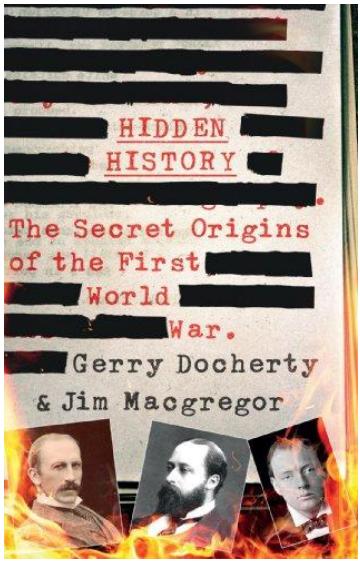




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Hidden History: a compelling and captivating study of the causes of WW1 that turns everything you think you know on its head

van Docherty, Gerry, MacGregor, James

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43 Highlights | Geel (43)

Highlight (Geel) | Locatie 226

Rhodes was prime minister of Cape Colony and master and commander of a vast area of southern Africa that some were already beginning to call Rhodesia. He was held to be a statesman, answerable to the British Colonial Office in terms of his governance, but in reality was a land-grabbing opportunist whose fortune was based on the Kimberly diamond mines. His wealth had been underwritten by brutal native suppression¹⁰ and the global mining interests of the House of Rothschild,¹¹ to whom he was also answerable.

Highlight (Geel) | Locatie 235

He advocated that the control of the state should be restricted to a small ruling class. Social order was to be built upon the authority of superiors, imposing upon inferiors an absolute, unquestioning obedience. He was repelled by what he regarded as the logical conclusion of Liberalism: the levelling of distinctions between class and class, man and man, and the disintegration of the 'rightful' authority of the ruling class.¹³

Highlight (Geel) | Locatie 250

Before he died of heart failure at the age of 48, and well aware that his lifespan would be limited, Rhodes wrote several wills and added a number of codicils. By 1902, the named trustees of his will included Lord Nathaniel Rothschild, Lord Rosebery, Earl Grey, Alfred Beit, Leander Starr Jameson and Alfred Milner, all of whom, as we shall see, operated at the heart of the secret society. Rhodes believed that 'insular England was quite insufficient to maintain or even to protect itself without the assistance of the Anglo-Saxon peoples beyond the seas of Europe'.¹⁷ In the years to come, problems of insularity required to be solved and links with America strengthened.

Highlight (Geel) | Locatie 291

Two others quickly drawn into the inner elect of the secret society were Lord Nathaniel Rothschild, the international merchant banker, and Alfred Milner, a relatively little known colonial administrator who brought order and sense to the financial chaos in Egypt. Both of these men represented different aspects of control and influence. The Rothschild dynasty epitomised 'the money power' to a degree with which no other could compete. Alfred Milner was a self-made man, a gifted academic who began his working life as an aspiring lawyer, turned to journalism and eventually emerged as an immensely powerful and successful powerbroker. In time, he led the 'men behind the curtain'.

Highlight (Geel) | Locatie 296

The Rothschild dynasty was all-powerful in British and world banking and they considered themselves the equals of royalty,²⁶ even to the extent of calling their London base 'New Court'. Like the British royal family, their roots lay in Germany, and the Rothschilds were possibly the most authentic dynasty of them all. They practised endogamy as a means of preventing dispersal of their great wealth, marrying not just within their own faith but also within their own immediate family. Of 21 marriages of the descendants of Mayer Amschel Rothschild, the original family patriarch, no fewer than 15 were between cousins. Wealth begets wealth, never more so when it can provide or deny funds to governments and dominate the financial market on a global scale. The Rothschilds were pre-eminent in this field. They manipulated politicians, befriended kings, emperors and influential aristocrats, and developed their own particular brand of operation. Even the Metropolitan Police ensured that the Rothschild carriages had right of way as they drove through the streets of London.²⁷ Biographers of the House of Rothschild record that men of influence and statesmen in almost every country of the world were in their pay.²⁸ Before long, most of the princes and kings of Europe fell within their influence.²⁹ This

Highlight (Geel) | Locatie 342

Governments also fell under the spell of their munificent money power. It was Baron Lionel who advanced Disraeli's Liberal government £4,000,000 to buy the Suez Canal shares from the bankrupt Khedive of Egypt in 1875, an equivalent of £1,176,000,000 at today's prices.³⁷ Disraeli wrote jubilantly to Queen Victoria: 'You have it, Madam ... there was only one firm that could do it – Rothschilds. They behaved admirably; advanced the money at a low rate, and the entire interest of the Khedive is now yours.'³⁸ The British government repaid the loan in full within three months to great mutual advantage.

Highlight (Geel) | Locatie 862

The following month, when statistical returns from the camps arrived at the War Office, it was clear that Hobhouse's worst fears had been confirmed. There were 93,940 whites and 24,457 blacks in 'camps of refuge', and the crisis was becoming a catastrophe as the death rates grew higher and higher.⁷⁷ To Milner, the life or death of 118,000 Boer and African civilians therein rated as an abysmally low priority. Friends like Richard Haldane dismissed the utter tragedy of the concentration camps as 'a great mess caused by the military authorities',⁷⁸ but no one should forget that Milner was morally responsible for the camps. He was the high commissioner.

Highlight (Geel) | Locatie 1002

And what of Jameson, butcher of the Matabele and leader of the shambolic raid? Without even a blush of embarrassment, Milner made him prime minister of Cape Colony, a suitable reward for his loyal service and silence.

Highlight (Geel) | Locatie 1424

The Entente Cordiale was not as it seemed. Top-secret codicils, hidden within its published articles, signed on that very same day, 8 April 1904, concealed the double-dealing upon which the entente had been settled. The secret clauses effectively guaranteed British control of Egypt in return for French control over Morocco. Britain had earlier promised to leave Egypt as soon as its financial affairs were in order, but such an open-ended promise meant nothing. The great financial houses in London – Rothschilds and Barings – had secured vast concessions by restructuring Egyptian finances.⁵ They held large commercial interests there, and unfettered control of Egypt was a cash cow for these British bankers. Thanks to the Rothschilds, not only did the British government own most of the shares in the Suez Canal but it also acted as the strategic and commercial gatekeeper to the Gulf, the Middle East and India through the canal. Britain essentially controlled the entrance to the Mediterranean at Gibraltar and its exit at Suez. Do not imagine that strengthening the capacity to shut down the Mediterranean was a chance happening.

Highlight (Geel) | Locatie 1498

When the kaiser visited Tangier, he already knew about the secret articles attached to the entente and of the ‘secret’ Franco-Spanish Convention. He knew that deals had purposefully been concealed, and he was also aware that a series of ‘reforms’ had been prepared for the sultan’s acceptance that were absolutely incompatible with Morocco’s independence.¹⁹ The German government declared that no one country should attempt to take control of Morocco, and, with dignified diplomatic propriety, the kaiser called for an international conference to resolve the matter. Von Bülow warned the international community that France might assume a protectorate over Morocco and expel other commercial competitors just as it had previously done in Tunis.²⁰ The sultan agreed with the kaiser’s reasoned approach and invited interested parties to a conference in Tangier. All hell was let loose in the British and French newspapers. Germany and the kaiser were ridiculed and vilified. The Secret Elite unleashed their outraged press to denounce the kaiser with unrestrained violence.²¹ He was accused of deliberately attempting to destroy the entente as a prelude to making war on France. Wild claims of evil German intent poured out in a torrent of sheer vitriol, and any voice of reason was ‘assailed as that of a traitor or a coward’.²²

Highlight (Geel) | Locatie 1522

Belgian military staff was also included in direct talks with their British counterparts at this juncture. Hold on to this thought: Belgium was involved in secret military plans for a possible war of aggression against an unsuspecting Germany but almost a decade later would be presented as the innocent victim of German aggression.

Highlight (Geel) | Locatie 2024

An awesome conspiracy to thwart the Liberal Party's plan for peace and retrenchment was endorsed by the Secret Elite. They rubber-stamped a coup to undermine the democratic process, neuter the first man of the Liberal Party, and take control of the new government's foreign policy. Incredible though it might appear, the two most senior Conservative leaders were actively conspiring with the king and an unelected lord to decide the composition of a Liberal Cabinet. What would Liberal Party members have thought had they known that three of their most senior representatives were plotting in secret against their stated interests? How would they have felt had they known that the leader of the Conservative Party, their political adversary, was intimately involved? The prime minister in waiting, Campbell-Bannerman, had no notion that his 'loyal' colleagues had loyalties that lay elsewhere.

Highlight (Geel) | Locatie 2148

Arthur Ponsonby, Campbell-Bannerman's principal private secretary, knew nothing about the military talks. He was astounded by later claims made by Grey and Haldane that they had kept the prime minister fully informed. Ponsonby was adamant that 'C-B never apprehended the significance of conversations with France, nor did he see how we were being gradually committed.'⁵⁷ Had Campbell-Bannerman known what Grey and Haldane were up to, he would have confronted them. Given his staunch anti-war credentials, he would never have allowed Grey and Haldane to proceed.

Highlight (Geel) | Locatie 2389

Lloyd George was a gifted orator, though the Establishment saw him as a 'rabble-rouser'. He was elected to Parliament as Liberal MP for Caernarfon Boroughs in 1890 and became an outspoken critic of the Boer War. He saw it as 'an outrage perpetrated in the name of human freedom'.³⁶ While the war in South Africa was staunchly supported by Asquith, Grey and Haldane, Lloyd George stayed true to his core belief that it was an expensive waste, conducted in a blundering and cruel fashion. Parliamentary exchanges between

Highlight (Geel) | Locatie 2397

There is another possibility. Was Churchill asked by the Secret Elite to defect to the Liberals in order to bring Lloyd George into their sphere of direct influence? While this might seem an outrageous question, later developments lend it credence. Lloyd George had qualities that the Secret Elite could use: leadership, sharp and acerbic wit and popularity with the masses. He addressed colossal audiences, had no fears in parliamentary debate, cared passionately about social reform and had credibility in the public arena that was unsurpassed in its time. He was ambitious, relatively poor, had no additional sources of income, no benefactors or any likelihood of finding any in the capitalist bear-pit he railed against. His enemies were the wealthy, the aristocracy, the privileged, the warmongers and, of course, the House of Lords. He was a man of the people, but, as Asquith had said, he was not necessarily a man of principle. From the day he took office in Asquith's 1908 government as chancellor of the Exchequer, no one expected anything other than the Liberal government's absolute opposition to war, opposition to massive spending on the machines of war, opposition to the naval race and opposition to exorbitant wealth ... all the core values that made Lloyd George the champion of Liberal radicalism. No one, that is, except the Secret Elite, who were preparing the ground to make him their

Highlight (Geel) | Locatie 2696

What set alarm bells ringing within the Secret Elite was not German warship construction but their engineering innovations in merchant shipping that emerged from the dockyards of Hamburg, Bremen and Wilhelmshaven. German superiority in the commercial sea lanes could not be tolerated. The rapid growth of the lucrative commercial fleets of the North German Lloyd and Hamburg-America lines was outshining liners built in Britain. For a brief period, the SS Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse was the largest and fastest liner on the Atlantic Ocean.

Highlight (Geel) | Locatie 2699

This was followed by SS Deutschland III, which crossed from Cherbourg to New York in five and a half days, with a new speed record of 23.61 knots. International prestige was slipping from British-built liners. In 1907, the Lusitania regained the Blue Riband for the fastest crossing, outstripping the Deutschland III by 11 hours and 46 minutes. 'Bigger, Better and Faster' became watchwords for national one-upmanship. The rough guide to Admiralty practice

Highlight (Geel) | Locatie 2771

Competition amongst British armaments firms had been virtually eliminated by 1901. Across Europe and the United States, armaments makers colluded in an international combine called the Harvey United Steel Co. to minimise competition and maximise profits. The five British armaments giants joined forces with Krupp and Dillingen of Germany, Bethlehem Steel Company of the United States, Schneider & Co. of Creusot in France, and Vickers-Terni and Armstrong-Pozzuoli of Italy.³⁷ Harvey United Steel provided a common meeting ground for the world's armament firms and accumulated royalties from those nations sufficiently civilised to 'construct armour-plated slaughter machines'.³⁸ It was highly successful in maintaining the demand for armaments that were bought by rival governments on the basis that they could not afford to be less well armed than their neighbours.³⁹

Highlight (Geel) | Locatie 2811

The Rothschilds had always understood the enormous profits generated by these industries. Financing wars had been their preserve for nearly a century. Bankers, industrialists and other members of the Secret Elite, the same men who were planning the destruction of Germany, stood to make massive profits from it. War, any war, was a means of garnering wealth. Secret Elite bankers had provided Japan with high-interest-yielding loans to build a modern navy with which to attack Russia. The greater part of that victorious Japanese navy was constructed by the British yards from which the Secret Elite made even more profits. Of course, the Japanese people were left to foot the bill. After the Russian fleet had been destroyed at Tsushima, Russia was provided with high-interest-bearing loans of £190,000,000 to rebuild her navy. Much of the construction work went to factories and shipyards owned by the Secret Elite, and the cycle repeated itself, with the Russian people left to pay the price.⁴⁸ It was no different in Britain. The great 'naval race' produced millions of pounds of profits, and the cost was met by the ordinary citizen.

Highlight (Geel) | Locatie 3285

Lloyd George was constantly in trouble over his extra-marital relationships. Women were a damaging distraction, and fidelity was completely beyond him. His daughter claimed bluntly that he started having affairs soon after he was married.¹⁴ He blamed his wife Margaret for his serial adultery because she was reluctant to move from Wales to London.¹⁵ Lloyd George entered into relationships with scant regard for the women he left behind. His appendage was rumoured to be as large as his ego, but neither serve as adequate explanation for his sexual misbehaviour.¹⁶ And of course it landed him in serious trouble.

Highlight (Geel) | Locatie 4257

On 12 June 1913, Baron Guillaume, the Belgian ambassador in Paris, warned his foreign minister in Brussels that Poincaré's exorbitant expenditure on the French army posed an alarming dilemma. France would 'either renounce what she cannot bear to forgo [Alsace-Lorraine], or else [go to] war at short notice'. Clearly, Poincaré was not preparing for the former. Guillaume noted that infatuation with the military had created a kind of popular frenzy and that French people were not allowed to express doubt about the three-year law 'under pain of being marked as a traitor'. The propaganda, which had been carefully planned and executed, 'began by helping to get Poincaré elected president' and continued 'regardless of the dangers that it is creating. There is great anxiety throughout the country.'³⁷ The French people were right to

Highlight (Geel) | Locatie 4369

was the perfect front. J.P. Morgan, who posed as an upright Protestant guardian of capitalism, who could trace his family roots to pre-Revolutionary times, acted in the interests of the London Rothschilds and shielded their American profits from the poison of anti-Semitism. In 1895, the Rothschilds secretly replenished the US gold reserves through J.P. Morgan and raised him to the premier league of international banking.²⁴ In turn, his gratitude was extended to another Rothschild favourite and one of the most powerful men in England, Alfred Milner. In 1901, Morgan offered Milner a then massive income of \$100,000 per annum to become a partner in the London branch of J P Morgan,²⁵ but Milner was not to be distracted from the vital business of the Boer War. J.P. Morgan became the Empire loyalist at the heart of the American Establishment.

Highlight (Geel) | Locatie 4413

On the surface, there were periods of blistering competition between the investment and banking houses, the steel companies, the railroad builders and the two international goliaths of oil, Rockefeller and Rothschilds, but by the turn of the century the surviving conglomerates adopted a more subtle relationship, which avoided real competition. A decade earlier, Baron Alphonse de Rothschild had accepted Rockefeller's invitation to meet in New York behind the closed doors of Standard Oil's headquarters on Broadway. John D. Archbold,³⁵ Standard Oil's chief negotiator, reported that they had quickly reached a tentative agreement and thought it desirable on both sides that the matter be kept confidential.³⁶ Clearly both understood the advantage of monopolistic collusion. It was a trend that they developed to their own advantage. Much of the assumed rivalry between major stakeholders in banking, industry and commerce was a convenient facade, though they would have the world believe otherwise. Consider, please, this 'convenient facade'. Official Rothschild biographers would have us believe that Rothschild interest in America was limited and that the American Civil War led to 'a permanent decline in the Rothschilds' transatlantic influence'.³⁷ All our evidence points in the opposite direction. Their associates, agents and front companies permeated American finance and industry. Their influence was literally everywhere. J.P. Morgan, the acknowledged chieftain of the Anglo-American financial establishment, was the main conduit for British capital and a personal friend of the Rothschilds.³⁸ Jacob Schiff of Kuhn, Loeb, another close friend of the Rothschild family, worked hand-in-glove with Rockefeller in oil, railroad and banking enterprises. In December 1912, Truth magazine stated: Mr Schiff is head of the great private banking house of Kuhn, Loeb & Co, which represents the Rothschild interests on this side of the Atlantic. He has been described as a financial strategist and has been for years the financial minister of the great impersonal power known as Standard Oil.³⁹ If the article was written to shock Wall Street, it failed abysmally. What it demonstrated was that Jacob Schiff, the Pilgrim, was both a Rothschild agent and a trusted associate of J.D. Rockefeller, the Pilgrim. Morgan, Schiff and Rockefeller, the three leading players on Wall Street, had settled into a cosy cartel, behind which the House of Rothschild remained hidden but retained immense influence and power. Control of capital and credit was increasingly concentrated in the hands of fewer and fewer men until the rival banking groups ceased to operate in genuine competition.⁴⁰

Highlight (Geel) | Locatie 4450

The Morgan–Rockefeller–Kuhn, Loeb axis on Wall Street planned to consolidate their grip on America by setting up a central bank that, like those in Europe, would be owned and controlled not by government but by banks. Their banks. The problem facing the money power was that banks and bankers were not popular with the ordinary citizen in the United States, and there was widespread public antipathy towards a central bank.

Highlight (Geel) | Locatie 4452

The Secret Elite's solution was to deliberately create a banking crisis that would frighten the populace into accepting banking reforms. Shortly after a five-month spell in England in 1907, J.P. Morgan found the perfect opportunity. A rogue speculator, Augustus Heinze, owner of the Knickerbocker Bank, had been surreptitiously using depositors' money in an attempt to corner the stock of the United Copper Company. Its value had been pumped up to \$62 per share but two days later closed at \$15 per share. Heinze lost a fortune and the Knickerbocker Bank immediately faced problems over its solvency.⁴⁴ When the National Bank of Commerce, part of Morgan's financial empire,⁴⁵ publicly refused to accept Knickerbocker cheques, rumours spread rapidly. Morgan's decision scared other institutions from offering financial support⁴⁶ and next morning, 22 October, the Knickerbocker depositors were so desperate they withdrew \$8 million during a three-hour run.⁴⁷ Depositors at other banks across America panicked, attempted to withdraw their savings, and the anticipated domino effect kicked in. Having caused the crash, Morgan took personal charge of reversing it, though he was neither elected nor appointed to the task.⁴⁸ In so doing, he assumed the mantle of saviour of the American banking system. With the government's approval, Morgan browbeat bankers and Trust company presidents into contributing to the rescue package.⁴⁹ Rothschild hailed Morgan as 'a man of wonderful resources. His latest action fills one with admiration and respect for him.'⁵⁰ It was a vote of approval from the boss of bosses to one of his trusted lieutenants.

Highlight (Geel) | Locatie 4486

Amongst the few politicians who railed against the corruption in American banking, Congressman Lindbergh and Senator La Follette stood tall. They never ceased to demand that the system be thoroughly cleansed and repeatedly called for an investigation with teeth. Tellingly, they were denied access to the Pujo Committee. The only witnesses allowed to testify were the bankers themselves.⁵⁹ The entire object of the run on the banks was to frighten the public into believing that urgent reform of the banking system was necessary to protect their savings and that Wall Street should be brought under control.⁶⁰ The public, who had objected to a central bank for many years, had to be made to believe that banking reform was precisely what was needed. No one appeared to appreciate that the biggest advocates of banking reform were the bankers themselves. Their standing in the community assumed toxic proportions in terms of the popular reaction, but they used that to pursue their near impossible dream of a US central bank. The lie was repeated over and over again that only a central bank could bring banks and bankers to public account. The case they put forward argued that the government would regulate and control banking in the interests of the people, but nothing could have been further from the truth. This was a colossal fraud perpetrated by the money power. As Professor Quigley explained, these bankers sought 'nothing less than to create a world system of monetary control in private hands, able to dominate the political system of each country and thus the economy of the world as a whole'.⁶¹ That could only happen if the United States had a central bank like those in England and France.

Highlight (Geel) | Locatie 4546

When the proposals took shape in Congress, there was one overarching flaw. Senator Aldrich insisted on appending his name to it, despite Paul Warburg's warning that it would automatically be associated with Wall Street and prove an unnecessary obstacle. The ego prevailed, and Warburg's concerns proved justified. The Aldrich proposals never went to a vote. President Taft refused to support his bill on the grounds that it would not impose sufficient government control over the banks. The money power decided that Taft had to go. Their support in the 1912 presidential election swung behind the little-known Democrat candidate, Woodrow Wilson. The speed with which Wilson was bounced from his post at Princeton University in 1910 to governor of New Jersey in 1911, then Democratic Party nominee for the presidency in 1912 made him the Solomon Grundy of US politics. Grass-roots Democrats in New Jersey were opposed to having Wilson imposed on them by 'the big interests' in New York,⁷⁴ but they quickly caved in.

Highlight (Geel) | Locatie 4553

Rarely has there ever been such a concerted and focused effort to remove a Republican president from office and replace him with a Democrat party-puppet. Sponsored by Cleveland H. Dodge, director of Rockefeller's National City Bank, and a friend of both Rockefeller and Morgan, Woodrow Wilson was thrust into the presidential race in 1912. The money power opened a campaign office for him at 42 Broadway, and over two-thirds of his campaign funds came directly from Wall Street.⁷⁵ Wilson lied about his politics during the campaign and betrayed the Democratic heritage of Presidents Jefferson and Jackson by courting the bankers and representing their interests. His public utterances were a masterclass in hypocrisy.⁷⁶ He campaigned in 1912 under the banner of 'New Freedoms' and opposition to monopoly powers, yet within a year had given the banks exactly that.

Highlight (Geel) | Locatie 4561

No matter the extent of financial backing, Wilson could never have defeated a popular president like Taft without devious tactics crafted by his political puppet-masters. Clear favourite for a second term in office, Taft's chance of success was seriously undermined when another Republican, former president Theodore Roosevelt, entered the race. Financed by Morgan's associates in Wall Street, Roosevelt created a third force, the 'Bull-Moose' Party, from thin air⁷⁷ and effectively split the Republican vote. While the Morgan team were destroying Taft's chance of victory, Paul Warburg and Jacob Schiff completed the pincer movement by backing Wilson⁷⁸ and ensuring his election. Wilson won with 42 per cent of votes cast, Roosevelt took 27 per cent while Taft could only muster 23 per cent. The remainder went to the socialist candidate Eugene Debs. The Republicans were also routed in the Senate elections, where the Democrats emerged with a clear majority.⁷⁹ Not only did the money power put their

Highlight (Geel) | Locatie 6078

In London that evening, 29 July, the Secret Elite's political placemen, Grey, Asquith, Haldane and Churchill, held a private meeting to discuss what Asquith called 'the coming war'.⁴⁶ Apart from Lloyd George, these were the only senior British politicians who knew what was about to happen. Parliament, in both Houses, was completely ignorant of the fact that Britain was going to war. Maurice Hankey, the Secret Elite's invaluable secretary to the Committee of Imperial Defence, advised them to declare a 'precautionary period' on the road to war. Hankey was indispensable and at the centre of all the major decision making. He was the keeper of minutes, the organiser of instructions: the man who linked the centre of the Cabinet to the Civil Service. Churchill left the meeting, went straight to the Admiralty and ordered the British fleet to proceed immediately to war stations at Scapa Flow in the Orkney Islands. The Grand Fleet may have been mobilised in full view, but it passed through the Straits of Dover in total secrecy. There was no glory for the British navy as it sneaked away in the dark of night with lights extinguished. Ten days previously it had paraded with all flags flying before the king in a line that stretched for forty miles.⁴⁷ On the 29th, while the kaiser was working to preserve the peace, the fleets and armies of his opponents were busily preparing for war.⁴⁸ Chancellor Bethmann could see that Germany was being progressively surrounded by the proverbial 'ring of steel', and his last ray of hope lay in the British government's announcement that it wanted nothing more than to cultivate friendship with Germany. How was he to know that it was simply part of Sir Edward Grey's deception? Bethmann was left with no alternative but to put Britain's 'friendly' overtures to the test. He discussed the critical European situation with Goschen, the British ambassador in Berlin, and detailed a number of promises that Germany would honour if Britain agreed to remain neutral. He was being honest and forthright: qualities that were alien to the Machiavellian instincts in the British Foreign Office. And in his openness, Bethmann gave a hostage to fortune. He was quoted as saying: 'provided that Belgium did not take sides against Germany, her integrity would be respected after the conclusion of the war'.⁴⁹ This was the moment for which the Secret Elite had been waiting. Goschen immediately telegraphed the German proposals to the Foreign Office.

Highlight (Geel) | Locatie 6677

Public opinion was not clamouring for war; every liberal, radical and socialist paper in the kingdom stood against participation in a European conflict. Nor was there any obvious sign of rabid jingoism. Yet. The Secret Elite knew precisely what would move public opinion: Belgium. If Britain's excuse for entering the war was focused well away from Russia, then Grey's final requirement would fall into place and the lock would be sprung. The people would clamour for war if the cause became the defence of 'gallant little Belgium' against a contemptible German invasion. It was Belgian neutrality that would furnish him with the best excuse for entering the war. Grey turned Belgian neutrality into his cause célèbre.

Highlight (Geel) | Locatie 6731

Confidential Belgian documents, to which we made detailed reference in Chapter 6, completely refuted Grey's nonsense and proved that top-secret military agreements between Britain and Belgium had been in place since 1906, when the Committee of Imperial Defence and the War Office began the process of modernising the British Army. This accord included comprehensive arrangements for military cooperation and elaborate plans for the landing of British troops²⁰ who were scheduled to disembark at Dunkirk and Calais in such numbers that half of the British Army could be transported to Belgium within eight days of mobilisation. The British supply base was to be moved from the French coast to Antwerp in Belgium as soon as the North Sea had been cleared of German warships. Lieutenant Colonel Barnardiston, the British military attaché to Brussels, had emphasised to the chief of the Belgian general staff, Major-General Ducarme, that these arrangements had to be kept 'absolutely confidential' and known only to his minister and the British general staff.²¹

Highlight (Geel) | Locatie 6739

In 1912, when the likelihood of a European war over the Balkans became a serious possibility, Anglo-Belgian military arrangements had been further refined. Secret guidebooks for the British military dated that year contained highly detailed maps of Belgian towns, villages and rural areas, including railway stations, church steeples suitable for observation posts, oil depots, roads, canals and bridges. British-Belgian military tactics had been worked out in fine detail, including the role of intermediary officers, interpreters, English translations of Belgian regulations, hospital accommodation for the British wounded and more. Barnardiston's successor as British military attaché to Brussels, Lieutenant-Colonel Bridges, confirmed to the Belgians that Britain had an army composed of six divisions of infantry and eight brigades of cavalry – 160,000 men in all – and that 'everything was ready' to go.²² Remarkably, the minutes of the meeting between Colonel Bridges and the Belgian chief of staff in 1912, General Jungbluth, stated that the British 'would have landed her troops in Belgium in all circumstances',²³ with or without Belgian consent, if Germany attacked France. Where would that have placed the sanctity of Belgian neutrality? By February 1914, the rate of exchange for payment of British soldiers fighting in Belgium had been fixed; that was some six months ahead of the conflict.²⁴

Highlight (Geel) | Locatie 6751

Britain and Belgium had been deeply involved in joint military preparations against Germany for at least eight years. Bethmann's honourable proposal on 29 July²⁵ regarding the integrity of Belgium brought no sudden and unexpected enlightenment as Sir Edward Grey would have us believe. It brought him a tangible excuse. He had, from that moment on, diplomatic 'proof' of Germany's 'ill-intentions'. On 1 August, Grey telegraphed Brussels urging the Belgian leaders to maintain their absolute neutrality.²⁶ It was essential that Belgium kept up the charade of neutrality until the very last, in order to provide Grey with his trump card.

Highlight (Geel) | Locatie 6756

Belgian 'neutrality' was a sham. Grey knew perfectly well that she would side with Britain, France and Russia against Germany. It had long been so arranged. Northcliffe's newspapers would ensure that the public outrage turned against Germany with a truly spiteful venom, and the Secret Elite could start their war. Sir Edward Grey was fully aware that Belgium had actually been mobilising her armed forces for almost a week, under the guise of self-protection against anyone who might try to cross the Belgian border. To this effect, a mobilisation order had been issued by the Belgian government on 24 July, and on 28 July three classes of army reserves were called up.²⁷ The Belgians were as ready as they could be to repulse the German invader. It was no coincidence that this 'neutral' little country began military preparations against Germany on the very same day that both Russia and France began theirs.²⁸

Highlight (Geel) | Locatie 6798

Those anxious, heavy-hearted, loyal Liberals, whose consciences and years of commitment to peace made the meeting almost unbearable, struggled with the enormity that was suddenly presented to them. Sir Edward Grey kept secret the German proposal on neutrality. It was never voiced as an option. Had Cabinet ministers been given all relevant information and time to consider the options, discuss the implications with significant others in their constituencies and prepare themselves properly, matters would likely have taken a very different turn. Instead they had to listen to situation reports from Berlin, Paris, St Petersburg, Vienna and Belgium that caught them by surprise and were presented in a manner that vilified Germany.

Highlight (Geel) | Locatie 6832

And what of David Lloyd George, the erstwhile pacifist and dazzling, devious darling of the radical masses in whom the hope and trust of the anti-war Liberals had been invested? Lloyd George appeared to be on the side of the 'non-interventionists'⁴⁰ and should have been their natural leader. They assumed that he was, but were very mistaken. Lloyd George had long since sold his soul to the Secret Elite. Had he been allowed to remain a free agent, an anti-war Liberal group headed by him would have represented the Secret Elite's gravest nightmare. The damage he could have caused was literally boundless. A splinter Cabinet led by a national figure, a rallying point for the Liberals and the Labour Party in Parliament, would have spelled disaster for the warmongers. But Lloyd George was not what he seemed. It was not for his own sake that he had been saved by the Secret Elite from public scandal, extra-marital excesses, from court cases and from the opprobrium of the Marconi Scandal, been favoured with a wealthy lifestyle and mistress and kept in a luxury he could never have personally afforded. Lloyd George simply continued his long-term payback. The Cabinet met again that evening. Grey informed them that he had told Cambon of their agreement to protect France if the German navy attacked her Channel coastline. Nothing further was decided. No one appeared to realise what Cambon instantly surmised. Britain had taken sides. The Liberal Cabinet tottered on the brink of disintegration. Ten or eleven ministers were still against war.⁴¹ Not undecided; still against the war. Surely the essential qualities of British fairness, decency and parliamentary democracy would safeguard the nation from a disaster that its elected representatives did not want? A number of the less prominent Cabinet ministers looked to Lloyd George for leadership at that moment but found none. Lord Morley felt with hindsight that the Cabinet would have collapsed that night if Lloyd George had given a lead to the waverers, and Harcourt appealed to the chancellor to 'speak for us'.⁴² To no avail. Lloyd George led the opponents of war into a cul-de-sac and left them there.

Highlight (Geel) | Locatie 6849

In Brussels that August evening, the German ambassador handed over the sealed letter that Moltke had earlier forwarded into his safe-keeping.⁴³ It stated that Germany had reliable information that France intended to attack her through Belgium and she would therefore be forced to enter Belgium in response. If Belgium did nothing to halt this invasion, Germany promised that, once the war was over and peace resumed, she would evacuate the territory, make good any damage done and pay for food used by her troops. However, if the movement of German troops was opposed, Germany regretted that she would have to regard Belgium as an enemy. The Belgians were given 12 hours to reply: that is by 7 a.m. on 3 August.⁴⁴

Highlight (Geel) | Locatie 6855

King Alfred of Belgium sent a message to Sir Edward Grey to confirm that Belgium would refuse the German request and appealed for British support. The telegram was timed to perfection for Grey's vital speech in the House of Commons later that day. It provided ammunition to sway the Cabinet and Parliament. How could anyone of moral standing reject gallant little Belgium's

Highlight (Geel) | Locatie 7230

IN AUGUST 1914, THE SECRET ELITE began the war they so coveted. In Britain, Liberal, Labour and Irish Nationalist Members of Parliament were in shock, stunned by the *fait accompli* Sir Edward Grey presented on 3 August 1914. They had been ambushed and betrayed. Cast adrift by the excited jingoism, democracy looked on in impotent disbelief. And it was all predicated on a myth: the myth of Belgian neutrality. From 1906 onwards, Britain's military link with Belgium was one of the most tightly guarded secrets, even within privileged circles. Documents found in the Department of Foreign Affairs in Brussels shortly after the war began proved Anglo-Belgian collusion at the highest levels, including the direct involvement of the Belgian foreign secretary, had been going on for years.¹ Like the 'conversations' with French military commanders, the Belgian 'relationship' was never put in writing or adopted as official policy by Britain, since that would have risked exposure to Parliament and the press. ² Indeed, because Belgium's behaviour violated the duties of a neutral state, the Secret Elite could not entertain any move to openly include them in the entente.

Highlight (Geel) | Locatie 7367

Fay's masterly twin volume, *The Origins of the World War*, first published in 1928, was matched by another powerful denunciation of the lies, *The Genesis of the World War* by Harry Elmer Barnes, professor of history at the prestigious Columbia University. It went deeper and further than Professor Fay's work in supporting Germany, but, like Carroll Quigley's history *Tragedy and Hope*, it was suppressed. Barnes explained: A major difficulty has been the unwillingness of booksellers to cooperate, even when it was to their pecuniary advantage to do so. Many of them have assumed to censor their customers' reading in the field of international relations as in the matter of morals. Not infrequently have booksellers even discouraged prospective customers who desired to have *The Genesis of the World War* ordered for them.³¹ Booksellers unwilling to sell books? That was surely an unusual situation, unless of course other influences – powerful, moneyed influences – wanted to restrict the circulation and squeeze the life from such work. Barnes expanded the historic debate by inviting German and Austrian politicians who played key roles in July 1914 to provide eyewitness evidence for a special edition of the *New York Times Current History Magazine* in July 1928. The result was a fierce rejection of German war guilt.³² The Secret Elite grew concerned. If this revisionist historical research was allowed to continue unabated, they faced the possibility of being unmasked. The peasant revolt had to be put down.

Highlight (Geel) | Locatie 7379

A steady stream of anti-revisionist histories that once more blamed Germany for causing the war began to appear. In 1930, American historian Professor Bernadotte Schmitt, who had studied at Oxford, published *The Coming of the War: 1914*. His work was heavily biased against Germany and reaffirmed her war guilt. Schmitt was awarded the Pulitzer Prize and, fittingly, the George Louis Beer Prize from the American History Association. Beer was specifically named by Professor Quigley as a member of the American branch of Rhodes' secret society.³³ Was it simply a coincidence that Schmitt had been a Rhodes scholar and was consequently awarded a major honour in memory of a Rhodes devotee who was the American correspondent for Milner's Round Table journal? One year later, Professor M.H. Cochran of the University of Missouri demolished Schmitt's work.

Highlight (Geel) | Locatie 7443

Through the Chinese Engineering and Mining Company, which became 'an octopus, racketeering in the stock market, racketeering in the mines and racketeering in human lives',⁴⁶ Hoover expanded his own empire. He supplied the British South Africa Company with the Chinese labourers whose abuse cost Alfred Milner dear,⁴⁷ and his Rothschild/Milner links were embedded in his racketeering excesses. His co-director in the mining company, and its highly profitable slave-driving sideline, was Emile Francqui, an ex officer in the forces of King Leopold of Belgium. Francqui had 'distinguished' himself in the brutal Belgian regime that massacred, tortured and mutilated millions of natives in the Congo to provide vast profits for Leopold's company.⁴⁸ This same Francqui later worked closely with his 'humanitarian' colleague, Herbert Hoover, to relieve the starving children in Europe – or so it was officially portrayed. Hoover's bloody reputation was revised during the war to project the false image of an enlightened Quaker philanthropist, a caring man who had repatriated Americans stranded in Europe in August 1914 and gone on to head the CRB. Hoover the ruthless, evil racketeer was reinvented as Hoover the saviour of starving children. In early 1919, Herbert Hoover was given another important task by the Secret Elite as they set about removing documentary evidence about the origins of the First World War.