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0521440904 - Transition of Power: Britain's Loss of Global Pre-eminence to the United States, 1930-1945

B. J. C. McKercher

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Transition of Power

*Britain's Loss of Global Pre-eminence
to the United States, 1930–1945*

This book addresses one of the least understood issues in modern international history: how, between 1930 and 1945, Britain lost its global pre-eminence to the United States.

The crucial years are 1930 to 1940, for which until now no comprehensive examination of Anglo-American relations exists. *Transition of Power* analyses these relations in the pivotal decade, with an epilogue dealing with the Second World War after 1941. Britain and the United States, and their intertwined fates, were fundamental to the course of international history in these years. Professor McKercher's book dissects the various strands of the two Powers' relationship in the fifteen years after 1930 from a British perspective – economic, diplomatic, naval, and strategic: security and disarmament in Europe; economic diplomacy during the Great Depression, especially the introduction of the Ottawa system of tariffs and the Roosevelt Administration's determination to get freer trade after 1933; threats to the Far Eastern balance of power between 1931 and 1941 and the British and American responses; growing American interests in the British Empire and their impact upon Imperial unity; and strategic thinking and planning at London and Washington revolving around naval power and armed strength in the wider world, from the London naval conference through such events as the 1935 Anglo-German naval agreement to the response to Axis and Japanese aggression after September 1939.

BRIAN MCKERCHER is Professor of History, Royal Military College of Canada. His previous publications include *The Second Baldwin Government and the United States, 1924–1929: Attitudes and Diplomacy* (1984) and *Esme Howard: A Diplomatic Biography* (1989).

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For my son, Asa

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x Acknowledgments

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Abbreviations

ADM	Admiralty
AHR	<i>American Historical Review</i>
AJPH	<i>Australian Journal of Politics and History</i>
B DFA	<i>British Documents on Foreign Affairs</i>
BIS	Bank for International Settlements
BJIS	<i>British Journal of International Studies</i>
C-in-C	Commander-in-Chief
CAB	Cabinet
CC	Cabinet Conclusion
CCS	Combined Chiefs of Staff
CEH	<i>Central European History</i>
CID	Committee of Imperial Defence
CJH	<i>Canadian Journal of History</i>
CNO	Chief of Naval Operations
COS	Chiefs of Staff Committee
CP	Cabinet Paper
CR	<i>Contemporary Review</i>
DBFP	<i>Documents on British Foreign Policy</i>
DBPO	<i>Documents on British Policy Overseas</i>
DCNS	Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff
DH	<i>Diplomatic History</i>
DOT	Department of Overseas Trade
DPR	Defence Policy and Requirements Sub-Committee
DPR(DR)	Defence Policy and Requirements (Defence Requirements) Sub-Committee
DRC	Defence Requirements Sub-Committee
DS	<i>Diplomacy and Statecraft</i>
EcoHR	<i>Economic History Review</i>
EHR	<i>English Historical Review</i>
FA	<i>Foreign Affairs</i>
FDRFA	<i>Franklin D. Roosevelt and Foreign Affairs</i>
FO	Foreign Office

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<i>FRUS</i>	<i>Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States</i>
GB	Great Britain
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
<i>HJ</i>	<i>Historical Journal</i>
<i>HZ</i>	<i>Historische Zeitschrift</i>
<i>IA</i>	<i>Journal of the Royal Institute of International Affairs</i>
<i>IHR</i>	<i>International History Review</i>
<i>IJ</i>	<i>International Journal</i>
IJN	Imperial Japanese Navy
<i>INS</i>	<i>Intelligence and National Security</i>
<i>JAH</i>	<i>Journal of American History</i>
<i>JBS</i>	<i>Journal of British Studies</i>
<i>JCH</i>	<i>Journal of Contemporary History</i>
<i>JICH</i>	<i>Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History</i>
<i>JEEH</i>	<i>Journal of European Economic History</i>
<i>JEH</i>	<i>Journal of Economic History</i>
<i>JRUSI</i>	<i>Journal of the Royal United Services Institution</i>
<i>JSS</i>	<i>Journal of Strategic Studies</i>
LND	League of Nations Published Document
LNU	League of Nations Union
LNP	League of Nations Private Papers
LNR	League of Nations Registered Files
LNS	League of Nations Section Files
NCM	Naval Conference Ministerial Committee
PCIJ	Permanent Court of International Justice
PRO	Public Record Office
PSF	Private Secretaries File
RAF	Royal Air Force
Reparation	Official Documents of the Allied Reparations Commission
RIIA	Royal Institute of International Affairs
RN	Royal Navy
<i>RP</i>	<i>Review of Politics</i>
<i>SAQ</i>	<i>South Atlantic Quarterly</i>
SDDF	State Department Decimal Files
SWC	Supreme War Council
T	Treasury
UDC	Union of Democratic Control
USN	United States Navy
USNGB	United States Navy General Board
<i>VfZ</i>	<i>Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte</i>
WCP	War Cabinet Paper