

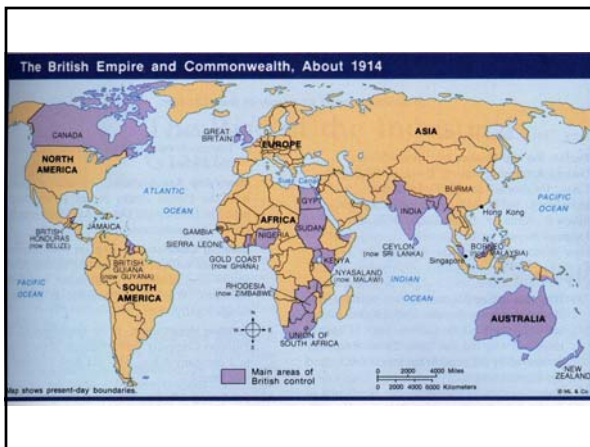
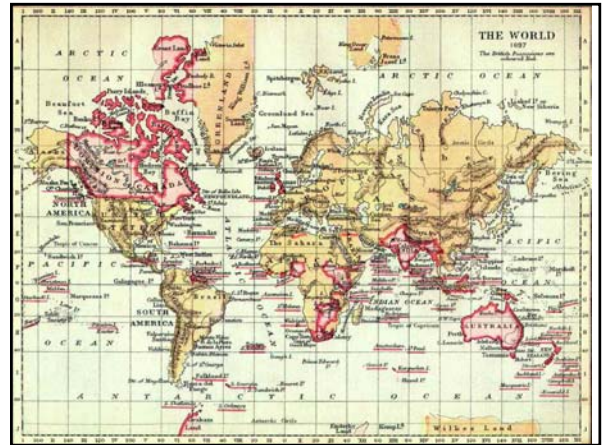
Case Studies of Empire: The British Empire



Professor Lavender
16 March 2005

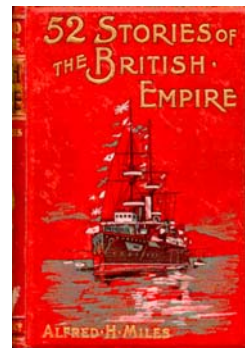
The British Empire

- For many historians, the British Empire is the most commonly cited exemplar of late-nineteenth-century European empires:
 - in part because of its size: “The sun never sets on the British Empire”;
 - in part because it encompasses all the regions of the world;
 - in part because it encompasses the “good” and “bad” aspects of empires.



History of the British Empire

- The growth of the British Empire was due in large part to ongoing competition for resources and markets.
 - This competition existed over a period of centuries;
 - between England and her Continental rivals:
 - Spain
 - France
 - and Holland.



British Empire Under Elizabeth I

- Establishment of trading companies
 - Turkey, Russia, and the East Indies
- Exploration of coast of North America, and establishment of colonies there.
- In early 17th century NA colonies expanded
- Also, systematic colonization of Ulster in Ireland.



British Empire, 18th Century

- Mercantile system extended and perfected
- Ongoing wars with the Dutch, the French, and the Spanish, with ultimate success.
- Britain won most of the eastern coast of NA, Canada, holdings in Caribbean, slaving stations in Africa, and a foothold in India.



British Empire, 1713

Losing America

- With the American Revolution in 1776, the Empire lost half of its holdings in North America.
- Australia came under British control at around the same time, but due to its remoteness, could not replace it.
- This led the Empire to turn “eastwards” towards Asia and India.



Turning Eastward

- In 1773 the British government was obliged to take over for the financially troubled East India Company;
 - East India Company had been in India since 1600.
- By the end of the century Britain's control over India extended into neighboring Afghanistan and Burma.



Sir Thomas Smith, First Governor of the East India Company

1815 to the Middle of the 1800s

- End of the Napoleonic Wars
- England extraordinarily strong and powerful
- Takes South Africa from the Dutch
- Defends Indian holdings from Russian expansion.
- England is now the leading industrial nation of Europe
 - world dominated by British commercial, financial, and naval power.

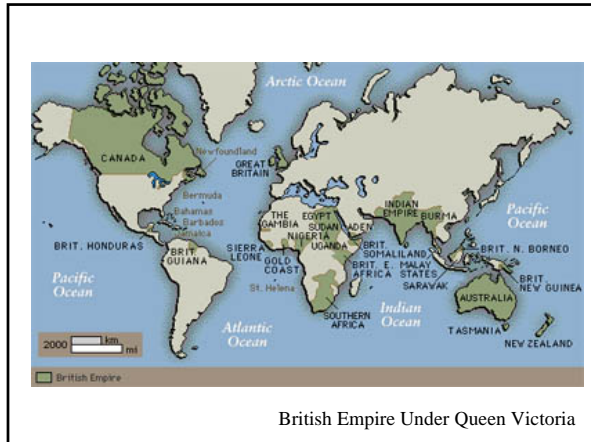


Queen Victoria

- Victoria becomes queen in 1837
- Under Queen Victoria, England pursued a foreign policy designed to expand its empire
- Victoria, at the urging of the Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli, was crowned “Empress of India” in 1877.



Queen Victoria as Empress of India



England Focuses on India

- Africa (with exception of South Africa) becomes less lucrative for England than before with end of slave trade.
- England abolishes slavery at home (1807) and in its colonies (1833)
- France had abolished slavery in 1794
- Slavery abolished in much of Latin America in the 1820s



Main Focuses of British Empire

- Central Africa
 - Source for raw materials for British industry and market for British goods; also, active missionary work there as part of “White Man’s Burden”
 - British Settlers/Farmers
- China
 - Military importance and important source for raw materials and market for finished goods.
- India

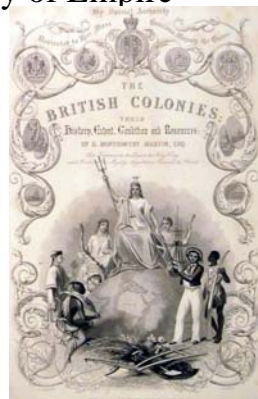


Other Aspects of British Empire

- Some parts of the empire were still “colonies” = “Commonwealth”
- Canada
 - British control over North America
 - Land for settlers, goods and markets
- Ireland, Scotland and Wales
 - Sources of land to reward service to the crown, and later for cheap labor/raw materials
- Australia
 - After 1770s, used as penal colony and “safety valve”
 - Source for wool for British textile industry
- New Zealand
 - The British version of the “Homestead Act” -- a farmer’s paradise
 - Source for wool and timber
 - After refrigeration, source for meat and dairy (along with Australia)

The Ideology of Empire

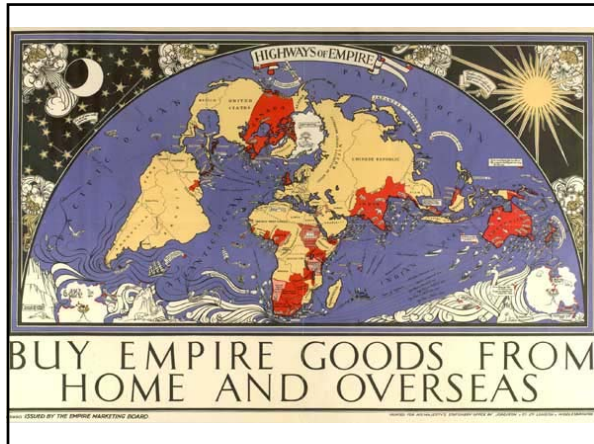
- As the British Empire grew after the 1870s, the ideology of empire appears in two ways:
- The White Man’s Burden
 - Accepted as whole cloth
 - Or cynically
- The Greatness of the Imperial Nation
 - The dependence of Britishness on the empire
 - British distinctiveness as an empire



The British White Man’s Burden



- British government exhorted the British public to consume imperial goods as a way to cement the development of overseas holdings and strengthen the empire



**MAKE YOUR CHRISTMAS PUDDING A
BRITISH EMPIRE
PUDDING.**

Reason . . . 1908.

Australia sends you the pick of her Sultanas,
Currants and Raisins.

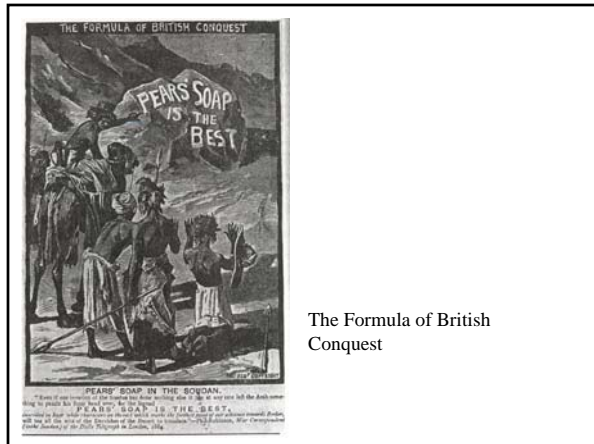
**AUSTRALIAN
Sultanas, Currants and Raisins.**

W. B. & H. HOLMES, FAVERSHAM.

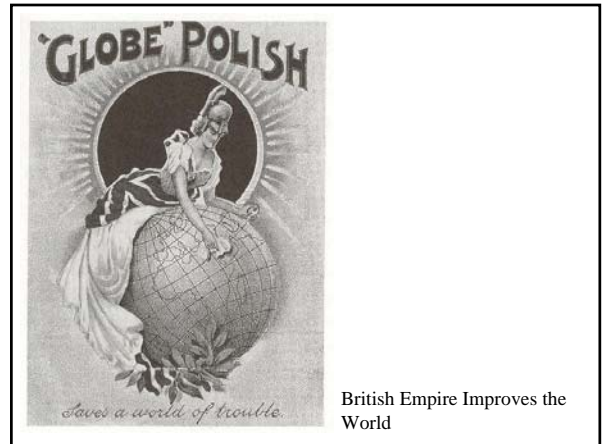
Purchasing goods produced in the overseas empire became a way to express British patriotism both at home and abroad.



The Empire Shop, British Government Poster



The Formula of British Conquest



British Empire Improves the World

2nd November 1930.

My dear Malcolm MacDonald,

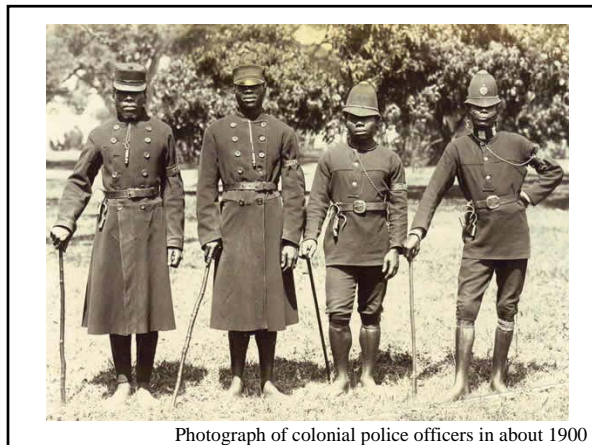
I know how fearfully busy you are with Palestine and Feroz, but there is just one point to which I wish you would give your attention immediately. Everybody tells me that the Colonial exhibit at Glasgow Exhibition was lamentable, being a purely commercial display. It is vital that the equivalent exhibit at the New York World Fair next year should in the main be an exhibit of the humanitarian and social services aspect of our Colonial Empire. It is all the more vital in view of the fact that the Colonial question may well be agitated by them, that there is a constant prejudice in the American mind against British "Imperialism" and this affords a marvellous opportunity of bringing home to the Americans that Britain is doing in Africa the kind of work on which they pride themselves on having done in the Philippines, etc., e.g. education, health, hospitals, self-government - all the things, in fact, which they will take for granted that Hitler won't do.

I understand there is a Committee dealing with this whose Chairman is Sir Harry Lindsay. The exhibit as planned so far, so I am informed, is going to be a purely commercial exhibit with no reference to the aspect of Colonial administration to which I have referred. I know that you have not time to look

Letter written to comment on the impact of British Imperialism, 1938



"The Secret of England's Greatness"



Photograph of colonial police officers in about 1900

SOMETHING ATTEMPTED:

Nobly's Children or -

SOMETHING SORE.

Empire Builders?

We teach the boys Trades and the girls domestic pursuits, to fit them for the Battle of Life; and we place large numbers of them in situations in England. Others we emigrate to the Colonies, chiefly to Canada. It is wise in some cases, if our

Our Day's Admission

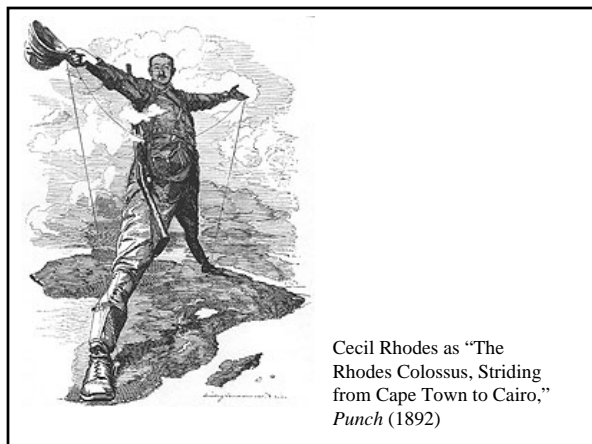
OUR charter is:—"No destitute child ever refused admission," and this is what we attempt, viz., to admit every destitute child who knocks at our doors throughout the country. There are no barriers and there is no red-tape if the child is destitute. That is the one condition. No Golden Key is required to unlock the door. Our admissions average 8 per working day. Think what it means to have nine children added to your family every day! These children, if not received by us, would probably become a charge upon the State.

And what do we do with these Little Ones? Not pauperise them; but we endeavour to make them self-reliant, God-fearing Citizens and Empire-Builders.

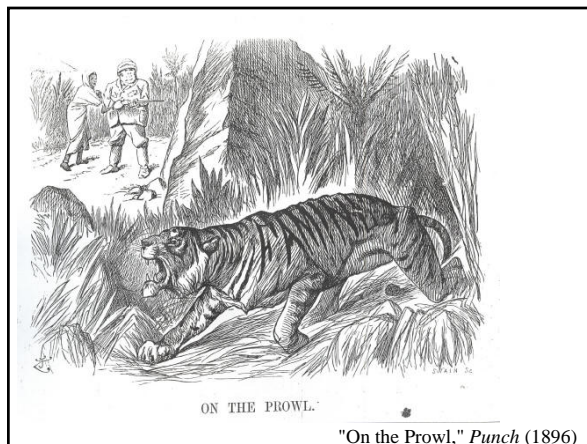
training is to be permanent, to place the ocean between the child and its earlier surroundings; for having once rescued the child we do not want it to drift back to the condition from which we rescued it.

Ninety-eight per cent. of our Emigrants do well, thus proving that our training is on the right basis. This is Empire-Building work of the best kind.

Extracts from a report published in 1915 on the work of the Dr. Barnardo's charity for destitute children's emigration.



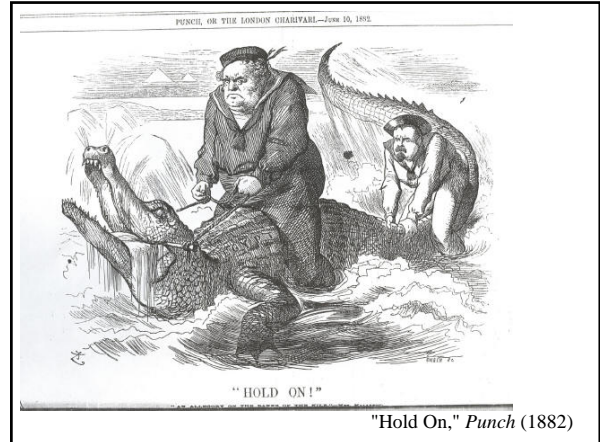
Cecil Rhodes as "The Rhodes Colossus, Striding from Cape Town to Cairo," *Punch* (1892)



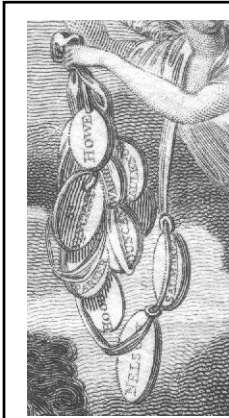
"On the Prowl," *Punch* (1896)



"Man-Eating Crocodile," from *Illustrated London News* (1887)



"Hold On," *Punch* (1882)

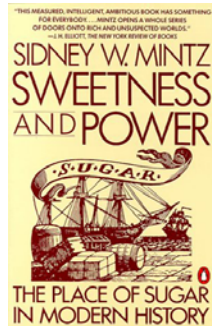


The Price of Glory: The Names of Admirals Lost in the Battles for Empire



Sweetness and Power

- Sidney W. Mintz, *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History* (New York: Viking, 1985)



Sweetness and Power

- Mintz traces evolution of sugar as a crop and food, then focuses on its place in the British Empire.
- He links sugar to Britain's growing colonial strength, but also to mercantilism.
- Mintz shows how sugar changes, in just a few hundred years, from the privileged food of the very rich to a staple of the fairly poor.
- Plantations provide a place for capital to work and serve as a market for "machinery, cloth, instruments of torture, and other industrial commodities"
- But may have had one more use: as a source of "low-cost food substitutes, such as tobacco, tea, and sugar, for the metropolitan laboring classes."

What makes sugar cheap and valuable?

- An acre of land would yield about eight million calories just from sugar (not counting energy from using the byproducts of extraction)
- For comparable energy
 - potato would need four acres
 - wheat 9-12 acres
 - beef over 135
- Sugar thus becomes the caloric fuel of English empire

Sugar as English Empire's Fuel

- Changing tastes to accommodate new forms of bitterness
 - caffeine
 - coffee
 - cacao
 - tea
 - these are also work-accelerants



Sugar as English Empire's Fuel

- Never before had a nation's diet depended on two goods imported from the "opposite sides of the earth."
- Ultimate testament to English empire's power.



Sugar and Empire

- The changes in tastes and human needs are those which most shape the political history of human nations.
- Britain's imperial import crops -- like sugar, coffee, and tea -- are the key fuel of its expansion
- These crops (especially sugar) fuel expansion in part by altering needs (they are addictive) and in part by providing the surplus necessary for expansion; in this case, the surplus is caloric.

Symbolic Nations

- Allegorical sculpture of "Australasia"
- Henry Hugh Armstead
- Colonial Office, Whitehall, London



Symbolic Nations



- Allegorical sculpture of "Asia" by Henry Hugh Armstead
- Colonial Office, Whitehall, London

Symbolic Nations

- Allegorical sculpture of “Africa”
- Henry Hugh Armstead
- Colonial Office, Whitehall, London



Symbolic Nations

- Allegorical sculpture of “Europe”
- Henry Hugh Armstead
- Colonial Office, Whitehall, London



(American Allegorical Nations)

- Asia:
- Calm woman seated with eyes closed, hands resting on her knees.
- On her lap: small Buddha. In her hand: lotus flower with serpent wrapped around stem.
- Her bare feet rest on a platform held up by a series of skulls.
- Dressed in draping robes with numerous necklaces.
- To her right is a tiger gazing up at her.
- To her left are three additional figures: a praying kneeling boy; an emaciated old man with his hands tied behind his back in slavery; a woman with a baby strapped to her back.

Daniel Chester French, The Four Continents (1903-1907)



(American Allegorical Nations)

- America:
- Young, alert woman, sitting at the edge of her chair ready to spring forward.
- On her lap: bushel of corn. In her hand: torch.
- Bare feet on sculpture of the Aztec deity Quetzalcoatl.
- Behind her on left is a Native American man wearing a warrior's headdress. On her left is a mostly-nude kneeling man, protected by her arm and flowing cape. He holds tools in one hand, and with the other tends a small, winged wheel.

Daniel Chester French, The Four Continents (1903-1907)



(American Allegorical Nations)

- Europe:
- Older woman sits majestically on a throne with a Parthenon frieze on its side; she sits up straight, holding her crowned head high and looking somberly ahead. She wears a Greek robe decorated with royal coats of arms.
- Her left arm rests on a large book atop the globe. Behind the throne turns into the front of a ship with a Roman Imperial Eagle perched above it. In the rear is an old woman, shrouded in a long cape, reading from a book.

Daniel Chester French, The Four Continents (1903-1907)



(American Allegorical Nations)

- Africa:
- A woman asleep on a chair of rocks. She is half nude, with fabric draped across her lower body. One elbow rests on the head of a lion, while the other rests on a crumbling sphinx. Her hair is in a long braid, falling over her shoulder.
- Behind her is another figure, almost completely covered in a long, flowing cloak. Only the figure's eyes are visible, and it is not possible to tell whether it is a man or a woman. The hand of this figure rests on a large jar. Her elbow rests on a sleeping lion.

Daniel Chester French, The Four Continents (1903-1907)



Advertising Empire - Power

- Symbols: Columbia, “John Bull,” flag, royal coat of arms
- “Self-rising” as reference to British empire being sign of England’s ascendancy
- If it’s good enough for the Queen, it’s good enough for anyone.



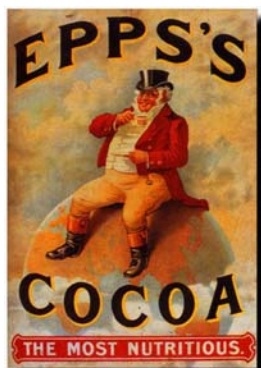
Advertising Empire - Power

- Lion of the British Empire
- Union Flag
- Royal Standard
- AND called “Imperial”



Advertising Empire - Power

- John Bull sitting astride the world; cocoa as source of imperial power; prosperity (portliness), prosperity, and joviality.
- British influence covers the globe; if you drink Epps's cocoa powder then maybe some of his good fortune and success will rub off on you.



Advertising Empire - Power

- Britannia standing between two globes (vastness of British Empire)
- Appeals to home as well as imperial market



Advertising Empire - Power

- Joseph Chamberlain was the most powerful Colonial advocate of his day.
- “One Flag, One Empire” (but missing India and Africa)
- So... who is under the flag? Who is a citizen?
- Difference between being a subject and being a member of Empire.



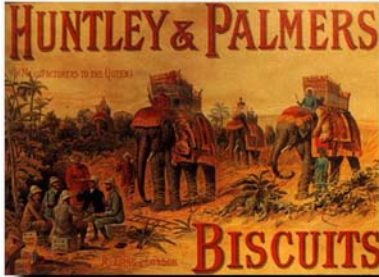
Advertising Empire - Power

- Stanley in Africa
- “Livingstone, I presume?”
- Rugged imperial legend but also a much wider imperial ideology.
- “Deepest, darkest Africa”
- “White Man’s Burden”
- White men (with their guns) meeting the noble savage (without guns)
- Racial ideology of empire: white men have dominion over and responsibility for “savages.”



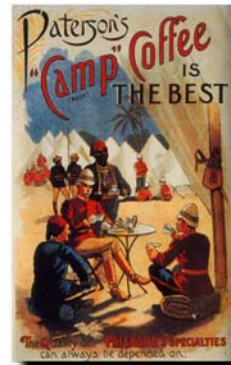
Advertising Empire - Power

- Exotic, and aristocratic pursuit: big game hunting in India
- Relative importance of participants
- Manufacturers to the queen.
- Up-market biscuits



Advertising Empire - Power

- Imperial Army on maneuvers or campaign
- Servants from the colonized group
- Presence of Indian soldiers (note relative position)



Advertising Empire - Power

- Royal Navy
- Reliability, power, dependability and permanency.
- Young officer thinking of home and using mustard to conjure up the tastes of the homeland.



Advertising Empire - Power

- Even a GERMAN company conjures up the image of British Imperial power to sell pencils
- Britannia -- how recognizable it has become
- British Navy as well as British army in a desert -- probably Africa
- Britannia has become a brand-name
- "Britannia" in quotes so as not to commit an act of false advertising.



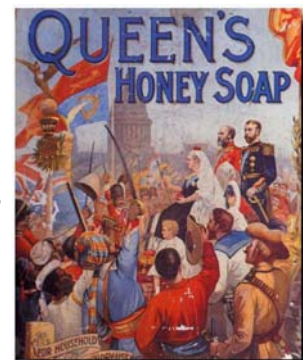
Advertising Empire - Power

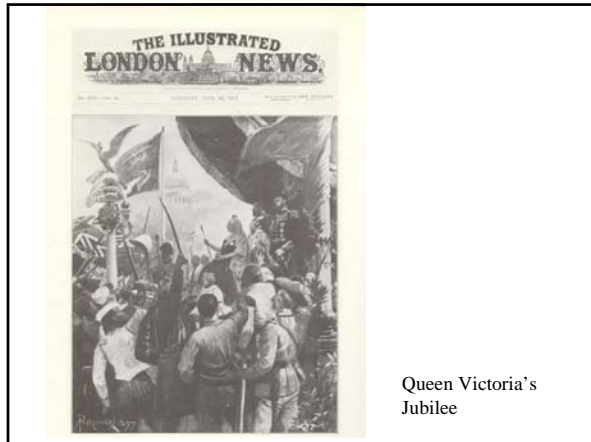
- King and the Royal Navy
- Flags, medals, crowns, uniforms and ships
- Royal Navy as the most powerful military force on the planet
- Royal Family as symbol of solidity and dependability



Advertising Empire - Royalty

- Army drawn from all over the dominion
- Queen Victoria being crowned Empress
- Actual Royal family -- association of product with "by appointment to HRH"
- World-wide appeal of Victoria and British Imperialism





Advertising Empire - Royalty

- Young Queen Victoria
- But product dates from reign of George 2nd. AD 1742 -- so dependable.
- The monarchy is a stable, continuous part of British society and tradition and that, likewise, Keens mustard is also from a noble and long heritage.

Advertising Empire - Progress

- Images
 - Union Jack: Symbol of Nation (flag)
 - Dreadnought: symbol of progress, industry; powerful and devastating ships
 - Dreadnought Razorblades
 - "cutting edge" technology
 - appeal to a masculine market
 - "Power of the Nation"

Advertising Empire - Industry

- Global appeal of the Empire and its peoples
- Empire as a "blessing" to the "primitive peoples" it uplifts
- "England's gift A blessing to all nations."
- Pastoral scene of England
- England as industrial workshop

Advertising Empire - Exotic

- The Great Nabob holding court over his minions
- Exoticism and mystique; success and patronage.
- Nabobs are hard to please; this is a product for picky people.

Summing Up The British Empire

- British power resulted from winning a long struggle with its Continental rivals (Spain, Holland, France)
- British Empire followed markets eastward towards China and India
- Britain differentiated between Empire and Commonwealth
- Britain developed an ideology of empire