

Somerset Richard Lowry-Corry, Earl of Belmore

(8 January 1868 – 21 February 1872)

Neil Graham

Somerset Richard Lowry-Corry, eldest son of Armar Lowry-Corry, third Earl of Belmore, was born on 9 April 1835 and succeeded aged ten to the Earldom on his father's death. Educated at Eton and Cambridge, he sat in the House of Lords from 1857 as an elected peer for Ireland. Married to Gladstone's niece and with a cousin serving as secretary to Disraeli, he was thus *persona grata* to both political groups and enjoyed a rising reputation as a Young Conservative. Successful committee work won him in 1866 the office of Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Home Affairs. For a time he represented Treasury in the Lords. Despite this rapid rise his appointment in 1867 as Governor of New South Wales excited a certain unease in the colony and critical comment in the *Saturday Review* which held that a colony with responsible government needed as Governor not merely an elegant or aristocratic social leader but a man of judgement and political knowledge, attributes acquired only by long official experience. So to bring in an outsider, no matter how skilled, was to deny merited promotion to those professional Governors who, equipped with such expertise, were now rising steadily in the colonial service. Hinting at a "groundless prejudice of caste or a gross love of jobbery", the *Saturday Review* concluded:

if peers or peers' sons are the best fitted for colonial governments let them get the appointment. But let them show their aptitude by running the same previous career with less favoured competitors.¹

The *Sydney Morning Herald* reprinted these remarks less than a fortnight before Belmore arrived in a colony which was still loudly lamenting the departure of Sir John Young. Moreover, his known role as a Protestant Ulster landlord scarcely recommended him to the numerous and

This is a preview. Not all pages are shown.

Still young, at 37 and 30 respectively, the Belmores proceeded to lead a quietly active life. Anne seems to have recovered her health, to produce eight more children. Belmore resumed control of his Fermanagh estates, serving as leader of the Irish Landowners' Convention. He resumed his studies, producing a history of the Corry family, *Parliamentary Memoirs of Fermanagh and Tyrone* and contributed articles to the *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*.⁹¹ He returned to public duties, serving as president of a commission to inquire into the affairs of Dublin University. In 1872 he was appointed KCMG and in 1890 GCMG. Above all, he continued to appear in the House of Lords, where he became something of a champion of Australian and Pacific interests⁹² on which he now spoke with that ring of confidence which he had once so sadly lacked. He died on 6 April 1913.

Notes

- 1 *Sydney Morning Herald*, 27.12.1867, p 3; *Review* article reprinted.
- 2 Belmore to Rogers, 30.12.1868, Belmore Letter Book, ML A2542-2.
- 3 Belmore to Buckingham/Chandos, 24.8.1868, Belmore Letter Book, ML A2542-2.
- 4 Belmore Letter Book, ML A2542-2.
- 5 No 79, Belmore to Buckingham/Chandos, 10.08.1868; reply to Deniliquin Masonic address, encl CO 201/547.
- 6 Belmore to Palmer, 5.6.1872, Belmore Ministers' Letters, ML A2542-3.
- 7 Speech by Belmore to members of Church of England, "15th inst" [1872?], Belmore Ministers' Letters, ML A2542-3.
- 8 Belmore to Fergusson, 23.11.1868, Belmore Letter Book, ML A2542-2.
- 9 *Ibid.*
- 10 No 2, Granville to Belmore, 18.12.1868, CO 201/548.
- 11 No 77, Granville to Belmore, 2.10.1869, CO 201/553.
- 12 Confidential, Belmore to Granville, 25.1.1870, CO 201/557.
- 13 No 104, Belmore to Kimberley, 22.6.1871; 25 Vic No 7 [*Navigation Act 1871*] encl, CO 201/564.
- 14 No 34, Belmore to Buckingham/Chandos, 27.3.1868; Belmore to Corry, 27.3.1868, enclosed; and Confidential, Belmore to Buckingham/Chandos 27.3.1868, CO 201/546.
- 15 No 81, Buckingham/Chandos to Belmore, 22.10.1868, CO 201/548.
- 16 Confidential, Kimberley to Belmore, 23.12.1870; telegram, Kimberley to Belmore, 23.12.1870, CO 201/559.
- 17 No 69, Belmore to Kimberley, 16.5.1871; 34 Vic No 19 [*Military and Naval Forces Act 1871*] encl, CO 201/564.
- 18 Lamb, PN, *Geoffrey Eagar and the Colonial Treasury of New South Wales*, Australian Economic Papers, vol 1, no 1, September 1962, p 34.
- 19 Lamb, p 34.
- 20 Belmore to Parkes, 22.6.1868, Belmore Letter Book, ML A2542-2.
- 21 September, Buckingham/Chandos to Belmore, 30.9.1868, CO 201/548.
- 22 No 52, Granville to Belmore, 16.6.1869, CO 201/551.
- 23 No 1, Granville to Belmore, 7.1.1870, CO 201/557.
- 24 No 69, Belmore to Granville, 10.5.1870: minute by Belmore encl, CO 201/558.

- 25 Lamb, p 34.
- 26 Belmore to Kimberley, 13.5.1871, CO 201/559; Belmore Letter Book, 23.12.1870, ML A2542-2.
- 27 Lamb, p 34.
- 28 Confidential, Belmore to Granville, 27.2.1869, CO 201/551.
- 29 Confidential, Belmore to Buckingham/Chandos, 30.9.1868, CO 201/548.
- 30 Belmore to Kimberley, 12.2.1872, CO 201/559; Belmore Letter Book, 23.12.1870, ML A2542-2.
- 31 Confidential, Belmore to Granville, 25.1.1870, CO 201/557.
- 32 Belmore to Kimberley, 1.12.1870, CO 201/559; Belmore Letter Book, 23.12.1870, ML A2542-2.
- 33 Confidential, Belmore to Granville, 25.3.1870, CO 201/557.
- 34 Confidential, Belmore to Kimberley, 6.9.1871, CO 201/565.
- 35 Belmore to Macarthur, 24.12.1872, Macarthur Papers, vol 42, ML A2935, 2939.
- 36 Belmore to Kimberley, 1.12.1870, CO 201/559; Belmore Letter Book, 23.12.1870, ML A2542-2.
- 37 *Sydney Morning Herald*, 16.6.1869, p 4.
- 38 *Sydney Morning Herald*, 5.9.1869, p 5.
- 39 *Sydney Morning Herald*, 19.5.1869, p 9.
- 40 *Sydney Morning Herald*, 19.5.1869, p 9.
- 41 *Sydney Morning Herald*, 16.6.1869, p 4.
- 42 *Sydney Morning Herald*, 17.5.1871, p 8.
- 43 *Sydney Morning Herald*, 1.10.1869, p 5.
- 44 *Sydney Morning Herald*, 6.9.1871, p 6.
- 45 Belmore to Parkes, 26.8.1868, Belmore Letter Book, ML A2542-2.
- 46 Belmore to Robertson, 29.6.1868; Belmore Letter Book, ML A2542-2.
- 47 No 145, Belmore to Kimberley, 21.9.1870, CO 201/559.
- 48 *Sydney Morning Herald*, 26.2.1869, p 4.
- 49 No 102, Belmore to Granville, 14.7.1869, CO 201/552.
- 50 No 20, Kimberley to Belmore, 9.3.1871, CO 201/559.
- 51 *Sydney Morning Herald*, 22.2.1872, p 4.
- 52 No 181, Belmore to Granville, 5.11.1869, CO 201/553.
- 53 Palmer, G, *Kidnapping in the South Seas; being a Narrative of a three months' cruise in H.M.S. "Rosario"*, Edinburgh, 1871, pp 130-1, 133, 142-4, 161.
- 54 No 149, Belmore to Kimberley, 7.9.1871; and No 159, Belmore to Kimberley, 5.10.1871; and enclosures CO 201/565.
- 55 Palmer to Belmore, 12.2.1872, Belmore Ministers' Letters, ML A2542-3; Lushington to Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, 2.2.1872, CO 201/571.
- 56 *Sydney Morning Herald*, 8.9.1869, p 6; officers of USS *Kearsage*, 4.11.1872, p 6; Princes Philip and Augustus of Saxe-Coburg.
- 57 No 148, Belmore to Kimberley, 21.9.1870, CO 201/559.
- 58 No 203, Belmore to Kimberley, 7.12.1870; No 212, Belmore to Granville, 19.12.1870, CO 201/559.
- 59 *Wikipedia*, Somerset Lowry-Corry, 4th Earl of Belmore, *answers.com*.
- 60 No 69, Belmore to Kimberley, 16.5.1871: 34 Vic No 19 [*Military and Naval Forces Act 1871*] enclosed, CO 201/564.
- 61 Belmore to Waddy, 26.10.1868; Belmore to Chute, 26.10.1868; AONSW 4 /1666 Governors' Letters.
- 62 No 179, Belmore to Kimberley, 22.11.1871: he arranged the rapid despatch of HMS *Rosario* to investigate Bishop Patterson's murder by island natives, CO 201/565.

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- 63 Henry to Deputy-Master, 26.4.1870, 7.12.1871, 3.5.1871, AONSW 5/1667 Governors' Letters. See also No 82 and No 93, Belmore to Buckingham/Chandos, 12 and 28.8.1868, CO 201/547.
- 64 NI No 2, Belmore to Granville, 28.1.1870; and No 6, Belmore to Granville, 15.6.1870, CO 201/557, 558.
- 65 NI No 9, Belmore to Kimberley, 31.10.1870, CO 201/559.
- 66 NI No 9, Belmore to Kimberley, 14.9.1871, CO 201/565.
- 67 Lady Belmore, *Tours in New South Wales, 1868–1872*, 3.6.1869: "I was rather frightened ... as I had to say a few words"; 6.6.1869 "sometimes it is rather difficult to find ... conversation"; ML 1058-1.
- 68 Lady Belmore, *Tours in New South Wales*, 14.7.1868: on receptions – "about twenty ladies came into the hall" – "We did not dress to go nor yet dance ... we were much amused to see their dancing and toilettes"; 2.8.1868: on churches – "a great deal of singing but ... not very good ... nice sermon: I wish our church in Sydney was like it".
- 69 Belmore to Granville, 24.3.1869, Belmore Letter Book, ML A2542-2.
- 70 Cowper to Belmore, 5.5.1870, Ministers' Letters, ML A2542-3.
- 71 Bedford, RM, *Think of Stephen: a Family Chronicle*, Sydney, 1954, p 24: William Dumaresq of St Aubin's, Scone.
- 72 *Freeman's Journal*, 10.2.1872, p 8: "His Lordship rarely speaks"; *The Empire*, 8.1.1868, p 2: "plain and unassuming in manner and very brief in conversation".
- 73 Belmore to Buckingham/Chandos, 13.5.1871, Belmore Letter Book, ML A2542-2.
- 74 *Sydney Morning Herald*, 4.7.1868, p 4.
- 75 1868 Lithgow; 1869 Muswellbrook, Goulburn; 1871 Scone; Lady Belmore, *Tours in New South Wales*.
- 76 Buckingham/Chandos to Belmore, 27.3.1868, Belmore Letter Book, ML A2542-2.
- 77 No 76, Belmore to Granville, 18.5.1870, CO 201/558.
- 78 Belmore to Rogers, 30.12.1868; Belmore to Fergusson, 3.10.1870: "I find little room for work here"; Belmore Letter Book, ML A2542-2.
- 79 Confidential, Belmore to Granville, 14.7.1869, CO 201/552.
- 80 *Sydney Morning Herald*, 8.9.1869, p 8: he provided £134.15.0.
- 81 *Sydney Morning Herald*, 3.9.1870, p 7.
- 82 *Sydney Morning Herald*, 30.11.1871, p 5.
- 83 *Sydney Morning Herald*, see also Confidential, Belmore to Kimberley, 6.9.1871, CO 201/565.
- 84 *Government Gazette*, 26.2.1872, encl in No 1, Stephen to Kimberley, 26.2.1872, CO 201/569.
- 85 Blaikie, G, *Scandals of Australia's Strange Past*, London, 1963, p 279.
- 86 *Freeman's Journal*, 10.2.1872, p 8: "Kitchen esculents and kitchen Protestantism appear about equally to have occupied the attention of His Lordship's powerful mind".
- 87 Report by curator on ... Botanic Gardens, 24.5.1871; Votes & Proceedings, NSWLA 1871-1872, vol 4.
- 88 Belmore to Buckingham/Chandos, 13.5.1871: "at the time when Lady Belmore was so unwell in 1869 we determined that 1872 should be the maximum period of our stay", Belmore Letter Book, ML A2542-2.
- 89 *Sydney Morning Herald*, 22.2.1872, p 4.
- 90 *Sydney Morning Herald* 22.2.1872, p 5.
- 91 *Wikipedia*, 4th Earl of Belmore.
- 92 *Hansard, House of Lords*, 1872, 1873, 1874, pp 81, 428, 193, 225.