To facilitate an exchange of views and to conciliate public opinion, it would be more practical to give the rapprochement the character of an accession by England to the Triple Alliance rather than an Anglo-German alliance.\(^2\)

Austria would gladly support such an idea, and to further facilitate negotiations the discussions should be transferred to Vienna. Chamberlain's charge of leakages to Russia would then be removed, and possibly some positive and useful agreement might be reached. Holstein felt that it was improbable that Salisbury was willing to offer any positive proposal.

\(^2\)Eckardstein, Ten Years, pp. 208-209.
but if the Prime Minister was serious a possible agreement might be obtained by conducting the negotiations through Vienna. If the negotiations progressed, Japan might even join the alliance.30

Eckardstein feared that, if he informed the British that the negotiations would have to be transferred to Vienna, the British would feel that Berlin was not serious about an agreement. The alliance discussions would come to an end, and all of his work would have been for nothing. He, therefore, failed to notify Lansdowne of the important stipulation, but he kept the Austrian Ambassador informed of the alliance discussions just in case the negotiations were transferred to Vienna.31

On March 23, Eckardstein reported that he had another profitable conversation with Lansdowne.32 According to Eckardstein, Lansdowne stated that he had submitted a memorandum for a possible defensive alliance to Balfour and Salisbury. The Prime Minister agreed to support a strictly defined defensive agreement, but Salisbury stated that all eventualities must be seriously considered and that a method

32The only record of this conversation is in the G. F. XVII, 46-48, and is based on solely Eckardstein’s reporting. The meeting probably never took place and the substance of the conversation probably occurred on March 18, 1901. For a more detailed discussion see Longer, Diplomacy, II, 730, and B. D., II, editorial note 61.
be devised for removing the opposition of Parliament to a long-term understanding. Eckardstein's reporting was incorrect as Salisbury definitely opposed an alliance. Eckardstein had possibly distorted the views of the British Prime Minister in order to obtain Berlin's support for an agreement.

The discussion then turned to the specific terms of the proposed alliance. Lansdowne, according to Eckardstein, asked if Germany would consent to an alliance, and Eckardstein replied in the affirmative if Britain joined the Triple Alliance and accommodated Germany in solving the outstanding questions facing the two nations. The British Foreign Secretary then enquired if the agreement was to be a defensive alliance or did the terms of the agreement stipulate that the *casus foederis* arose only when one of the parties to the understanding was attacked by two or more powers. Germany, said Eckardstein, preferred the latter. Lansdowne's next question was whether the agreement was to be secret or approved by Parliament? Eckardstein replied that the agree-


34 Ibid., 66-69.


36 This appears to be false. At this time the British were unaware that the German terms called for Britain to join the Triple Alliance.
ment must be approved by Parliament. He also added that the inclusion of Japan might be profitable. To avoid the suspicion of Berlin, Eckardstein telegraphed the Foreign Office that he had not suggested transferring the negotiations to Vienna as the discussions had not developed to that extent. 37

Buelow agreed with Eckardstein's replies to Lansdowne's questions and informed him that the next step was to wait until the British presented further suggestions for an alliance. 38 In addition to Buelow's instructions Holstein reminded Eckardstein that in order to avoid confusion and a misunderstanding the first real offer of an alliance must come through Vienna. Another advantage to negotiating in Vienna was that Germany would be more assured of British support to the Triple Alliance and would discourage the British from the idea of an Anglo-German alliance. The Vortragender Rat warned Eckardstein that he was to refrain from any action until Britain agreed to hold discussions in Vienna. Eckardstein continued to disregard Holstein's instructions and failed to inform Lansdowne that the negotiations were to be conducted in Vienna.

On March 26, Holstein complained that the alliance discussions were not progressing. He felt that the opposition of Salisbury to an agreement had delayed the negotiations

---

37 ibid., III, 143-144.  G. P., XVII, 48-49.
and that as long as Salisbury remained in power an understanding was impossible. Germany could only wait until the Prime Minister passed from power, and then an agreement might be concluded with the other cabinet ministers who were more favorable toward an alliance.\[39\]

On March 27, Holstein gave a more detailed exposition on the possibility of a British alliance in a memorandum dealing with the Far Eastern situation. At present, he said, Germany wished to maintain the best relations with Russia and would, therefore, continue her policy of neutrality in China. The opposition of Britain and Japan was sufficient to stop Russian aggression.\[40\] He stated:

All would be quite different if England would make up her mind to link herself at some time with the Triple Alliance, and if Japan came in also as a pendant to England. In this case England, who both in Asia and Europe is genuinely for a defensive policy, would serve as a counterweight to Japan's restlessness; but even if not, that new alliance would be so strong that the feelings of the other Powers would become less important to us than at this moment, when it is advisable to let Japan go her own way, even in company with England. The Japanese would reply to any German attempt at a rapprochement by asking if we would help them to enter Korea or get the Russians out of Manchuria. On this basis no understanding would be possible.\[41\]

As far as Holstein was concerned, these were the terms upon which an alliance was possible. Buelow agreed completely

---

\[41\] Ibid., 141. - C. L., XVII, 351.
with Holstein's views and had his memorandum dispatched to all the major German Embassies as a statement of German policy in the Far East and on the alliance question. The Chancellor commented on the Vortragender Rat's memorandum, "For Baron von Holstein. Many thanks for this masterly memorandum, with the conclusions of which I agree at all points."²

At the end of March, while the Germans waited for further developments in the alliance discussions, the British cabinet were seriously considering the merits of an alliance. On March 20, Lansdowne drew up a memorandum based on Eckardstein's offer of an understanding with Germany. He circulated the memorandum among the cabinet ministers, who were generally in favor of an agreement but who also expressed apprehension over the indefinite and far-reaching character of the proposal. The British felt that before the negotiations continued, if at all, more precise information was needed concerning the multi-contingencies involved in such an agreement.³

Lansdowne returned to the alliance question on March 29.⁴ During his conversation with Eckardstein he


³B. D., II, 62, 64.

⁴Ibid., 62, 64-65.
suggested that the alliance discussions be postponed for a time. He had made very little progress on the question since March 15, as Salisbury was ill and unable to discuss the matter. Lansdowne was also aware of Salisbury’s opposition to an alliance and was reluctant to discuss the matter with Eckardstein until he had consulted the Prime Minister. Eckardstein agreed to postpone the alliance discussions. He accepted the illness of Salisbury as a valid excuse for delaying the negotiations and told Lansdowne that there was currently a strong anti-British attitude in Berlin and that the sentiment of the Reichstag was not favorable toward the British. As he was going to Berlin, it was best to delay the discussions until after the Easter holidays.\textsuperscript{45} Eckardstein informed the German Foreign Office that the British had postponed the alliance discussions, but he did not give as a reason the objections of Lansdowne. He said that the interference of Berlin by sending the Stuebel mission to London had caused the British to postpone the discussion of an alliance.\textsuperscript{46}

To a certain extent, Eckardstein was correct in blaming the postponement of the alliance negotiations on Berlin’s sending of the Stuebel mission. The special mission had been sent in late March because of a report by

\textsuperscript{45}Ibid., 62.  
Count von Waldersee, who had stated that the British were
hindering a quick solution to the Chinese indemnity question
and the general problems in the Far East.\(^47\) Acting on the
basis of Waldersee's report, Buelow and the Kaiser, who was
apparently unaware of the alliance negotiations,\(^48\) sent to
London Dr. Oskar Stuebel, Head of the Colonial Department,
to obtain a quick settlement of the Chinese indemnity ques­tion
and the claims of German citizens for losses suffered
in the South African War.\(^49\) Holstein was not in favor of
the Stuebel mission, but he told Eckardstein that at the
time the success of the Stuebel mission was more important
than the alliance question, particularly for the Kaiser and
Buelow.\(^50\)

The Stuebel mission failed and, as Eckardstein
stated, strained Anglo-German relations at the important
moment when an alliance was under consideration.\(^51\) The Brit­
ish were highly displeased with Germany for raising the in­
demnity and South African claims questions. They were par­
ticularly annoyed at Germany's failure to notify them that a

\(^{47}\) Ibid., II, 209-90. Eckardstein, Ten Years,
p. 212.


\(^{49}\) G. P., XVII, 100-101n. **. For information on the
Stuebel mission see G. P., XVI, 392-400.

\(^{50}\) Eckardstein, Erinnerungen, II, 292.

\(^{51}\) Ibid., II, 289-92.
mission was being sent and when the more important issue of a war in the Far East was threatening. 52 Eckardstein claimed that the British dissatisfaction over the Stuebel mission prevented the conclusion of an alliance when all that was necessary for an understanding was the signing of the agree­
ment. He definitely had exaggerated the extent to which the negotiations had developed, but he was sincere in his con­demnation of the Berlin Foreign Office for sending Stuebel to London. In fact Eckardstein was so disturbed by Berlin's action that he submitted his resignation, which was not ac­cepted. 53 He probably submitted his resignation in fear that Dr. Stuebel and Berlin would discover his unorthodox role in the alliance discussions, and his fear of discovery was possibly a reason for his willingness to postpone the alliance discussions on March 29. 54

During April one of the Kaiser's outbursts against the British further hindered the possibility of an alliance and worsened Anglo-German relations. Eckardstein had re­ported that one of the British cabinet ministers felt Ger­many was untrustworthy as she constantly sought Russia's friendship. This accusation, the failure of the Stuebel

52 Holstein Papers, IV, 222-23.
54 Langer, Diplomacy, II, 731.
mission, and Britain's refusal to oppose Russian aggression in the Far East led the Kaiser to refer to the British cabinet ministers as "unmitigated noodles." The British learned of the Kaiser's accusation, and the result was a further strain in Anglo-German relations. The incident, as well as the Stuebel mission, might have been avoided if the Kaiser had been informed that an alliance had been under serious consideration.55

The Kaiser's displeasure with Britain resulted, in part, from his dissatisfaction over British policy in the Far East. The British had continued to refrain from any action in spite of reports of an agreement between Russia and China over Manchuria. Britain appeared content to allow the Japanese to halt the Russian by sending repeated threats that force would be employed unless Russia repudiated the Manchurian agreement. Finally on April 5, Russia notified the powers that she was no longer considering an agreement with China.56 Germany had hoped that Britain might unite with Japan and become involved in a Far Eastern conflict against Russia. In such a case Britain might have had to seek German assistance and possibly in the form of an alliance. British laxity in acting and the Russian announcement prevented such a situation from developing and lessened the tension in the

but these events had little affect in discouraging Eckardstein from continuing to seek an Anglo-German alliance. 58

In early April, 1901, Holstein returned to the question of a British alliance. He informed Eckardstein that when the alliance negotiations resumed there were two major points that must be agreed upon before an agreement could be concluded. If any member of the proposed alliance suffered attack by two or more powers, the remaining powers must come to its aid. Finally, the negotiations were to be conducted through Vienna, thereby gaining the support of public opinion for an alliance. He felt public opinion had to be considered in this matter and stated that if the alliance discussions were to succeed it was on the above terms. Holstein also warned that any further postponement and delay was not desirable. 59

Eckardstein replied to Holstein's dispatch that Lansdowne would probably raise the question of an alliance at any time. The reason why discussion had not resumed was because the British distrusted Germany, but Eckardstein added that with time the distrust would be removed and negotiations would resume. 60 Eckardstein met with Lansdowne on April 9,

---

57 *R. D.,* I, 332.  
G. P., XVII, 50-51.  
and told the British Foreign Secretary that the time had come to resume the alliance negotiations. Lansdowne replied that such an important question was impossible of discussion until Salisbury returned to Britain from his trip to the South of France. The Prime Minister was not scheduled to return until May 10.

Eckardstein again talked with Lansdowne on April 13. The British Foreign Secretary told Eckardstein that he would not discuss an alliance until the Prime Minister returned. Eckardstein then reminded Lansdowne that the alliance discussions were unofficial and that Kaiser Wilhelm II was not aware of the details of the negotiations. Lansdowne asked just how far was the Kaiser aware of the discussions? Eckardstein replied, after he "hummed and haa'd a great deal", said Lansdowne, that the ideas so far expressed agreed with the Kaiser's opinions as judged by individuals close to Wilhelm II. Eckardstein gave Holstein as an example, and apparently, Lansdowne had never heard of him.

Eckardstein's report is almost a complete contradiction of Lansdowne's version of the April 13, meeting. Eckardstein said that Chamberlain, Lansdowne, and Devonshire all desired an alliance and that even Salisbury would probably favor an agreement. "Times have changed," he said, and

---

62 B. P., XVII, 535n. r.  
63 T. P., II, 63-64.
the discussions would possibly resume next week. Not since
the initial offer of an alliance on March 18, had Eckard-
stein reported such an optimistic turn in the negotiations.64
Lansdowne, however, reported that he had refused to discuss
the subject and stated that he had grown quite sceptical of
Eckardstein's repeated attempts to renew the alliance nego-
tiations. He stated that much of what Eckardstein said was
not authorized. In fact, he believed, Eckardstein's views
were "de son propre cru." The British Foreign Secretary also
expressed grave doubts that anything would result from the
negotiations. In principle, he felt, an alliance was a good
idea, "but when each side comes, if it ever does, to formu-
late its terms, we shall break down; and I know Lord Salis-
bury regards the scheme with, to say the least, suspicion."65

As a result of Eckardstein's reporting, Holstein was
under the impression that the discussions were progressing.
He telegraphed Eckardstein reemphasizing and explaining why
the negotiations must proceed through Vienna. Holstein said
that the discussions must be held in Vienna in order to dis-
pel the Austrian apprehensions, which resulted from the en-
emies of the Triple Alliance proclaiming that Germany planned
the partition of the Austrian Empire. The Austrians were to

64 Eckardstein, Erinnerungen, II, 337. Amery,HEIGHT OF POWER, IV, 156.
65 B. D., II, 63-64.
have a leading role in the negotiations in order to reassure Austria's friendship. Eckardstein, as in many previous instances, failed to follow Holstein’s advice.66

On April 18, Eckardstein reported that both Britain and Japan showed a growing interest in a Far Eastern agreement with Germany. This was particularly true of the Japanese.67 In reply to Eckardstein's report Holstein warned that such an agreement was against the interests of Germany. If the three powers concluded such an understanding, which was certainly the desire of Britain and Japan, there would no longer exist any inducement for the British to join the Triple Alliance. It was Britain’s isolationist position in the Far East that would force her to conclude an alliance with Germany. Eckardstein was to refrain from encouraging the Japanese that a Far Eastern agreement was possible until the conclusion of a defensive alliance with Britain.68

By late April or early May, the German Foreign Office realized that the negotiations were not progressing. Salisbury was still out of the country. Lansdowne had been absent from London for some time, and a brief illness kept him from any work at the Foreign Office. Eckardstein had also

66 i., XVII, 53. Dugdale, German Diplomatic, III, lhl.
67 Eckardstein, Ten Years, pp. 218-19.
journeyed to Berlin. Since no progress seemed possible, German policy was to continue to wait until the British returned to the subject of an alliance and avert any incidents that might strain relations between London and Berlin.69

With Salisbury's return to Britain on May 10, the German Foreign Office sent elaborate instructions to London in preparation for the resumption of the alliance discussions. Bülow's instructions were very similar to those of Holstein. The only difference was that Holstein favored an agreement more than Bülow.70

Holstein stated the German policy on an alliance with Britain in a long, detailed, and hypothetically argued memorandum. He said that British adhesion to the Triple Alliance would create such a strong alignment of powers that peace would be assured or success in the case of any war. Such an alliance required that, if any signer of the proposed agreement was attacked by two or more powers, the remaining powers, who were party to the agreement, would aid the attacked power. Under such conditions, neither the German nor the British parliamentary bodies could object as both Germany and Britain were assured of support in case of an attack. These terms would remove the fear that either Britain or Germany would fail to grant support and remove

69 Holstein Papers, IV, 221-24.
70 G. P., XVI, 26-27.
Anglo-German distrust. An Anglo-German agreement, Holstein
stated, was impossible since it might increase Austrian dis-
trust of Germany. In fact the negotiations must proceed
through Vienna in order to dispel the Austrian fear that
Germany planned the partition of the Hapsburg Monarchy fol-
lowing the death of Emperor Francis Joseph. By going through
Vienna, Holstein said, neither Germany nor Britain would have
to fear that any information would pass to the Russians.
These were the only terms for an agreement and must not be
varied from in any way. 71

Eckardstein reported on May 15, that he had dis-
cussed an alliance with Lansdowne. 72 He said that Salisbury
had agreed, at least in principle, with the cabinet minis-
ters in favoring a defensive alliance with Germany, but men-
tioned that the Prime Minister had objections to the inclu-
sion of Austria and Italy in the arrangement. 73 Salisbury

71 Eckardstein, Erinnerungen, II, 3h4–h7.
72 There is no record of this conversation in the B. D.
73 B. D., II, 6h–65.

Eckardstein had been informed to tell the British
that the agreement was to be between Britain and the Triple
Alliance and not solely with Germany. Eckardstein did not
specifically state when he informed Britain of the stipula-
tion nor does the B. D. indicate. Lansdowne’s first refer-
ance to the stipulation was made on May 21. It appears that
between March 29, when the negotiations were temporarily
postponed, and May 23, Eckardstein informed the British that
the alliance was to include Italy and Austria. Since Lans-
downe did not record this conversation, it seems more than
likely that the B. D. do not contain the complete documents
of the 1901 alliance question or that the meeting never took
place.
felt that the addition of Austria and Italy complicated a probable treaty. For example, what would be the responsibilities of Britain in case Italy and Austria suffered attack? Britain must know definitely her responsibilities if such questions arose in Parliament. The Prime Minister particularly disliked the idea of uniting with the rather weak Slavic state of Austria and the Latin one of Italy. Lansdowne, reported Eckardstein, expressed confidence that Salisbury's objections could be overcome and that the time had arrived to put the terms in a written form. The terms would then be discussed point by point, but as before the discussions were to be of a purely academic nature with no binding obligations. Eckardstein also remarked that the time was still not appropriate to suggest transferring the negotiations to Vienna.

Hatzfeldt reported in a separate and later dispatch that he was highly skeptical of Britain's supposed willingness to conclude an agreement. It was particularly doubtful that Salisbury favored an alliance and even more doubtful that Lansdowne could persuade the Prime Minister to accept

74 The views reflected by Eckardstein as those of the British and particularly of Salisbury seem highly distorted, if not false. The British were not so favorable as indicated nor had the discussions developed to that extent. Langer, _Diplomacy_, II, 732.

the idea. Since neither he nor Eckardstein had discussed an alliance with Salisbury, it was too early and too dangerous to consider putting any views in a written form. The discussions had not progressed to that extent. Hatzfeldt said that Germany should not push the discussions but wait until the British acted, since rushing the negotiations would only create distrust.

Holstein and the Foreign Office agreed with Hatzfeldt. As Holstein stated there was no merit in discussing detailed questions and putting any ideas on paper until Britain agreed to join the Triple Alliance. An Anglo-German agreement, he said, was not desirable since such an understanding failed to provide Germany with protection. For example if Austria and Italy were not included in the alliance and Germany aided her Triple Alliance partners in a war, Britain might state that she was not required to support Germany when the latter was obligated to the Triple Alliance. British adhesion to the Triple Alliance would also assure peace since the other powers would not risk a war for fear of fighting both Britain and the Triple Alliance. Once Britain realized this fact and consented to join the Triple Alliance, Germany would agree to put matters on paper. As to Salisbury's objections, Holstein said, he was merely trying to avoid any definite obligations. German policy was to continue to wait

76 G. P., XVII, 63-64.
until Britain returned to the subject and agreed to accept
the German terms. Holstein warned that the British were not
to be rushed or pushed unnecessarily.\textsuperscript{77}

The alliance discussions resumed on May 20.\textsuperscript{78} Lans­
downe met with Hatzfeldt, who had recovered from an illness
which had prevented him from meeting with the British Foreign
Secretary since early in January. During their brief dis­
cussion they planned a meeting for May 23, at which time
they would discuss the alliance question.\textsuperscript{79} Eckardstein, at
this time, was not in London and was unaware of the scheduled
meeting until he returned to the Foreign Office on May 22.
On that same day Eckardstein, having found out about Hatz­
feldt's planned meeting with Lansdowne, discussed the possi­
bility of an alliance with the British Foreign Secretary.
 Immediately following their meeting, Eckardstein met with
Hatzfeldt and attempted to persuade the Ambassador not to
meet with Lansdowne on the next day. Eckardstein offered
three times to write a note to Lansdowne explaining why the
Ambassador would be unable to meet him, but Hatzfeldt re­
fused. Eckardstein probably feared that Hatzfeldt would
discover his unauthorized role in offering and discussing an

\textsuperscript{77}\textit{Ibid.}, 60-65.

\textsuperscript{78}\textit{Ibid.}, 63-64. Eckardstein, \textit{Erinnerungen}, II,
350.

On May 23, Eckardstein telegraphed Holstein the subject of his May 22, meeting with Lansdowne. In the most optimistic tones Eckardstein stated that the alliance discussions had resumed and that Britain had accepted the German terms for an alliance. Even Salisbury recognized that "splendid isolation" was no longer possible and only objected to an alliance on minor points, which could easily be overcome. Eckardstein concluded by asserting that he had arranged the May 23, meeting between Lansdowne and Hatzfeldt. Holstein's reaction to Eckardstein's report was one of skepticism that Salisbury had agreed to an alliance.

The most important discussion of the 1901 alliance negotiations took place on May 23, between Hatzfeldt and Lansdowne. The Ambassador, as a result of Eckardstein's reporting, was under the impression that Britain had practically agreed to an alliance and that they were aware of the German alliance terms. Hatzfeldt, therefore, merely repeated the German terms. The alliance was to be between Britain and the Triple Alliance with the casus foederis arising when any one signer of the agreement was attacked by

---

80 Ibid., 225-26.
82 G. P., XVII, 67n. ***.
83 Holstein Papers, IV, 225-26.
two or more powers. Public opinion, stated Hatzfeldt, prevented an agreement which would fail to insure support to Austria and Italy. The basis of German policy was to support Austria, and, if this had not been the case, Germany could have easily come to terms with Russia. It was only the Austro-Russian conflict of interests that prevented a Russo-German agreement. At the present time, Hatzfeldt said, unless Britain agreed to join the Triple Alliance, it was useless to discuss the more detailed questions of such an agreement.\(^\text{84}\)

Hatzfeldt had stated that the agreement was to be solely with the Triple Alliance. Lord Lansdowne was somewhat shocked at Hatzfeldt's statement since he was under the impression that the proposed agreement was not necessarily between the powers of the Triple Alliance and Great Britain. Lansdowne "told Count Hatzfeldt that this proposal seemed ... to go further than anything which we had yet discussed."\(^\text{85}\) Eckardstein, Lansdowne said, had earlier informed him that Austria and Italy were to be included in an agreement, but he had not explained that Britain was merely to join the Triple Alliance. The British Foreign Secretary said that, if Britain was to join the Triple Alliance, she would need to know the terms of that agreement. Hatzfeldt replied that


\(^{85}\) Ibid., 80.
there was nothing mysterious about the terms of the Triple Alliance.

Hatzfeldt's proposal, Lansdowne felt, would make it difficult to clearly distinguish when one of the parties to the agreement was attacked or merely defending itself. The implication was that each of the parties to the agreement possessed the right to determine the foreign policy of the other party. The British could not accept such terms as public opinion would not accept such a limitation upon her liberty of action. The many objections of Lord Salisbury also prevented the possibility of such an agreement, but Lansdowne told Hatzfeldt that he would submit the proposal to the Prime Minister and cabinet.

On the day following the May 23 meeting Lansdowne sent a note to Eckardstein requesting a promised memorandum. On May 22, Eckardstein had promised the British Foreign Secretary, without the sanction of the Berlin Foreign Office, a memorandum containing the detailed alliance terms of the Germans. Eckardstein received Lansdowne's request, but as he was leaving London he gave Lansdowne's note to Hatzfeldt. The Ambassador was completely ignorant that such a

87 B. D., II, 66.
document had been promised and informed Lansdowne that he
knew nothing about such a document and that, until he talked
with Eckardstein, he was unable to supply any information on
the matter.\textsuperscript{90}

Hatzfeldt telegraphed the Foreign Office about his
May 23, meeting and informed only Holstein of Lansdowne's
request for Eckardstein's promised memorandum.\textsuperscript{91} He told
Holstein that Eckardstein had definitely gone beyond Berlin's
instructions and was intriguing against him in hope of re­
placing him as Ambassador.\textsuperscript{92}

In the meantime Eckardstein had learned what had
passed at the May 23, meeting and spread the rumor that
Hatzfeldt had gone beyond Berlin's instructions in the nego­
tiations with Lansdowne. Eckardstein even made a trip to
Berlin\textsuperscript{93} and informed Holstein and other officials that
the old and mentally weak Ambassador was unfit for his post.\textsuperscript{94}
Remarkable as it may seem, Holstein believed Eckardstein in­
stead of his life-long friend, Count Hatzfeldt. In a letter
to the Ambassador, Holstein answered Hatzfeldt's charge that

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{90} B. D., II, 70.
\item \textsuperscript{91} G. P., XVII, 65-67n. ***.
\item \textsuperscript{92} Holstein Papers, IV, 225-37.
\item \textsuperscript{93} Ibid., 231-34.
\item \textsuperscript{94} Ibid., 225-34. Eckardstein, Ten Years, pp. 220-21.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
Eckardstein was intriguing against him. He said:

Everything I know of his Eckardstein activities tends to show that he wants to help you. Thus during the long time when you were completely out action, he did not say a single word about your condition in the Ministry here, not even to me.

... had he, Eckardstein not been present, the Kaiser would by now have sent someone else to London to take over...

I must warn you most definitely against breaking with Eckardstein.

His Majesty, and I... also the Chancellor, regard Eckardstein as the necessary official complement in view of your physical immobility.95

As a result of Hatzfeldt's age and illness, Holstein also believed that the Ambassador had "summoned Lord Lansdowne to come to terms with Germany at the May 23 meeting."96 Eckardstein had also informed Lansdowne that Hatzfeldt had gone beyond his instructions on May 23.97 Lansdowne, acting on the basis of Eckardstein's information, believed that Hatzfeldt had "pushed matters rather too far and too fast"98 and "that Hatzfeldt's intervention had led to a good deal of misunderstanding, and that he must have represented my conversation with him as indicating much more alacrity on our part than we have actually exhibited."99

\[95\text{Holstein Papers, IV, 227-28.}\]
\[96\text{B. D., II, 35. Holstein Papers, IV, 231-32.}\]
\[97\text{B. D., II, 87. Eckardstein, Erinnerungen, II, 353-56.}\]
\[98\text{Ibid., 31.}\]
\[99\text{Ibid., 70.}\]
Eckardstein's intrigue was that Count Hatzfeldt was eventually removed from his post as Ambassador to Great Britain.  

While Eckardstein conducted his intrigue, Hatzfeldt requested Berlin for instructions on the alliance negotiations. Holstein informed the Ambassador that Germany was unable to provide Lansdowne with the terms of the Triple Alliance and that to avoid any indiscretion nothing was to appear in writing before Britain agreed, at least in principle, to the German terms. He then repeated the terms of an alliance and his earlier instructions. As to the British request for Eckardstein's promised memorandum, Holstein telegraphed that  

There can be no question of a written memorandum for the present, that is, not until we are agreed on the basic principles. You would have to be specifically empowered from here before such a memorandum could be handed over.  

On May 20, Lansdowne sent Hatzfeldt a second request for the promised memorandum of Eckardstein as well as the terms of the Triple Alliance. The apprehensive Ambassador immediately

---

100 For one of the most scholarly and detailed treatments of Eckardstein's intrigue against Hatzfeldt see Heinrich Freiherr von Hoyningen genannt Huene, Untersuchungen zur Geschichte des Deutschen-Englischen Buendnisproblems, 1898-1901 (Breslau, 1934), pp. 123n. 494. Hereafter cited as Huene, Untersuchungen.

101 Holstein Papers, IV, 229-32.

102a. P., XVII, 67-68.

103 Holstein Papers, IV, 227-28.
informed Berlin of Lansdowne's request\textsuperscript{104} and asked for instructions as to what he was to tell Lansdowne concerning the promised memorandum and if he raised the question of an alliance. Hatzfeldt warned that if the problem was not handled with care there was a likelihood of alienating the British.\textsuperscript{105}

Holstein telegraphed the Ambassador on May 29, that

\begin{quote}
when the first written document in the alliance question leaves our hand, the first formal suggestion of an alliance comes from us—exactly what we wish to avoid. To decide on the principle whether an attack on the Triple Alliance should raise the casus foederis for England, the English require nothing in writing. When England has expressed herself on the principle, written notes, for instance on the meaning of the word attack, can be exchanged. Till then, in my opinion, we should give nothing in writing.\textsuperscript{106}
\end{quote}

He added that, if Britain failed to agree to the general principles of an alliance, Germany would have no proof that the intentions of the British were serious. There was an exception. If Lansdowne requested information on certain points, which indicated clearly that the initiative came from Britain, then possibly Germany would supply the information requested.\textsuperscript{107}

Hatzfeldt agreed with Holstein that the two governments should not put anything in writing or that Germany should supply Lansdowne with the promised memorandum, but he

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{104}G. P., XVII, 68-70. B. D., II, 70-71.
\textsuperscript{105}G. P., XVII, 70.
\textsuperscript{106}Ibid. Gooch, Before the War II, 11.
\textsuperscript{107}G. P., XVII, 70-71.
\end{flushright}
felt that it was necessary to assure Britain's continued interest in an alliance. Like Holstein, the Ambassador believed that, if and when both countries agreed to the principles of an alliance, then a document similar to Eckardstein's promised memorandum could be exchanged and would be useful. In the meantime Hatzfeldt said he would not mention an alliance until the British had, and then the conversations would remain academic as in the past.

While the Germans waited for the alliance discussions to resume the British were seriously considering the German terms for an alliance. Following the May 23, meeting, Lansdowne drew up a memorandum on the history of the 1901 alliance negotiations. He submitted the memorandum to Salisbury and the cabinet and directed Under-Secretary, T. H. Sanderson to draft a treaty based on the German terms. Sanderson drew up two slightly different and incomplete treaties. He stated that it was difficult to draft any detailed or complete treaty without full knowledge of the terms. This may have been the reason for Lansdowne's anxious request for the terms of the Triple Alliance and for Eckardstein's promised memorandum. Sanderson felt that Britain would gain little from such an alliance, but his opposition to an understanding was not as strong as that of Lord

---

The Prime Minister reviewed the German alliance terms and drew up a masterly memorandum in which he maintained his traditional position of opposition to any alliance. Salisbury stated:

*It is open to much question whether the bargain would be for our advantage. The liability of having to defend the German and Austrian frontiers against Russia is heavier than that of having to defend the British Isles against France... In its most naked aspect the bargain would be a bad one for this country.*

As to the threat of British isolation, Salisbury argued on the basis of historical precedent. Britain could only be saved by control of the Channel and the seas, and never in her past had any power been able to protect or aid the Island, nor was such protection ever really necessary. Isolation, he felt, was no great danger. He questioned:

> Have we ever felt that danger practically? ... it is impossible for us to judge whether the "isolation" under which we are supposed to suffer, does or does not contain in it any elements of peril. It would hardly be wise to incur novel and most onerous obligations, in order to guard against a danger in whose existence we have no historical reason for believing.

The Prime Minister stated that an alliance was impossible because of one important fact. In case of war, Salisbury said:

> The English Government... must depend on the view taken by public opinion in this country, and public

---

opinion would be largely, if not exclusively, governed by the nature of the *casus belli*.\textsuperscript{114}

As far as the British were concerned, the opposition of Salisbury ended any prospect of concluding an alliance based upon the German terms.\textsuperscript{115}

Before Lansdowne informed the Germans of Salisbury's negative attitude, Eckardstein met with the Foreign Secretary and postponed the alliance discussions. Eckardstein remarked that since Hatzfeldt had gone beyond his instructions on May 23, that it was best to postpone any further discussion until a more opportune time. Lansdowne agreed and waited for the Germans to resume the negotiations.\textsuperscript{116}

On June 7, Lansdowne met with Hatzfeldt, but an alliance was not discussed. The meeting with Lansdowne was the last one for Hatzfeldt, who was soon to be removed from his post. The British Foreign Secretary felt that since Hatzfeldt was leaving any discussion of an alliance would be of little value.\textsuperscript{117} The Ambassador held a similar opinion. He believed that, since Lansdowne had not raised the subject of an alliance, he would probably not do so in the future.\textsuperscript{118}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{114}Ibid., 69.\\
\textsuperscript{115}Ibid., 68-69. \hfill Dreyer, Deutschland, pp. 83-89.\\
\textsuperscript{116}B. D., II, 71-72, 76-77, 80-83, 87-88.\\
\textsuperscript{117}Ibid., 71-72.\\
\textsuperscript{118}Holstein Papers, IV, 229-31.\end{flushright}
The British Foreign Secretary stated that he was quite content to mark time for a while. I doubt whether it will be possible to make anything of what for convenience sake I would describe as the Eckardstein proposal, and if we are to consider some alternative form of agreement, perhaps limited to particular eventualities—it could be more conveniently examined when Bätzfeldt has left.\[119\]

During June, Eckardstein attempted to resume the negotiations, but Lansdowne refused saying that the members of the cabinet were too involved with parliamentary matters. He said that consideration of such a "momentous" question would have to wait until later.\[120\] The British and the German Foreign Office continued to wait for the other to resume the alliance discussions, but neither took the initiative.\[121\] Holstein and the Germans were confident that the British would eventually seek an alliance with Germany.\[122\]

\[119\] B. ii, 71-72.
\[121\] Ibid., 71-72, 80-83, 76-79, 69. G. P., XVII, 68f.
\[122\] G. P., XVII, 72, 74. Gooch, Holstein Oracle, p. 469.
On June 12, Holstein reviewed the alliance discussions in a detailed and lengthy memorandum. After discussing the alliance negotiations of 1887, Holstein commented on the nature of British foreign policy.\(^1\) He stated:

British policy, indeed, rested on the conviction that a continental struggle was inevitable, and that Great Britain would profit by a conflict in which she took no part. In other words it was the business of other Powers to pull the chestnuts out of the fire for her. This cat's paw theory, which has gradually become a fetish for a certain school of English politicians, is beyond doubt the cause of the universal hatred of England to-day. No one likes being duped, and the people of the Continent have gradually reached the conviction that England is out to dupe them. Salisbury has carried out this policy more openly than any of his predecessors.\(^2\)

Following an attack on the British Prime Minister, Holstein continued by reviewing Anglo-German relations. He said that since the meeting at Cowes in 1895 the two nations relations had deteriorated until the relationship was dominated by mistrust. The only satisfactory result of the past association between the two governments was the tenuous merit that arose from agreements over particular questions. Further limited

\(^1\)G. p., XVII, 83-88.
\(^2\)Ibid. Gooch, Holstein Oracle, p. 466.
agreements were impossible, he felt, because such agreements failed to bring Germany any significant compensation.

Holstein continued by tracing the alliance negotiations since 1898 and reiterated the German terms for an alliance in 1901.3 He stated:

If we assume the immense burden and responsibility of defending the British Empire, with all its colonies against all comers, the Triple Alliance must be regarded as a whole, just like the British Empire, so that for instance an attack on Austria or Italy by two or more Powers would call not only the members of the Triplce but also England into the field. An alliance of England with Germany alone would make the position of the latter worse instead of better. For since the contents of the treaty would be published, her opponents would know that if they attack Austria, and Germany goes to her assistance, England will take no part. But the inclination to fight with Germany would be greatly enhanced when it was known that in certain eventualities she is pledged to support Great Britain. At present we feel strong enough not to hurry in the search for support. Moreover we believe that the current of events will probably one day bring Germany and England together. In times of excitement we have avoided building dams which would impede the flow of the stream, and we will retain our freedom as long as we can.4

Holstein felt that there would be a definite advantage gained from transferring the negotiations to Vienna. The Austrian fear that Germany planned the partition of the Austro-Hungarian Empire would be removed, and such a transfer would lessen Anglo-German distrust. Negotiating in Vienna, he felt, would have the support of public opinion in both Germany and Britain. He concluded that future alliance

3G. p., XVII, 83-83.
discussions must be conducted in Vienna, even if Salisbury opposed the idea. In the memorandum Holstein had stated the German terms for an agreement and reaffirmed Germany's policy of waiting until the British returned to the alliance question.5

Not until July did Eckardstein report that the British had again expressed an interest in discussions with Germany, but it was for a limited understanding over the growing problem of Morocco.6 In January Eckardstein had reported that Chamberlain had favored a limited agreement over Morocco, which might possibly lead to an alliance, but the Berlin Foreign Office had disregarded the idea.7 By July the affairs in Morocco had worsened and the Sultan of Morocco, Abdel Aziz, had claimed that France planned aggressive actions against his sultanate. After the request of Abdel Aziz for support, Britain sought to discover the attitude of Germany on the question.8 According to Eckardstein, the British desired to conclude an agreement with Germany over Morocco.9

The German Foreign Office responded to Eckardstein's report by declaring German policy in Morocco to be the maintenance of the status quo.10 As Buelow stated, "In this

5G. P., XVII, 83-88.
6Ibid., 333n. **. Eckardstein, Erinnerungen, II, 258.
7Ibid. Anderson, Morocco, pp. 11-15.
9Ibid., 92-93, 339-42.
matter we must for the time being maintain complete reserve and act the part of the sphinx.\(^{11}\) Holstein echoed these sentiments by stating that, as long as the position of the powers remained unchanged, Germany policy was to refrain from any action. Such a policy, he felt, agreed with the British view as they as well as the French had no desire to push the issue.\(^{12}\) Morocco was not important enough for Germany to risk a war over by concluding a limited agreement with Britain.\(^{13}\) The negative attitude of Holstein and the Berlin Foreign Office prevented Eckardstein from resuming the alliance negotiations on the basis of a possible agreement over Morocco.\(^{14}\)

By July the Germans felt that the alliance negotiations, which had begun in March were now ended, and that sometime in the future the British would return to the subject.\(^{15}\) The British, at this time, believed that the alliance discussions were only postponed and waited for the German government to resume the negotiations.\(^{16}\)

Eckardstein, during the remaining months of 1901, failed to achieve the resumption of the alliance discussions.\(^{17}\)

\(^{11}\)Ibid., 333. Langer, Diplomacy, II, 710.
\(^{12}\)G. P., XVII, 333. \(^{13}\)Ibid., 88.
\(^{15}\)G. P., II, 85. \(^{16}\)Ibid., 80-83.
\(^{17}\)G. P., XVII, 100-109. Eckardstein, Ten Years, p. 240.
He was prevented from conducting such independent action by Count Paul von Metternich's strict control of the German Embassy in London. Metternich refrained from initiating any independent action and followed Berlin's instructions on the alliance question. He made no effort to broach the subject of an alliance and waited to receive any British overtures, but neither the British nor the Germans renewed the alliance negotiations.

The only reference to an understanding, before the alliance discussions resumed in December, came in August during a meeting between the Kaiser and King Edward VII at Homburg. In preparation for the meeting Holstein dispatched instructions to Buelow, who was to inform the Kaiser, as to German policy. On the subject of an alliance Holstein advised that Germany should wait until Britain again suggested an understanding, which, in order to be acceptable, required Britain to join the Triple Alliance. If the British made such an offer, he felt that the opposition of Salisbury would prevent an understanding. Holstein instructed Buelow that the Kaiser's duty was to preserve friendly relations with the British and emphasize Britain's need for German support. The Kaiser agreed to follow Holstein's instructions.

---

18bid.  
19B. D., II, 84-86.  
20bid., 80-83.  
The discussion of Wilhelm II and King Edward VII concerned the foreign policy of the two governments, and as a result they referred to the possibility of an alliance. Both leaders were disappointed that the alliance negotiations of March and May had not resulted in a formal understanding. The Kaiser was particularly displeased, and his comments may have damaged the possibility of resuming the negotiations. King Edward VII and the Kaiser concluded the Hamburg meeting with a repetition of the old cliche for a desire of better relations and a future alliance. 22

Following the Hamburg meeting, Holstein repeated his views on a British alliance in a lengthy memorandum on German foreign policy. He attacked Salisbury asserting that the Prime Minister was untrustworthy and desired to involve Germany in a Continental war. Since Salisbury had no desire for an alliance with Germany, Holstein felt, there was no prospect for the conclusion of an understanding. Buelow and Metternich agreed with Holstein and believed Germany should continue to seek the friendship of Russia. 23


Holstein told Chirol that Germany was becoming powerful, and this fact reduced Britain's freedom to reject a German alliance. If the British failed to realize this fact, Germany might form a Continental league against Britain; however, Germany favored an Anglo-German understanding, which would assure the "pacification of Europe." Following a lengthy history of how Britain had caused Germany to distrust the British, Holstein discussed the 1901 alliance negotiations of which Chirol was completely unaware. He stated that an alliance was never really considered as an actual possibility. Germany was not in need of such an agreement as she was on the best of terms with Russia, but the major obstacle to an understanding had been the opposition of Salisbury. As long as the Prime Minister remained in power, Holstein said, an alliance was impossible, but he, Buelow,
and the Kaiser believed that time would gradually bring the two governments together. Such an understanding would probably be concluded after he had passed from power. Holstein felt that for the present, "All that could be done was to leave the future open."25

In a subsequent memorandum Holstein developed his ideas further and reviewed the terms of a British alliance. The British were to join the Triple Alliance with the agreement coming into effect when one of the parties to the understanding was attacked by two or more powers. Such an agreement could maintain the world balance of power and could easily obtain the approval of public opinion since the agreement would insure peace and no combination of powers would consider attacking such a powerful alliance. Holstein said that, unfortunately, such an understanding was unlikely while Salisbury remained in power; however, Germany could wait until a more opportune time for the conclusion of an agreement. Buelow approved Holstein's memorandum and stated that the Vortragender Rat's views supported Germany's policy of seeking Russian friendship, while still hoping for the possibility of an alliance with Britain. Germany, the Chancellor said, "must make hope glitter on the horizon," thereby

preventing Britain from co-operating with Russia.\textsuperscript{26}

Holstein's hope of gaining British support through Chirol's newspaper articles proved impossible when Chamberlain, in a speech at Edinburgh, created an antagonism between Britain and Germany that nearly equaled that following the Kruger telegram.\textsuperscript{27} On October 25, Chamberlain spoke in defense of Britain's harsh methods in suppressing the Boers. British actions, the Colonial Secretary stated, were still below the precedents established by other nations in time of war. He gave Germany during the war against France in 1870 as an example, but he also referred to the war practices of other nations.\textsuperscript{28}

German public opinion reacted violently and accused Chamberlain of attacking the honor of the Germany army. The Kaiser and Buelow, as well as Holstein, also expressed shock at Chamberlain's speech. The issue disturbed Anglo-German relations from November, 1901, to February, 1902, and resulted in Buelow attacking the British in the Reichstag as well as the Kaiser demanding a formal apology.\textsuperscript{29} Chamberlain was just as furious as the Germans and felt that an alliance

\textsuperscript{26}Ibid., 332-36. \quad \textit{G. I.}, XVII, 106-109.

\textsuperscript{27}Holstein Papers, IV, 247.

\textsuperscript{28}Langer, \textit{Diplomacy}, II, 774.

with Germany was impossible. In such an antagonistic atmosphere an alliance appeared unlikely, but, at this time, Lansdowne and the British Foreign Office were again seriously considering a defensive agreement with Germany.

Lansdowne believed that the alliance discussions had never been formally closed and was under the impression that the Germans would return to the subject in the fall. Since the Germans had not resumed the alliance negotiations, the British Foreign Secretary felt that he should again raise the question or that Germany might accuse Britain of suddenly breaking off negotiations in an unfriendly manner. Lansdowne had also received information that Germany was still interested in an agreement, and he felt that, to avoid any misunderstanding, the Germans should be informed of the British position.

The British began to reconsider an alliance with Germany in November. Lansdowne drew up an elaborate memorandum reviewing the 1901 negotiations and the possibility of an alliance with Germany. He also instructed Sir Frances Bertie, Assistant Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, to draw up a memorandum on the merits of an agree-

---

31 B. D., II, 76-79.
32 Ibid., 73-79. B. S. F. P., XCV (1901-1902), 81-95.
ment. Bertie and Lansdowne agreed that an alliance was im-
possible, and Salisbury was definitely opposed to an agree-
ment. Lord Lansdowne hoped that possibly the two governments
might consider a limited agreement over a particular issue;
however, Salisbury even opposed that idea. As Lansdowne
stated, an alliance with Germany was "a very stiff fence to
ride at.”

On December 19, Lansdowne met with Count Metternich
and informed him of the British position. During their con-
versation, the two men reviewed the alliance negotiations
since the discussions began in March. Metternich agreed with
Lansdowne that the German terms were for a defensive alliance
between Great Britain and the Triple Alliance. The British
Foreign Secretary stated that Britain desired an under-
standing, but the opposition of public opinion and the un-
obtainable sanction of Parliament prevented the conclusion
of an agreement. He hoped that possibly some limited agree-
ment on a particular issue might be concluded. Metternich
replied that he was disappointed that the British had refused
such a favorable opportunity for the conclusion of an agree-
ment. Such an opportunity might not again occur. The Am-
bassador remarked that, since Britain had refused to conclude
an understanding, Germany would probably move closer to
Russia. Both men agreed that at the present time circum-

33 B. D., II, 73-79. 34 Ibid., 81.
stances appeared unfavorable for an agreement. As to the possibility of a limited agreement, Metternich replied, that the Berlin Foreign Office was not receptive to such an idea and "it was a case of the 'whole or none.'" Britain would not join the Triple Alliance, and Germany would not consider an agreement on any other terms. Thus ended the Anglo-German attempt at an alliance in 1901.  

Count Metternich communicated the substance of his conversation to the German Foreign Office, where it was felt that he had conducted himself in proper fashion. The Berlin Office expressed some shock that Lansdowne had again raised the subject of an alliance. They believed that the discussions had ended in June when Britain had failed to renew the negotiations. Holstein felt that the alliance discussions had ended with Hatzfeldt's recall and expressed some distress that the British had returned to the issue. He believed that it was a possible attempt on the part of Salisbury to snub the Germans.  

The alliance discussions ended on a positive note and failed to indicate any great change in policy or relations on the part of either the British or German governments. At the end of 1901 the Kaiser and King Edward VII  

---

36Ibid. B. D. II, 83-84.
37Ibid., 84-86.
exchanged letters expressing a desire for better relations and a possible future agreement.\textsuperscript{38} The Chancellor and Lansdowne expressed similar hopes.\textsuperscript{39} Holstein held a similar opinion and wrote Chirol that the public antagonism, which resulted from Chamberlain's speech against the German army and Buelow's retaliations in the Reichstag, prevented the conclusion of an alliance. In the letter to Chirol, he said that he always favored an understanding with Britain and that he would always work for better relations and the conclusion of an alliance between Great Britain and Germany.\textsuperscript{40} Holstein believed that the failure to conclude a British alliance, which he had doubted as being possible, had in no way hindered the conclusion of an agreement in the future or that the failure required Germany to change her policy toward the British. Britain would again seek an alliance with Germany and on German terms.\textsuperscript{41} The main objective of German policy, he asserted, was to remain on friendly terms with Great Britain. British friendship was obtainable by removing the antagonism caused by the Buelow-Chamberlain feud and avoiding all action that might cause further distrust between the two nations. Germany, Holstein believed,
could look to the future with optimism and the real possibility of obtaining a British alliance.\textsuperscript{42}

\textsuperscript{42}Ibid., IV, 257ff.
CONCLUSIONS

The alliance negotiations of 1901 between Great Britain and Germany failed to result in an understanding. During the negotiations German policy, to a great extent, was determined by Friedrich von Holstein. The fact that Holstein was merely a Vortragender Rat had very little effect in limiting his influence and may have enhanced his ability to gain control of German policy. He was able to secure his extensive power as the Chancellors following Bismarck were not well-informed on foreign affairs and were, as a result, forced to depend more upon the advice of the Foreign Office. As the most informed Vortragender Rat in the Wilhelmstrasse, Holstein obtained a considerable influence over the direction of foreign policy.

In 1901 Holstein determined much of the German policy toward an alliance with Great Britain. Buelow had placed the alliance question in the hands of Holstein, and the Chancellor had generally followed the Vortragender Rat's advice during the negotiations. In numerous dispatches and memoranda Holstein influenced Germany's policy by stipulating and justifying the German terms for an alliance. His detailed explanations of how the negotiations should be con-
ducted and his almost day-to-day instructions enabled him to maintain as strict a control over the alliance negotiations as could be exercised from the Berlin Foreign Office.

More important than Holstein's method of influencing Germany's alliance policy was his influence on the success or failure of the alliance negotiations. Holstein always desired an alliance with Great Britain, but in 1901 he felt that such an understanding was improbable. He believed that the British would not accept Germany's terms and that the opposition of Salisbury would prevent the conclusion of an agreement. In addition the Vortragender Rat felt that there was no great need for a British alliance in 1901, and he was confident that Britain, at some future time, would seek an alliance on German terms. His skepticism about the possibility of concluding an understanding governed German policy and, at least from the German point of view, prevented the conclusion of an alliance with Great Britain in 1901.

Holstein's influence on Germany's alliance policy was not the only factor that prevented an Anglo-German understanding. Like Holstein, the British were skeptical about the prospect of concluding an agreement, but the opposition of Salisbury assured the impossibility of an alliance. Another reason that contributed to the unsuccessful conclusion of an alliance was the damage to Anglo-German relations that resulted from the actions of the Kaiser. More detrimental to an understanding was the steady growth of a feeling of
distrust between the two governments and the antagonistic public opinion in both countries. These factors, plus Holstein's opposition, prevented an alliance in 1901 but did not necessarily mean that the conclusion of an alliance was impossible during the period from 1901 to the outbreak of World War I.

A number of historians, besides feeling that Holstein prevented an understanding in 1901, believe that the failure to obtain an Anglo-German alliance is the greatest error in Imperial German foreign policy. They believe this because no other serious attempt was made to secure an alliance after 1901. These historians reason that, had an alliance been concluded in 1901, Britain would not have turned to France and Russia for support. As a result they suggest that 1901 is the turning point in Anglo-German relations and that from that time World War I appeared inevitable. These historians, however, misinterpret the significance of the unsuccessful alliance negotiations and Anglo-German relations, as well as European relations, in 1901 and following years. The failure to conclude an alliance did not result in a sharp break between Great Britain and Germany. In 1901 and immediately thereafter there was no indication that Britain would move toward France and Russia instead of Germany and not conclude an Anglo-German alliance. In these circumstances Holstein's reluctance to seriously consider a British alliance and the failure of an understanding in 1901 did
not prevent a later agreement or make World War I inevitable.

One of the remarkable aspects of the 1901 negotiations is that Holstein was able to formulate much of the German policy toward Great Britain. A mere Vortragender Rat in the Berlin Foreign Office had obtained such great influence that he could, and did, determine the course of German policy in the alliance negotiations. Whether or not Holstein's influence on foreign affairs was positive or negative will long remain a controversial question. What is not controversial is that responsible individuals in the German government permitted such a person as Holstein to wield extensive power, without at the same time accepting a corresponding degree of public responsibility. Nothing better illustrates the above fact than the ability of Friedrich von Holstein to avoid the responsibility for his actions while determining much of German policy in the 1901 alliance negotiations between Great Britain and Germany.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

I. SOURCES


*These letters supplied a valuable insight into Salisbury's character and his attitude toward Germany.*


*The vain memoirs of the German Chancellor are unreliable but contain interesting information on Eckardstein and Holstein.*


*This highly selective book of documents was helpful in providing translations of the German documents.*


Eckardstein's memoirs are more vain than even Buelow's but just as incriminatory. The memoirs are unreliable but contain the invaluable dispatches between Eckardstein and Holstein during the 1901 alliance negotiations.

*Ten Years at the Court of St. James, 1895-1905.* trans. and ed. George Young. London: Thornton Butterworth Ltd., 1921.

*The book is a translation of Eckardstein's memoirs cited directly above.*


*These documents contain the British version of the 1901 negotiations but like the German documents are helpfully organized by subject matter instead of*
by chronology. The documents correct many of the inaccuracies of the German documents on the 1901 alliance negotiations.

Great Britain. British and Foreign State Papers. XCIV-XCVI (1900-1903).

These documents were a helpful supplement to the British and German documents on the situation in China in 1901.


The German documents were a major source for this study and particularly valuable for the views of Holstein; however, it would have been more helpful if the documents had been arranged by chronology. The documents are one of the greatest aids for the historian in evaluating German history and pre-World War I European diplomacy. These documents contain the most extensive coverage of the 1901 negotiations.


Lichnowsky's memoirs contain interesting comments on Holstein and the importance of the 1901 negotiations.


These memoirs provide information on the connection between the 1901 alliance and Anglo-Japanese Treaty of 1902 negotiations and on the role of Eckardstein in these negotiations.


Holstein's papers contain material on the 1901 negotiations that is not available in any other source and give the most complete picture of Holstein's character and influence. The papers are a necessity for any study of German and European history from 1860 to 1914. The importance of these four volumes cannot be overemphasized for any study of Holstein or European history in the decades preceding World War I.
Temperley, Harold, and Fenson, Lillian M. Foundations of British Foreign Policy from Pitt (1792) to Salisbury (1902) or Documents, Old and New. Cambridge: At the University Press, 1933.

The work supplies significant documents on the foreign policy of Lord Salisbury and Anglo-German relations.

II. SECONDARY WORKS

BOOKS


The work is anti-Holstein and critical of German policy in 1901. Amery accepts the truth of Eckardstein's memoirs.


Anderson's work is an excellent study on the Moroccan question and provided important information on the Moroccan aspect of the 1901 negotiations, as well as some very astute comments on the Kaiser.


Asquith had some interesting comments on Anglo-German relations and was ignorant of the 1901 negotiations.


This study is an excellent interpretation and was helpful on the foreign policies of the various powers in China in 1901.


Becker is particularly critical of Buelow's
foreign policy in this study and supplies important information on Holstein's influence.


Though not well-documented, this study provides important details on the alliance question and interesting comments on the Kaiser.


In spite of the publication date, Brandenburg's study is for the most part accurate and gives a detailed version of the 1901 alliance negotiations. The work also contains valuable information on Holstein.


Buelow's comments in this volume were useful in ascertaining his policy toward Britain.


This work only supplied a very general background to the problem of the Far East in 1901.


This biography contains little on the 1901 negotiations but is necessary for the consideration of Salisbury's foreign policy.


Though general in nature, this work was helpful on German policy in China during the Boxer Rebellion.


Chirol presented his rather contradictory version of the 1901 negotiations and the October and November meeting with Holstein.

This work contains a brief chapter on Holstein and his place in the forming of German foreign policy. It is an objective study.


Dawson's two volumes, though general and somewhat dated, provided material on the organization of the Second Reich.


These two volumes contain information on Eckardstein and the 1898 negotiations for an alliance.


As one of the most reliable and detailed accounts of the 1901 negotiations, it was helpful on Eckardstein's role in the alliance discussions.


The study was of use on the organization of the Second Reich, though it was brief.


Fischer argued and is now disproven that Holstein prevented an alliance in 1901. It is now only useful as an interesting piece of historiography.


This volume is a notable and general history of Germany.


Garvin's biography, though pro-Chamberlain, is an excellent study and gives a detailed account of the Anglo-German negotiations up to 1901.

In a brief but accurate account of the 1901 negotiations, Gebhardt presents the negotiations in proper perspective. The book was also valuable for its excellent bibliography.


This was a useful and general treatment of the 1901 negotiations.

Gooch has a great deal of information on Holstein in this volume and gives a fairly detailed treatment of the 1901 negotiations.


This volume was useful as a bibliographical source.


This work provides additional information on Holstein and the alliance negotiations, as well as material on the diplomatic situation before 1901.


One of the articles in this book is entitled "Holstein: Oracle of the Wilhelmsgrasse", which is the best and lengthiest biography in English of Holstein. The article also contains a meritable account of the 1901 negotiations. This work is mandatory for any study of Holstein.


These two volumes were only helpful in providing interesting comments on British policy.


This is the standard work on British history in the Nineteenth century.

Though biased against Holstein, the two volumes contain pertinent information on the influence and intrigues of Holstein.


This volume contains a brief but biased biographical sketch of Holstein.


The two volumes were of very little help for this study.


This study is one of the most scholarly examinations of Eckardstein’s role in the 1901 negotiations and in his intrigue against Katzfeldt.


This work was unobtainable for this study.


In this early biography of Holstein, Kurenborg presents Holstein as an individual of great and evil influence. The work is general and undocumented.

Langer's two volume study is a great scholarly work. It is the most extensive account in English of the 1901 negotiations and provides an extensive bibliography on the alliance question.


Though highly anti-German, Lee included, in the biography, important material on the Kaiser's visit to Britain in January, 1901.


Magnus deals only very briefly with the alliance question. The volume tends to be a social history of King Edward.


This is one of the most extensive treatments of the 1901 alliance negotiations but relates the problem to the causes of World War I. It is one of the few studies that deals in any length with the influence of Holstein and the negotiations but does so in a biased fashion.


The book is helpful, as to Lansdowne's opinion of the Germans in 1901.


The greatest merit of this volume is the excellent bibliography and the information on Holstein during the Caprivi Era.


This volume includes an essay by Otto Becker entitled "Die Wende der Deutsch-Englischen Beziehungen", which is a commendable account of the 1901 negotiations and too anti-Holstein.


The third volume of this work contains a scholarly
examination of the Holstein-Chirol meetings in October and November, 1901, and a portion of the two men's correspondence of 1901.

This book contains general information on the political organization of the Second Reich.

This general study is still useful, mainly because of its accuracy in interpretation.

Pinson's volume serves as an excellent general study of Germany and contains helpful bibliography listings.

Though a brief study of pre-World War I diplomacy and somewhat dated as to detail, the book is particularly outstanding because of Pribram's interpretative comments on European relations.

This is one of the most objective and accurate studies of the 1901 alliance problem. Ritter presents the thesis that there really never was an attempt for an alliance in 1901.

The volume contains an article by Lillian M. Penson entitled "The New Course in British Foreign Policy 1892-1901", which is a helpful interpretation of Salisbury's foreign policy.

This volume includes the most recent research on the problems in pre-World War diplomacy. There are articles on Anglo-German relations and Holstein.
The book presents a general survey of the alliance negotiations.

In this work, Seton-Watson gives a meritable account of Anglo-German relations before World War I.

Sontag gives a highly interpretative and useful account of European diplomacy.

This volume is a general survey of Anglo-German relations and was helpful for the background of this study.

Taylor presents a provocative and highly interpretative account of European diplomacy. The volume also contains a lengthy and valuable list of bibliographical materials.

In this very sympathetic biography, Trotha feels that Holstein was not as powerful or as evil as his contemporaries claimed. It is a useful work but is a general account.

This biography of Harden is an excellent study and contains valuable information on Holstein's position and character.

PERIODICALS
This article contains little of merit and is too dependent upon Eckardstein's memoirs to be useful.

This biographical sketch of Holstein supplies a few details and insights that Gooch did not repeat in his later biography of Holstein in Studies in German History.


The article is a traditional treatment of Buelow's foreign policy and adds little to what Buelow had already said in his Memoirs.


Penson, in this article, presents some very interesting comments on the nature of Salisbury's foreign policy. The article is also helpful for the proper understanding of Salisbury's character.


In this article, Rassow, besides discussing Holstein and Schlieffen's relations, discusses the position and character of Holstein, but the article was of little use for this study.


Rich, in this astute and scholarly article, refutes successfully the traditional belief that the Arnim Affair changed Holstein's character and caused him to work for the overthrow of Bismarck.


This is a fairly objective study of Holstein from the psychological viewpoint, but of little use for this study.