Unsettled Nation: Britain, Australasia, and the Victorian Cultural Archipelago

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Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Department of English in the Graduate School of Duke University

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ABSTRACT

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Abstract

This dissertation argues that the literary, intellectual, and cultural borders of Victorian Britain extended as far as Australia and New Zealand, and that the tradition of nation-based literary criticism inherited from the Victorians has blinded Victorian Studies to that possibility. Building upon the nineteenth century concept of “Greater Britain,” a term invoking the expansion of the British nation through settler colonization, I demonstrate that literary forms did not simply diffuse from the core to the periphery of the empire, but instead were able to circulate within the space of Greater Britain. That process of circulation shaped Victorian literature and culture, as local colonial circumstances led writers to modify literary forms and knowledge formations; those modifications were then able to be further disseminated through the empire by way of the networks that constituted Greater Britain.

My argument focuses on the novel, because its formal allegiance to the imagined national community made it a valuable testing ground for the multi-centered nation that was being formed by settlement. I specifically locate the Victorian novel in the context of Britain’s relations with the colonies of Australia and New Zealand, which were unique in that their transition from initial settlement to independent nations occurred almost entirely during the Victorian period. The chapters of Unsettled Nation focus on realism,
romance and political economy’s interest in settlement; the bildungsroman and theories of discipline developed in the penal colonies; the theorization of imperial spatiality in utopian and invasion fiction; and the legacy of the Waverley novel in the portrayal of colonization in temporal terms. Each chapter presents a specific example of how knowledge formations and literary forms were modified as a result of their circulation through the archipelagic nation space of Greater Britain.

Working at the intersection between Victorian Studies and Australian and New Zealand literary criticism, I seek to recover and reconsider the geographical mobility of nineteenth century Britons and their literature. Thus, more than merely trying to cast light on a dimension of imperialism largely ignored by critics of Victorian literature, I use the specific example of Australasia to make the broader claim that the very idea of Victorian Britain can and must be profitably expanded to include its settler colonies.
This dissertation is dedicated to

Sarah, Esther, and Silas

and to

Michael and Susan Steer

and to the memory of

Vivienne Claire Steer, nee Prestidge
11 January 1951—3 January 1983


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1. Introduction

But the New World would also act upon the European communities themselves, modifying their occupations and ways of life, altering their industrial and economical character. Thus the expansion of England involves its transformation.


[It] may have had its shortcomings . . . but it had never struck me as being sufficiently dull-witted and pompous to be mistaken for national literature.


1.1. The Trans-National Island of Doctor Moreau

This dissertation argues that the literary, intellectual, and cultural borders of Victorian Britain extended as far as Australia and New Zealand, and that the tradition of nation-based literary criticism inherited from the Victorians has blinded Victorian Studies to that possibility. A sense of the new readings and perspectives enabled by the idea of an archipelagic Victorian nation can best be introduced through a brief discussion of a novel set in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, H. G. Wells’ *The Island of Doctor Moreau* (1896). Narrated by Edward Prendick, the “scientific romance” revolves around the activities of the mysterious Dr. Moreau, a British biologist who has been

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“simply hounded out of the country” because of the cruelty of his experiments. He has chosen the isolated Noble’s Isle, “a small volcanic islet, and uninhabited” (5), as the place to perfect techniques of vivisection that promise to turn animals into humans. After Moreau is killed during (and by) one of his experiments, Prendick is forced by necessity to live among the Beast People created by the scientist, until he builds a boat and escapes. Rescued at sea, he returns to London but continues to be haunted by his experiences.

In the wake of postcolonial theory, Moreau tends to be read as an imperial allegory due to the similarities between the Beast People and Victorian stereotypes of the “native.” Accordingly, Cyndy Hendershot casts Moreau as a colonial despot, “creat[ing] an imperial situation on Noble’s Island in which he establishes himself as a white god figure controlling the Beast people and using them for manual labor.” Along these lines, the second half of the novel functions as a bleak parable of anti-colonial violence: “The Beast-People and Prendick revert to the ‘beast-flesh,’ ‘go native’ in imperialist terms, and the novel imagines the extinction of the British Empire as well as the extinction of man.” The problem with this account, as Hendershot acknowledges, is that the Beast People are not indigenous to the area. In fact, they displace those who are, namely, Moreau’s

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5 Ibid.: 14.
original Kanaka workforce. In other words, the indigenous population is not analogous to the Beast People but is supplaned by them, and recognizing this small but crucial difference unlocks a very different imperial allegory.

Scholars have long recognized the similarities between Moreau and the scenario outlined by Wells’ mentor, T. H. Huxley, at the beginning of his *Evolution and Ethics* (1896).6 Huxley introduces his work, part of the Victorian genre of evolutionary justifications of liberal society, by proposing a thought experiment grounded in a specific episode of colonial history:

Suppose a shipload of English colonists sent to form a settlement, in such a country as Tasmania was in the middle of the last century. . . . They clear away the native vegetation, extirpate or drive out the animal population, so far as may be necessary, and take measures to defend themselves from the re-immigration of either. In their place, they introduce English grain and fruit trees; English dogs, sheep, cattle, horses; and English men; in fact, they set up a new Flora and Fauna and a new variety of mankind, within the old state of nature.7 Although he does not acknowledge it in this tendentious portrait of colonization, Tasmania was notorious among Huxley’s contemporary readership for two things: the genocide of its aboriginal population, and its role as a penal colony. As historian Robert Hughes describes, “It took less than seventy-five years of white settlement to wipe out most of the people who had occupied Tasmania for some thirty thousand years; it was

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the only true genocide in English colonial history.”

Wells was certainly aware of this appalling history, but his depiction of Moreau’s Beast People resists any ready application of that history of extinction.

What the boat that rescues Prendick and bears him along with its animal cargo to Noble’s Isle does resemble, however, is a prison ship:

Fastened by chains to the mainmast were a number of grisly staghounds, who now began leaping and barking at me, and by the mizzen a huge puma was cramped in a little iron cage, far too small even to give it turning-room. Further under the starboard bulwark were some big hutches containing a number of rabbits, and a solitary llama was squeezed in a mere box of a cage forward. The dogs were muzzled by leather straps. (14)

I wish to suggest that Wells’ portrayal of the Beast People can be productively read as invoking the gruesome history of penal colonization in Van Diemen’s Land (Tasmania). Brought to the island in chains, the beasts are subjected by Moreau to a

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9 Wells refers in his Outline of History (1920) to “the early British settlers in Tasmania, who shot at sight the Palaeolithic men who still lingered there and put out poisoned meat for them to find”; he earlier observes, “They are now, unhappily, extinct. The last Tasmanian died in 1876.” H. G. Wells, *The Outline of History: Being a Plain History of Life and Mankind*, Rev. ed. (New York: MacMillan, 1926), 760, 130. The theme also enters into *The War of the Worlds* (1898), where it provides a fundamental referent for the narrator to understand the Martian invasion: “And before we judge of them too harshly, we must remember what ruthless and utter destruction our own species has wrought, not only upon animals, such as the vanished bison and the dodo, but upon its own inferior races. The Tasmanians, in spite of their human likeness, were entirely swept out of existence in a war of extermination waged by European immigrants, in the space of fifty years. Are we such apostles of mercy as to complain if the Martians warred in the same spirit?” H. G. Wells, *The War of the Worlds*, ed. Patrick Parrinder (London: Penguin, 2005), 9.

10 “In convict lore, Van Diemen’s Land always had the worst reputation for severity. . . . It was the very quintessence of punishment.” Hughes, *Fatal Shore*, 368.
tortuous operation intended to form them into rudimentary liberal subjects: “Each time I
dip a living creature into the bath of burning pain, I say: this time I will burn out all the
animal, this time I will make a rational creature of my own” (78). Following their
vivisection, the Beast People are indoctrinated with a “series of prohibitions called the
Law . . . [that] battled in their minds with the deep-seated, ever-rebellious cravings of
their animal nature. This law they were perpetually repeating, I found, and—
perpetually breaking” (81). Locating this project of reformation in the context of
Tasmania not only highlights the broadly “imperial” stakes associated with order,
improvement, and discipline, but it also suggest that Wells is using the novel to think
specifically about the British nation.¹¹

Indeed, as Linda Dryden observes, “Despite its setting on a remote Pacific island,
London is never far from view.”¹² The novel’s conclusion underscores that Prendick’s
experience of the gothic penal colony is not a nightmare he can awake from, but one that
has transformed his perception of the metropolis he returns to. He is literally unsettled

¹¹ The novel, with its gothic invocation of Tasmania, thus stands in contrast to the salvific status accorded
settler colonization in William Booth’s contemporary In Darkest England and the Way Out (1890): “The
Scheme, in its entirety, may aptly be compared to A Great Machine, foundationed in the lowest slums and
purlieus of our great towns and cities, drawing up into its embrace the depraved and destitute of all classes.
. . . Forwarding them from the City to the Country, and there continuing the process of regeneration, and
then pouring them forth on the virgin soils that await their coming in other lands, keeping hold of them
with a strong government, and yet making them free men and women; and so laying the foundations,
perchance, of another Empire to swell to vast proportions in later times.” William Booth, In Darkest England
and the Way Out (Hapeville, GA: Tyler, 1942), 101.
¹² Linda Dryden, The Modern Gothic and Literary Doubles: Stevenson, Wilde and Wells (Houndmills: Palgrave
MacMillan, 2003), 168.
by his experiences—“I have withdrawn myself from the confusion of cities and multitudes” (131)—because he cannot help but see London in the terms of Noble’s Isle:

I could not persuade myself that the men and women I met were not also another, still passably human, Beast People, animals half-wrought into the outward image of human souls; and that they would presently begin to revert, to show first this bestial mark and then that. . . .

I would go out into the streets to fight with my delusion, and prowling women would mew after me, furtive craving men glance jealously at me, weary pale workers go coughing by me with tired eyes and eager paces like wounded deer dripping blood (130, 131)

Prendick now sees the inhabitants of London as if they were colonial subjects precisely because colonial space had first enabled him to see metropolitan subject formation in a harsh new light.

Wells’ tale usefully highlights three claims about the relationship between Victorian Britain and its settler colonies that form the foundation of this dissertation. First, the Victorians increasingly conceived of settler colonization as a trans-oceanic extension of British society, premised upon the assumption that their race and nation were destined to expand into the “waste” lands of the world. Such colonies provided Britain with a destination for its “surplus” population, a source of commodities and a captive market for its manufactures, and—as the invocation of convict transportation in Moreau suggests—with a range of imperial metaphors and historical experiences specifically relating to what it means to be British. Second, Prendick’s ability to compare the Londoners to Beast People attests that the metaphors and histories provided by settlement could be readily mapped onto British society. That ready applicability arose
in part because the settler colony was seen to be some kind of refracted or miniature
version of that society, and thus a mirror to it, and in part because the Britishness of the
settler population enabled an extensive, two-way cultural traffic with it. Third, and most
significantly for Victorian Studies, Prendick’s newfound ability to see the inhabitants of
London as animals provides a metaphoric example of the ability of the settler experience
to change the forms of metropolitan perception. Prendick, that is, does not simply return
from his time “out of human knowledge about latitude 5°S. and longitude 105°W” (6)
with an exotic story to be consumed, for his experiences prove able to reinterpret and
literally reshape its intended audience.

1.2. Greater Britain and Victorian Studies

The interpretive framework that allows The Island of Doctor Moreau to be read in
terms of a multi-centered British nation came to be known, during the last third of the
nineteenth century, as “Greater Britain.” In The Expansion of England (1883), the “most
influential account of colonial unity in the late Victorian age,” J. R. Seeley defined that
vision as “a real enlargement of the English State; it carries across the seas not merely the
English race, but the authority of the English Government.” His account posits that the
“expansion of England” occurs by way of settler colonization, creating a trans-oceanic

13 Duncan Bell, The Idea of Greater Britain: Empire and the Future of World Order, 1860-1900 (Princeton:
polity defined by its common racial and cultural heritage: “When we have accustomed ourselves to contemplate the whole Empire together and call it all England, we shall see that here too is a United States. Here too is a great homogeneous people, one in blood, language, religion and laws, but dispersed over a boundless space.” While Seeley usefully highlights the Victorians’ awareness that settler colonization has extended the borders of Britain, however, this dissertation seeks to disturb his sanguineness about this process and complicate any impression that the “expansion of England” was a purely centrifugal process. Rather than assuming that cultural production simply diffused from the core to the periphery of Greater Britain, I shall argue that this archipelagic entity was characterized by the internal circulation and transformation of individuals, material objects, capital and commodities, intellectual discourses, plots and literary forms.

While the significance of Greater Britain for Victorian literary criticism has yet to be fully acknowledged, it has become an increasingly prominent category of analysis amongst imperial historians and proponents of the “New British History.” Of the latter, David Armitage recounts, it was in the early 1970s that J. G. A. Pocock first articulated a global conception of Britishness that sought to pay “equal attention to both the interactions of peoples, nations, and states within the ‘Atlantic archipelago’ and the

15 Ibid., 126.
extension of those interactions across the maritime expanses of the Atlantic, Pacific, and
Indian Oceans.” More recently, P. J. Cain and A. G. Hopkins’ magisterial history of the
British empire, *British Imperialism, 1688-2000* (2002), has placed new emphasis on the
importance of the economic ties between Britain and the settler colonies:

> The geographical emphasis shifted . . . because the weight of financial and
commercial flows redirected attention to parts of the empire, such as
Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, which had been moved to the edge
of the picture following the decolonisation of what was to become the
new Commonwealth after World War II. . . . [T]he evidence we assembled
required us . . . to give the white dominions greater visibility in the
continuing story of British overseas expansion and imperialism.17

Victorian literature provides a testing ground for asking whether the economic
interpenetration of Britain and its settler colonies also affected Britain’s cultural
imaginary. In particular, rather than simply attending to *representations* of those colonies,
I shall make the case that an oceanic Victorian culture must also have left its traces on
literary *form*, providing evidence that the shape of the Victorian novel was changed by
writing in the colonies about the colonial experience.

The settler colony currently constitutes something of an aporia in Victorian
literary studies. On the one hand, postcolonial approaches to the literature of empire,
emphasizing racial difference and attuned to events on the colonial frontier, are neither

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16 David Armitage, “Greater Britain: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis?,” *American Historical Review* 104, no. 2 (1999): 431. Pocock was writing at the time of Britain’s decision to enter into the European Economic Community; Armitage notes “the long, withdrawing roar of empire could be heard behind this plea . . . in the voice of an aggrieved and abandoned New Zealander.” Armitage, “Greater Britain,” 431.

suited to nor particularly interested in discussing the trans-oceanic relationship between a settler population and its point of origin. Thus Patrick Brantlinger, in *Rule of Darkness* (1988), includes a chapter that posits Australia as a “colonial setting” for Victorian literature on emigration and colonization, but his methodology prevents him from considering such basic questions as whether or not it matters that a text is written in Australia or Britain. On the other hand, the study of Victorian literature—and the realist novel in particular—is still strongly demarcated by Britain’s territorial bounds, to which the colonies are always external. These limitations are evident in John Plotz’s *Portable Property* (2008), even though it invokes the concept of Greater Britain:

> The problem of ‘staying English’ within the wider realm . . . called ‘Greater Britain’ is addressed in novelistic representations of implicitly and explicitly *national* portable property. It is the existence of Greater Britain that requires not just a notion of portable cultural objects, but also *asymmetry* in portability, so that the flow of culture-bearing objects from core to periphery is not counterbalanced or interrupted by a flow in the opposite direction.

Not only does Plotz finesse the fact that Greater Britain rapidly became synonymous with a homogeneous white empire, but he uses it to reinscribe the notion of a one-way “flow of culture bearing objects from core to periphery.” Plotz’ analysis lie reflects Victorian Studies’ monolithic conception of the empire, for which India provides the

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dominant template, but even more so it attests to its monolithic conception of the nation as a geographically and culturally self-contained entity.

It is to challenge broad and unhistoricized generalizations such as this, of the Victorian novel reflecting “a sense of seamless [national] identity on the move,”\(^20\) that I focus in this dissertation on the form as well as the content of the novel of Greater Britain. Benedict Anderson’s *Imagined Communities* (1983) famously posits a homology between the novel and the nation, arguing that both are constituted by “homogeneous, empty time,” and that the novel serves to delineate the boundaries of the “imagined community” of the nation by allowing the reader to imagine the simultaneous, parallel actions of his or her fellow-citizens. The boundary of national temporality is, for Anderson, implicitly territorial because it is constrained by the limits of sovereignty.\(^21\)

One of the more significant recent works on Victorian realism, James Buzard’s *Disorienting Fiction* (2005), demonstrates a similar belief that literary form is restricted to the territorial boundaries of the nation. Arguing that “narrative self-interruption” is “the formal signature” of Victorian realism, which is “devoted to the performance of a ‘metropolitan autoethnography,’” Buzard maintains that such an approach:

\(^20\) Ibid., 21.

\(^21\) “Though many novels represent a society conceived as national, in Anderson’s account what is crucial to the role of fiction in the imagining of nations is not this representation but that the world evoked by the novel include events happening simultaneously, extend beyond the experience of particular individuals, and be conceived as geographically situated or bounded.” Jonathan Culler, “Anderson and the Novel,” *Diacritics* 29, no. 4 (1999): 23, emphasis added.
Reorients our perspective on the ideological work of the novel, enabling us to think about it as defensive rather than smug. It encourages us, in other words, to approach the great masterpieces of Victorian fiction as attempts to comprehend and counteract a suspected by-product of British expansion, a moral evacuation or ‘meaning loss’ at the imperial center—as if the exporting of British legal codes, school curricula, religious doctrines, investment capital, and personnel depleted the island nation’s identity rather than aggrandized it.²²

Buzard invokes the nation-based concept of “metropolitan autoethnography” in direct opposition to the centrifugal forces of “British expansion.” The work of Plotz and Buzard usefully highlights that, if Greater Britain did change the “island nation’s identity,” evidence for it must be found in the form of the novel; less helpfully, however, their reinscription of the national boundaries of the Victorian novel make it harder to conceive of it as an archipelagic cultural form in the first place.

### 1.3. The Settler Archipelago

In Unsettled Nation I deliberately and narrowly focus on the triangular relationship between Britain, New Zealand, and the colonies of Australia.²³ For one thing, their transition from colonies to independent nations occurred almost entirely

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²³ Other configurations, though outside the scope of this project, could presumably focus on different archives to produce different models of Greater Britain: for example, the “southern hemisphere” formation of Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, or a “Pacific rim” organized around Australia, New Zealand and the United States. I do not wish to suggest that the Australasian-British iteration of Greater Britain is the sole, or even perhaps the most important, story to be told; rather, in delineating the complex and multi-faceted nature of Britain’s engagement with Australasia, I wish to suggest the possibility of a new understanding Victorian literature in terms of multiple and overlapping imperial circuits of literary production.
during the nineteenth century. The history of these colonies is, as New Zealand politician Julius Vogel observed in 1893, largely a Victorian story: “New Zealand is essentially a product of the Victorian era. It was during the present reign that its sovereignty was acquired, and that it was constituted into a British colony.” As a “product of the Victorian era,” moreover, the colonization of Australasia also differs from its most immediate predecessor, the eighteenth century settlement of North America. Indeed, many a writer recounting his world tour performed a double movement, differentiating the Australasian colonies from the United States in the act of asserting their remarkable Englishness. “Coming from San Francisco and the Nevadan towns,” Dilke writes, “Wellington appeared very English and extremely quiet; the town is sunny and still, but with a holiday look; indeed, I could not help fancying that it was Sunday.” J. A. Froude remarks so often on the Englishness of Australia that he begins to be troubled by it despite himself:

The Australians speak all pure English as it is taught in schools. There is no general tone, like the American, that my ear could detect. I could not

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24 Julius Vogel, *New Zealand: Its Past, Present and Future* (London: Waterlow and Sons, 1893), 3-4. New Zealand officially became a colony with the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840, and the establishment of the Australian colonies mainly occurred between 1825 and 1859: New South Wales in 1788; Western Australia in 1825; South Australia in 1836; Victoria in 1851; Queensland and Tasmania in 1859; and the Northern Territories in 1911. At the end of the period, the federation of the Australian colonies created the nation of Australia in 1901, while New Zealand became a semi-autonomous “dominion” in 1907.


tell whether to be pleased or not at this. On the one side it showed how English they yet were; on the other, it indicated that they were still in the imitative stage. Original force and vigour always tend to make a form for themselves, after their own likeness.\textsuperscript{27}

Even though these witnesses are testifying in favor of the viability of Greater Britain,

their emphasis on the Englishness of Australasia nevertheless helped reinforce amongst their British readership a sense of common ground with those colonies that helped them to be seen in a different, more sympathetic light than other areas of the empire.

At the same time, however, the economic, political, and cultural relationships between Australia from New Zealand were fluid and permeable. In terms of trade, at a time when sea routes often provided the most efficient links between settlements, Australasia constituted a distinct economic entity. Lydia Wevers notes,

Before Federation the powerful constellation of New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania, South Australia and New Zealand treated the Tasman Sea not so much as a barrier but a highway. Much of New Zealand’s settler capital came from Sydney or Melbourne; trade routes and connections flourished, business relationships were strong, and the labour market responded to demand on either side of the Tasman. Nineteenth-century New Zealand newspapers and magazines are full of Australian news, shipping arrivals, stock market reports, politics, court and police news, arts and gossip. A thriving tourism trade saw Australia and New Zealand as ports on the same route, and the migration flows were broad and reciprocal.\textsuperscript{28}

Yet this “reciprocal” relationship was only part of the story, for in other aspects Australia and New Zealand appeared to have little in common. The emergence of

\textsuperscript{27} J. A. Froude, \textit{Oceana, or, England and Her Colonies}, 2nd ed. (London: Longmans, Green, 1886), 188.

distinct movements of literary nationalism in both places by the 1890s, most famously the *Bulletin* school of writers in Melbourne, reflects their widely divergent histories of settlement and, as Dilke succinctly pointed, the sheer variety of what were seen to be "natural" differences between them:

No two countries are so wholly distinct as Australia and New Zealand. The islands of New Zealand are inhabited by Polynesians, the Australian continent by negroes. New Zealand is ethnologically nearer to America, Australia to Africa, than New Zealand to Australia. If we turn from ethnology to scenery and climate, the countries are still more distinct. . . . It is impossible to conceive countries more unlike each other than are our two great dominions of the south. Their very fossils are as dissimilar as are their flora and fauna of our time.29

Alongside these deep and significant differences, however, the colonial economies of Australia and New Zealand were so closely connected federation between them was a serious possibility in the 1890s.30

Implicit in the specific arguments I develop in each chapter of *Unsettled Nation* is a broader claim that our current approach to the Victorian novel is far more rigidly determined by national categories than was the case in the nineteenth century. Thus, while the dissertation is firmly grounded in Victorian Studies, it also operates at the intersection with Australian and New Zealand literary studies; or, put another way, discussing works that map out an area between these fields requires these disparate

29 Dilke, *Greater Britain*, II.6-7.
fields be brought into dialog with each other. Australian and New Zealand literary
studies has traditionally been suspicious or dismissive of works from this period that do
not appear in some way to prefigure an aesthetic of national realism, generally defined
by such features as the use of the vernacular, the “strangeness or special character of the
land and the conflict between man and land.” 31 Even more recent efforts to recover
colonial writing, such as Robert Dixon’s Writing the Colonial Adventure (1995) and Jane
Stafford and Mark Williams’ Maoriland (2006), are governed by the gesture of
recuperating that writing in the name of the nation. 32 While I do not by any means wish
to deny the existence of national literary traditions—indeed, the literatures of Australia
and New Zealand have developed in almost complete isolation from each other—factors
such as the movement of authors between Britain and the colonies, 33 the increasingly

31 Geoffrey Serle, From Deserts the Prophets Come: The Creative Spirit in Australia, 1788-1972 (Melbourne:
Heinemann, 1973), 14-5.
32 Dixon reads Australian authors appropriated the international form of the imperial romance, or “ripping
yarn,” to articulate a sense of Australian national identity: “For these reasons, it is too simple to see ripping
yarns as an inherently imperialist form in opposition to realism as a nationalist form . . . since many writers
who can reasonably be called Australian continued to use romance as a way of discriminating identities that
were far from synonymous with either Englishness or empire.” Robert Dixon, Writing the Colonial Adventure:
Race, Gender and Nation in Anglo-Australian Popular Fiction, 1875-1914 (Cambridge: Cambridge University
Press, 1995), 6. Despite arguing that “literary nationalism’s exclusive focus on the local ignores, and even
denies, the international sources of the local,” and “demonstrat[ing] that European Romanticism, Irish and
Scottish Celticism, the [and] Victorian crisis of belief” are all influences on this body of work, Stafford and
Williams’ focus remains resolutely national: “Maoriland is important because it is not only part of New
Zealand history but a formative part . . . [and] because so large a part of the country’s literature cannot be
excised form memory without attendant loss of knowledge about the present” Jane Stafford and Mark
33 For example, Robert Stout’s introduction to Thomas Bracken’s collection of poetry, Musings in Maoriland
(1890), which seeks to describe the emergence of a distinctive New Zealand literature, nevertheless
emphasizes the poet’s simultaneous allegiance to Australia and New Zealand: “In poetry we are more
intra-imperial book market\textsuperscript{34} and the closer trade and defense links between the polities of Greater Britain all suggest that the retrospective imposition of national borders impoverishes our understanding of the cultural role played by literature in the nineteenth century.

Set within this cohesive yet disparate triangular imperial space, \textit{Unsettled Nation} tells four stories of the surprisingly wide ramifications of literary variations that occurred in the colonies had because of arising from their transmission through the global networks of Greater Britain. That is, the local conditions of the colony—which include the process and politics of indigenous dispossession, ideologies of ethnology and landscape, and specific historical events—influenced the form and content of colonial writers and visiting British authors. These innovations were disseminated through the empire by way of the imperial publishing system and, often more significantly, through individuals who carried works and ideas with them on their

\textsuperscript{34} The advent of the colonial library series in the mid-1880s—whereby parallel, single-volume editions of texts were produced for Britain and the colonies, with the latter bound more cheaply and sold for less—effectively unified the empire’s book trades, ensuring that “the history of the book is . . . an imperial indeed, international) history, rather than a series of national histories.” Australasia surpassed the United States in 1889 as the largest importer of British books. Paul Eggert, “\textit{Robbery Under Arms: The Colonial Market, Imperial Publishers, and the Demise of the Three-Decker Novel},” \textit{Book History} 6 (2003): 142.
travels. Again, historians of the nineteenth century have preceded literary scholars in beginning to develop models to describe these circulatory patterns; likewise, the influence on European scientific discourses of colonial “discoveries,” such as the wildlife of Australia on the biological sciences, has also been established for some time. It is important to note, however, that scientific citational practices granted a weight to colonial evidence that allowed it to contribute to and even transform “metropolitan” scientific disciplines. Colonial literary and aesthetic productions were not, for reasons I shall discuss below, as inherently mobile as their scientific counterparts.

Nevertheless, there are scholarly precedents for the claim that Victorian Studies has underestimated the extent and significance of colonial literary mobility. Nancy Armstrong and Leonard Tennenhouse, for instance, have recently argued that the generic protocols of Samuel Richardson’s *Pamela* (1740) emerged out of North American textual precedents. “Such a narrative,” they argue, “should help us to imagine England as part of a larger nation whose boundaries extended overseas to North America.” Rather than simply reverse the flow of influence, as Armstrong and Tennenhouse do, art

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historian Bernard Smith has placed greater emphasis on circulation within the empire and on the intersection between circulating aesthetic and scientific discourses. In *European Vision and the South Pacific* (1959), Smith claims that the principles of nineteenth-century European landscape painting were altered as a result of the innovative techniques employed by the artists and naturalists involved in exploration and colonization of the South Pacific:

> The well-known accounts of the development of nineteenth-century landscape that are still to be found in the general histories, *couched as they are entirely in terms of European cultural movements and categories* . . . *are of little value in attempting to understand the underlying structure of the situation*, in which Europeans are undertaking the physical and emotional mastery of the world. Such cultural categories obscure the conceptual underpinnings of landscape throughout the century by the dominating categories of the descriptive sciences (botany, zoology, geology, geography, meteorology, anthropology, etc.) by means of which landscapes and their inhabitant were effectively described and brought under control. Only then were the conventional cultural categories of European landscape used to endow the new in its typicality with a familiar European gloss.38

Similarly to Smith’s interest in the discursive depth of the landscape painting, I understand the novel to be involved in encapsulating, theorizing and reworking other knowledge formations invested in the idea of the nation—those I focus on include political economy, penology, spatiality and temporality—in the act of representing a specific place and time.

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Unlike the artists discussed by Smith, however, neither the novelists of the Victorian era nor the settings of their realist works were particularly portable. The colonies largely feature in such works as a *deus ex machina*, allowing authors to rapidly hustle characters like Dickens’ Micawber family offstage. This absence, I suggest, does not simply reflect a willful resistance to representing imperialism (as advanced by Edward Said in *Culture and Imperialism*), or a defensive reaction against perceived imperial cultural dilution (as we have seen James Buzard articulate), but it also derives from the implicitly national bounds of realism demarcated in temporal and territorial terms. To the extent that the colony is understood to exist in a different time and space to the metropolis—Seeley, for example, argues that the colonies have “no past and an unbounded future”—they remain outside the scope of nineteenth century realism. This is partly why several of the texts I discuss here belong to “minor” genres such as the invasion or utopian novel, and others invoke the protocols of romance. Indeed, the attempt to engage with the multiple centers of Greater Britain often results in a text that is a generic hybrid or is formally stratified in some other manner.

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39 “In order to more accurately read works like *Mansfield Park*, we have to see them in the main as resisting or avoiding that other [colonial] setting, which their formal inclusiveness, historical honesty, and prophetic suggestiveness cannot hide completely.” Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Knopf, 1993), 96.


41 This approach builds upon Fredric Jameson’s argument in *The Political Unconscious* that layering and discontinuity in a narrative reflect “the coexistence of distinct and sedimented types of generic discourse,” but whereas Jameson understands form in the archaeological terms of temporal accumulation, the analysis...
subtle and complex manner in which settlement expands and transforms the boundaries
Victorian literature, therefore, I employ a deliberately capacious definition of form. At
times I focus on the underlying logic of a plot structure, or trace the appearance of
stylistic features associated with a specific genre, or attend to the distinctive formal
mechanisms by which they imagine the world of Greater Britain. There is no single,
readily identifiable formal signature that unites all the texts I discuss, because the
authors in question were in no ways part of a single aesthetic “movement,” but rather
each was responding at various times and places (and with various degrees of self-
consciousness) to the archipelagic nation they all inhabited.

1.4. Unsettled Nation

Each chapter in Unsettled Nation constitutes a discrete case study that traces an
eexample of archipelagic literary circulation within Greater Britain. The strength of each
eexample, however, hangs on the claim that the formal changes I identify engage in some
way with the material intersection between Britain and its settler colonies. For this
reason, I place significant weight on the biographies and extra-literary interests of the
writers in question. This is not to make a case for rigid biographical determinism, but

Edward Said observes, in adopting a similar geographic approach to imperial literature, “The inherent
mode for this counterpoint is not temporal but spatial.” Fredric Jameson, The Political Unconscious: Narrative
as a Socially Symbolic Act (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1982), 144; Said, Culture and Imperialism, 81.
focusing on the colonial experiences of writers, or their encounters with others who had them, provides a useful means of identifying and justifying connections between what otherwise might appear to be little more than coincidental likeness with what are often minor texts. At the same time, my argument is not solely focused on literary texts but addresses in each case a nexus of novelistic genres and non-fictional discourses or knowledge formations that were written and rewritten at various points within Greater Britain. On the one hand, the ground shared with those discourses usefully highlights the fact that the novel was a means of theorizing, as well as reflecting, the nation; on the other hand, their shared interest in settlement strengthens the claim that colonial space was always also a form of national space.

The four chapters that follow are divided according to geography, reflecting the distinctive aspects of colonial history that foregrounded the particular concerns explored by the texts in question. The first two, concerned with questions of how the Victorians understood the individual subject, are focused on Australia because penal colonization and the mid-century gold rushes provided dramatic examples of colonial individuality that intersected with preexisting economic and political theories on the subject. The third and fourth chapters, by contrast, are more geographically complex, for they focus on questions of imperial spatiality and temporality that were illuminated by the racial politics of settlement in New Zealand in ways that also informed the applicability of those questions to other sites. Put another way, my dissertation adopts a “geographic

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formalism,” coupling the formal analysis of literary texts to an awareness of the geographical and historical specificity of the settler colonies. Rather than using Greater Britain’s rhetoric of spatial and racial homogenization to produce an equally unspecific, universalizing notion of “imperial discourse,” I wish to demonstrate that attending to the specificity of certain colonial relations must necessarily extend and complicate the manner in which Victorian Studies discusses of literary production and imperialism.

The chapters are also arranged in a roughly chronological sequence that moves towards the end of the century, but several of them begin at a similar point, with ideologies inherited from the late eighteenth century. This repeated return to the Romantic period—to the tenets of political economy, to Jeremy Bentham, to Walter Scott—points to a series of complex and overlapping aspects of the arc of colonial history in the nineteenth century. First, the necessity of beginning with these figures and their ideas highlights the extent to which they enabled the transition from the first British empire, centered on America, to the settler colonies of the second British empire, providing an intellectual starting point and hinge for that renewed colonial project. Second, it emphasizes the intellectual activity and interest that centered on the subject of settler colonization—roughly divided between an economic interest in the first half of the century, and a strategic focus in the second—and how the migration of those eighteenth century concerns from Britain out to a colonial periphery consequently mediated their reintroduction to Victorian society in modified form. Third, the fact that
some of the literary criticism most germane to this project derives from eighteenth century studies suggest that historical reasons specific to that period, including the less rigidly codified state of the novel and the contemporary project of internal colonization, have allowed critics of that period to more readily recognized the porosity of its national boundaries. One of the broader consequences of my argument, therefore, is to suggest that attending to the settlement of Australasia demonstrates the continuities of genre, discourse, and imperial history that constitute the shared ground of the Romantic and Victorian periods.

At the other end of the temporal spectrum of this dissertation, by gesturing towards early British modernism and the emergence of self-conscious national literatures in Australasia at the turn of the twentieth century, I wish to suggest that trans-national patterns of influence and circulation established during the Victorian period have continued, despite the collapse of the empire, to coexist alongside the national categories emphasized by the academy. This legacy is perhaps of greatest relevance for Australian and New Zealand writing, which has been shaped to a significant extent in the twentieth century by the antagonism between a masculinist national realist aesthetic and “popular” genres typified by the romance, and denigrated for their “feminine” characteristics and its “derivative,” i.e. trans-national, forms. One particularly compelling example that illustrates this point is provided by the career of Edith Lyttleton, who wrote under the penname of G. B. Lancaster in the early twentieth
century. Born in Tasmania in 1873 and raised in New Zealand, Lyttleton moved to England in 1908 where she made a hugely successful career writing novels and short stories about the settler colonies in a mode of masculine romance for a popular audience. In the 1930s, Lyttleton began to produce a different form of fiction, writing a series of highly successful “dominion-historical” romances took a more feminist stance and explored her family’s colonial origins in Australia, New Zealand, and Canada.

Lyttleton has, however, been almost completely elided from the national literary histories of Australia, New Zealand, Canada and Britain, all places where she lived and set her fiction. *Unsettled Nation* seeks to describe the nineteenth century origins of the literary, economic, and cultural forces that continued to produce such trans-national figures and bodies of work. At the same time, the very need to recover the idea of Greater Britain in order to describe that archipelagic literary world also attests to the some of the most pressing reasons why a figure such as Lyttleton has been so inevitably occluded by literary criticism.

My first chapter addresses the overlapping commitment of early Victorian realism and political economy to the idea of the nation, and the shared conceptual language with which they understood its formation as the displacement of nomadism by

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43 Pageant (1933) is set in Tasmania; The World is Yours (1934) in the Yukon; Promenade (1938) in New Zealand; and Grand Parade (1944) in Nova Scotia.
settlement. The formation of Australasian settler colonies in the 1820s-40s appeared to affirm political economy’s stadial theory of social formation—that capitalist society emerges out of agricultural settlement—and to be narratable in an analogous fashion as the displacement of what I term “nomadic romance” by “territorial realism.” Catherine Spence’s novel *Clara Morison* (1854) testifies to the challenge posed to both accounts by the Australian gold rushes, commencing in 1851, which raised the possibility that the wandering gold prospector—remarkably akin to the antisocial hero of romance—might represent an alternative origin to capitalist society. The impact of the gold rushes can be seen by the 1870s, I argue, in the “marginal revolution” within political economy and in Anthony Trollope’s *John Caldigate* (1879), both of which reconfigure the relationship between nomadic romance and territorial realism to posit the individual consumer at the heart of the Victorian nation.

Chapter two focuses on a single mid-century bildungsroman, *Great Expectations* (1860-1), and argues that the representation of its protagonist, Pip, marks the culmination of a series of experiments in subject formation and reformation conducted across Greater Britain. The first experiment began in the 1830s with the governor of the Norfolk Island penal colony, Alexander Maconochie, who framed the convict’s punishment as a personal bildungsroman of economic discipline, and thus formally articulated Victorian liberalism’s unification of capitalism, acculturation and moral improvement. Dickens explicitly adopted Maconochie’s theories in his mid-century
project for reforming fallen women, Urania Cottage, but I claim that they also underpin the plotting of Pip’s bourgeois “apprenticeship” and the formal logic underpinning that plot in Great Expectations. By applying Maconochie’s principles to an increasingly wide range of metropolitan subjects, and by abstracting those principles into the form and content of the Victorian bildungsroman, Dickens succeeded in articulating and propagating a form of self-governing middle class subjectivity defined by its ability to be readily and successfully transported to the furthest corners of the imperial archipelago.

My third chapter addresses how the politics of competing conceptualizations of imperial space in the last decades of the century were made visible in utopian and dystopian fiction set in the settler periphery. First, the advocates of a “Greater Britain” imperial military alliance proposed that the empire be conceived of as a homogeneous space where the settler colony was simply an extension of metropolitan territory. The consequences and limits of such proposals are explored in Anthony Trollope’s sardonic dystopia The Fixed Period (1882) and Julius Vogel’s enthusiastic fantasy Anno Domini 2000 (1889). Second, fear of isolation and invasion crystallized the idea of the “imperial outpost” in Australasia by the 1890s, which made a virtue of necessity by asserting the defensive value of a nativist knowledge of colonial territory. This stance was most powerfully articulated in Alexander Mackay’s xenophobic invasion novel The Yellow Wave (1895). These two models inform the formal innovations of Erskine Childers’ The
Riddle of the Sands (1903), wherein its protagonists must reimagine the defense of Greater Britain as if it were an imperial outpost in order to thwart a German invasion of Britain.

Chapter four focuses on the imitation and reworking of the Waverley novel in the South Pacific, arguing that Scott’s popularity and applicability to colonial situations necessitated that settlement be thought of in temporal terms as the displacement of “local” archaism by “imperial” modernity. On the one hand, the appropriation of Scott was heightened by the belief that Maori and Pacific Islander cultures resembled that of the Highland Scots; on the other hand, the settler constituted a third temporal category between the imperial and the local that disrupted the Waverley paradigm. Two divergent responses to the temporality of settlement are mapped out by texts set on the colonial frontier of New Zealand, F. E. Maning’s Old New Zealand (1863) and Rolf Boldrewood’s War to the Knife (1899). The former narrates settlement as an overwhelmingly localizing process, which is reflected in the text’s digressive form; the latter portrays colonization as solely imperial in its outcome, which is underscored by its trans-national scope. Both texts demonstrate that one of the three temporal categories of the settler periphery—local, settler, and imperial—is inevitably elided through applying Scott’s model there. Robert Louis Stevenson’s response to Scott in The Ebb-Tide (1893), set in the South Pacific, is to redefine settlement as the simultaneous coexistence of “imperial” and “local” temporalities. This approach results in a romance narrative
marked by internal discontinuities and ruptures, thus reconfiguring the Waverley novel into protomodernist form.
2. Genres of Settlement: Realism and Romance in Victorian Literature and Political Economy

It is the great merit of E. G. Wakefield to have discovered, not something new about the colonies, but, in the colonies, the truth about capitalist relations in the mother country.

Karl Marx, Capital (1867)\(^1\)

He . . . regarded the colonies generally from a politic-economical point of view

Anthony Trollope, John Caldigate (1878-9)\(^2\)

In this chapter, I argue that Victorian realism and political economy participated in a shared project: the delineation of a settled society. By a settled society, I mean one in which capitalism is harmonized with the traditional social order, so that the individual subject can be imagined as maintaining a stable place within the economy and to be rooted in a specific part of the nation’s territory. Writing with reference to the fiction of Anthony Trollope, Paul Delany describes a “myth of the land” that binds together “the fate of the individual with that of the commonwealth”: “people are most real and knowable through their ancestral attachment to a tract of land, an attachment signified by possession of a name that goes with the property. Conversely, those separated from


the land are evanescent and unreliable.” The idea of a settled society, founded upon this “myth of the land,” provided the ultimate guarantee of social coherence for the Victorian realist novel and marked the highest stage of human society of classical political economy.

For political economy, settlement marked the terminus of stadial history, a historical narrative that saw human society progressing through distinct stages of increasingly sophisticated economic behavior and increasingly stable social formations. At the opposite extreme to settlement was nomadic society, whose lack of civilization was evident in their ceaseless wanderings, which were solely governed by appetite and testified to disdain of attaining property through labor. Beginning in the 1820s, political economy was able to put this theory to the test through a series of more or less planned experiments in settlement in Australasia, most notably the foundation of the colonies of South Australia in 1836 and New Zealand in 1840. The most prominent theorist of this colonial activity was Edward Gibbon Wakefield, who was himself the prime mover behind establishing settlements in South Australia and New Zealand. Wakefield’s “art of colonization” outlined a theory of economic land management specifically aimed at forming a settled society and to prevent the nomadic dispersal of colonists across the “waste land” of the colony. Wakefield’s theoretical insights were regarded as casting

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light on the universal truths of political economy by writers as diverse as John Stuart Mill and Karl Marx, who described him as “the most notable political economist” of the 1830s.4

In what follows, I will explore the overlapping concerns of Victorian realism and political economy on two fronts. First, I will argue that Wakefield’s conceptual framework of “systematic colonization” illuminates the manner in which realism depicts the settled nature of British society. I read his description of the relationship of labor to land, and his economic rationale for territorial and social fixity, as offering a Victorian theory of the novel. Marx observed, “It is the great merit of E. G. Wakefield to have discovered, not something new about the colonies, but, in the colonies, the truth about capitalist relations in the mother country.”5 In a similar manner, I argue that Wakefield’s largely imagined Australasian settler colony provides a series of acute insights into the socio-economic logic underpinning the British realist novel. Second, I will argue that political economy’s narratives of nomadism and settlement can be understood in terms of the opposing genres of romance and realism, respectively, for those economic concepts are embodied in their formal qualities.

In other words, I use the genres of realism and romance as a way of tracing the intellectual and material traffic between Britain and Australasia, and of comprehending

4 Marx, Capital, 936, 830.
5 Ibid., 932.
the changes to British knowledge formations that arose out of that encounter. Prior to 1850, I argue, both realism and political economy told a nationalist teleological narrative of the displacement of nomadic, unsettled romance by settled, territorial realism. The discovery of gold in Australia in the 1850s, however, threatened this account by providing a dramatic illustration of how a nomadic figure—the gold prospector—could provide the economic foundation of a nation. Put in generic terms, as is illustrated by Australian author Catherine Spence’s novel *Clara Morison*, literature and political economy sought to portray the gold discoveries as a passing romance, after which the stability of a realist social order would be restored. The stadial account of history was demolished in the 1870s, however, by the advent of the theory of marginal utility which severed the connection between the subject and land. This theory, which repositioned economics around the romance figure of the individual consumer, was first advanced by W. S. Jevons, who had worked for the Royal Mint in Sydney during the gold rush of the 1850s. Anthony Trollope’s *John Caldigate* (1878-9), which narrates the restoration of an English estate through the proceeds of gold mining in Australia, lays out a new relationship for realism and romance arising from the marginal revolution. Rather than striving to banish the troubling elements of romance from the Victorian subject, realism from the 1870s now serves as a framework that renders the modern consuming subject comprehensible.
2.1. The Art of Colonization, 1830s-1850

2.1.1. Stadial History and the Settler Colony

Classical political economy, which was initiated in the eighteenth century by Adam Smith’s *Wealth of Nations* (1776) and reached its apogee in the Victorian period with John Stuart Mill’s *Principles of Political Economy* (1848), depends upon a stadial account of history. Underpinning its account of modern capitalism, classical political economy sought to provide an historical narrative of how those economic tenets emerged as human society progressed through distinct stages towards the current state of advancement exemplified by western Europe. Classical political economy’s stadial narrative of history typically identified four distinct stages in a society’s economic development, and the succession from one stage to another is marked by a society’s changing relationship to property that reflects its changing relationship with the territory it inhabits. Political economy thus founded itself—and modern, Victorian society—upon a narrative of settlement that, as Pat Molony describes it, “classified different societies according to their mode of subsistence, and accredited them, on the basis of that ranking, with different degrees of sovereignty and proprietary rights over
the territory they inhabited.” J. R. McCulloch, in his *Principles of Political Economy* (1825), provides a typical and usefully condensed example:

Those who observe the progress, and trace the history of the human race, in different countries and states of society, will find that their comfort and happiness have been always very nearly proportioned to the power which they possessed of rendering their labour effective in appropriating the raw products of nature, and in fitting and adapting them to their use. The savage, whose labour is confined to the gathering of wild fruits, or the picking up of shell-fish on the sea-coast, is placed at the very bottom of the scale of civilisation, and is, in point of comfort, decidedly inferior to many of the lower animals. The *first step* in the progress of society is made when man learns to hunt wild animals, to feed himself with their flesh, and clothe himself with their skins. But labour, when confined to the chase, is extremely barren and unproductive. Tribes of hunters, like beasts of prey, whom they closely resemble in their habits and modes of subsistence, are but thinly scattered over the surface of the countries which they occupy. . . . The *second step* in the progress of society is made when the tribes of hunters and fishers learn to apply their labour, like the ancient Scythians and modern Tartars, to the domestication of wild animals and the rearing of flocks. The subsistence of herdsmen and shepherds is much less precarious than that of hunters, but they are almost entirely destitute of those comforts and elegancies which give to civilised life its chief value. The *third* and most decisive step in the progress of civilisation—in the great art of producing the necessaries and conveniences of life—is made when the wandering tribes of hunters and shepherds renounce their migratory habits, and become agriculturalists and manufacturers. It is then that man begins fully to avail himself of his productive powers. He then becomes laborious, and, by a necessary consequence, his wants are then, for the first time, fully supplied, and he acquires an extensive command over the articles necessary for his comfort as well as his subsistence.  

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McCullough’s account blurs archaeological and anthropological evidence—“ancient Scythians and modern Tartars”—in order to provide an historicized account of Britain’s current state of advancement at the same time as providing a hierarchized explanation of the economic and social diversity (and inferiority) of the populations that Britain has encountered during its imperial expansion.

McCulloch’s stadial account, typical of most similar works from the period, usefully foregrounds the different rhetorical and ideological strands that comprise such a teleological account of history. The narrative traces an arc from a primitive, savage society living in an animalistic state of nature to a modern society able to live in comfort. This narrative arc is itself constituted out of intertwined narratives derived from John Locke about labor, property, and settlement. As a society begins to labor to accumulate property, raising it above the level of subsistence into a new level of comfort, it also becomes possible to sustain a higher density of population and to remain in one place.

Whereas hunters, “like beasts of prey,” are only “thinly scattered over the surface of the countries which they occupy,” the “most decisive step” in the civilizing process occurs “when the wandering tribes of hunters and shepherds renounce their migratory habits” and take up practices of agriculture and manufacturing that both allow and force them to remain in one place. Put another way, classical political economy narrates the emergence of capitalism (and, by association, civilization) as the displacement of nomadism by settlement.
It is important to emphasize what is implicit in such narratives of stadial history, namely, that classical political economy describes the behavior of societies rather than individuals. As McCulloch states, he is not concerned with particulars but with aggregates:

It is not required of the economist, that his theories should quadrate with the peculiar biases [sic] of particular persons. His conclusions are drawn from observing the principles which are found to determine the conduct of mankind, as presented on the large scale of nations and empires. He has to deal with man in the aggregate—with states, and not with families—with the passions and propensities which actuate the great bulk of the human race, and not with those which are occasionally found to influence a solitary individual.  

Although McCulloch assumes political economy to be grounded in a common human nature—Mill, likewise, refers to wealth as “this universal object of human desire”—he nevertheless focuses solely on the economic workings of social collectivities, collectivities that correspond to “nations and empires.” As indicated by the thrust of stadial history towards settlement, writers such as McCulloch and Mill orient economic behavior of those “nations and empires” in relations to land. Mill outlines in Principles of Political Economy that the three requisites of economic production are labour, capital, and “natural agents.” Of the latter, he argued, “These may be all represented by the term land,” and land is privileged by Mill for it provides the ultimate limit on economic productivity.

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8 Ibid., 17.
10 Ibid., II.153.
productivity: “Its extent is limited, and the extent of the more productive kinds of it more limited still. It is also evident that the quantity of produce capable of being raised on any given piece of land is not indefinite. This limited quantity of land, and limited productiveness of it, are the real limits to the increase of production.”  

Thus classical political economy, in narrating the emergence of a settled society, grounds the character of a society in the nature of its economic relationship to the territory it inhabits.

McCulloch’s insights into settlement are intensified and extended by Mill because, in the time between the publication of their respective works in 1825 and 1848, the significance of land to political economy was brought into new prominence by Edward Gibbon Wakefield, the economic prophet of the Colonial Reform movement. Wakefield, who had published an edition of Adam Smith’s *Wealth of Nations* in 1835, advocated that the establishment of settler colonies not only cast light upon political economy’s narrative of nation formation, but also presented a means of solving Britain’s economic problems. According to Donald Winch, whereas the Ricardian economic orthodoxy established in the early 1800s maintained that “the export of capital could never be anything but detrimental to the exporting country,” Wakefield countered (drawing upon Smith) that settler colonization provided “the best means of enlarging the field of employment and of reducing the pressure of accumulated capital on profits

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11 Ibid., II.173.
Wakefield saw the establishment of settler colonies in Australasia as providing a controlled experiment in the tenets of political economy, collapsing the long duration of its stadial narrative by transplanting a viable capitalist society into the state of nature. The high profile of Wakefield’s writings—most notably *A Letter from Sydney* (1829), *England and America* (1833), and *A View of the Art of Colonization* (1849)—and their theoretical significance for political economy is evident in other economists’ writings from the time. For example, Herman Merivale’s *Lectures on Colonization and Colonies* (1840), based upon his lectures as Drummond Professor of Political Economy at Oxford, were a response by the challenges posed to his field by the Colonial Reform movement:

> My objects were . . . to call their attention also to the principles of the art of colonization, if I may so term it, particularly to the ingenious speculations of late years respecting the most profitable mode of applying capital and labour in the foundation and improvement of settlements;—speculations which have not only assumed something of scientific dignity, but have been partially subjected to the test of experiment in some of our Australian possessions.

Spurred by the negative example of the Swan River Settlement, which was founded in Western Australia in 1829 and effectively collapsed within a year, Wakefield’s National...
Colonization Society had established the colony of South Australia in 1836, based upon his theory of “systematic colonization.” Wakefield later became director of the New Zealand Company in 1839, which dispatched its first ships in the same year, and helped establish the Canterbury Association in 1848, which established a Church of England settlement in New Zealand along similar principles. As I shall outline below, Wakefield’s writings about settler colonization not only illuminated political economy but also modified its principles.

For Wakefield, settler colonization—and political economy—was all about land. On the one hand, the colony’s supposedly limitless amounts of “waste land” provide the field for capital and labor to be applied more profitably than in Britain; on the other hand, the same lack of limit on the availability of land thwarted any attempt to form a settled society. Mill, influenced by Wakefield, identifies as the central paradox of “waste land” that it can only enter into the purview of political economy if it is scarce enough to attain value:

So long as the quantity of a natural agent is practically unlimited, it cannot unless susceptible of artificial monopoly, bear any value in the

wisdom of emigrating to the Swan River Colony in Western Australia. . . . [Their critical] ideas were set down by Wakefield in a pamphlet and later in the form of letters dealing with the social, political and economic situation in New South Wales. Gouger distributed these writings among influential people but does not seem to have made many converts initially. Nevertheless, in February 1830, prior to Wakefield’s release from prison, he succeeded in forming the Emigration Society which later became the National Colonization Society.” Winch, Classical Political Economy, 106.
market, since no one will give anything for what can be obtained gratis. But as soon as a limitation becomes practically operative; as soon as there is not so much of the thing to be had, as would be appropriated and used if it could be obtained for asking; the ownership or use of the natural agent acquires an exchangeable value.¹⁵

The economic paradox of limitless colonial land provides the starting point for Wakefield’s Letter from Sydney (1829), which despite its title he wrote while serving a three year sentence in Newgate Prison for his elopement with underage heiress Ellen Turner. He adopts the guise of an Australian settler who has purchased 20,000 acres of land for a bargain price, only to come to a painful realization: “My domain has no market value. . . . The reason is plain: there are millions upon millions of acres, as fertile as mine, to be had for nothing; and, what is more, there are not people to take them.”¹⁶

As becomes apparent, however, this scenario threatens the individual’s financial viability and the order of society as a whole.

Whereas the traditional stadial history of political economy assumed that economic advancement gradually led a society to settle in one place, Wakefield argued instead that the unlimited quantity of colonial land would inevitably lead such a society to regress towards a less settled state of existence. The “millions upon millions of acres” tempt the prospective settlers to scatter across the landscape, each seeking his own land to farm or graze, and remaining in constant motion because the easiest solution is to

move on when the soil becomes exhausted. Wakefield explicitly associates this unsettled, rootless behavior with the nomadic, semi-barbarous populations that exemplify the lower evolutionary stages of political economy:

But this state of things is not without many precedents. It has occurred in every waste country, settled by emigrants from civilized countries. . . . [T]his colony would never be anything but a half-barbarous, Tartarian, ill-cultivated, poverty-stricken wilderness, until, in the course of nature, some hundreds of years hence, the population should become more dense[.]\textsuperscript{17}

In other words, it is the physical environment of the settler colony that determines its economic character, and without constraint it will inevitably cause colonial society to dissociate into atomized, degenerate settlers. What Wakefield does not mention is that his description of such settlers corresponds to political economy’s description of Australia’s aboriginal inhabitants, for the nomad is by definition incapable of fixed land habitation and ownership. One result of denying their right to inhabit Australia territory as its “owners” is that Wakefield is able to invoke the concept of “waste land” that then threatens to reduce the settler to a similar nomadic status.

The solution that Wakefield proposes—“that \textit{CONCENTRATION} would produce what never did and never can exist without it—\textit{CIVILIZATION}”\textsuperscript{18}—hinges upon successfully altering the settler’s economic relationship to the land in order to fix him in

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote{17} Ibid., 112.
\footnote{18} Ibid., 134.
\end{footnotes}
Wakefield imagines the colony as a pastoral society replicating an aristocratic model of rural land ownership, but to instantiate this vision in the antipodes required him to rethink nothing less than the function of the division of labor within political economy. As Mill notes, “Mr. Wakefield was, I believe, the first to point out, that part of the subject had, with injurious effect, been mistaken for the whole; that a more fundamental principle lies beneath that of the division of labour, and comprehends it.”

That “more fundamental principle” is the combination of labor, or cooperative economic interaction of individuals, that Wakefield first outlined in his commentary on Smith: “It will be seen that society improves in proportion as the principle of co-operation obtains more and more force, and that all schemes for dividing labour tend to drive us back into a state of barbarism. In the principle of co-operation we find a complete argument against all schemes for dividing land into small portions, or for dividing men into small societies.”

In order to achieve the concentration of population necessary to achieve such cooperation, Wakefield developed what he called the “sufficient price” doctrine, whereby government asserted its ownership over all colonial land and sold it at a flat

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19 In England and America, the United States provides the paradigmatic example of a nomadic settler society: “I saw a people without monuments, without history, without local attachments founded on impressions of the past, without any love of birthplace, without patriotism—unless men constantly roaming over immense regions may be called a country.” Edward Gibbon Wakefield, England and America: A Comparison of the Social and Political State of Both Nations, ed. M. F. Lloyd Prichard, The Collected Works of Edward Gibbon Wakefield (Glasgow: Collins, 1968), 134.


fee, thus placing an artificial constraint on the availability of land in order to create an economic demand for it.

As Jonathan Lamb has argued, the “sufficient price” effectively condensed into a single economic transaction the history of development that, according to stadial theory, separates waste land (and its nomadic denizens) from the civilized practice (and practitioners) of agricultural settlement:

In its price land was to bear the value of its improvement. Its history as a civilised space, and as an instrument of civilisation, was telescoped into the single transaction by which it became settleable. Unlike other commodities . . . [New Zealand] company land knew its value independently of the market. At £1 an acre it had already acquired its future attributes of fertility, beauty, and community; and in this dehistoricising of value lay its virtue in ensuring the sustained civility of those who acquired it.22 That is, the “sufficient price” sought to prevent the settler from degenerating into nomadism by restricting land ownership so that the population was forced to cluster together. For Wakefield, an added benefit was that land ownership would also be restricted and a working class thus called into existence. As Marx observed, “In the old civilized countries the worker, although free, is by a law of nature dependent on the capitalist; in colonies this dependence must be created by artificial means.”23

23 Marx, Capital, 937.
ultimate outcome of this policy was, however, to be nothing less than the creation of what he terms “civilization”:

In any colony where this perfect rule . . . should be adopted, colonization would proceed, not as everywhere hitherto, more or less, by the scattering of people over a wilderness, and placing them for ages in a state between civilization and barbarism, but by the extension to new places of all that is good in an old society; by the removal to new places of people, civilized and experienced in all the arts of production; willing and able to assist each other; excited to the most skilful application of capital and labour by ready markets for disposing of surplus produce; producing, by means of the most skilful industry in the richest field, more than colonial industry has ever produced; obtaining the highest profits of capital and the highest wages of labour; offering the strongest attraction for the immigration of capital and people; increasing rapidly; enjoying the advantages of an old society without its evils . . . an old society in every thing save the uneasiness of capitalists and the misery of the bulk of the people.  

It is worth spelling out here what is perhaps obvious from Wakefield’s utopian vision of creating “an old society without its evils”: that the “art of colonization” is an attempt to delineate, in the language of political economy, the conditions under which British society can be spontaneously generated (and improved) in a new place. Although settler colonies have largely been regarded as copies of the metropolis—New Zealand, for example, being seen as “Better Britain”—I shall argue that imagining the settler colony also cast light on British society.

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24 Wakefield, England and America, 549.
25 See James Belich, Paradise Reforged: A History of the New Zealanders from the 1880s to the Year 2000 (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2001), 76-86. Belich argues that New Zealand history from 1880-1920 was shaped by a strengthening of imperial ties he terms “recolonisation”: “The shift was . . . from the
2.1.2. Settlement and Territorial Realism

Questions of settlement were not solely focused on the settler colonies during the first decades of the Victorian period, and neither were they solely the concern of political economists. Thomas Carlyle, for example, in Past and Present (1843) uses the opposition between settlement and nomadism to argue for the social importance of “Permanent Contract instead of Temporary.” The figure of the mobile nomad—who “has his very house set on wheels”—represents the embodiment of “liberty” and freedom, whose primitiveness (Carlyle associates the nomad with the “ape”) is paradoxically also aggressively modern in its intimation of democratic energies. Settlement, by contrast, represents the endurance of tradition and social order:

The civilised man lives not in wheeled houses. He builds stone castles, plants lands, makes lifelong marriage-contracts, —has long-dated hundred-fold possessions, not to be valued in the money-market; has pedigrees, libraries, law codes; has memories and hopes, even for this Earth, that reach over thousands of years.26

Carlyle’s hyperbolic imagery27 highlights the common ground shared by Wakefield’s theory of colonization and a conservative understanding of Victorian social order, concerns that are usefully encapsulated in the term “cultivation.” Cultivation invokes

Progressive British Paradise to the Exemplary British Paradise, from embryonic superpower to the world’s social laboratory.” Belich, Paradise Reforged, 77.


the improvement of the soil and intellectual attainment, and for Carlyle and Wakefield both concepts are possible only when members of society remain fixed in their physical and social places. “I am for permanence in all things, at the earliest possible moment,” he claims, “Blessed is he that continueth where he is. Here let us rest, and lay out seedfields; here let us learn to dwell.” Turning to literature in this and the following section, I will lay out the claim that the values attached to the figures of the settler and the nomad by political economy correspond to those associated with realism and romance, respectively, in early Victorian fiction. This similarity between political economy and literature is not merely a homology but reflects their shared project of imagining the modernity of the Victorian nation.

Within systematic colonization, cultivation is a question of proportion. Describing his theory as “an art rather than a science,” Wakefield refused—indeed, admitted he was unable—to precisely spell out what the “sufficient price” might amount to, instead resorting to the argument that the appropriate “proportion” between land and labor would be evident from its positive effects:

Does it not follow that the government might, by restricting the amount of grants, establish and maintain the most desirable proportion between people and territory? The answer appears to me so clear and unquestionable, that I will not detain you by any argument concerning it. The proportion between people and territory does, in new countries,

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28 Carlyle, Past and Present, 277.
29 Wakefield, England and America, 504.
depend altogether upon the will of the government. Every new
government, therefore, possesses the power to civilize its subjects.\textsuperscript{30} In this formulation, the “proportion between people and territory” blurs seamlessly with a second form of proportionality that attracted Marx’s attention, namely, the ratio of capitalists and workers. It is in the colonial state’s ability to control both forms of proportion through the sufficient price that Wakefield locates the “power to civilize” the settlers, otherwise prone to nomadic dispersion and degeneration. The “art of colonization” thus demonstrates how the shared interests of political economy and the cultural sphere are revealed in imagining the settler colony.\textsuperscript{31}

The “art of colonization” also casts a new light upon the cultural work performed by Victorian realism. Recent works in Victorian studies have cast realism as a mode of cultural autoethnography or as a technique for establishing visually-coded social stratification.\textsuperscript{32} By contrast, I wish to reanimate a somewhat older approach in order to examine how realism works to relate the individual subject to the territory of


\textsuperscript{31} Christopher Herbert argues that proportionality entered into political economy through the work of Malthus: “Malthus grasped more lucidly than his contemporaries prior to Mill that the propositional system of political economy implied abjuring any idea of fixed natural values in favor of an all-pervading principle of relativity or what he calls by one of the key terms in his theoretical lexicon: ‘proportionality.’ He means that the significance of any item in the economic system is only calculable as a series of ratios expressing its relations to other items. . . . [H]e appends a striking footnote which underlines the centrality of this idea in all his thought. ‘It is not, however, in political economy alone that so much depends upon proportions, but throughout the whole range of nature and art.’” Christopher Herbert, \textit{Culture and Anomie: Ethnographic Imagination in the Nineteenth Century} (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 123-4.

\textsuperscript{32} See, for example, Nancy Armstrong, \textit{Fiction in the Age of Photography: The Legacy of British Realism} (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999); Buzard, \textit{Disorienting Fiction: The Autoethnographic Work of Nineteenth-Century British Novels}. 48
the nation. What I shall term “territorial realism” shares with the stadial history of classical political economy the broad notion of a modernizing progression from nomadism to settlement, and provides an aesthetic parallel to Wakefield’s specific concern with the importance of proportionality to settled society. George Levine argues that the everyday concerns of realism testify to its investment in social stability: “It belongs, almost provincially, to a ‘middling’ condition and defines itself against the excesses, both stylistic and narrative, of various kinds of romantic, exotic, or sensational literatures.” Moreover, he claims, realism’s interest in the representation of individual interiority is balanced by its interest in the structures that restrict that individuality and hold it in place: “The primary conventions of realism are its deflation of ambition and passion, its antiheroism, its tendency to see all people and things within large containing social organizations and, hence, its apparently digressive preoccupation with surfaces, things, particularities, social manners.” Put another way, territorial realism both stabilizes and locates its subjects within the nation. In modeling this “power to civilize its subjects” (Wakefield’s phrase) to the reading nation, territorial realism aspires to perform an

33 Annette Van, also discussing the similarities between the two domains, highlights Harriet Martineau’s contention in Illustrations of Political Economy that “realism in political economy, like realism in the novel, is its ‘natural’ form because they share an investment in making value stable.” Annette Van, “Realism, Speculation, and the Gold Standard in Harriet Martineau’s Illustrations of Political Economy,” Victorian Literature and Culture 34, no. 1 (2006): 116.
35 Ibid., 15, emphasis added.
aesthetic work of settlement equivalent to that performed in economic terms by the sufficient price.

As Levine describes it, the landscape of the Victorian realist novel is—similarly to its characters—defined by the Wakefieldian principles of settlement. Noting that “Victorian realism’s attempts to exclude extremes extends not only to heroism, psychic intensity, or violent behavior, but to geography as well,” he argues that the realist landscape is overwritten with certain principles of social order:

In Victorian realism . . . country villages, gently sloping hills, fertile lands and, occasionally, urban clutter are the norms. The English countryside figures forth the life of moderate expectations . . . In a world whose reality is defined . . . according to inherited traditions of social order, no ‘inhuman’ landscape can occupy much space . . . The realist’s landscape, like the community and traditions it embodies, and like the particularizing strategies of realism itself, affirms what may be the only intelligible reality—the humanly ordered world. It is intelligible because it has human scope, implies no absolute but only mixed conditions, bringing together nature’s mysterious energies and the human capacity for using and ordering those energies, in farms, and gardens, and parks. The equivalent of unrestrained nature is the Frankensteinian idealist, whose ambition points beyond the compromises of the social order toward illimitable social or personal satisfactions.36 Levine’s concept of the “mixed condition” and “moderate expectations” is, I claim, broadly analogous to Wakefield’s invocation of “proportion.” Both are markers of a social order opposed to unrestrained individualism, and both are grounded in a landscape that guarantees the continuation of that order.

36 Ibid., 204, 5.
The tendency of territorial realism to ground its characters in a “proportional” relationship to a specific national territory is not restricted to novelistic content. At a formal level, Wakefield’s concepts of “proportion” and “combination” are analogous to the quality of “consensus” that Elizabeth Deeds Ermarth argues has been fundamental to the aesthetic of realism since the Renaissance. Ermarth argues that realism is characterized by its efforts to reconcile the differing viewpoints (akin to a division of labor) within the text, and it does so by positioning (or combining) those viewpoints within “neutral time and neutral space,” a common medium that possesses the power “to deliver mutual relevance even between the most disparate events or persons.”37 The territorial implications of this analysis become evident in Ermarth’s description of the community encompassed by the realist text:

Because the realistic medium of experience is neutral, the same everywhere, there is a potential continuity between the vision of the spectator and the vision of all possible spectators in the same horizon. . . . This consensus among possible views homogenizes the medium of perception and unifies the field perceived; it literally creates a common horizon. . . . Because consensus thus establishes that the same conditions hold everywhere in space, and because objects have an invariant structure that does not change with position, the realistic artist can project from a limited number of cases to general laws of relationship or sequence.38

38 Ibid., 20-1, emphasis added.
Ermarth’s invocation of the “neutral time and space” of realism parallels Wakefield’s description of colonial space as “waste land.” Both concepts are brought together in Benedict Anderson’s *Imagined Communities* (published in the same year as *Realism and Consensus*), which argues that the nation is constituted by “homogeneous, empty time” that unifies the simultaneous acts of its citizens, and that print-capitalism—specifically, newspapers and novels—allows those citizens to imagine “events happening simultaneously, extend[ing] beyond the experience of particular individuals” within a “geographically situated or bounded” community. Viewed in this light, the absence of depictions of indigenous peoples in Victorian realism—such representations are largely confined to romance—appears primarily to be not a failure of literary imagination, or due to the sheer exoticism of such subjects. Rather, that absence is inherited from the stadial history of political economy, which cannot imagine a “nomadic” people within the temporally homogeneous national community that realism presumes.

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39 Wakefield writes, “For the existence of a colony two things are indispensable: first, waste land, that is, land not yet the property of individuals, but liable to become so through the intervention of government; and secondly, the migration of people; the removal of people to settle in a new place. Further, it will be seen at once, that this migration must be of two kinds; first, the removal of people from an old to a new country; secondly, the removal of people from a settled part to a waste part of the colony. Colonization, then, signifies the removal of people from an old to a new country, and the settlement of people on the waste land of the new country. As there is more to be done than to be learned, this is an art rather than a science.” Wakefield, *England and America*, 503-4. Marx likewise defines “true colonies” as “virgin soil colonized by free immigrants.” Marx, *Capital*, 931.
40 Culler, “Anderson and the Novel,” 23.
One final point of intersection between classical political economy and territorial realism worth emphasizing is their shared assumption that the state of settlement provides social stability over time. John Stuart Mill’s version of stadial history, for example, highlights the geographic and social “fixity” of the European population during feudalism as a primary reason for its economic superiority compared to Asia:

The greater stability, the fixity of personal position, which this state of society afforded, in comparison with the Asiatic polity to which it economically corresponded, was one main reason why it was also found more favourable to improvement. From this time the economical advancement of society has not been further interrupted. Security of person and property grew slowly but steadily; the arts of life made constant progress; plunder ceased to be the principal source of accumulation; and feudal Europe ripened into commercial and manufacturing Europe.\(^{41}\)

Likewise, territorial realism prioritizes the “greater stability, the fixity of personal position” within the imagined community, and its continuity over time. As Levine notes, the realist novel depicts “a world whose reality is defined . . . according to inherited traditions of social order,” while Nancy Armstrong has more recently described realism as “any representation that establishes and maintains the priority of the same social categories that an individual could or could not actually occupy.”\(^{42}\) This understanding of Victorian society is manifested in the logic of the investment, “the holding of property


for the income it provided,”43 whereby a predictable and stable return is apparently
guaranteed by the physical actuality—indeed, the groundedness—of that investment.
Thus territorial realism can be recognized from the assertion of continuity, stability, and
moderation in the overlapping spheres of the social and the economic.

2.1.3. Speculation and the Nomadic Romance

One consequence of Wakefield’s economic theories of settlement was the
effective reduction of stadial history to a binary opposition between modern settlement
(defined by the “combination of labor”) and primitive nomadism (reflected in “the
scattering of people over a wilderness”). While the former finds aesthetic expression in
territorial realism, the latter is equally readily assimilated by the romance. It has been
demonstrated that, rather than remaining rooted in one place and gradually
accumulating wealth, Wakefield’s nomadic settler moves unpredictably across the
landscape. Such a wandering, monadic rootless, and uncivilized—indeed, pre-modern—
figure is at the center of the romance, especially as it is retrospectively constructed by
territorial realism as a more archaic literary form. Northrop Frye argues in The Secular
Scripture (1976) that the romance form is characterized by its protagonist’s territorial
unboundedness and random, unsettled movements: “There is always something of the
nomadic in romance, something that recalls its heritage of travelling folk tales and ballads.

43 David C. Itzkowitz, “Fair Enterprise or Extravagant Speculation: Investment, Speculation, and Gambling
Recurrently . . . *we have seen romance associating itself with an imaginative uprooting, a drive over and across everything settled and planted and built.*”\(^{44}\) The romance form—or, as I shall term it here, “nomadic romance”—provided Victorian writers with the means to articulate a profoundly antisocial individualism and the associated qualities of unbounded mobility and appetite antithetical to the tenets of territorial realism.

The formal properties of nomadic romance also correspond to certain principles outlined in classical political economy. The nomad’s irregular territorial movements, evidence for Wakefield of bad settlement, mirror the instability of the uncontrolled colonial economy:

> The history of settlements in desert countries abounds with instances of *fluctuations* in the value of land and of labour, arising solely from fluctuations in the proportion between the people and the territory for their subsistence; and such fluctuations have, for the most part, been caused solely by a restriction or an extension to the amount of grants.\(^{45}\) The settler’s random movements, and the colony’s economic fluctuations, are given formal expression in the non-linear and sensational plotting of the nomadic romance. Indeed, Frye uses such terms to distinguish romance from realism: “In realism the attempt is normally to keep the action horizontal, using a technique of causality in which the characters are prior to the plot. . . . Romance is more usually ‘sensational,’ that

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is, it moves from one discontinuous episode to another.” Frye’s realism resembles the “common horizon” described by Ermarth, and Frye usefully highlights the importance of that “neutral” setting to imagining the stability of character. In nomadic romance, by contrast, characters are secondary to plot, which is unstable and disruptive—but also exciting. Thus, the pre-capitalist nomad of stadial history is readily figured by a genre whose formal properties articulate what (from the perspective of political economy) appear to be pre-capitalist social values, such as violent and excessive passion, irrationality, and unpredictability.

In allying this early Victorian iteration of the realism-romance debate with contemporary concerns in political economy, I wish to suggest that that debate is about something far more specific than a loosely-defined cultural ‘anxiety’ about degeneration, such as is often attributed to the emergence of “imperial gothic” at the fin de siècle. The apparently anti-economic primitivism of the nomadic settler—he “loses all the advantages of commerce, of markets, of separation of employments, and combination of labour”—also resembles the distinctively modern, hyperindividualistic economic activity of speculation. Wakefield’s *Art of Colonization* attributes similar detrimental qualities to the speculator and to the nomadic settler:

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46 Frye, *Secular Scripture*, 34.
47 Itzkowitz observes, “Victorians viewed gambling and investment as lying at opposite ends of a continuum of financial risk with speculation lying somewhere inbetween.” Itzkowitz, “Fair Enterprise,” 123. He argues
A ruined man is a dangerous citizen; and I suspect that there are at all times in this country more people who have been ruined than in any other country. During the time of speculation indeed, some gain; those who are fortunate or sharp enough to ’get out’ of bad speculations before their badness is generally known. These gain suddenly and largely; they are, for the most part, gamblers for life. Their success is an example which induces others to become gamblers when the speculation-time comes round again. Indeed, during the time of speculation most people are gamblers. I know of nothing for which these violent alternations of ’prosperity’ and ’distress,’ of speculation and panic, are more to be regretted than for their effect in nurturing the spirit of the gambler. Ever since capital began to be superabundant in England, the spirit of the gambler has been growing amongst our commercial and manufacturing classes.\textsuperscript{48}

The characteristics of nomadic romance brought about by the speculator—the “violent alterations” producing “dangerous citizens”—threaten the social order expressed in territorial realism. In a parallel example, Ayşe Çelikkol has argued that in Walter Scott’s historical romances the lawless figure of the smuggler, characterized by “unbounded travel as well as freedom from the rules that regulate ordinary experience,” provides a figure of economic modernity in his ability to “generically embody the conditions and

that speculation became increasingly difficult to differentiate from investment until, with the repeal of Barnard’s Act in 1860 allowing futures trading, it came to be accepted as a legitimate form of investment. The argument of this chapter spans this period of recuperation, and as a result the terms speculation and gambling will be used interchangeably to invoke economic behavior predicated upon randomness and uncertainty.

\textsuperscript{48} Edward Gibbon Wakefield, \emph{A View of the Art of Colonization, with Present Reference to the British Empire: In Letters between a Statesman and a Colonist} (London: J. W. Parker, 1849), 77-8.
contradictions of the emergent transnational system” of global capitalism. The unboundedness of the nomadic romance embodies the very “spirit of the gambler” that political economy seeks to eliminate in the course of its project to envisage a stable society brought about by “investment.”

2.2. Australian Gold, 1850s

2.2.1. Marvelous Melbourne and the New Hairystocracy

During the first decades of the Victorian period, Australia’s infamy as the destination of transported convicts was increasingly balanced by its growing reputation as an enormous imperial farm. This rehabilitation through pastoralism centered on a single export commodity—wool—that settlers began to grow in vast flocks of fine-fleeced merino sheep to meet the growing demand of the British textile industry. Shipments of Australian wool to London first began in 1811, but it was with the advent of “squatting” in the late 1820s that pastoralism became the remarkably successful basis of the colonial economy: “The 1830s and 1840s in colonial Australia are commonly called the ‘squatting age,’ when colonial entrepreneurs ‘put everything into four legs.’ . . . Wool exports increased from 1,967,309 pounds in 1830 to 41,426,655 pounds in 1850,

accounting for almost 50 percent of Britain’s wool supply.”

I shall have more to say about the practice of squatting below, in particular about the significance of its differences from the agricultural and social model embodied by the traditional English estate, but for my present purposes I wish to emphasize how neatly this emerging pastoral narrative appeared to coincide with the stadial history of classical political economy. The reformation of the colonial economy, and the colony’s reputation, demonstrably hinged on the establishment of farming practices that civilized and settled the colonial population, providing the foundation for a recognizably modern economy. As historian Philip McMichael notes, “The entry of British banking capital into the colonial economy en masse in the 1830s was attracted by, and indeed facilitated, the pastoral boom of the 1830s.”

Indeed, sheep-farming provided a primary vector of colonial territorial expansion, as the search for pasture motivated squatters to move inland from coastal settlements such as Sydney.

The discovery of gold in Australia in 1851, and the series of gold rushes that followed over the next several decades, proved distinctly unsettling for those who wished to use the colony as an economic proof-text. the confident claims of classical

51 Ibid., 105.
52 John C. Weaver, *The Great Land Rush and the Making of the Modern World, 1650-1900* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2003), 272. Weaver further notes that “Sheep raising spread in the 1840s from Australia to New Zealand, where it incited a South Island land rush during the mid- and late 1850s.”
political economy outlined above. Not only did gold surpass wool as Australia’s main export earner from 1853-1874,\(^{53}\) but the population and economic boom resulting from the fabulous quantities being discovered there appeared to violate all the tenets of orderly economic and social growth that political economy had so confidently asserted distinguished nomadism from settlement. The gold prospector, emblematic figure of the gold economy, was a qualitatively different figure from the wealthy squatter:

> Australia’s alluvial gold had an attraction that neither farming nor pastoralism, nor any other form of industry except possibly hunting, could possess. Farming, and more particularly grazing, required a large amount of capital. The man with the most capital was the one most likely to succeed in making a fortune. Alluvial mining required little capital. It required hard work and luck. In this industry it was the strong man who was most likely to make a fortune and although very few did, the chance was always there.\(^{54}\)

Alluvial gold, lying on or near the surface of the continent, appeared to rewrite the rules of capitalist accumulation, replacing the idea of steady labor over time with that of a randomness that verged on gambling. The gold prospector was accordingly cast by contemporary commentators as a profoundly individualistic, unsettled, nomadic figure. William Howitt, in *Land, Labour, and Gold* (1855), notes: “The uneasy state of the digging population here is evidenced by their being so generally on the *qui vive* for a rush.

Wonderful rumours are afloat on all sides, and everywhere the diggers are ready to run


\(^{54}\) Ibid., 118.
after them.”\textsuperscript{55} The gold prospector rapidly became established as the paradigmatic example of the nomadic settler, directly displacing Wakefield’s earlier figure of the pastoral nomad, and solidifying an opposition between a settled pastoral community and the unsettled prospecting population.

Yet gold prospecting also produced its own forms of settlement, whose success rivaled that of the pastoral economy. The phenomenal growth of the city of Melbourne, Australia’s archetypal boomtown,\textsuperscript{56} confronted nineteenth century political economy with proof of a viable alternative pathway to nation formation other than that described by stadial history. Australian historian Geoffrey Blainey notes, “Possibly no other country in the world had been so quickly transformed by metals; the normal growth and achievement of several decades were crammed into one.”\textsuperscript{57} In accordance with this, Howitt recounts, “The diggers are styled ‘The New Aristocracy,’ and the shopkeepers flatter them with the title in their advertisements,” before suggesting the nouveau riche of Melbourne ought more properly to be called a “\textit{hairystocracy},—for hairy enough they


\textsuperscript{56} Graeme Davison terms Melbourne “perhaps the most spectacular example of a new type of city created by the advance of capitalistic enterprise in the New World,” the “instant city,” for its population quadrupled between 1851-1861, from 30,000 to 125,000. He also notes, “at the peak of the gold rush, Melbourne was more a way-station than a settled community, more a flooding river than a placid lake.” Graeme Davison, “Gold-Rush Melbourne,” in \textit{Gold: Forgotten Histories and Lost Objects of Australia}, ed. Iain McCalman, Alexander Cook, and Andrew Reeves (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 52, 4.

are in all conscience.”\textsuperscript{58} In keeping with its new nomadic aristocracy, Howitt portrays Melbourne as a city built on speculation:

The whole property of it and its vicinity is tossed about in the same Dutch Tulip-mania style. . . . \textit{The} Melbournians, from some cause or other, have shown themselves from the beginning of their brief history, a most mercurial race,—the maddest speculators in the world. At the slightest touch of prosperity, up they go beyond the clouds, and if they met the man-in-the-moon in their flight, he would never convince them that they must descend again—till they actually fell. They disdain everything but the most lunatic prices and profits. To all warnings, ‘The gold! the gold!’ is the answer, and the assurance that this outrageously unnatural rate of property will last for ever. . . . The value is not in the things, and, therefore, it cannot remain.\textsuperscript{59}

Howitt invokes tropes of romance, such as the “man-in-the-moon,” to express his frustration with such economic irrationality because that provides the form most suited to “the maddest speculators in the world.” Romance is also to the fore when one of Henry Kingsley’s characters describes the growth of Melbourne in \textit{The Recollections of Geoffry Hamlyn} (1859): “bald bare statistics read like the wildest romance. . . . \textit{The} Yarra [once] rolled its clear waters to the sea through the unbroken solitude of a primeval forest, as yet unseen by the eye of a white man. Now there stands a noble city, with crowded wharves, containing with its suburbs not less than one hundred and twenty thousand inhabitants.”\textsuperscript{60} Although “the wildest romance” had apparently led to

\textsuperscript{58} Howitt, \textit{Land, Labour and Gold}, I.62-3, original emphasis.
\textsuperscript{59} Ibid., I.278.
\textsuperscript{60} Henry Kingsley, \textit{The Recollections of Geoffry Hamlyn}, 7th ed. (Boston: Ticknor and Fields, 1866), 248-9.
settlement, the question of social stability remained a concern that is staged and explored in Catherine Spence’s *Clara Morison* as a tension between realism and romance.

2.2.2. *Clara Morison* and the All-engrossing Gold-fever

Catherine Spence’s early Australian novel, *Clara Morison: A Tale of South Australia during the Gold Fever* (1854), is of particular interest here because its attempt to narrate the formation of a contemporary colonial settlement forces it to make explicit the nature of the challenge to stadial history posed by gold-mining. Published in London, Spence’s novel initially made little impact, although Frederick Sinnett praised it in his pioneering work of Australian literary criticism, “The Fiction Fields of Australia” (1865). It has drawn critical attention more recently for its representation of gender in a colonial context, but Rosalind Smith nevertheless argues that its “critical reception has been characterised by ambivalence, centered upon a resistance to the novel’s generic hybridity.” I shall argue that this generic hybridity is intimately associated with the

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61 Spence, having written *Clara Morison* in the colony of South Australia, “dispatch[ed] it with her friend John Taylor as he set off for a holiday in England and France, asking him to submit it to Smith, Elder of London. . . . Their chief reader, the same William Smith Williams who had declined Charlotte Brontë’s novel *The Professor*, wrote Spence a letter similar to the one he had sent Brontë saying that he thought she could do better. John Taylor left the manuscript with another of Spence’s Australian friends in London, William Bakewell. He wrote a preface for it and arranged for its publication in two volumes, for which Spence was to receive £40. However, the novel was too long for two volumes, so the publishers abridged it, and reduced their payment by £10 as a fee for the task.” Susan Magarey, *Unbridling the Tongues of Women: A Biography of Catherine Helen Spence* (Sydney: Hale & Iremonger, 1985), 53-4.

62 Sinnett praises the novel as “decidedly the best Australian novel we have met” because of its artistic success in depicting Australia while remaining “free from the defect of being a book of travels in disguise.” Frederick Sinnett, “The Fiction Fields of Australia,” *Journal of Australasia* 1 (1856): 199.

task of narrating both the Australian gold rushes and the formation of an Australian colony, each of which is associated with a distinct generic signature, and of Spence’s struggle to ultimately reconcile these differences in the name of settlement.

The novel centers on the eponymous heroine, Clara Morison, who is forced to emigrate to Australia by her heartless guardian because she is “without one accomplishment that had any marketable value.” Arriving in Adelaide, the cultured Clara discovers her letters of introduction are useless because their addressees reside in different colonies; unable to find work as a governess, she is eventually employed as a domestic maid and acquires some basic domestic skills through performing grinding domestic labor. Having discovered that her long-lost cousins, the Elliots, live next door, Clara moves in with them when the beginning of the gold rush leads to the departure of her erstwhile employers, along with virtually all of Adelaide’s male population. William Bakewell, a London-based friend of Spence’s, provided a preface to the first edition that usefully summarizes the strongly gendered nature of these social dislocations:

The fair writer’s aim seems to have been to present some picture of the state of society in the Australian colonies, especially as it existed in South Australia, in the year 1851, when the discovery of gold in the neighbouring province of Victoria took place. . . . Finding the gold would not come to them, the people determined to go to the gold. Accordingly, the entire male population, with comparatively few exceptions, removed

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64 Catherine Helen Spence, Clara Morison: A Tale of South Australia during the Gold Fever (Kent Town, SA: Wakefield Press, 1994), 2. Further quotations will be cited parenthetically in the text.
in the course of a few short weeks, to the vicinity of Mount Alexander and Forest Creek.

The exodus was almost complete, and entirely without parallel in the history of the country. None but women and children were to be seen anywhere, and the skill manifested by them in the management of affairs was the subject of much admiration. No sight or sound of manual labour met the ear or eye. An unwonted silence prevailed. A state of society unsung by poets, and such as was never seen before, existed, in which gentleness, and courtesy, and loving kindness reigned, and which will never e forgotten by those whom a supposed hard fortune compelled to remain behind.

Rosalind Smith has termed the Elliot household (following Foucault) a “feminine heterotopia,” a domestic space characterized by the inversion of social norms brought about by the absence of any male presence. Societal norms are eventually restored, however, and Clara Morison concludes with Clara’s marriage to the handsome and cultured squatter, Charles Reginald, and the suggestion that South Australia’s future is assured now that the supply of gold has begun to peter out.

Janet C. Myers has argued that Clara Morison is a rewriting of Jane Eyre, where the colonial setting grants Clara greater social mobility than Jane is able to achieve as a governess in Britain. Clara’s social power hinges on what Myers terms “portable domesticity,” the ability to “transport domestic values and practices to Australia while adapting them to a new colonial lifestyle.” Portable domesticity, she argues, is enacted

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65 Ibid., xi.
66 Smith, “Heterotopia.”
at two levels in the novel: “Thematically, by examining the role of British literature in enabling Clara to maintain her ties to Britain despite her displacement; and metatextually, by rewriting the domestic novel and adapting its conventions to a new, postcolonial setting.” While Myers helpfully emphasizes the role played by cultural production in the novel’s efforts at connecting Britain and Australia, her desire to cast Clara as an emigrating governess elides the fact that her domestic education does not begin until her arrival in the colony. Clara has been shipped off to Australia precisely because she is unable to replicate the full range of “domestic values and practices” expected of a governess. The reader nevertheless knows from the opening pages that she embodies an exclusively literary taste and sensibility:

She neither played, nor sung, nor drew, but she read aloud with exquisite taste; her memory was stored with old ballads and new poems; she understood French, and was familiar with its literature, but could not speak the language; she could write short-hand, and construe Caesar’s commentaries; she played whist and backgammon remarkably well, but she hated crochet and despised worsted-work. . . . She knew what book such a thing was in, and almost at what page. (I.2)

Her exclusively literary accomplishments suggest that the novel is concerned not just with the “domestic ideologies associated with gender and nationality” that are focused on the governess, but also with the questions of what literary form is appropriate to settler colonization.

Ibid.
Ibid.
At her first meeting with Charles Reginald, their conversation rapidly enters into a discussion of literary taste. Clara critiques Byron for providing a sensational, discontinuous reading experience that characterizes the romance:

I have read very little of his writings, and what I have read has puzzled me much. . . . One moment I admire, next pity, then hate, then despise. I do not feel comfortable in reading Byron; my mind aches with his jerks more than my body did yesterday in the port cart. . . . It seems to me that he could not help writing, but that he wrote without a purpose. He throws no light upon the path of life. (I.42)

The unpredictable, seemingly directionless “jerks” of Byron reflect his lack of “purpose,” and invoke the nomadic meanderings of romance protagonist. Reginald proposes Walter Scott as a more pleasing alternative. While this choice may at first appear surprising, he renders his novels in a classically realist light:

His sympathies were wider, and his observation genial. When he paints a villain, he is generally a villain—not Byron’s melodramatic half-scoundrel, half-hero, with some infusion of the fool. Still, neither Sir Walter’s villains nor heroes are so much to my taste as his middling characters. His back-grounds are well filled in, all the accessories are perfect, and his minor characters never out of place. (I.43)

Using language reminiscent of Levine’s definition of realism as “belong[ing], almost provincially, to a ‘middling’ condition,” Reginald locates the virtue of Scott precisely in the settled nature of his style. If Scott’s minor characters are “never out of place,” it is presumably because they reliably occupy their appropriate social and geographic positions.

In keeping with their aesthetic commitments, both Clara and Reginald remain settled in the novel. Not, that is, that they are not highly mobile characters, for Clara
changes her occupation several times and both move around frequently, but these
movements take place within the stable boundaries of colonial society. Reginald is
proprietor of the Taringa sheep station, representing the possibility offered by
pastoralism for the colony’s stable economic growth. Even while his paid laborers are
deserting Taringa for the goldfields, Reginald remains committed to settlement. As he
explains to Clara, his decision to remain is partly due to economic necessity—“Sheep
farmers dare not leave their flocks, if they mean to save any property at all”—and partly
due to the chance for even higher returns in future: “Let our neighbours dig for gold in
Victoria, but if we supply them with food, we may make that as profitable as the other.
If our farmers are rational enough to return to put in their crops in time, I feel sure that
they will get higher prices for their produce than they have got these seven years I have
been in the colony” (I.233, 35) Reginald’s invocation of rationality and of a long-term
commitment stands in opposition to the characteristics that we shall see typify gold
prospecting. Clara is also committed to settlement, and her paid work—first as a maid
and later as a nurse—anchors her firmly to the domestic sphere, both ideologically and
as a fixed abode. Moreover, she is eminently marriageable. As the proudly single and
politically active Margaret Elliot says to Clara, “Your vocation is marriage. . . . You are
formed to make some good man very happy, and I hope ere long to see you do it. All
your little talents are pleasure-giving; you have feeling, and taste, and tact, and I can
fancy your husband finding new charms in you every day” (II.17) It is through Clara,
therefore, that Reginald’s pastoralism can be united with a realist aesthetic and
domesticity in a manner that allows the reader to recognize South Australia as a replica
of Britain.

South Australia is a particularly apt destination for Clara, because it was the site
of one of Wakefield’s projects in systematic colonization. Moreover, Wakefield’s
writings stress the importance of maintaining a gender balance in new colonies in order
to sustain an appropriate level of morality and of population growth:

In trade, navigation, war, and politics . . . the stronger sex alone takes an
active part; but in colonization, women have a part so important that all
depends on their participation in the work. If only men emigrate, there is
no colonization; if only a few women emigrate in proportion to the men,
the colonization is slow and most unsatisfactory in other respects: an
equal emigration of the sexes is one essential condition of the best
colonizing. To further this aim, Wakefield proposed that the revenues gained from selling land at
the “sufficient price” be put toward sponsoring select emigrants, a policy that was
adopted in South Australia. Another of the novel’s characters, William Bell, refers to
these policies in a letter discussing the gender imbalance in the neighboring colony of
Victoria:

\[70\] Wakefield, *Art of Colonization*, 155. Dilke observes in Greater Britain, “Adelaide is so distant from Europe
that no immigrants come of themselves and, in the assisted importation of both men and women, the
relative proportions of English, Scotch, and Irish that exist at home are carefully preserved, by which simple
precaution the colony is saved from an organic change of type, such as that which threatens all America,
although it would, of course, be idle to deny that the restriction is aimed against the Irish.” Dilke, *Greater
Britain*, II.117.
The disproportion for the sexes was always great, for Melbourne was peopled chiefly by independent emigrants and people from the other colonies; and not so much from free emigration, paid for out of the colony’s land fund, in which case pains are taken to equalize them. The high upset price of crown lands has on the whole been a great benefit to South Australia; for when half the price was devoted to bringing out labour to improve the land it benefited both the mother country and the young colony. (II.95-96)

In other words, the “sufficient price” reflects a concern with the proportion between men and women as well as between capitalist and laborers. Yet this balance is disrupted by the gold rushes, enabling the “feminine heterotopia” that is a site of production but not of reproduction.

The novel depicts the discovery of gold at Mount Alexander in Victoria as if it were a plague or other natural catastrophe afflicting the body politic. The chapter where it occurs is entitled “South Australia under an eclipse,” and the facing pages are headed, “Symptoms of the Fever.” With the colony suffering from an economic downturn caused by “over-speculation in building and in mines” (I.218), and its population rendered susceptible to gold-fever by the earlier discovery of a “hundredweight of gold” in New South Wales (I.152), virtually every male in the colony joins the rush. Annie Elliot recounts the outbreak in a letter:

[71] Howitt also complains of the seductive power of such proverbial large nuggets: “The people at home look at the great Ballarat nugget, and every man thinks he can just run over and pick up one like it. They look at the 10 tons of gold by the ‘Australian,’ and at the aggregate amount of gold shipped monthly to England, and are persuaded that coming higher and enormous riches are synonymous. Nothing will teach them the reality, but the stern reality itself.” Howitt, Land, Labour and Gold, I.278-9. Such large nuggets soon became a
I have nothing to write about but the all-engrossing gold-fever. . . . The clerks out of employment, supernumerary shopmen, failing tradesmen, parasol-menders, and piano-tuners, went first; but now everyone is going, without regard to circumstances or families. Married and unmarried, people with lots of children, and people who have none, are all making up their minds and their carpet-bags for Mount Alexander. Those who are doing nothing here fancy they will do something at the diggings, and those who are doing something are sure they will do more; so that there is no security against any one’s leaving dear South Australia. (I.219)

The phenomenon takes a personal toll on the Elliot sisters, for their brothers Gilbert and George also join the exodus. Indeed, the craze has the potential to depopulate entirely the colony: “The chief streets are still very full of a most unsettled-looking population; but the outskirts of Adelaide are greatly thinned, and the villages round about are almost deserted” (I.222). As the talk of “unsettlement” and lack of regard for “circumstances or families” attests, Annie’s letter—and the novel more generally—casts the prospector in terms of the antisocial, nomadic settler familiar from the negative example of colonization in Wakefield’s writings.

In A Letter from Sydney, we have seen, Wakefield argues that unrestricted access to land inevitably leads to economic volatility. In Clara Morison, such fluctuations are equally troubling but are not primarily due to a disproportion between settlers and the land. Rather, what Reginald describes as “the dreadful uncertainty of all things in this staple in Victorian romances of Australia, such as Charles Reade’s It Is Never too Late to Mend (1856) and, most famously, Mary Louise Braddon’s Lady Audley’s Secret (1861-2).
“wretched colony” (I.234) is caused by the unknowable value of land that might or might not contain gold. In Henry Martin’s first letter since reaching the goldfields, he outlines the speculative economic logic of prospecting:

It is a perfect lottery here; we have sunk nine holes already, and have got nothing, while from holes close by us fellows have taken pounds upon pounds of gold. I saw one party take eighteen pounds’ weight of gold from a hole that touched ours, in a day and a half. We can only say, ‘Better luck next time;’ but I must confess . . . that I am ashamed of our first remittance. . . . [W]e have worked like slaves, and send you five ounces and a half of gold, worth here only two pounds fifteen per ounce. (II.39)

Despite his despondency, Martin nevertheless holds to the belief that “If people will only persevere long enough, they will be successful in the end” (II.40), a rationale that simply does not apply when the chances of success are based on a “lottery” rather than on the consistent work ethic of territorial realism. The random fluctuations of the mining economy are reflected in myriad signs of social unsettlement or disorder: Martin recounts how he has “turned out a capital cook” and has learned how to wash clothes, “though we find it very hard work” (II.40-2), while George Elliot recounts their need to drink the water that collects in the bottom of mine shafts (II.45). The economic and social domains are thus equally destabilized by the gold rush and the economy ordered around the “vagabond” lifestyle of prospector.

The brothers eventually return to Adelaide, after experiencing “good luck at last, having got about twelve pounds weight a-head, from the holes they had sunk at the Bendigo” (II.123) What has come into focus during their adventure is that the two
colonies, South Australia and Victoria, are differentiated by being founded on the principles of agriculture and gold, respectively, and this difference is marked at a societal level. According to the aesthetic logic of the novel, South Australia ought to be preferable for, as William Bell attests, “I really think that, as a whole, the Adelaide folks are more intelligent. They are not such great readers in Victoria as we used to be” (II.131). Nevertheless, the presence of gold in Victoria threatens to undermine the economically and socially more advanced colony by presenting an overwhelming temptation to the male population to transform their fortunes by luck. The novel offers only two factors as capable of preserving South Australia: first, the gold running out and thus restoring a sense of normalcy; and second, the lure of settled domesticity embodied by Clara and the Elliot household. While still on the gold fields, Gilbert Elliot expressed both possibilities in a letter to his politically-minded sister, Margaret:

We cannot make a home in this sort of vagabond life at the gold diggings, and our affections cling to the home we have made for ourselves in Adelaide, with an earnestness which could not be exceeded by the people of any old country in the world. I have not met a South Australian who did not mean to return, and really at present there are few inducements to settle in Victoria. I say at present, because by judicious legislation much might be done to improve the great natural advantages of this wonderful colony; and when the news of the gold discoveries reaches the mother country, it may bring out such an immense number of people, that the gold fields may be exhausted, and civilization and cultivation take the place of the present nomadic system. (II.47-8)

Upon the brothers’ return, Gilbert is torn between remaining in Adelaide and continuing in his legal studies, or seeking a more dramatic means of social advancement through
unearthing further capital on the gold fields. Appropriately it is Clara, the embodiment of “civilization and cultivation,” who dissuades him from following his nomadic tendencies: “Everybody looks for advancement by means of money: it would be much more distinguished—much more striking—to trust to prudence and talent. And I am sure it would be pleasanter, when you grow old, to have people date your rise from the time when you made an eloquent speech or an important reform, than from the day when you brought home a large bag full of nuggets from the gold-fields” (II.244) Gilbert’s choice, at Clara’s behest, represents in microcosm the novel’s affirmation of the joint economic and cultural logic of combination and settlement over dispersion and nomadism.

The last perspective on South Australia’s future is left to Margaret, whose anxiety on the subject is allayed by the regularization of the search for gold that is occurring in response to the diminishing returns it offers: “She . . . is in hopes that the Victoria gold fields will soon yield nothing more than good wages for hard work; so as to offer no very powerful inducement for South Australians to desert their agricultural and mechanical pursuits. Even Victoria is getting into a wonderfully orderly state; and Margaret’s alarm about the demoralization of the colonies has greatly subsided” (II.272). Simon During has argued the novel attests that “the colony’s project of democratic nation building cannot place literary styles of life and literary values at its core since they lead to the privatization and domestication of subjectivity,” which appears to be
endorsed by Spence’s decision to conclude with Margaret’s perspective: “Margaret thinks not in literary terms but in political, economic and governmental ones, and indeed this ending culminates the novel’s declining interest in literary subjectivity as it has proceeded.\textsuperscript{72}

In light of the analysis I have pursued, however, Margaret’s reassuring words of future progress attest to the success of Clara’s aesthetic principles in settling and regularizing colonial society. The logic of cultivation is evident in Victoria’s increasing “orderl[iness]” and, an interrelated phenomenon, in the restored importance of agriculture and industry in South Australia.

These conclusions are affirmed, and symbolized, by the marriage of Clara and Reginald. By choosing to remain in the colony, Clara affirms its future by offering the promise of producing a new colonial generation and by asserting the centrality of cultivation to the project of colonization. As Margaret witnesses when she visits their home,

\begin{quote}
Whitewash and paper-hangings had quite divested Taringa of the gloomy appearance Reginald used to ascribe to it. It was really a cheerful, pretty place; the garden was thriving, and . . . the sheep-station began to look like a comfortable farm-house. . . . Clara was industrious without being a drudge, and it was evident to Margaret that she had all that her heart desired. She was the companion, the friend, the counselor of her husband, and his life seemed to him but newly begun. All his vague wishes were satisfied, and he rested in the consciousness of entire
\end{quote}

happiness. Margaret thought that his life was too inactive, and his ambition too low; but it suited Clara, though it would not have suited her. (II.271)
The transformation of the domestic space at the center of Reginald’s sheep station solidifies the tripartite alliance of agriculture, settlement, and cultivation.

2.3. Multitudes of Individuals, 1870s

2.3.1. The Marginal Revolution: Stanley Jevons in Sydney

In the previous section, I argued that the 1850s Australian gold rushes provided a shock to the stadial history of classical political economy, and that a text like Clara Morison narrates the struggle to contain this competing form of settlement within the existing protocols of territorial realism. In this final section, I wish to turn to the 1870s, the period when, as Henry Sidgwick put it in 1883, the “halcyon days of Political Economy had passed away” due to the advent of the so-called “marginal revolution.”
The marginal revolution was heralded by W. S. Jevons’ The Theory of Political Economy (1871), which made three crucial changes to political economy: it switched focus from production to consumption, asserted the mathematical basis of economic analysis, and abandoned the narrative of stadial history. I wish to advance the claim that these innovations are not unconnected to Jevons’ earlier career as an assayer at the first imperial branch of the Royal Mint outside of India, which he helped establish in Sydney in 1855 in order to turn the metal found in Australia’s goldfields into legal tender. As is

made clear in Anthony Trollope’s *John Caldigate* (1878-9), Australian gold also provided a useful vector for understanding the broader social changes being wrought in Britain by the advent of reform and mass consumption.

Jevons’ innovations in political economy stem from his attempt to provide a mathematical model of utilitarianism, and his belief that such a model could explain economic phenomena. He states in the original preface to *The Theory of Political Economy*, “In this work I have attempted to treat economy as a calculus of pleasure and pain. . . . I have long thought that as it [e.g. economy] deals throughout with quantities, it must be a mathematical science in matter if not in language. . . . The nature of wealth and value is explained by the consideration of indefinitely small amounts of pleasure and pain.” As Jevons goes on to elaborate, mathematics cannot explain the workings of pleasure and pain on an individual level, but statistics can be used to measure their broader effects: “The will is our pendulum, and its oscillations are minutely registered in the price lists of the markets.” The effect of this approach, as Regina Gagnier explains, was to shift the focus of political economy from land to consumption:

Political economy’s theory of the productive relations between land, labor, and capital thus gave way to the statistical analysis of price lists or consumption patterns. One of the corollaries of marginal utility theory, as it came to be called, was that consumer choice ceased to be a moral

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75 Ibid., 84.
category: it did not matter whether the good desired was good or bad, just that the consumer was willing to pay for it. Value ceased to be comparable across persons: it became individual, subjective, or psychological.\footnote{Regenia Gagnier, \textit{The Insatiability of Human Wants: Economics and Aesthetics in Market Society} (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 3-4.}

That is, the shift in focus from production to consumption effectively moved the nomadic individual from the periphery to the center of economic inquiry. Jevons’ “calculus of pleasure and pain” does not critique the idea that the individual might be governed by appetite, but seeks to understand the consequences of that appetite in its collective manifestations. Whereas McCulloch, writing forty years earlier, refused to consider the individual—only “man in the aggregate, not the solitary individual”—Jevons now argues: “The general forms of the laws of economics are the same in the case of individuals and nations; and, in reality, it is a law operating in the case of multitudes of individuals which give rise to the aggregate represented in the transactions of a nation.”\footnote{Jevons, \textit{Political Economy}, 86.}

The consequences of considering the nation to be little more than the individual consumer writ large can be understood by addressing the renegotiation of the relationship between realism and romance that occurred at this time.

The possibility of a new relationship between realism and romance can be glimpsed in the disappearance of stadial history from accounts of political economy. Jevons’ \textit{Political Economy} is notable partly because it feels no obligation to account for the
origins of economic activity, or to match that activity to a specific social structure. In focusing on consumption rather than production, Jevons is able to rely on a universalized, trans-historical model of subjectivity and the statistical production of “an average, or . . . an aggregate result” that flatten out the stadial history. As Gagnier claims,

Significantly, modern man would henceforth be known by the insatiability of his desires, and the indolent races of savages . . . needed only to be inspired by envy to desire his desires, imitate his wants, to be on the road to his progress and his civilization. His nature, insatiability, was henceforth human nature itself. His mode, consumer society, was no longer one stage of human progress but its culmination and end, the end of history.

The economic path to civilization, capitalism and modernity is no longer understood to pass through distinct stages of development. Put in terms of genre, romance is no inevitably and necessarily longer displaced by realism. Instead, with an individual’s degree of civilization now indexed by the amount and object of their desire, the subject of romance becomes indistinguishable from the modern consumer. The task of territorial realism, like Jevons’ political economy, becomes that of rationalizing the place of such a subject within a societal framework.

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78 In *Money and the Mechanism of Exchange* (1875), Jevons argues that money is a universal aspect of human society—“It is entirely a question of degree what commodities will in any given state of society form the most convenient currency”—and goes on to hypothesize that even hunter-gathers, the form of society with the “the most rudimentary state of industry,” derived a form of currency from “the proceeds of the chase.” William Stanley Jevons, *Money and the Mechanism of Exchange*, 13th ed. (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner, 1902), 19-20.

79 Gagnier, *Insatiability*, 4-5, original emphasis.
While I do not wish to suggest that Jevons’ time in Australia explains the marginal revolution in any simplistic sense, I will briefly highlight two ways in which Australian economic activity at that time illuminate his theories by the challenge they pose to classical political economy, and thus to the established relationship between realism and romance. First, there Jevons’ work at the Sydney branch of the Royal Mint from its opening in 1855 until 1859, which involved assaying the gold dug out of the Australian landscape and coining sovereigns and half-sovereigns out of it.\(^80\) As an assayer, Jevons was at the interface of transforming a colonial commodity into an imperial currency, bridging the economies of Australia and Britain, and thus fully aware of the extent to which the British social order was built upon the uneconomic activities of Australian gold-prospectors. His first major economic intervention, “A Serious Fall in the Value of Gold Ascertained” (1863), used statistical methods to determine whether the surplus currency brought into circulation by the Australian gold discoveries (and by his own work in Sydney) had effectively inflated the prices of commodities. His conclusion is mixed, for on the one hand he credits Australian gold with contributing to a globalized economy: “In becoming more abundant gold will become more than ever the natural international currency, by the flow of which the balances of the exchanges of

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\(^{80}\) Originally tender only in New South Wales, Australian coins were legal tender throughout most of the Empire by 1863, although their designs were not standardized with British coins until 1870. See John Herbert McCutcheon Craig, *The Mint: A History of the London Mint from A.D. 287 to 1948* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1953), 386-7.
nations are adjusted. It will become more generally the money of the world.” On the other hand, he critiques the gold-prospectors for causing inflationary pressures—“gold-digging has ever seemed to me almost a dead loss of labour as regards the world in general—a wrong against the human race”—and disavows the value of their discoveries, for their sheer unpredictability threatens the stability underpinning the idea of a gold standard: “Gold has not lost its character of a standard by the late gold discoveries. These must be regarded as one of those runs of luck, one of those events of extreme improbability, which will in all likelihood not recur in the course of ages.”

Foreshadowing his later theory of marginal utility, Jevons demonstrates that the prospector’s individualistic appetite in itself no longer poses a problem for political economy, so long as it can be framed with predictive accuracy by mathematical models.

The second aspect of the Australian economy I wish to emphasize is the tenuous relationship between Australian land and Australian commodities. Wakefield’s writings had wedded Australian pastoralism to the traditional model of the British estate, and the contrast that Spence drew between gold-mining and sheep-farming emphasized the settled nature of the latter. Yet, as McMichael recounts, the practice of squatting was—as

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82 Ibid., 104. 2. Trollope would also highlight the paradoxically uneconomic activity of gold-digging: “All that I have seen in Australia teaches me to believe that every ounce of gold raised has cost more in its raising than the price for which it has been sold.” Anthony Trollope, *Australia and New Zealand*, 2 vols. (London: Chapman & Hall, 1873), 1.58.
its name suggests—distinctly unsettled: “The squatting phase of colonial wool growing began in 1829 as flockowners breached the boundaries of the official ‘Nineteen Counties’ to create a new land frontier called the ‘unsettled districts.’ . . . [G]raziers obtained a limited tenure (‘ticket of occupation’) by paying a minimal rent for the right to graze their flocks on Crown land over which they had no legal rights.”83 Not only was the squatter “seminomadic,”84 in constant search of fresh (“unsettled”) pasture, but the sheep themselves were regarded as a commodity little different than gold. There were multiple ways by which a sheep could be made to turn a profit: “Large boiling down vats were constructed in all country towns and surplus sheep could be sold for 5 shillings a head to tallow manufacturers. . . . By 1850 the proportion of total sheep boiled down had increased to 15.7 per cent of the nation’s flock.”85 When Trollope visited Queensland in the early 1870s, he visited a plant that processed sheep, and was fascinated by the techniques that allowed mutton to be preserved or “converted into essence”: “By means of this operation the traveller may carry an entire sheep, or all the nutritive part of his sheep, done up in a small parcel, in his coat pocket. . . . I was once induced by a liberal manufacturer to put as much into my mouth as I could extract by thrusting my thumb into a can of it, and I felt as though I were pervaded by meatiness

83 McMichael, *Agrarian Question*, 120.
84 Ibid., 125.
for many hours.” At the end of his visit, Trollope observed, “I fancy that it may be wise to abstain from an endeavour to interest the reader in the workings of these establishments. The sheep is speedily but not pleasantly boiled down, potted, or made into essence;—and that, perhaps, may be sufficient on the subject.”

If Australia was a farm, therefore, it was a distinctly new type of farm. Despite squatters occupying the upper echelons of Australian society (as the “squattocracy”), sheep-farming in Australia did not root settler society in the land in order to guarantee its class stratified identity over time, but represented the cutting edge of modern capitalism. In the colony, every aspect of what Mill termed “land” was only important insofar as it could be (literally, in this case) rendered into a commodity.

I wish to conclude this discussion of Jevons by addressing his most infamous body of work. Beginning in 1875, he published a series of papers advancing the claim that economic crises were caused by the periodic recurrence of sunspots. Reasoning that solar variance might affect the harvest, and the resulting food shortages would disrupt the whole economy, Jevons outlined the stakes of this theory in an 1878 letter to Nature:

“An empire on which the sun never sets, and whose commerce pervades every port and creek of the sunny south, cannot wisely neglect to keep a watch on the great fountain of energy. From that sun . . . we derive our strength and our weakness, our success and our failure, our elation in

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commercial mania, and our despondency and ruin in commercial collapse.”

In a second letter, published the following year, Jevons noted that he had been accused of “jesting, or at the best romancing,” but his attempt to provide a mathematical rationale for the occurrence of commercial bubbles in fact represents an attempt to constrain the power of romance that his theory of marginal utility had unleashed. As Mary Poovey argues, “By insisting that commercial manias and panics could be correlated to a natural phenomenon whose occurrence seemed mathematically regular, he tried to dispel suspicions that some economic events were irrational by subjecting them to a fully rational, because mathematical, account.” Thus, despite shifting the focus of political economy from production to consumption, Jevons nevertheless seeks to rationalize the behavior of individual consumers by grounding their actions in “natural agents.” In other words, the ghost of territorial realism is invoked in Jevons’ work as a means of constraining a romance narrative, pointing towards a similar shift occurring at this time in the relationship between realism and romance.

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88 Ibid.
2.3.2. *John Caldigate* and Speculative Realism

In 1865, five years prior to Jevons’ publication of *Political Economy*, Anthony Trollope’s second son, Frederic James Anthony, left Britain for Australia at the age of 18. Returning briefly for a few months in December 1868, he permanently emigrated with around £7,000 of his parents’ money, which he used to purchase a 27,000 acre sheep station in New South Wales. The Trollopes resolved to visit their son in the early 1870s, and Anthony characteristically secured a contract (worth £1,250) to write an account of his experiences, as well as agreeing to write a series of letters for publication in the *Daily Telegraph*. Trollope spent four weeks at the end of 1871 on Frederic’s sheep station, Morray, 250 miles west of Sydney, but his determination to visit the other Australian colonies prior to departing for New Zealand apparently resulted in the Trollopes missing their son’s wedding that December. After a year in Australia, they moved on to New Zealand in July 1872, and departed for Britain in October of that year. In 1875, Trollope returned to Australia, for Frederic was struggling to maintain

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* My account of this trip draws heavily from Ibid., 362-79.
* As well as providing material for his novel, *John Caldigate* (discussed below), the Australasian sojourn provided material for the short novels *Harry Heathcote of Gangoil* (1874), set on an Australian sheep station, and *The Fixed Period* (1882; discussed in chapter 3), which concerns a New Zealand-like colony in the South Pacific. While he had been away, *The Eastace Diamonds* had appeared in the *Fortnightly*, and after completing *Australia and New Zealand* in mid-January, began his next project—*The Way We Live Now*—in May.
his sheep station in the face of a drought, but in January of the following year Frederic notified his father that he had sold Mortray for £1,400, representing a massive loss of Trollope’s capital and a striking failure of the myth of colonial pastoralism. Trollope’s interest and (literal) investment in Australasia provides an insight into an intriguing but little known dimension of his life and career, but it also speaks to some of the deepest concerns of his fictional project. Those concerns include the formation and fate of capital, the effect of that capital on Victorian society, and the ability of realism to articulate these themes.

Trollope’s *John Caldigate*, his ‘sensation’ novel of the late 1870s, uses the opposition of realism and romance to make explicit the connections between Australia and Britain that I have argued are implicit in Jevons’ writings. Just as Jevons’ time in Australia played into his interest in utility that reconfigured the terrain of political economy, so Trollope’s colonial experiences inform a novel that modifies the relationship between realism and romance in response to the changing Victorian economy and society. In New South Wales, Trollope met a miner who had attended the same school as his sons in Britain:

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93 After spending seven weeks at Mortray, Trollope returned to Britain in October—Henry James, a fellow passenger on the journey from New York, described him as “the dullest Briton of them all”—and soon after began to write his *Autobiography*. See Hall, *Trollope*, 402-9.

94 In addition to his personal experiences in Australasia, he was also strongly influenced by Herman Merivale’s *Lectures on Colonization and Colonies* (1841; rev. 1861). The Merivales were family friends of the Trollopes; Herman’s brother was Trollope’s oldest friend, and the writer named one of his sons after him.
He had been softly nurtured, well educated, and was a handsome fellow to boot; and there he was eating a nauseous lump of beef out of a greasy frying-pan with his pocket-knife, just in front of the contagious blankets stretched on the ground, which constituted the beds of himself and his companion. It may be that he will strike gold, and make a fortune. The eponymous hero of *John Caldigate*, having decided to try his luck as a gold miner in Australia in order to redeem his debts, does indeed make a fortune when he strikes gold, and returns to Britain to resume his place in the upper echelons of society. Yet, in keeping with the demise of stadial history, Australia does not occupy a different stage of economic development than Britain, and the ostensibly realist realm of Caldigate’s British estate likewise proves difficult to differentiate from that of his Australian romance.

Unusually for a work of Victorian realism, where the colonial labors and enrichment of its characters usually occurs offstage, *John Caldigate* follows its protagonist to Australia and back. While the majority of the action takes place in and around Caldigate’s family estate of the remarkably unattractive setting of the parish of Utterden, “in the middle of the Cambridgeshire fens,” four chapters are set in the fictional mining settlements of Nobble and Ahalala in New South Wales. The British plot, staged

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Catherine Hall argues that Trollope’s distinction of the white settler colonies as the only ‘real’ colonies derives from Merivale. Catherine Hall, “Going a-Trolloping: Imperial Man Travels the Empire,” in *Gender and Imperialism*, ed. Clare Midgley (Manchester: Manchester University Press 1998), 185.

*Trollope, ANZ*, I.89-90.

*Trollope, John Caldigate*, 3. Further quotations will be cited parenthetically in the text.
upon a settled piece of land, is clearly recognizable as territorial realism even though that setting is first represented in the novel in particularly unpleasant terms:

Folking [the manor house] is not a place having many attractions of its own, beyond the rats. . . . The property is bisected by an immense straight dike, which is called the Middle Wash, and which is so sluggish, so straight, so ugly, and so deep, as to impress the mind of a stranger with the idea of suicide. And there are straight roads and straight dikes, with ugly names on all sides, and passages through the country called droves, also with ugly appellations of their own, which certainly are not worthy of the name of roads. . . . The fields around are all square and all flat, all mostly arable, and are often so deep in mud that a stranger wonders that a plough should be able to be dragged through the soil. The farming is, however, good of its kind, and the ploughing is mostly done by steam. (3-4)

An entail on the estate heightens the sense of a population attached to the land over multiple generations. “In his heart of hearts,” the narrator recounts of Daniel Caldigate, the protagonist’s father, he “did feel a desire that when he was gone the acres should still belong to a Caldigate. . . . Caldigates had been at Folking for three hundred years” (5-6). Caldigate, however, with whom he has a strained relationship, having got into debt at Cambridge, requests that his father buy him out of his share of the property, so that he can use the capital to redeem his fortunes.

Caldigate decides to emigrate with his college friend, Dick Shand, after their imaginations are fired by news of the gold discoveries in Australia. Australia is a realm of romance in the novel and, in addition to the chance of enrichment, there are the added attractions of the prospector’s life and the colonial setting: “There was gold being found at this moment among the mountains of New South Wales, in quantities which
captivated his imagination. And this was being done in a most lovely spot, among circumstances which were in all respects romantic” (9). There is also an erotic dimension to Caldigate’s romance, for he has fallen in love with the beautiful Hester Bolton—significantly, as will be seen, her father is a banker—and has resolved to seek her hand in marriage if he makes his fortune. Indeed, as I shall argue in greater detail below, the erotic and the colonial dimensions to romance are inseparable and mutually reinforcing in the novel: “He thought that it would lend a fine romance to his life if he could resolve to come back, when he should be laden with gold, and make Hester Bolton his wife. It should be his romance, and he swore that he would cling to it” (18). Marriage signifies settlement in the general sense of social stability, but, more pressingly for Caldigate, the entail on the property necessitates a legitimate male child for the family’s continued possession of the estate.

The beginning of the novel establishes the contradictory and volatile role that Australia will play throughout the narrative. On the one hand, it will be the scene of Caldigate’s redemption. The fickle Cambridge graduate’s masculine labor on the colonial gold fields teaches him the discipline that will allow him to return to Folking and govern the estate appropriately. On the other hand, the colonial romance of gold exerts an antisocial influence over the individual. Trollope locates that romance in the metal itself—“gold is an article which adds fervour to the imagination and almost creates a power for romance” (106)—and emphasizes its seductive power:
The acquisition of gold is a difficult thing to leave. There is a curse about it, or a blessing,—it is hard to decide which,—that makes it almost impossible for a man to tear himself away from its pursuit when it is coming in freely. And the absolute gold,—not the money, not the balance at one’s banker’s, not the plentiful so much per annum,—but the absolute metal clinging about the palm of one’s hands like small gravel, or welded together in a lump too heavy to be lifted, has a particular charm of its own. (122)

That “curse” is manifested on the goldfields in a wide range of anti-social behaviors.

Arriving in Nobble, the nearest settlement to the gold field of Ahalala and the “foulest place which they had ever seen,” which happens to be, a melancholic miner soon informs Caldigate and Shand that “they’re a-going to the most infernal, mean, —, — break-heartedest place as God Almighty ever put on this ‘arth for the perplexment of poor unfortunate — — miners” (83, original ellipses). The new arrivals soon sign up an experienced miner, Mick Maggott, who helps them establish a claim in Ahalala but also proves prone to drunkenness. Although the threesome eventually strike gold, both Maggott and Shand are unable to resist the temptation to drink. The former eventually drinks himself to death, while the latter, “deserting the trade of a miner . . . [eventually] became a simple shepherd” (119). The fates of Shand and Maggott underscore that the romance of gold is a nomadic romance, wherein appetite overrules rationality, and the individual proves unable to settle.

The nomadic behaviors that typify the prospectors in the novel are inseparable from the economic logic that governs the gold field. Diametrically opposite to a wage economy, earnings at Ahalala are characterized by disproportion—miners are either
destitute or, as legend has it, able to drink champagne out of buckets and shoe their horses with gold—that in turn derives from the randomness of actually striking gold. As one miner attests, “Ahalala aint [sic] a place for wages. If you want wages, go to one of the old-fashioned places,—Bendigo, or the like of that. . . . A man goes to Ahalala because he wants to run his chance, and get a big haul. It’s every one on his own bottom pretty much at Ahalala” (83). Thus far the narrative follows the path laid out by Clara Morison, seamlessly merging the individualistic speculative logic of prospecting with the narrative logic of nomadic romance.

Caldigate, by contrast, appears at first glance to have found the self-discipline necessary to redeem himself and his fortunes. Resisting the temptation of drink, he succeeds so well that he eventually graduates from mining his individual claim to managing a large commercial goldmine, the Polyeuka: “The claim at Ahalala had been sold, and he had deserted the flashy insecurity of alluvial searchings for the fundamental security of rock-gold” (120). The Polyeuka offers a lower but more consistent yield—“two ounces to the ton”—that translates into a more stable and secure form of income.97 Caldigate attains a mythical status among the mining community.

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97 “That the supply of gold from its quartz matrix is subject to entirely different laws: that we at present know of no limit to the amount procurable with the aid of capital; and that that amount, whatever it be, will probably remain constant for a long period of time; that, in short, the supply of gold from Australia will prove as inexhaustible as the supply of tin and copper from the Cornwall mines, or as the supply of almost any other metal from its most common source.” William Stanley Jevons, “Remarks on the Australian Gold Fields,” Memoirs of the Literary and Philosophical Society of Manchester 3, no. 1 (1859): 130.
because of this imperviousness to romance: “He in his search for gold had been uniformly successful,—was spoken of among the Nobble miners as the one man who in gold-digging had never had a reverse” (355). His good fortune continues on his return to Britain, as he erases his bad debts, restores his relationship with his father and purchases back the entail to Folking, and wins Hester’s hand in marriage despite the vehement opposition of her puritanical mother. “John Caldigate surprised both his friends and his enemies,” moreover, “by the exemplary manner in which he fulfilled his duties as a parish squire” (211). To complete the restoration of territorial realism, the birth of a son assures the family succession and the maintenance of tradition. Yet, as Caldigate notes, the most apparently British of estates owes its continued existence to the settler colony: “I should not have done very well here unless I had been able to top-dress the English acres with a little Australian gold” (217).

This successful appearance is not as solid as it seems however, for Caldigate has not entirely succeeded in escaping the taint of romance. For one thing, he cannot shake the suspicion that he has at best been lucky or, at worst, little more than a gambler. As he reflects on the possible reasons for his success and Shand’s failure,

I am sometimes aghast with myself when I think of the small matter which, like the point on a railway, sent me running rapidly on to prosperity,—while the same point, turned wrong, hurried him to ruin. . . . It was something nature did for me rather than virtue. I am a rich man, and he is a shepherd, because something was put into my stomach capable of digesting bad brandy, which was not put into his. (136)
Rather than believing he succeeded by force of character, Caldigate invokes a sense of biological destiny as random as the chance of striking gold. By contrast the Boltons, his in-laws, offer the more telling critique that Caldigate’s success in the colonies was precisely due to the same defects of character that had forced him to leave Britain in the first place. Mrs Bolton summarizes the case, “The man had been a gambler at home on racecourses, and then had become a gambler at the gold-mines in the colony” (282-3), while Mr Bolton elsewhere reflects at greater length:

Here was a young man, who, having by his self-indulgence thrown away all the prospects of his youth, had rehabilitated himself by the luck of finding gold in a gully. To Mr. Bolton it was no better than had he found a box of treasure at the bottom of a well. Mr. Bolton had himself been a seeker of money all his life, but he had his prejudices as to the way in which money was to be sought. It should be done in a gradual, industrious manner, and in accordance with recognised forms. (122)

Put another way, Caldigate’s method of wealth acquisition cannot be easily reconciled with the middle-class professional’s ethos of steady industry and investment. The Boltons’ suspicion raises the question of whether Caldigate’s wealth can safely enter the British economy, or whether traces of nomadic romance will cling to it and threaten to destabilize the social order.

Indeed, Caldigate can only proceed in this “exemplary manner” for a few months before his colonial wealth sparks a social conflagration. Having sold his shares in the Polyeuka mine to a coalition of buyers for £60,000, he hears from Australia that the mine was exhausted shortly afterwards: “Polyeuka gold had come to an end, the
lode disappearing altogether, as lodes sometime do disappear” (221). The aggrieved buyers included an actress, Euphemia Smith, with whom Caldigate had become intimate on the boat to Australia to the point that he had proposed before disembarking, conditional on his success, and who had “flung herself into his arms” upon being reunited with him in Melbourne. Caldigate presumably hoped that his “youthful indiscretion” would remain hidden in Australia, but when he refuses to return half the purchase price of the mine, Euphemia threatens to reveal evidence of their legal marriage. The last two-thirds of the novel is primarily concerned with this bigamy plot, but that does not mark an abandonment of the novel’s concerns with Australia or with romance. Rather, whereas nomadic romance was primarily legible in Australia in the figure of the gold prospector, in Britain it is more readily apparent in the threat to property transmission posed by bigamy. In both cases, individual appetite is opposed to the status quo, so that the character of John Caldigate reveals gold and bigamy to be the economic and narrative sides of the same coin. As he says to his brother-in-law: “You or any one else would be very much mistaken who would suppose that life out in those places can go on in the same regular way that it does here. Gold beneath the ground is a dangerous thing to touch, and few who have had to do with it have come

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out much freer from misfortune than myself” (227). The deeper question raised by the bigamy plot, however, is to what extent the vast economic and social changes that had occurred in Britain by the 1870s allow life to still be thought of as going on in the “same regular way.”

Mr Bolton’s assertion, quoted above, of the desirability of earning money “in a gradual, industrious manner, and in accordance with recognised forms” recalls the description of settlement advanced by political economy and territorial realism prior to the marginal revolution. It also raises the question of why Trollope’s “gradual, industrious” prose should be engaging with such unsettled material as colonial mining towns and the subject of bigamy, producing “probably his most wholehearted and accomplished attempt at a sensation novel.” 96 Indeed, the novel can be seen as staging a duel between romance (Edwards, and I, regard Trollope’s use of the term as interchangeable with sensation) and realism. These dueling narrative modes express in formal terms the tensions arising from the increasing economic interconnection of Australia and Britain, and the ultimate resolution of the bigamy plot appears at first to narrate the eventual overcoming of the unsettling effect of the former on the latter. Caldigate is tried for bigamy and, remarkably, is found guilty; sentenced to jail, it is only after several months of confinement that he is exonerated through evidence brought to

light by the reappearance of his itinerant friend, Dick Shand. Caldigate receives a pardon from the Queen, which restores his freedom, Hester’s status as his legal wife, and the legitimacy of his son and heir.

The ultimate restoration of social order—the novel concludes with news of the birth of a second son—might appear to reassert the fundamental difference between Britain (the realm of territorial realism and secure property succession) and Australia (the realm of nomadic romance and individual appetite). Yet that neat conclusion is consistently undercut by Trollope, as is evident in the description of Caldigate’s pardon provided by a functionary in the Home Office:

I need hardly explain that the form of a pardon from the Throne is the only mode allowed by the laws of the country for setting aside a verdict which has been found in error upon false evidence. Unfortunately, perhaps, we have not the means of annulling a criminal conviction by a second trial; and therefore, on such occasions as this,—occasions which are very rare,—we have but this lame way of redressing a great grievance. I am happy to think that in this case the future effect will be as complete as though the verdict had been reversed. (587)

The fact that the original conviction cannot be annulled, but merely papered over “in this lame way” by the granting of a pardon raises the possibility that the dangerous elements of romance are not in fact being expunged from the text but merely subdued by the weight of the realist narrative.

In *John Caldigate*, Trollope is engaged in reconfiguring territorial realism. The effect of this realignment on his style was usefully by one of his contemporary
reviewers, Julian Hawthorne, who pointed out the surprising lack of sensation caused by Trollope’s sensational plots:

Considered in the abstract, it is a curious question what makes his novels interesting. . . . There will be no astonishment, no curdling horror, no consuming suspense. There may be found, perhaps, as many murders, forgeries, foundlings, abductions, and missing wills, in Trollope’s novels as in any others; but they are not told about in a manner to alarm us; we accept them philosophically; there are paragraphs in our morning paper that excite us more. And yet they are narrated with art, and with dramatic effect. They are interesting, but not uncourteously—not exasperatingly so; and the strangest part of it is that the introductory and intermediate passages are no less interesting, under Trollope’s treatment, than are the murders and forgeries. . . . His touch is eminently civilizing; everything, from the episodes to the sentences, moves without hitch or creak: we never have to read a paragraph twice, and we are seldom sorry to have read it once.¹⁰⁰ Trollope’s style strives to achieve such an “eminently civilizing” effect in *John Caldigate*.

At one level, the novel reduces the import of its own scandalous content by endorsing the “feeling with many that anything done in the wilds of Australia ought not ‘to count’ here at home in England” (399). Caldigate’s behavior can be tolerated precisely because it occurred in the “wilds of Australia,” rather than “here at home.” Yet, at a deeper level, Trollope’s realism “civilizes” by teaching his reader to “accept . . . philosophically” the nomadic propensities that increasingly appear to define Victorian economic and social behavior.

¹⁰⁰ Julian Hawthorne, *Confessions and Criticisms* (Boston: Ticknor, 1887), 154-5.
John Caldigate therefore marks the transition from territorial realism to
“speculative realism,” whose task is no longer to ground individuals in their traditional
places but is instead to comprehend and thus rationalize the consuming subject at the
center of the marginal revolution. Jevons adopted a similar task in seeking to describe a
causal relationship between sunspots and commercial crises in that, faced with the
problem of economic irrationality, he no longer sought to end that problem but to make
it mathematically comprehensible. Mary Poovey observes, “He was determined to link
sunspot periodicity to the periodicity of commercial crises . . . because, without some
observable natural phenomenon to serve as causal agent, commercial crises threatened
to become uninterpretable and, thus, to mark the limit of political economy’s ability to
become a science.”101 Faced with the advent of a modern economic subject motivated by
consumer desire, Trollope articulates an analogous task for speculative realism. John
Caldigate does not condemn its protagonist—that is, regard him as “uninterpretable” and
therefore unfit for Victorian society—but instead allows him to remain tainted with
romance elements even as he restores his family fortunes. This new strategy
encompasses those romance elements within a realist narrative structure, “civilizing”
them only to the extent of making them comprehensible and thus socially acceptable.

101 Poovey, Genres of the Credit Economy, 283.
3. “Mere Scratches in a Book”: *Great Expectations*, the Mark System, and the Colonial Origins of the Metropolitan Subject

It would have almost every good property as a system of management, and not one bad one as regards the prisoners themselves, for it would be in the highest degree morally coercive, yet not physically obligatory at all. Every one would think he enjoyed full freedom of will,—yet every one would be under the almost absolute control of impulses, common to all, yet personal to each.

*Alexander Maconochie, Australiana* (1839)\(^1\)

The emergence of the individual consumer as a legitimate subject of economics and literature, described in the last chapter, created both a challenge and opportunity for Victorian liberalism, which also rested on an idea of the individual subject. Stefan Collini argues, “The ideal of character . . . enjoyed a prominence in the political thought of the Victorian period that it had apparently not known before and that it has, arguably, not experienced since.”\(^2\) This chapter thus parallels the previous one, describing how a different series of engagements with Australia and a different generic testing ground allowed the Victorians to imagine a liberal individual capable of governing impulses that had the potential to ruin even such a promising figure as John Caldigate. To talk about Victorian liberal individualism leads inevitably to the question of the status of

\(^1\) *Alexander Maconochie, Australiana: Thoughts on Convict Management, and Other Subjects Connected with the Australian Penal Colonies* (London: J.W. Parker, 1839), 103.

Foucault within Victorian Studies. Foucault famously argues in *Discipline and Punish* (1977) that Jeremy Bentham’s design of the panoptical prison provides a visual metaphor of the individuated, disciplinary functioning of power in the west by the turn of the nineteenth century:

> The Panopticon . . . must be understood as a generalizable model of functioning; a way of defining power relations in terms of the everyday life of men…. But the Panopticon must not be understood as a dream building: it is the diagram of a mechanism of power reduced to its ideal form; its functioning, abstracted from any obstacle, resistance or friction, must be represented as a pure architectural and optical system: it is in fact a figure of political technology that may and must be detached from any specific use.³

Victorian studies became by the mid-1980s the staging ground for the entry of Foucauldianism into literary criticism, for the nineteenth century realist novel seemed to be the cultural artifact most analogous to, and best embodying, the workings of the panopticon. On the one hand, the third person narrator brought all of society under the middle-class reader’s gaze; on the other hand, that same middle-class reader was disciplined and individuated by their reading experience.⁴

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⁴ The most famous Foucauldian reading of the Victorian novel is D.A. Miller’s *The Novel and the Police* (1988), which argues that the omniscient narrator of the Victorian realist novel contributes to the task of “confirm[ing] the novel-reader in his identity as ‘liberal subject,’” a term with which I allude not just to the subject whose private life, mental or domestic, is felt to provide constant inarguable evidence of his constitutive ‘freedom,’ but also to, broadly speaking, the political regime that sets store by this subject.” D. A. Miller, *The Novel and the Police* (Berkeley, CA: U of California P, 1988), x.
Since reaching that high-water mark of Foucauldian reading practice, critics have adopted one of two approaches to revise the impression that the realist novel (and, by implication, Victorian society more generally) is what Dorrit Cohn calls “a genre whose form replicates the malevolent power structures of a society that both produces and consumes it, a genre that . . . exists largely in order to wield absolute cognitive control over the lives of the characters it incarcerates and whose psyche it maliciously invades and inspects.”5 The first approach, dating from the mid-1990s, acknowledges the pertinence of the panoptical metaphor, but seeks to complicate or add nuance to it by an appeal to history. This is exemplified by Mary Poovey’s account of the beginnings of mass culture in the 1830s-50s in Making a Social Body (1995): “I suggest that no theoretical position that credits modernity with totalization is adequate to the historical record.”6 The second approach, which came to prominence in the mid-2000s, claims that panopticism is a fundamentally inappropriate metaphor for the workings of state power within British society. Thus Lauren Goodlad maintains in Victorian Literature and the Victorian State (2003): “Foucault’s Discipline and Punish, written from a presentist perspective with French contexts foremost in mind, is a distorting lens through which to peer at the modernization of Britain’s idiosyncratic, self-consciously liberal,

decentralized, and ‘self-governing’ society.” What both approaches have in common is the assumption that the panopticon is as much a limiting as an enabling metaphor for the viability of a Foucauldian analysis of disciplinary power. Critics accordingly labor to tweak or dismiss that metaphor in order to tweak or dismiss the analysis of power it articulates.8

In this chapter, I will pursue a historicist account in order to argue that the Victorians superseded the panopticon with a new penal metaphor sourced from Australia that enabled them to further embrace and develop the theory of disciplinary, liberal individualism. Put another way, this metaphor—known as the “Mark System”—raises the possibility that “Britain’s idiosyncratic, self-consciously liberal, decentralized, and ‘self-governing’ society” in fact marks a fuller flowering of the workings of power that Foucault found emblematized by the panopticon. I will focus in particular on the deep commitment that Charles Dickens made to applying the Mark System in Britain, for this demonstrates the material connections between this colonial theory of liberal self-fashioning and the mid-century Bildungsroman, which stand in stark contrast to the

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8 Caroline Reitz, for example, has recently argued that Victorian detective fiction demonstrates the need to tweak the panoptical model: “In short, contrary to the logic of the Panopticon, the power of surveillance supplies a vital link between center and periphery as much as it reifies a difference between them. . . . I intend to challenge the ‘us-them’ model of panopticism presently associated with imperial authority, Victorian national identity, and the figure of the detective.” Caroline Reitz, *Detecting the Nation: Fictions of Detection and the Imperial Venture* (Columbus, OH: Ohio State U P, 2004), xxv.
solely metaphoric level at which critics discuss panopticism. More broadly, this
historical record suggests that middle class Victorian writers and public intellectuals
cannot be simply posited either as unwitting dupes of the workings of power or as
actively opposing that power because it appears to have a French accent. Rather,
Dickens actively embraced the Mark System’s account of disciplinary self-fashioning
because it so powerfully articulated the goals he endorsed and provided such a
compelling account of how they could be achieved.

In what follows, I argue that Dickens’ second bildungsroman, *Great Expectations*
(1860-1), marks the culmination of a series of trans-national experiments in subject
formation and reformation. Those experiments, initiated around the turn of the century
by the policy of transporting convicts to Australia, center on the “Mark System” of
convict discipline developed by Alexander Maconochie, onetime governor of Norfolk
Island penal colony, during the 1830s and 40s. The Mark System provided a powerfully
succinct description of the notion of bildung underpinning emergent Victorian
liberalism by articulating a formal mechanism that united capitalist accumulation and
moral improvement. By narrating the convict’s punishment and reformation in
economic terms, the Mark System cast that process as a personal bildungsroman
wherein the convict struggles to consider his present actions in light of a future benefit,
thus rendering the subject’s inner state visible and providing an engine for its
improvement. Dickens was captivated by Maconochie’s theories, and adopted them at
Urania Cottage, his mid-century philanthropic collaboration with Angela Burdett-Coutts for the reform of fallen women. I will claim that the also employed those theories in the broad structure and the precise plotting of Pip’s “apprenticeship” in *Great Expectations* (1860-1). By these means, Dickens significantly increased the power of the Mark System as a theory of character formation by *generalizing* its applicability. In doing so, Dickens both articulated and propagated a form of self-governing liberal subjectivity that could be readily transported to the furthest corners of the Empire.

3.1. The Panopticon and the Penal Colony

3.1.1. “Panopticon Versus New South Wales”

The history of the panopticon is inseparable from that of penal colonization; indeed, the one is something of a mirror image of the other. One consequence of the American Revolution was that Britain lost the dumping ground where it had disposed of the majority of its criminals. Lacking adequate penal facilities for the number of convicts that soon began to pile up, the government had fallen back on the stop-gap measure of housing them in floating hulks (there were eventually more than 2,000) while it searched for a solution. Ultimately it chose to resume the policy of transportation, deciding to devote a colony solely to the purpose in the phenomenally
distant territory of Australia, where James Cook had first landed in 1770. As Bentham caustically observed, “The moon was then, as it continues to be, inaccessible: upon earth there was no accessible spot more distant than New South Wales.” The first fleet of 736 convicts, headed by the newly-appointed Governor of New South Wales, Arthur Phillip, reached Botany Bay in early 1788. Bentham’s original series of letters outlining his theory of the panopticon were subsequently republished as Panopticon: or, the Inspection-House in 1791, partially in response to the resumption of transportation. His panopticon writings are thus motivated by a critique of British imperialism, an interest in penal reform, and, as is suggested by the title of a later pamphlet—“Panopticon versus New South Wales: Or, The Panopticon Penitentiary System, and the Penal Colonization System, Compared” (1802)—his desire to win favor for his scheme against another penal regime competing for public funding.

Bentham had outlined the key principle of his system in Panopticon, or the Inspection-House: “the more constantly the persons to be inspected are under the eyes of the persons who should inspect them, the more perfectly will the purpose of the

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9 The definitive history of convict transportation is Hughes, Fatal Shore. For a history of the political process that led to the establishment of the New South Wales penal colony, see Hughes, Fatal Shore, 62-7.


establishment have been attained." Accordingly, in “Panopticon versus New South Wales,” all of his numerous objections to convict transportation arise out of the sheer distance of the penal colony from the “vicinity of the metropolis” (174). In particular, that distance rendered it virtually impossible to observe the convict with the intensity necessary to reform his character: “Colonizing-transportation-system: characteristic feature of it, radical incapacity of being combined with any efficient system of inspection” (175). Using strikingly Gothic imagery that has set the tone for much later analysis of penal colonization, Bentham argues that transportation was premised solely on expelling detritus from the body politic:

The measure was, indeed, a measure of experiment, and experiment in that sort of operation which calls for the exercise of all sorts of faculties: but the subject-matter of experiment was, in this peculiar case, a peculiarly commodious one—a set of animae viles—a sort of excrementitious mass, that could be projected, and accordingly was projected . . . as far out of sight as possible. (176)

Bentham’s rhetoric points to the fact that transportation increasingly blurred the line between metaphoric and actual social death. On the one hand, transportation was the most graphic, severe, and apparently irreversible form of ostracism. On the other hand, transportation increasingly became the legal punishment for the wide variety of crimes

that had previously carried the death penalty.\textsuperscript{13} Bentham, by contrast, maintains that penal justice requires not only the individual to be visible at all times but the place of punishment to be visible to the general populace, \textit{pour encourager les autres}.

The image of the deported convicts as an “excrementitious mass” also stands in contrast to the rigorously individuated subjects that were to come under the purview of the panopticon. Historian Robert Hughes breaks the history of convict transportation down into distinct phases, and argues that the peak of the system occurred from 1831-1840, when 51,200 people (including 7,700 women) were shipped to Australia. The continent ultimately received over 160,000 convicts in the eighty years from the first fleet until the last shipment of sixty convicts, most of whom were Fenian political prisoners, landed at Western Australia in January 1868.\textsuperscript{14} The scheme therefore bridged the Romantic and Victorian periods, beginning around the time of the French Revolution and ceasing only a year after the second Reform Bill. Yet Bentham’s critique—the act of expulsion wastefully reduces the convict to the status of social excrement—also highlights an important geographic limitation to his theory: it depends upon a specific architectural environment located in the metropolis. Panopticism, that is, cannot be readily transported.

\textsuperscript{13} “By 1837, hanging was mainly restricted to cases of murder, while crime after crime—forgery, cattle-theft, housebreaking—was relegated to the less terrible and magical status of a ‘transportable’ offense.” Hughes, \textit{Fatal Shore}, 160.
\textsuperscript{14} Ibid., 580.
3.1.2. Maconochie and the Mark System

The principles of panopticism provided the grounds for Bentham to mount a powerful critique of convict transportation. At the same time, however, that oppositional critique highlights the status of the penal colony—indeed, any colony—as a limit case to that theory, for such a space exists outside the geographic and conceptual scope of its techniques. Put another way, the failings of Benthamite theory as an account of character formation were particularly apparent in Australia, and any alternative theory aspiring to reform convicts in antipodean conditions could not be constrained by those limitations. Seen in this light, it is perhaps a little less surprising that the most sustained and original counternarrative to Bentham produced in the first decades of the Victorian period originated in the antipodes. That critique, about which I shall soon say more, was part of a broader shift in attitudes towards crime and its punishment that began in the 1830s:

Underneath the well-known controversies that emerged in the 1830s and raged for the next generation over forms of punishment—the death sentence, public hangings, transportation, and separate versus silent and, later, the Irish versus the English systems of prison regimes—an unspoken consensus was taking shape on the nature and meaning of crime and the purposes of punishment. It was less the actions than the characters of offenders on which attention came to focus. Although want and mistreatment were acknowledged as contributing factors, crime was essentially seen as the expression of a fundamental character defect
stemming from a refusal or an inability to deny wayward impulses or to make proper calculations of long-run self-interest.\textsuperscript{15} The repositioning of individual character as the root of criminal behavior tallies with—and, to an extent, precedes—the emerging liberal orthodoxy of the self-governing individual. Moreover, it was primarily in the fields of penology and criminal reform where the formation of character was theorized at an individual, rather than a national or species, level.

Alexander Maconochie has been described as “the one and only inspired penal reformer to work in Australia throughout the whole history of transportation.”\textsuperscript{16} Born in 1787, the year the first fleet sailed for Australia, he was appointed as inaugural professor of Geography at University College, London in 1833 after publishing on commerce and colonization in the Pacific. Enthusiastic about colonization, he uprooted himself and his large family in 1836 to take up the post of private secretary to the explorer, Sir John Franklin, who had been appointed Lieutenant-Governor of Van Diemen’s Land (Tasmania). Before leaving, he was commissioned by the Society for the Improvement of Penal Discipline to report on the treatment of convicts in the colony, and the publication in Britain of his critical findings led to him being fired by Franklin after two years. Those early writings fueled the critical findings of the Select Committee on Transportation

\textsuperscript{16} Hughes, \textit{Fatal Shore}, 488-9.
(1837), and provided the basis for his first major publication outlining the “Mark System” of penal reform, *Australiana: Thoughts on Convict Management, and Other Subjects Connected with the Australian Penal Colonies* (1839). His sudden notoriety led to his appointment as governor of the Norfolk Island penal colony, where he attempted to enact the reforms he advocated. Dismissed from his post in 1844, Maconochie returned to England where he became a prominent commentator on penal issues, publishing a series of works advocating his reforms, most notably *Crime and Punishment* (1846). His ideas gained prominence both in penal circles, where they influenced the introduction of penal servitude in England and Ireland, and in wider society. Dickens wrote in a letter on 26 May 1846, “I do not know of any plan so well conceived, or so firmly grounded in a knowledge of human nature, or so judiciously addressed to it . . . as what is called Captain Macconochie’s [sic] Mark System.”

Maconochie’s writings demonstrate that he had Bentham’s theoretical legacy in mind, for he actively seeks to distance his own proposals from those of his predecessor. 

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17 John Barry argues that various aspects of Maconochie’s scheme were derived from numerous other critics of the penal system, including prison reformer John Howard, utilitarian philosopher William Paley, Archbishop of Dublin Richard Whately, and the Quaker missionaries James Backhouse and George Washington Walker. Nevertheless, “his great merits were that he combined the concepts and the various features into a coherent system of penal management, and, what is more, successfully put that system to the test of practical operation in the face of disbelief, derision and incredible difficulties.” John Vincent Barry, *Alexander Maconochie of Norfolk Island: A Study of a Pioneer in Penal Reform* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1958), 79.

18 The standard account of Maconochie’s life and tenure on Norfolk Island remains Ibid. See also John Clay, *Maconochie’s Experiment* (London: John Murray, 2001).

This distancing is most explicit in the pamphlet, “Comparison Between Mr. Bentham’s Views on Punishment, and those Advocated in Connexion with the Mark System” (1847), which juxtaposes selected quotations from Bentham’s writings in the left hand column with his own commentary on the right. At the broadest level, Maconochie critiques Bentham for placing too heavy an emphasis on the potential for punishment to prevent crime by way of intimidation: “He considered the function of punishment in society to be merely to deter from crime, instead of to prevent it by all means, Fear being only one of them. He thus undervalued the benefit to be derived to the State from systematically endeavouring to reform, as well as inflict pain on, its criminals.”\(^{20}\) Focusing on deterrence, Maconochie argues, comes at the expense of reformation. Constant surveillance of prisoners is detrimental because it “lowers their self-respect . . . weakens the springs of independent action, makes at best only eye-servants . . . and directly stimulates them to crime and deception,”\(^{21}\) producing a feigned obedience rather than any deeper transformation. The crucial phrase is “independent action,” which stands in opposition to dependence on external structures such as architecture or social opprobrium. Indeed, Maconochie critiques Bentham for regarding convicts as “far more

\(^{20}\) Alexander Maconochie, *Comparison Between Mr. Bentham’s Views on Punishment, and those Advocated in Connexion with the Mark System* (London: W.H. Compton, 1847), 4, original emphasis.

\(^{21}\) Ibid., 6.
malleable, when secluded within four walls, than they really are.” Accordingly, he shifts his focus from the punishable body, which was the external domain of the panopticon, to the reformable character, which will be the internal domain of the Mark System.

Maconochie was not at all opposed to convict transportation per se, but only to the assumption that the system could only serve the purpose of punishment. Indeed, he actively dissociates the Mark System from such low aims: “It is thus not to be compared with separation [i.e. solitary confinement] or any other form of mere punishment;—its province is above them.” Attaining that higher province requires reconsidering the status of the penal colony, regarding it no longer as a space of social oblivion but as a place for reformation. While the penal colony remains a disciplinary institution, in pursuit of the “furthest (almost divine) object of making [the] Colony a school for the recovery of social weakness,” Maconochie makes a significant conceptual shift in his choice of institutional metaphor from the prison to the school. Rather than understand the penal colony as the antithesis of Victorian society, therefore, the two are repositioned as parallel worlds, and the Mark System’s ability to reform character becomes the means of bridging them. The Mark System, with its interest in character and “social recovery,”

22 Ibid., 5.
23 Alexander Maconochie, Crime and Punishment: The Mark System, framed to mix persuasion with punishment, and make their effect improving, yet their operation severe (London: J. Hatchard, 1846), 27.
24 Maconochie, Australiana, 62.
effectively reconfigures penal discipline as a process of bildung, understood as a process of acculturation that reconciles the individual to society.²⁵

The central innovation of the Mark System is the deceptively simple step of providing pseudo-financial incentives for acquiring middle-class virtues. Sentences were no longer to be defined in terms of temporal duration but as a number of “marks” to be attained. Marks were able to be earned or lost every day, depending on the convict’s daily behavior, and were recorded in a ledger that functioned as an individual bank account of behavior (see figure 1).

²⁵ Jeffrey L. Sammons, for example, defines bildung as “the early bourgeois, humanistic concept of the shaping of the individual self from its innate potentialities through acculturation and social experience to the threshold of maturity.” Jeffrey L. Sammons, “The Bildungsroman for Nonspecialists: An Attempt at Clarification,” in Reflection and Action: Essays on the Bildungsroman, ed. James Hardin (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1991), 42.
Whereas every day of a prison sentence is alike, Maconochie intended the awarding of marks to instantiate a sense of temporal awareness within the convict by providing an incentive for them to base their current actions upon the anticipation of a future goal:

The essential ingredient in moral Training . . . is a limited amount of free agency, controuled and guided by moral impulse (prospective motive), and unfettered by direct present threat, or violence. Its domain is thus the future; — it looks to the future, — and operates by the future. It forms, consequently, a habit of resisting present impulses for the sake of consequent advantages, which, when confirmed, is just the result wanted, the precise form of social virtue which we wish to impress on our released criminals.  

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27 Maconochie, *Australiana*, 97, original emphasis.
Maconochie’s “moral training” is a fully-fledged disciplinary scheme in the Foucauldian sense. As Foucault observes, “The chief function of the disciplinary power is to ‘train’, rather than to select and to levy; or, no doubt, to train in order to levy and select all the more. . . . Discipline ‘makes’ individuals; it is the specific technique of a power that regards individuals both as objects and as instruments of its own exercise.”

Maconochie’s penal colony achieves its disciplinary effect by individuating the convict on paper and triangulating him between the disciplines of a “precise form of social virtue,” a new temporal awareness, and self-denial. This combination of forces, ironically yet inevitably, provides a remarkably neat account of middle-class self-definition. As will be explored below, Maconochie’s individuated convict also sounds remarkably like the protagonist of a bildungsroman.

Although Maconochie distances his proposals from Bentham’s theory of punishment, and turns his back on questions of architecture, the Mark System is not so much a rejection of the panopticon as its perfection. The Mark System delocalizes panopticism by shifting the ground of its operation from a specific architecture to a system of writing. Despite existing solely on paper, Maconochie invests the mark with an almost magical power to form character through its appeal to individual self-interest:

In themselves, they would really confer nothing, but be merely an attestation on the part of the several Officers of the conduct of each man

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28 Foucault, Discipline, 170.
as passing under their observation: but their acquisition would be so valuable that they would speedily be coveted as wages, and without being otherwise transferred than by a change of figures in the prison books, could be made to perform all the functions of money within its walls. . . .

But, to return within the prison, the use of Marks as wages in it would further enable its managers to make the life within it a close copy of that without, for return to which accordingly it would be an admirable preparation.  

With the ledger rather than the calendar providing the measure of the individual’s progress towards reformation, the convict is immersed in an elaborate double of the money economy. The accumulation of marks “as wages” transforms the prison term into a teleological process, with the accumulation of marks testifying to the individual’s changing inner state and providing an incentive for those changes to occur. His journey towards freedom thus becomes an economic pilgrim’s progress designed to resemble closely that traversed by the law-abiding middle class subject.  

The Mark System in particularly amenable to literary analysis because it understands the disciplining of the convict as a narrative process and achieves its reformatory effects by making that process visible to the convict on paper. The ledger, central to both tasks, functions as a schematic form of the bildungsroman, recording the

29 Maconochie, Prison, 7.
30 As Mary Poovey notes in her history of the origins of accountancy, “As a system of writing, double-entry bookkeeping produced effects that exceeded transcription and calculation. . . . One of its epistemological effects was to make the formal precision of the double-entry system, which drew on the rule-bound system of arithmetic, seem to guarantee the accuracy of the details it recorded.” Mary Poovey, A History of the Modern Fact: Problems of Knowledge in the Sciences of Wealth and Society (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 30, original emphasis.
individual's travails as he strives towards the degree of acculturation that will allow him to pass seamlessly into liberal society. Marc Redfield observes, “The ‘content’ of the Bildungsroman instantly becomes a question of form, precisely because the content is the forming-of-content, ‘Bildung’—the formation of the human as the producer of itself as human,” but the rigid structure imposed by the ledger necessitates a more precise formalization of bildung than the amorphous category of “innate potentialities.”\(^{31}\) Maconochie accordingly broke the concept into component parts that could be individually monitored and aggregated into narrative. The categories that Maconochie proposed are an intriguing mix of paternalistic and strikingly bourgeois values:

> If they have been orderly, obedient, sober, zealous, attentive, active, industrious, cleanly in their persons and rooms, civil, temperate under provocation, (should such have been offered to them,) punctual in their attendance (at prayers, school, work, &c.,) or have in any other way deserved commendation, they should be gainers accordingly; and if, on the other hand, any one has deserved censure his party in proportion, should suffer.\(^{32}\)

The Mark System focuses on passionate actions and utterances, instilling a work ethic, and encouraging religious sensibility and personal hygiene, in the belief that such middle-class disciplines will strengthen the individual’s character against the temptation


\(^{32}\) Maconochie, *Australiana*, 19. As the reference to “party” indicates, Maconochie originally proposed placing convicts in small groups, and awarding marks based on the group’s overall behavior, thus providing an incentive for them to monitor each other’s behavior.
to act irrationally and unreflectingly that Maconochie believes lies at the heart of the criminal impulse.

Redfield also notes, “Self-productivity, for Bildung, means the production of selves; in producing itself the genre produces—i.e., educates—readers,” and Maconochie accordingly regarded a narrow focus on specific aspects of character formation as entirely compatible with a broader notion of bildung as acculturation. This compatibility is evident in his attempt to establish a library on Norfolk Island:

He asked for a copy of Robinson Crusoe, to instill ‘energy, hopefulness in difficulty, regard & affection for our brethren in savage life, &c.’ . . . Hoping ‘to invest country and home with agreeable images and recollections [which] are too much wanting in the individual experience of our lower and criminal classes,’ he sent for books on English history and popular national poetry—Robert Burns, George Crabbe, the sentimental sketches of English village life by Mary Mitford, a set of Walter Scott’s Waverley Novels to encourage national pride in Scottish convicts, and the works of . . . Maria Edgeworth, such as the satirical Castle Rackrent (1800), to do the same for Irish ones.33 Maconochie invests literature with a specific disciplinary power—of socializing the convict by generating desirable sentiments of national pride—and a more general role of providing literary figures worthy of emulation. The library and the ledger work together to enable the Mark System to perform a similar task to the bildungsroman, seeking (in Maconochie’s words) to “make the life within it a close copy of that without” by creating

33 Hughes, Fatal Shore, 506.
(in Jeffrey L. Sammons’ terms) “a sense of evolutionary change within the self, a teleology of individuality.”

If it is anachronistic to apply *Discipline and Punish* to Victorian Britain, it is so because Maconochie’s writings provide a radical update to the eighteenth century structuring metaphor of the panopticon. If Foucault’s notion of centralized power jars with Victorian liberalism’s emergent rhetoric of individual freedom, Maconochie’s writings suggest that is not because Victorian liberalism had rejected the goal of discipline. Rather, it learnt to intensify the workings of that power by forsaking a regime of external bodily surveillance in favor of an internalized and (in Goodlad’s phrase) “self-governing” individualism. The Mark System thus provides a means of extending a Foucauldian analysis into the context of Victorian Britain with greater historical accuracy and theoretical nuance, but it also reveals the bourgeois hero of the mid-century bildungsroman to be a genuinely carceral subject. By creating a virtualized, capitalist, paper-based system of discipline to instantiate metropolitan virtues in the penal colony, Maconochie also stumbled on a technique that might be transported back to Britain. Indeed, he devoted the rest of his life to proposing ways that the Mark System might be put to institutional use there. But in light of the clarity of its methodology of social uplift, combined with the narrative qualities inherent in that methodology, it is

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perhaps not surprising that the further extension of the Mark System’s potential—across class, gender and public/private boundaries—was most dramatically theorized and put into practice in the middle decades of the century by Charles Dickens.

3.2. The Mark System in the Metropolis

3.2.1. Dickens and Urania Cottage

Dickens first met Maconochie just prior to the latter’s departure for Australia in 1836, and the two renewed their acquaintance upon his return in March 1846. Two months later, Baroness Angela Burdett-Coutts, then the richest woman in England, approached Dickens with the idea of founding a home for the reformation of prostitutes, and he proposed it be run in accordance with the principles of the Mark System. Philip Collins notes, “This is the only charitable activity and institution to which he gave his consistent attention over a prolonged period (some ten or twelve years), and . . . most of the ideas and their execution were of his devising.” Indeed, Dickens’ correspondence testifies to the remarkable extent of his involvement in the establishment, which he named Urania Cottage and also referred to as the Home for Homeless Women. That involvement ranged from choosing the Home’s location in Shepherd’s Bush, London, to

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appointing its staff, authoring a tract to solicit prospective inmates ("An Appeal to Fallen Women"), interviewing the prospective inmates, and (somewhat surprisingly) designing their uniforms:

I have laid in all the dresses and linen of every sort for the whole house—purchasing the materials at Shoolbred’s in Tottenham Court Road, at the wholesale prices. I have made them as cheerful in appearance as they reasonably could be—at the same time very neat and modest. Three of them will be dressed alike, so that there are four colors of dresses in the Home at once; and those who go out together . . . will not attract attention, or feel themselves marked out, by being dressed alike. I shall return to this image of Dickens as author and narrator of the characters inhabiting Urania Cottage, but I first wish to focus on the mechanisms he instituted for their reformation.

Dickens laid out the governing philosophy of the Home in one of the longest letters he ever wrote, addressed to Burdett-Coutts, on 26 May 1846. Similar to a Magdalene house, inmates would initially enter the Home for a trial period—Dickens terms it “a place of probation”—and, having proved themselves willing to be reformed, would then be admitted into “the Society of the house.” Where it diverged from a Magdalene house, however, was in being run according to Maconochie’s proposals:

I would carry a modification of this Mark System through the whole establishment; for it is its great philosophy and its chief excellence that it is not a mere form or course of training adapted to the life within the

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38 3 Nov 1847, in Ibid., 5.185.
39 26 May 1846, in Ibid., 4.553.
house, but it is a preparation—which is a much higher consideration—for the right performance of duty outside, and for the formation of habits of firmness and self-restraint.\textsuperscript{40} Dickens proceeds to outline how the Mark System would build the desired “habits of firmness and self-restraint” within each resident:

She is … required to earn there, a certain number of Marks (they are mere scratches in a book) so that she may make her probation a very short one, or a very long one, according to her own conduct. For so much work, she has so many Marks; for a day’s good conduct, so many more. For every instance of ill-temper, disrespect, bad language, any outbreak of any sort or kind, so many—a very large number in proportion to her receipts—are deducted. A perfect Debtor and Creditor account is kept between her and the Superintendent, for every day; and the state of that account, it is in her own power and nobody else’s, to adjust to her advantage.\textsuperscript{41} As if she were on Norfolk Island, the fallen woman’s moral progress towards reformation is translated into economic terms, and made legible as an individual narrative by the “perfect Debtor and Creditor account” kept in the ledgers of Urania Cottage.

Dickens was also involved in the minutiae of establishing and operating those accounts. He went to great lengths in designing them, intending them to be “perfectly clear and simple as I have sketched them,”\textsuperscript{42} and engaging in prolonged discussions with Burdett-Coutts regarding their typography:

The explanation wants a more defined and plain division between the three sets of columns. If you think it plain in other respects, I will take

\textsuperscript{40} 26 May 1846, in Ibid., 4.554.
\textsuperscript{41} 26 May 1846, in Ibid., 4.553.
\textsuperscript{42} 28 August 1848, in Ibid., 5.397.
care to arrange this with the Printer. I have not put many words, or the particularly appropriate words, into Italics; firstly, because I doubt whether it would not direct attention rather to bits and scraps of the explanation than to the whole of it; and secondly, because Italics are always considered objectionable in printed text, with a view to clearness and general plainness.  

Dickens’ involvement extended to the definition of the marks and the criteria for which they might be awarded. For each category, an inmate could be awarded up to four marks:

According to this mode of proceeding, 1 may be considered to mean pretty well; 2, well; 3, very well; 4, excellent. Where there is really no desert, and yet no tangible and positive misconduct, no mark will be given. A bad mark is to be entered cautiously, as it destroys the fruits of one whole day’s irreproachable conduct; but when it is deserved under the head of ‘truthfulness’, by any willful falsehood no matter what, it is never to be foregone.  

Dickens’ involvement in the nitty-gritty of operating the Mark System testifies to how seriously he took Maconochie’s theories of character formation, as well as to the fascination he found in controlling every detail of an environment that has the apparent potential to help or hinder that transformative process.

Dickens’ language of debt and credit was more than metaphorical, however, for one of his most significant advances over Maconochie’s plan was the establishment of an exchange rate between marks and money. Twenty marks were to be worth three pence,

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43 7 October 1848. Ibid., 5.420. The categories themselves, as later detailed Dickens’ article in *Household Words*, were Truthfulness, Industry, Temper, Propriety of Conduct and Conversation, Temperance, Order, Punctuality, Economy, and Cleanliness.

44 Ibid., 5.703.
with a daily possible maximum of six pence, to give good behavior a real world incentive: “I would propose that the weekly balance be struck, in the same way, every Saturday Evening, when a kind of Savings’ Bank should be held for making the entries in the book-accounts of the young women. . . . I would have every young woman keep her own book in her own custody.”  

With this innovation, Dickens solidified the relay between bildung and capitalism first sketched out by Maconochie, casting the process and goal of acculturation in economic terms, and reinforcing the attractiveness of that goal with real-world financial rewards. Dickens’ willingness to translate his marks into Burdett-Coutts’ money also strengthened the bridge between the Mark System and middle-class identity by not providing compensation according to the market value of the inmates’ labor but rewarding the moral value of the work ethic itself.

In seeking to make the reformatory space more like the outside world and less like an institution, Dickens and Burdett-Coutts also intended the inmates to gain skills appropriate to the “dream of returning to Society, or of becoming Virtuous Wives.” In practice, this meant they were to be trained in a variety of virtues and skills deemed appropriate for a domestic servant or a working-class wife:

45 “Explanation of the Mark Table,” sent to Burdett-Coutts probably on 29 August 1848. Ibid.

46 Unlike Urania Cottage, which was entirely funded by Burdett Coutts, each Magdalene house was a charitable organization that rarely raised enough money from donations to sustain its operations. Therefore, its inmates spent the large part of their days in factory-like labor (generally sewing or laundry) to fund the institution. Linda Mahood, The Magdalenes: Prostitution in the Nineteenth Century (London: Routledge, 1990), 87-94.
It is very essential in dealing with this class of persons to have a system of training established, which, while it is steady and firm, is cheerful and hopeful. Order, punctuality, cleanliness, the whole routine of household duties—as washing, mending, cooking—the establishment itself would supply the means of teaching practically, to every one. But then I would have it understood by all—I would have it written up in every room—that they were not going through a monotonous round of occupation and self-denial which began and ended there, but which began, or was resumed, under that roof, and would end, by God’s blessing, in happy homes of their own.47

In concert with the “whole routine of household duties,” Dickens regarded the process of bildung as integral to the purpose of Urania Cottage, and he also sought to provide means of acculturation for the inmates. Those included “books of instruction, with some other reading of my own selection”, a “cheap second-hand” piano (“The fondness for music among these people generally, is most remarkable; and I can imagine nothing more likely to impress or soften a new comer, than finding them with this art among them”), and the stipulation that books were to be read aloud during needlework.48

Despite Burdett Coutts’ desire to impart her evangelical principles to the inmates, Dickens established a largely secular cultural trajectory for their reformation.

The final dimension of the scheme I wish to emphasize is the ultimate outcome that Dickens and Burdett-Coutts envisaged for the successful graduate of Urania Cottage. That vision is spelled out most clearly in Dickens’ “Appeal to Fallen Women,” the recruiting tract he wrote to be handed to women in prison:

47 26 May 1846, in Dickens, Letters, 4.554.
48 3 Nov 1847, in Ibid., 5.186-7.; Collins, Dickens and Crime, 106.
In this Home they will be taught all household work that would be useful to them in a home of their own, and enable them to make it comfortable and happy. . . . [T]hey will be supplied with every means, when some time shall have elapsed, and their conduct shall have fully proved their earnestness and reformation, to go abroad, where, in a distant country, they may become the faithful wives of honest men, and live and die in peace.\textsuperscript{49}

Indeed, the Home regularly sent out groups of its former inmates on emigrant ships to Australia.\textsuperscript{50} It is thus one of the more striking ironies of the Urania Cottage project that the principles Maconochie had devised in Australia for the purpose of reforming exiled criminals were now being applied for the ultimate purpose of sending reformed women to the same place. Presumably, they might be lucky enough to marry one of Maconochie’s reformed convicts. Dickens had endorsed the view that emigration to Australia offered this potential for a new beginning in the first number of \textit{Household Words}, which supported Caroline Chisholm’s Family Colonisation Loan Society, and he repeatedly giving space in the journal to the booster of Australian emigration, Samuel Sidney. Yet, as he recounted in his article on the project in \textit{Household Words}, “Home for Homeless Women” (23 April 1853), with Urania Cottage he was able to facilitate more actively the colonization of Australia. Of the 56 inmates who had been admitted since its opening on 18 November 1847, “thirty (of whom seven are now married) on their arrival in Australia or elsewhere [some were sent to the Cape Colony], entered into good

\textsuperscript{49} Dickens, \textit{Letters}, 5.698-9.

\textsuperscript{50} In contrast, emigration was only a “limited option” for inmates of the Magdalene house. Mahood, \textit{The Magdalenes: Prostitution in the Nineteenth Century}, 98.
service, acquired a good character, and have done so well ever since as to establish a strong prepossession in favor of others sent out from the same quarter.”\footnote{Charles Dickens, “Home for Homeless Women,” Household Words 7, no. 161 (1853): 169.} Urания Cottage is thus significant in part because it marks the point where Dickens went beyond rhetorical support of settlement and began to actively assist specific individuals to emigrate.

Moreover, Dickens’ emigration scheme highlights a further crucial change that he made to the Mark System. Whereas Bentham regarded the colonies as antithetical to any disciplinary project because they were beyond surveillance, the attractiveness of the Mark System for Dickens lay in its apparent ability—not fully grasped even by Maconochie—to produce a self-governing character stable enough to be readily transported into different social and geographic spaces. As Dickens wrote to Burdett-Coutts, successfully reformed inmates must feel “free” before they can emigrate: “I most entirely agree with you that it is right they should feel perfectly free before going abroad. If this system hold . . . I believe they will feel perfectly free, when that time comes.”\footnote{3 November 1847. Dickens, Letters, 5.187, original emphasis.} This is not to say, however, that the scheme worked entirely as intended. Dickens at one point recounts the governing board of Urания Cottage receiving an “impression of heavy disappointment and great vexation” upon receiving a letter from the Bishop of Adelaide attesting that five women they had sent out had “returned to
their old courses & [were] totally unfit to be recommended as household servants” even before disembarking.53

3.2.2. Urania Cottage and the Bildungsroman

Dickens’ involvement with Urania Cottage not only demonstrated the applicability of the Mark System outside the penal colony, but also modified it in a number of ways that further broadened its scope as a model of character formation. The audacity of taking a disciplinary scheme devised for male convicts in the penal colonies and applying it to female prostitutes in the heart of the metropolis is only matched by the audacity of imagining that both spaces could best be inhabited by the same type of subject. The fallen woman was particularly useful for making such a mental leap, for she stands as a transitional figure between the convict and the middle class, a criminal who is also a (potential) bearer of domestic virtues. Dickens recounts that his “Appeal to Fallen Women” was given to women at the verge of being released “to read in their Cells,” where it was found to “affect them very heavily indeed”;54 Dickens’ attention to women in this complex space of legal exoneration and moral culpability also highlights his translation of the Mark System out of the realm of state power and into a more private sphere of endeavor. This act of privatization does not serve to free the Mark System from the trappings of state power so much as more effectively internalize its

53 Ibid., 4.637.
54 28 Oct 1847, in Ibid., 5.179.
workings. Franco Moretti observes that this privatizing gesture is also one of the characteristic gestures of the bildungsroman, which offers “one of the most harmonious solutions ever offered to a dilemma coterminous with modern bourgeois civilization: the conflict between the ideal of self-determination and the equally imperious demands of socialization.”\(^{55}\) In other words, the Urania Cottage experiment allowed Dickens to understand that the private, cultural domain charted by the bildungsroman provided an appropriate space for creating citizens suited for an expanding empire.

The distance from Urania Cottage to the bildungsroman was not in any case great for Dickens, for his correspondence reveals the extent to which he thought of his philanthropic endeavor as a narrative project. Although references to the inmates’ pasts were forbidden within the home, Dickens took a detailed case history of each woman who sought to enter—“A most extraordinary and mysterious study it is, but interesting and touching in the extreme”\(^{56}\)—and recorded it in her file. “I have provided a form of book,” he writes, “in which we shall keep the history of each case, and which has certain printed enquiries to be filled up by us, before each comes in, and a final blank headed its ‘Subsequent History,’ which will remain to be filled up, by degrees, as we shall hear of


them, and from them, abroad.” In one of his letters to Burdett-Coutts, Dickens claims to “have a reasonably good little anecdote in reserve, of Rachael Bradley, whom I ‘booked’ today,” that is, both admitting her into the Home and entering her into its narrative form. This raises the question of what it means to think of Philip Pirrip, the protagonist of Great Expectations, as being “booked” in the bildungsroman in an analogous manner to Rachael Bradley’s admission to Urania Cottage.

With its plot centering on the illegal return to Britain of a convict transported to Australia, Great Expectations is pertinent to the current discussion but it has also come to occupy an important place in discussions about the relationship between imperialism and Victorian realism. Edward Said succinctly established the terms of that discussion in the introduction to Culture and Imperialism (1993), where he draws attention to the exiled convict: “The prohibition on Magwitch’s return is not only penal but imperial: subjects can be taken to places like Australia, but they cannot be allowed a ‘return’ to metropolitan space, which, as all Dickens’s fiction testifies, is meticulously charted, spoken for, inhabited by a hierarchy of metropolitan personages.” Carolyn Lesjak’s more recent reading of the novel similarly revolves around the contrast between the colonial figure of Magwitch and the “metropolitan personage” Pip:

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57 3 November 1847. Ibid., 5.186.
58 3 March 1849. Ibid., 5.504.
59 Said, Culture and Imperialism, xvi.
By locating the imperial work in the figure of Magwitch, Dickens’s narrative registers the literal dependency of England on her colonial possessions and slave labor, thereby undermining the kind of enforced separation between ‘there’ and ‘here’ . . . locate[d] in the transportation system—and more generally within a colonial mentality.\textsuperscript{60} Said’s work, and Lesjak’s even more so, rightly emphasize that the novel makes visible the connections between Britain and Australia wrought by imperial power. Yet by assuming that the two characters embody a geopolitical allegory, that Magwitch stands for Australia and Pip for Britain, such readings do little more than reiterate a contrast made quite explicit by the novel itself.\textsuperscript{61}

Such analyses rest on the twofold assumption that Pip is a purely “metropolitan personage,” and that coloniality only acts \textit{externally} upon his already formed British identity. A similar contrast informs discussions of the novel’s form, for its colonial interests are assumed to be restricted to the level of content while its structure, akin to a “metropolitan personage,” is solely a product of the British literary tradition. An alternative approach to these questions is offered by Jed Esty’s claim that, at the fin de siècle, “colonialism disrupts the bildungsroman and its humanist ideals, producing jagged effects on both the politics and poetics of subject formation.” Specifically, the

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote{The most dramatic example is Pip’s adoption of a modified Frankenstein analogy: “The imaginary student pursued by the misshapen creature he had impiously made, was not more wretched than I, pursued by the creature who had made me, and recoiling from him with a stronger repulsion, the more he admired me and the fonder he was of me.” Charles Dickens, ed., \textit{Great Expectations} (London: Penguin, 1996), 339. Further quotations will be cited parenthetically in the text.}
\end{footnotes}
underdeveloped space of the colony, understood as being anachronistically frozen in
time in contrast to the metropolis, is registered in the colonial Bildungsroman as a
disruption of narrative temporality and of character development. Thus, “In such
colonial fictions of unseasonable youth, imperialism brings the bildungsroman and its
humanist ideals into a zone of stubbornly racialized global anachronism, deforming the
genre’s basic temporal framework, its essential commitment to progress.”62 While Esty
contrasts his late Victorian and early Modernist archive to “socially integrative Victorian
bildungsromane such as David Copperfield and Jane Eyre” from the middle of the
century,63 his analysis raises the possibility that earlier novels might also be structured
by colonialism. I wish to suggest, moreover, that such a structuring influence can occur
even in a text that is not set in colonial space. Specifically, the history of Dickens’ interest
in and energetic application of Maconochie’s theories suggests that the most profound
influence of Australia in Great Expectations might be seen in the characterization of Pip
rather than Magwitch, and that the structure of the novel might also be shaped by that
Australian theory.64

63 Ibid.: 410, 1.
64 Jenny Hartley has observed, in one of the few critical discussions of the literary afterlife of the Home for
Homeless Women, that “Urania Cottage was clearly a valuable resource for Dickens, a source of plots and
narrative” for Domby and Son, David Copperfield, and Little Dorrit. Jenny Hartley, “Undertexts and Intertexts:
The Mark System illuminates the logic behind Pip’s changing character as he acquires bildung. As Jerome Buckley outlines in *Season of Youth* (1974), the bildungsroman is by definition primarily concerned with the development of its protagonist. Noting the “awkwardness” of the genre’s German label, he outlines “several possible synonyms”:

The novel of youth, the novel of education, of apprenticeship, of adolescence, of initiation, [or] even the life-novel. The first two of these are perhaps the least unsatisfactory alternatives, if ‘youth’ can imply not so much a state of being as a process of movement and adjustment from childhood to early maturity, or if ‘education’ can be understood as a growing up and gradual self-discovery in the school-without-walls that is experience.65

The Urania Cottage project and Maconochie’s writings suggest that Pip does not undergo a process of “gradual self-discovery” so much as one of self-formation, and that the does not attend a “school-without-walls,” but one whose walls are designed to feel as if they do not exist. Maconochie argues that the success of the Mark System hinges on its ability to mask its disciplinary intent behind an appearance of freedom:

It would have almost every good property as a system of management, and not one bad one as regards the prisoners themselves, for it would be in the highest degree morally coercive, yet not physically obligatory at all. Every one would think he enjoyed full freedom of will,—yet every one would be under the almost absolute control of impulses, common to all, yet personal to each, and which could not fail, therefore, of generating an *esprit de corps* productive of harmonious effect.66

Dickens was likewise aware that the workings of power in the Cottage needed to remain invisible to achieve a better reformatory effect upon the inmates:

> The expediency of explaining to them [the inmates] that the rules of the Establishment may alter, I greatly doubt. For this reason.—If we did so, they would immediately conceive that we did not know what we were about, and that we were experimentalizing. Which would desperately shake their trust in us. . . . Recollect that we address a peculiar and strangely-made character.67

Maconochie thus provided Dickens with a theoretical framework wherein the appearance of individual freedom could be entirely compatible with the most rigorous social conformity. In other words, I shall argue that the lack of visible shackles on Pip, and the novel’s intense focus on his interiority, are precisely the signs that he is enrolled in a novelistic version of the Mark System.

### 3.3. Pip and the Penal Colony

#### 3.3.1. Character Weakness as a Problem of Surveillance

Critics have long singled out *Great Expectations* among Dickens’ works for its complex plot and the unprecedented intensity of its focus on its protagonist’s interiority. Martin Meisel has described it as a “Copperfield of the inner man,” usefully emphasizing its greater interest in the formation of character in contrast to Dickens’ bildungsroman of a decade earlier, while John H. Hagan’s painstaking structuralist account of the novel delineates “the high degree of organization Dickens succeeded in

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imposing on his material,” and explicitly ties this level of organization to its minute focus on Pip’s emergent character. As I shall argue, the novel’s intense focus on Pip’s “inner man” and its tight—indeed, disciplined—structure are integral to its task of narrating the displacement of a Benthamite regime of character formation by centralized surveillance in favor of a self-governing, internalized model of discipline. This transition marks the transition in Pip’s characterization from a weak-willed youth to a self-sacrificing manhood and is made explicit by way of the narrative discontinuity between the gothic representation of Magwitch in the novel’s first two volumes and his more sentimentalized portrayal in the last volume.

Pip’s “first most vivid and broad impression of the identity of things,” with which he opens his narrative, is of his childhood encounter on the Thames marshes with Abel Magwitch, who has escaped from a nearby prison hulk and is soon to be recaptured and transported to the Australian penal colonies for life. The marshes are an unsettled, primeval space that appear to be constantly traversed by escaped convicts: “‘There was a convict off last night,’ said Joe, aloud, ‘after sunset-gun. And they fired warning of him. And now, it appears they’re firing warning of another’” (14). Indeed, both the marshes and the convicts unified by the gothic imagery with which they are

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69 Dickens, ed., Great Expectations, 3. Further quotations will be cited parenthetically in the text.
depicted. Pip recalls the sight of Magwitch departing after their first encounter: “As I saw him go, picking his way among the nettles, and among the brambles that bound the green mounds, he looked in my young eyes as if he were eluding the hands of the dead people, stretching up cautiously out of their graves, to get a twist upon his ankle and pull him in” (6-7). The gothic imagery partly functions to cast the scene in a distinctly pre-Victorian light, as well as endorsing Bentham’s critique of convict transportation. The image of Magwitch on the verge of being pulled into the grave anticipates his deportation to New South Wales, a “scene of intended annihilation” for individuals who the legal system has made dead to the social body: “Of the aggregate mass of his Majesty’s subjects . . . such as remained in this and the next island constituted . . . the only articles that had any pretensions to a place in the inventory. Those who were to be sent out of it belonged neither to the list of souls to be saved, nor to the list of moral beings.”

IN its unsettled state, the “dark flat wilderness” (3) of the marshes provides a foretaste of the social extinction intended in the penal colony. It is appropriate, therefore, that when Magwitch and his nemesis Compeyson are both recaptured, the hulk where they are deposited is dramatically darkened in front of Pip’s eyes:

“By the light of the torches, we saw the black Hulk lying out a little way from the mud of the shore, like a wicked Noah’s ark. Cribbed and barred

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and moored by massive rusty chains, the prison-ship seemed in my young eyes to be ironed like the prisoners. . . . Then, the ends of the torches were flung hissing into the water, and went out, as if it were all over with him.” (40)

In keeping with Bentham’s analysis, Magwitch’s ostracism from British society creates more social problems than it solves. His removal from the novel and the nation, rendering his actions unknowable and unpredictable, enables the social chaos that arises from Pip mistaking the financial source of his great expectations. An anonymous bequest offers him the hope of social uplift, funding a process of bildung: “It is the desire of the present possessor of that property, that he [Pip] be immediately removed from his present sphere of life, and brought up as a gentleman—in a word, as a young fellow of great expectations” (138). The anonymous bequest appears perfectly keyed to Pip’s growing sense of personal dissatisfaction, which has been crystallized by encounters with the beautiful, wealthy, and elitist Estella:

I set off on the four-mile walk to our forge . . . deeply revolving that I was a common labouring-boy; that my hands were coarse, that my boots were thick; that I had fallen into a despicable habit of calling knaves Jacks; that I was much more ignorant than I had considered myself last night, and generally that I was in a low-lived bad way. (65)

There are two sides to Pip’s newfound sense of inadequacy. The first is a sense of “commonness,” as he becomes increasingly sensitized to his working-class origins. The second, somewhat deeper yet related, is “the guilty coarse and common thing it was, to be on secret terms of conspiracy with convicts—a feature in my low career that I had previously forgotten” (79). Pip’s expectations literally set him in motion, motivating him
to move to London at the end of Volume I, in order to leave behind his class status and his complicity with a mode of criminality that cannot be encompassed by the social body.

In contrast to the narrowness of life on the marshes, London is economically bourgeois and temporally modern, and appears to offer Pip the chance to make a clean break from his past. From his perspective, London seems to exist in a different world, temporally and spatially, to that of his childhood:

On a moderate computation, it was many months, that Sunday, since I had left Joe and Biddy. The space interposed between myself and them, partook of that expansion, and our marshes were any distance off. That I could have been at our old church in my old church-going clothes, on the very last Sunday that ever was, seemed a combination of impossibilities, geographical and social, solar and lunar. (185)

The “space interposed” between Pip and the marshes is reflected in the transfer of his guardianship to the lawyer Jaggers, whose address in “Little Britain” (163) reinforces the sense that Pip has finally arrived in the space of the modern nation. Once established there, he has little to do except acquire the cultural capital appropriate for a gentleman. He acquires a tutor, who “referred to his having been told by Mr. Jaggers that I was not designed for any profession, and that I should be well enough educated for my destiny if I could ‘hold my own’ with the average of young men in prosperous circumstances” (197). Not being “designed for any profession,” Pip stands as a test case for the possibilities offered by bildung for bourgeois self-fashioning.
It soon becomes apparent, however, that Pip’s London education falls far short of successful social uplift. Pip’s growing and genuine accomplishment in the cultural sphere is not marked by greater self-discipline, but is accompanied by a remarkable degree of financial improvidence and personal unhappiness. Indeed, his education and his improvidence seem two sides of the same coin: “I soon contracted expensive habits, and began to spend an amount of money that within a few short months I should have thought almost fabulous; but through good and evil I stuck to my books” (204). Pip recounts the growth of his debts as an inevitable process that reflects an innate inability to govern his own affairs wisely:

My business habits had one other bright feature, which I called ‘leaving a Margin.’ . . . [S]upposing my own [debts] to be four times as much [as Herbert’s], I would leave a margin and put them down at seven hundred. I had the highest opinion of the wisdom of this same Margin, but I am bound to acknowledge that on looking back, I deem it to have been an expensive device. For, we always ran into new debt immediately, to the full extent of the margin, and sometimes in the sense of freedom and solvency it imparted, got pretty far on into another margin. (277)

In addition to causing him to act (at an economic level) with financial improvidence, Pip’s great expectations cause him to act (at a sentimental level) with ingratitude to his family and others from his past. He recounts his feelings, when anticipating a visit from Joe, his closest childhood friend, as “considerable disturbance, some mortification, and a keen sense of incongruity. If I could have kept him away by paying money, I certainly would have paid money” (218). Pip’s social elevation has come at the cost of sundering the “natural” bonds of familial affection, and while Pip reflects back on his attitudes and
actions with a sense of shame, at the time his actions were governed by weaknesses of character that were able to override those feelings.

Pip’s miserable attempt at self-fashioning in the first two volumes of Great Expectations, during the period between Magwitch’s deportation from Britain and his illegal return, occurs under a regime of surveillance rather than individual freedom. If the representation of Magwitch endorses Bentham’s critique—that the convict’s expulsion from Britain fails to serve the national interest because it renders him invisible—then the parallel representation of Pip critiques the solution that Bentham proposed in its stead. Indeed, several scholars have discussed how Dickens’ early support for Benthamism began to modify during the 1840s as he came under the influence of Carlyle, and his interest in Maconochie dates from the same period; whereas Carlyle offered a new way for Dickens to conceive of the social body, Maconochie provided him with a new account of the individual. Thus, while Magwitch provides proof on the colonial side of the equation that the geographic limitations to centralized surveillance necessitate a new mode of subject formation, on the metropolitan side Pip demonstrates the deleterious effects of an “efficient system of

inspection” on the social body. His sister and guardian, Mrs. Joe, is—in the words of her husband, and Pip’s ally, Joe—a despotic figure who governs by surveillance and force:

Your sister is given to government. . . . Which I meantersay the government of you and myself. . . . I don’t deny that your sister comes the Mo-gul over us, now and again. I don’t deny that she do throw us back-falls, and that she do drop down upon us heavy. At such times as when your sister is on the Ram-page, Pip . . . cander compels fur to admit that she is a Buster. (48-9)

Mrs. Joe’s violently carceral treatment of Pip—“my sister must have had some idea that I was a young offender . . . delivered over to her, to be dealt with according to the outraged majesty of the law” (23)—divides his inner sentiments from his outward behavior, a fragmentation that is first manifested when he conceals his involvement with Magwitch: “I was too cowardly to do what I knew to be right, as I had been too cowardly to avoid doing what I knew to be wrong. . . . Quite an untaught genius, I made the discovery of the line of action for myself” (41). This frustration, which will dog Pip throughout his youth, accords with Maconochie’s claim that Benthamite discipline “weakens the springs of independent action, [and] makes at best only eye-servants.”

In leaving the marshes for the city, Pip escapes this panoptical environment only to be accommodated within one that is even more powerful. This is organized around Jaggers, whose charismatic legal expertise derives from his vast amount of secret knowledge and his ability to imbue those around him with a sense of guilt. Pip recalls, “Jaggers made not me alone intensely melancholy, because, after he was gone, Herbert said of himself, with his eyes fixed on the fire, that he thought he must have committed
a felony and forgotten the details of it, he felt so dejected and guilty” (292). The most
dramatic example of the lawyer’s powers of character formation is provided his control
over his housekeeper, Molly. Described as a “wild beast tamed” (202), the former gypsy
has been subdued by constant surveillance and the threat of violence: “he kept down the
old wild violent nature whenever he saw an inkling of its breaking out, by asserting his
power over her in the old way” (414). Pip is subject to a more psychological form of
violence—“I knew that he wrenched the weakest part of our dispositions out of us”
(213)—that exacerbates those aspects of his character that have led him into debt and the
neglect of his former friends. Furthermore, as sole possessor of the knowledge that
Magwitch is Pip’s benefactor, Jaggers embodies the nature of the link between the two
characters in the first two volumes of the novel. This connection is underscored by
Wemmick’s observation that Jaggers is “‘Deep . . . as Australia.’ Pointing with his pen to
the office floor, to express that Australia was understood, for the purposes of the figure,
to be symmetrically on the opposite spot of the globe. ‘If there was anything deeper . . .
he’d be it’” (199). Jaggers’ ability to metaphorically span England and Australia thus
provides one of the strongest clues that Pip and Magwitch are governed by a shared
Benthamite logic of characterization.

Pip’s great expectations are reduced to dust when Magwitch returns at the end of
Volume II to reveal that it is he, rather than the rich and reclusive Miss Havisham, who
has bankrolled them. Having made his fortune in New South Wales as a farmer—“I’ve
been a sheep-farmer, stock-breeder, other trades besides, away in the new world. . . .

[N]o man has done nigh as well as me” (317)—the convict has now returned to London
at the risk of death to view what his colonial wealth has wrought:

And then, dear boy, it was a recompense to me, look’ee here, to know in
secret that I was making a gentleman. The blood horses of them colonists
might fling up the dust over me as I was walking; what do I say? I says to
myself, ‘I’m making a better gentleman nor ever you’ll be!’ When one of
‘em says to another, ‘He was a convict, a few year ago, and is a ignorant
common fellow now, for all he’s lucky,’ what do I say? I says to myself, ‘If
I ain’t a gentleman, nor yet ain’t got no learning, I’m the owner of such.
All on you owns stock and land; which on you owns a brought-up
London gentleman?’ This way I kep myself a going. And this way I held
steady afore my mind that I would for certain come one day and see my
boy, and make myself known to him, on his own ground. (321-322)
Perhaps the most humorous, yet also most intriguing, aspect of Magwitch’s return is
that he doesn’t upbraid his young protégé for his financial improvidence. Instead,

Magwitch positively encourages Pip to continue his conspicuous consumption: “He was
full of plans ‘for his gentleman’s coming out strong, and like a gentleman,’ and urged
me to begin speedily upon the pocket-book, which he had left in my possession” (345).
Not only has Magwitch bankrolled Pip’s great expectations with his backbreaking
colonial labor, but he intends the financial and cultural wealth of his “brought-up
London gentleman” to be on ostentatious display. That is, those personal qualities that
Pip’s retrospective narrative frames as character weaknesses are enabled and celebrated
by the character created by the system of convict transportation, and both embody
failures of panopticism.
3.3.2. The Good Name of the Disciplined Protagonist

The third volume of *Great Expectations* narrates the transformation of Pip’s character, as if he were enrolled in a Urania Cottage, and that change is paralleled by an aesthetic shift in the representation of Magwitch’s criminality, from gothicism to sentimentalism. At the moment of their reunion, Pip had felt that Magwitch’s convict stain could never be concealed or forgiven: “The influences of his solitary hut-life were upon him besides, and gave him a savage air that no dress could tame. . . . [I]n these ways and a thousand other small nameless instances arising every minute in the day, there was Prisoner, Felon, Bondsman, plain as plain could be” (337-338). Accordingly, Pip can only regard him as an object of horror. Invoking *Frankenstein*, he recalls, “The imaginary student pursued by the misshapen creature he had impiously made, was not more wretched than I, pursued by the creature who had made me, and recoiling from him with a stronger repulsion, the more he admired me and the fonder he was of me” (339). Within a few chapters, however, the “misshapen creature” who has made him appears to be “softened—indefinably, for I could not have said how, and could never afterwards recal how when I tried; but certainly” (377). The cause of this change of heart is at the center of the new logic of character formation that differentiates the last volume of the novel from what has come before.

The change that has “softened” Magwitch is that he has recounted the story of his childhood descent into crime. The convict’s narrative, which provides a familiar
moment of Dickensian social critique aimed at the heartlessness of various bureaucratic structures and figures of authority, is vital because it renders him for the first time an object of sympathy:

This is the way it was, that when I was a ragged little creetur as much to be pitied as ever I see (not that I looked in the glass, for there aren’t many insides of furnished houses known to me), I got the name of being hardened. . . . They always went on agen me about the Devil. But what the Devil was I to do? I must put something in my stomach, mustn’t I?—Howsomever, I’m a getting low, and I know what’s due. Dear boy . . . don’t you be afeerd of me being low. (346-7)

Magwitch is tamed by the narrative—a technique diametrically opposite to that which constrains Molly—as the gaps and discontinuities of his life that once rendered him “afeerd” are filled in. The convict’s new status is apparent in the new name that Magwitch adopts upon his return, which at first seems only a legal fiction employed by Jaggers to finesse the problematic knowledge of his illegal return. That name, “Provis”—suggestive of, among other things, the Latin root of “foresight”—signals a new potential for characters to discipline their present actions in anticipation of future benefits. That is, the truthfulness of his “ragged little” narrative enables him to find a (temporary) place within the social body once again, and Magwitch becomes Provis, improvable.

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73 The contrast between gothicism and sentimentalism is echoed in the scene where Pip is taken to be bound as an apprentice to Joe, and the onlookers mistake him for a juvenile delinquent: “One person of mild and benevolent aspect even gave me a tract ornamented with a woodcut of a malevolent young man fitted up with a perfect sausage-shop of fetters, and entitled TO BE READ IN MY CELL.” (105) As has already been noted, Dickens also intended his “Appeal to Fallen Women” to be read in the prison cell, but his tract strikes a markedly more sympathetic tone: “I mean nothing but kindness to you, and I write as if you were my sister.” Dickens, Letters, 5.698.
Immediately following Magwitch’s softening, Pip begins to display evidence of his own reformation. He travels to Satis House, home of Miss Havisham and Estella, where he responds to the loss of his expectations with a series of self-sacrificial acts of truth-telling. Although Miss Havisham has taken advantage of his misapprehension about the source of his expectations, he nevertheless attempts to restore her sundered relationship with his friend’s family: “I should be false and base if I did not tell you . . . that you deeply wrong both Mr. Matthew Pocket and his son Herbert, if you suppose them to be otherwise than generous, upright, open, and incapable of anything designing or mean” (360). These words set the stage for Pip to declare his avowedly hopeless love for Estella and—evoking a sentimental register similar to that used by Magwitch to describe his childhood—acknowledge the pain of his feelings without anger:

Estella, to the last hour of my life, you cannot choose but remain part of my character, part of the little good in me, part of the evil. But, in this separation I associate you only with the good, and I will faithfully hold you to that always, for you must have done me far more good than harm, let me feel now what sharp distress I may. O God bless you, God forgive you! (364-365)

With these speeches, the new Pip begins to display the moral fiber he has previously lacked, and it is no coincidence that from this point he also begins to display financial discipline for the first time. Resolving not to take any more of the convict’s money, and to live within his means, Pip begins to sell his assets to pay his debts: “I had quite determined that it would be a heartless fraud to take more money from my patron in the existing state of my uncertain thoughts and plans. . . . I felt a kind of satisfaction—
whether it was a false kind or a true, I hardly know—in not having profited by his
generosity since his revelation of himself” (381). Pip’s newfound ability to make such
sacrifices, deferring current pleasure for an anticipated moral goal, exemplifies the new
regime of character that emerges in the last volume of the novel.

At this point, it is useful to recall the virtues that the Home for Homeless Women
sought to instantiate—“Truthfulness, Industry, Temper, Propriety of Conduct and
Conversation, Temperance, Order, Punctuality, Economy, Cleanliness”\(^74\)—for they
outline (perhaps excepting cleanliness) the extent of Pip’s own reformation. Put more
explicitly, Pip’s transformation bears structural traces of the Mark System, now applied
not only to convicts and fallen women but also to the bourgeois subject at the center of
the bildungsroman. The novel is not a watered-down version of Maconochie’s scheme,
however, but a technological advance over the penal colony and Urania Cottage. That
advance centers on the translation of the mathematical structures of those institutions
into the organic language of novelistic character formation. Pip’s discovery of a personal
ethic that knits him simultaneously into the economic and social order appears, as if by
accident, to embody Foucault’s description of the individualizing yet socially cohesive
thrust of disciplinary power: “It ‘trains’ the moving, confused, useless multitudes of
bodies and forces into a multiplicity of individual elements—small, separate cells,

\(^74\) Dickens, “Homeless Women,” 171. Dickens observes that he uses an “enlarged” definition of temperance:
“Moderation, patience, calmness, sedateness, moderation of passion.”
organic autonomies, genetic identities and continuities, combinatory segments.” Yet Dickens’ investment in Maconochie’s theories suggests that it is no accident that this is the means used by *Great Expectations* to resolve what Franco Moretti terms “the conflict between the ideal of *self-determination* and the equally imperious demands of *socialization*.”

As has been demonstrated, the experiments and writings of Maconochie and Dickens yoked bildung to economic accumulation, and accordingly the recovery of Pip’s financial position provides both a yardstick to measure his reformation and a reward for his good behavior. Moreover, that recovery reveals the imperial usefulness of this regime of character, for Pip’s newfound economic acumen is manifested in the East. If Maconochie intended the reformed convict to remain in Australia, and Urania Cottage extended his vision by enabling the fallen woman to leave Britain for a new life in the colonies, then the conclusion to *Great Expectations* further extends the pattern by allowing Pip free movement within the empire. Pip ultimately joins Herbert at Clarriker’s House, the merchant’s where he had secretly bought his friend Herbert a partnership during the days of his prosperity, and this allows his healing to continue:

> Within a month I had quitted England, and within two months I was clerk to Clarriker and Co., and within four months I assumed my first undivided responsibility. . . . Herbert had gone away to marry Clara, and I was left in sole charge of the Eastern Branch until he brought her back.

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75 Foucault, *Discipline*, 170.
Many a year went round, before I was a partner in the House; but, I lived happily with Herbert and his wife, and lived frugally, and paid my debts, and maintained a constant correspondence with Biddy and Joe. . . . We were not in a grand way of business, but we had a good name, and worked for our profits, and did very well. We owed so much to Herbert’s ever cheerful industry and readiness, that I often wondered how I had conceived that old idea of his inaptitude, until I was one day enlightened by the reflection, that perhaps the inaptitude had never been in him at all, but had been in me. (480)

This compressed narrative of deferred pleasure for the sake of future financial rewards—frugal living and debt repayment precede Pip’s becoming a partner—constitutes a novelized, middle-class version of the financial discipline instilled by the Mark System. Herbert’s “ever cheerful industry and readiness” resembles a category of the Urania Cottage mark table, and the “good name” earned by Pip and Herbert in Britain as a result of their Egyptian endeavors attests to the imperial transportability of this new mode of character.76

The colonial profiteering of Clarriker’s House thus appears, somewhat surprisingly at first sight, more acceptable within the logic of the novel than the fruits of Magwitch’s antipodean labors. This is despite the fact that Magwitch, in good Lockean fashion, has generated property from the soil by way of his labor, whereas Clarriker’s House apparently produces nothing. Yet Clarriker’s provides Victorian Britain with a

76 P. J. Cain argues that the British perceived a failure of character, especially of financial discipline, to be “at the heart of Egypt’s economic crisis in the 1870s and 1880s and [that failure], for them, both explained and justified Britain’s presence there.” P. J. Cain, “Character and Imperialism: The British Financial Administration of Egypt, 1878-1914,” *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 34, no. 2 (2006): 180.
more stable source of colonial wealth because—in parallel to Magwitch’s reformation through incorporation into realist narrative, and the entry of the convict and fallen woman into the mark table—it is rendered legible to the imperial nation (and thus legitimized) by the narrative structure of double-entry book-keeping. As Carolyn Lesjak notes, *Great Expectations* registers the increasingly blurred distinction between Britain and its empire wrought by the imperial economy:

The notion of an ‘outside’ to the system, or of margins opposed to centers, collapses as all spaces become equally rife for the market. This does not mean, of course, that the inequalities between margin and center disappear; rather the desire to maintain strict boundaries between them, or, more accurately, to keep those existing on the margins or in the periphery at (Botany) bay, becomes increasingly impossible as ‘peripheral’ spaces and populations become central to Britain’s development.

Pip’s prosperity at the end of the novel thus affirms the promise of liberal individualism to stabilize the interpenetration of metropolis and colony by using the principles of the Mark System to create a self-fashioned character able to act reliably and predictably both in Britain and the colonies. Thus the unintended irony of Edward Said’s explanation of Pip’s presence in Egypt, that “Britain’s other colonies offer a sort of normality that Australia never could,” is that the ideological formation underpinning his eastern

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77 As Mary Poovey observes, the formal characteristics of accountancy strive to achieve an effect of verisimilitude—claiming to “reflect things that actually exist, and . . . recorded in a language that seems transparent”—that grounds its claim to authority: “the double-entry system seemed to guarantee that the details it recorded were accurate reflections of the goods that had changed hands because the system was formally precise.” Poovey, *A History of the Modern Fact: Problems of Knowledge in the Sciences of Wealth and Society*, 29, 30.

engagement originated as an attempt to normalize the penal colonies of Australia, which was then applied to the task of normalizing the citizens of Victorian Britain.

3.3.3. Magwitch’s Money and the Persistence of Panopticism

Thus far I have argued that Great Expectations narrates a self-avowedly Victorian (that is, self-consciously modern) account of liberal self-fashioning over and against the Bentham’s theory that character formation depends on centralized surveillance. Now, however, I wish to draw attention to the continuities that the novel maintains—hiding them in plain sight, as it were—with the past it claims to disavow, as a means of acknowledging the Victorians’ willing inheritance of what we now think of as panopticism. I will pursue this claim by addressing the fate of Magwitch’s money. Despite Wemmick’s repeated injunctions in the novel that Pip ought to lay hold of Magwitch’s “portable property” while he has the chance, Pip’s refusal to accept the convict’s pocketbook ensures that Magwitch’s fortune is forfeited to the government upon his arrest:

I was not related to the outlaw, or connected with him by any recognisable tie; he had put his hand to no writing or settlement in my favour before his apprehension, and to do so now would be idle. I had no claim, and I finally resolved, and ever afterwards abided by the resolution, that my heart should never be sickened with the hopeless task of attempting to establish one. (448)

The moral Gordian knot surrounding Pip’s inheritance of Magwitch’s earnings is apparently cut. And it is immediately following the arrest that Herbert proposes Pip join
Clarriker’s as a clerk, thus providing him with a profession: “A clerk. And I hope it is not all unlikely that he may expand (as a clerk of your acquaintance has expanded) into a partner. Now, Handel—in short, my dear boy, will you come to me?” (450) As has already been demonstrated, this offer marks the ultimate reformation of Pip’s character.

Yet Magwitch’s money has an enduring positive effect in the novel, insofar as Pip had used part of it to purchase Herbert’s entry into Clarriker’s House (299). Prior to that intervention, Herbert had indulged in entirely ungrounded capitalist fantasies while racking up debts:

“I think I shall trade,” said he, leaning back in his chair, “to the East Indies, for silks, shawls, spices, dyes, drugs, and precious woods. It’s an interesting trade.” “And the profits are large?” said I. “Tremendous! . . . I think I shall trade, also,” said he, putting his thumbs in his waistcoat pockets, “to the West Indies, for sugar, tobacco, and rum. Also to Ceylon, specially for elephants’ tusks.” “You will want a good many ships,” said I. “A perfect fleet,” said he. (184)

Pip uses Magwitch’s money to enable Herbert’s dream, though on a more “realistic” level. This effectively launders those colonial earnings, by transforming them into seed money for a legitimate profession. Whereas I have previously emphasized the marked differences between the last volume of the novel and those that precede it, this gift of money bridges them at the level of the plot and reveals the ontological continuities between them. What remains hidden in plain sight within the novel, in other words, is the extent to which the Victorian conception of character can be read as an
intensification of the technologies of its Georgian predecessor, rather than an enlightened substitution.\(^9\)

The novel’s awareness of these continuities is reflected in a crucial difference between Pip and his predecessors, the inmates of Urania Cottage. Dickens intended that the latter would become new people by putting their pasts entirely behind them: “That

\(^9\) This intensification is evident in the mathematical gymnastics involved in weaning the Victorian legal system from its dependence on sentences of transportation: “When transportation was abolished a new structure of penalties had to be evolved. The first attempt in 1853 produced a curious exercise in penal calculation.

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<td>7 years’ transportation</td>
<td>= 4 years’ penal servitude</td>
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<td>over 7 and up to 10 years’ transportation</td>
<td>= 4-6 years’ penal servitude</td>
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<td>over 10 and up to 15 years’ transportation</td>
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<td>over 15 years’ transportation</td>
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<td>transportation for life</td>
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But although the exercise appeared straightforward it caused much confusion and ill-will. . . . Select Committees were set up to find a solution. And this time they were the calculators:

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7 years’ transportation</td>
<td>= 7 years’ penal servitude (4 years in custody, then eligible for ticket-of-leave)</td>
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<tr>
<td>over 7 and up to 10 years’ transportation</td>
<td>= 10-15 years’ penal servitude (4-6 years in custody, then eligible for ticket-of-leave)</td>
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<tr>
<td>over 10 and up to 15 years’ transportation</td>
<td>= 10-15 years’ penal servitude (6-8 years in custody, then eligible for ticket-of-leave)</td>
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<tr>
<td>transportation for life</td>
<td>= penal servitude for life. . .</td>
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But once again the Home Office decided that the time to be spent in captivity was too short. The periods of remission actually allowed were far less than those envisaged by the Select Committee and, in effect, yet another equation was established:

their past lives should never be referred to, at the Home, there can be no doubt. I should say that any such reference on the part of the Superintendent would be an instance of blind mistake that in itself would render her dismissal necessary.”

Pip at the end of *Great Expectations*, however, is notably unable to turn his back on that past: “My dear Biddy, I have forgotten nothing in my life that ever had a foremost place there, and little that ever had any place there. But that poor dream as I once used to call it, has all gone by, Biddy, all gone by!” (482) Pip’s inability to abandon his hopeless love for Estella, despite giving up on the “poor dream” of marriage, thus frustrates the expected plot trajectory of the Bildungsroman, where—as in *David Copperfield*, for instance—a concluding marriage symbolizes the protagonist’s reconciliation with the social order. Yet the frustration of the marriage plot—mirrored in the two endings to the novel, and the famously inconclusive nature of the revised ending—attests that the rhetoric of Victorian modernity cannot be so neatly distinguished from the past that it implicitly seeks to disavow.

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81 Dickens revised the ending to the novel after Edward Bulwer-Lytton suggested it was too disappointing for readers, in foreclosing the possibility of Pip ever marrying Estella. The novel, as originally published, thus ended, “and in all the broad expanse of tranquil light . . . I saw the shadow of no parting from her.” Dickens revised the ending again for the one-volume edition of 1862, to read “I saw no shadow of another parting from her.” See Dickens, ed., *Great Expectations*, 484, 507n2, 8-9.
3.4. The Transportable Individual: Great Expectations in Australia

The series of material and ideological circulations between Victorian Britain and its Australian penal colonies in the 1840s and 50s, centered on Alexander Maconochie’s Mark System of convict discipline, attest to the extensive interpenetration of these two spaces within the imperial imaginary. I wish to conclude by focusing on one further iteration within that history of circulation, that of Great Expectations as a material object. Elaine Freedgood has described Dickens’ flirtation in the 1860s with the idea of a reading tour to Australia, but whereas he never visited the antipodes, Great Expectations certainly did. Tim Dolin has recently analyzed the colonial fortunes of the first three-volume edition of the novel, two copies of which arrived by sea at the circulating library of the South Australian Institute, Adelaide in October 1861.

According to lending records, the novel’s readers “were drawn from the full range of middle-class occupations: clerks and shop assistants, artisans, professionals, and shopkeepers. It was also probably read by a significant number of nonpaying ‘registered readers,’ including some labourers, who were permitted to use the reading room, and who would have had access to the ‘room’ copies of the latest volumes of All the Year

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Dolin claims that importing such novels exacerbated a colonial double-consciousness: “[T]he shipment of print products was largely one-way: it made one home—mid-Victorian Britain—more vitally present and real than the other, colonial Australia, which was either absent, hurried over, falsified, exoticised, or distorted.”

Yet, as this chapter has demonstrated, the flow of print and ideas was never a solely one-way process. If Dickens’ bildungsroman seeks to articulate a version of metropolitan character able to be successfully transported into a colonial setting, then that version of character was first formed in the penal colonies of Van Diemen’s Land and Norfolk Island. From this perspective, *Great Expectations* was always as much at home in Adelaide as London.

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84 Ibid.: 277.
4. Greater Britain and the Imperial Outpost: Spatial Forms and the Imperial Imaginary in Utopian Fiction and the Invasion Novel

But who among the armies thus organized, for what [the mother country] is pleased to call ‘home defence,’ can determine the exact distance from a man’s home at which the obligation ends? Who can draw the magic circle which is to include the territorial area of his duty to die for his country? Home is something more than an abstract idea having reference only to locality; its foundations are laid in common interests, sympathy, and affection…. Hence it is that, from whatever quarter of the Empire a cry for help comes — wherever the British flag waves over Englishmen struggling on their own ground for all they hold dear — it is there our home is in danger, there is the rallying-point of forces created for its defence.

J. C. R. Colomb, The Defence of Great and Greater Britain (1880)

While the last two chapters have been focused around the individual, this chapter turns to the subject of how the Victorians imagined the territory of Greater Britain. It also eschews the narrow focus on Australia for a more broadly conceived notion of circulation between Australasia and Britain. I shall demonstrate how tracing the changing ways that utopian fiction imagines the settler colony in spatial terms necessitates rewriting how Victorian Studies understands the changing nature of the invasion novel at the turn of the century. Thomas Richards argues in The Imperial Archive (1993) that the genre of the invasion novel that emerged near the end of the nineteenth century contributed to the rearmament of the British empire, and the west more generally, by creating a mindset he terms “war interiority,” characterized by paranoia.

about the perceivable world. His claim revolves around what is often claimed to be the first spy novel, Erskine Childers’ *The Riddle of the Sands: A Record of Secret Service* (1903), in which the two protagonists investigating mysterious German military activity along the Frisian coast facing England come to realize that what they thought were defensive preparations are actually the beginnings of an invasion plan. While the two protagonists, Davies and Carruthers, are only amateur spies—the former is a functionary in the foreign office; the latter a keen yachtsman—it is precisely their amateurism that allows them to uncover and thus defuse the threat of invasion, and Richards argues that marks an evolution in the militarization of the imperial state:

> The maritime idiom of the novel, perhaps its most celebrated feature, results directly from Davies’s systematic use of low technology as an effective form of twentieth-century reconnaissance. . . . *This foregrounding of conventional technology has no parallel in previous invasion novels*. . . . The logic of the Victorian arms race had based military preparedness on technological sophistication. Childers, however, thinks of military preparedness as contingent upon a regression in basic technology. No mere alarmist, he advances a mythology of the demilitarized war economy, that is, the myth of a society capable of maintaining a permanent war footing without mortgaging its surplus to a military-industrial complex, and without resorting to the applied force of the security state.¹

Richards’ analysis of the novel is remarkable, but his investment in theorizing a solely metropolitan genealogy of imperial knowledge precludes the possibility that colonial writing might have had any effect on the problematic he details. Indeed, Richards’ claim

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² Ibid., 132, emphasis added.
that Childers’ “foregrounding of conventional technology has no parallel in previous invasion novels” is an impoverished account of generic innovation in the Victorian period that arises from an impoverished account of Victorian imperialism.

In what follows, I will outline an alternative genealogy for the reconstruction of the invasion novel into a tale of amateurs defending the nation. Childers’ novel narrates the defensive value of an intensely local focus on territory, marking the culmination of an ongoing Victorian debate about the conceptualization and defense of imperial space. The stakes of that debate were most evident in the Australasian colonies, and most powerfully articulated in utopian and dystopian fiction set on that colonial periphery. I focus on two competing ways of imagining the spatial relationship between Britain and the Australasian settler colonies, which proved particularly suited to these genres when the spatial distance of the settler colony was imagined in temporal terms as its futurity. The first of these spatial models, Greater Britain, was in vogue from 1870-1900 and imagined the homogenization of imperial space by understanding the settler colony in strategic terms to be an extension of metropolitan territory. The second spatial model, which I term the imperial outpost, was articulated in Australasia in the 1890s and represents the flipside to Greater Britain. It approached the subject of imperial space from the perspective of the settler colony’s isolation from Britain, which forced it to appropriate a nativist knowledge of the land previously ascribed to the New Zealand Maori. The novels I discuss make increasingly clear that Greater Britain’s version of
imperial space depends on Britain’s status as the world’s sole superpower, whereas those premised upon the imperial outpost emphasize the strategic value of local knowledge. In light of these precedents, *The Riddle of the Sands* can be seen as significant not because it “invents” a new form of the invasion novel, but because it translates the spatial understanding associated with the imperial outpost into the context of conflict between European Great Powers. That is, it depicts the security of the nation and empire as no longer depending on the extension of overwhelming metropolitan force to the colonial peripheries but on thinking of the metropolis as if it were an imperial outpost.

### 4.1. *Erewhon* and the Spatiality of the Settler Colony

From the 1840s until the 1870s, the British empire enjoyed unchallenged industrial and naval supremacy around the globe, one result of which was that imperial defense had largely been conceived of in terms of possible threats to Britain posed by European nations. From the 1870s onwards, however, the rising imperial challenge posed by European nations, particularly Germany, and the increasingly powerful United States spurred a variety of movements aimed at integrating Britain and its settler colonies into a unified strategy of imperial defense. Samuel Butler’s satiric utopia *Erewhon* (1872), published at the cusp of this transition in geopolitical thinking, arose out

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4 Ibid., 134.

of his experiences as a settler in New Zealand, and highlights how such a colonial setting enabled the utopian novel to imagine imperial space. Moreover, it reflects the stakes of that transition in its ability to imagine the colony simultaneously as integrated with Britain and isolated from it, a possibility that disappears from the Victorian novel until Childers’ contribution.

Butler spent the early 1860s as a sheep farmer in Canterbury, New Zealand, and prospered to the extent that when he returned to England in 1864, “his own initial capital of £4800 was now worth over £8000, once he could realise it, and he intended to keep it in New Zealand for the immediate future, where the rate of interest was 10%.”

Butler began to write Erewhon in 1870, but he had previously published a version of its critique of Darwinism in a New Zealand newspaper, The Press, in 1862-3. The novel falls into two parts, with the narrative that frames Erewhon’s utopian core beginning with the arrival of the narrator—only named as Higgs in the later Erewhon Revisited (1901)—in an unnamed colony, and following his search for new farmland that will allow him to make his fortune. In the course of this search he discovers the land of Erewhon “just over the range,” which provides the setting for the central portion of the text where he describes his experiences and observations of a society that is recognizable as an inversion of

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Victorian society. The frame-narrative resumes at the end of the novel with Higgs' escape by hot air balloon with his Erewhonian lover, Arowhena, and their return to England, and it concludes with him proposing another money making venture based upon the colonial exploitation of the Erewhonian population.

The novel’s mixed geographic origins and its variety of cultural references have rendered *Erewhon* marginal yet still of interest to Victorian Studies, science fiction, and New Zealand literature. Some of the most interesting recent work, however, has responded to the colonial traces underlying much of this ostensibly metropolitan text by emphasizing the connection between Victorian New Zealand and Britain, paying particular attention to Butler’s apparently contradictory representation of the

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9 Those traces were first identified by Joseph Jones in *The Cradle of Erewhon* (1959), which focused on three specific aspects of the novel: Butler’s colonial writings on Darwin, the mountainous landscape within which he conducted his farming career, and an ethnological awareness of Maori culture. “Very likely *Erewhon* could not have been written if Butler had remained in New Zealand, though we cannot be sure. But neither could it have been written if he had not lived there as long as he did, and under the right conditions to produce it.” Jones, *The Cradle of Erewhon: Samuel Butler in New Zealand,* 95.
Erewhonians as both British and racially other. Helen Blythe and Sue Zemka map this incoherence onto differences between the colonizers and the indigenous Maori population of New Zealand, whereas Jonathan Lamb argues that it illuminates the competing utopian and Machiavellian principles underlying New Zealand’s colonization. This analysis will also address the paradoxical representation of the Erewhonians in the novel, but will take a different approach in arguing that it reflects the coexistence of two different spatial models of the relationship between Britain and its settler populations.

Among Samuel Butler’s papers there is a map of Erewhon that transposes the novel’s fictional geography onto the actual geography of New Zealand (see figure 2).

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11 Elinor Shaffer regards the map to most likely be drawn by one of Butler’s executors. See Elinor Shaffer, “Samuel Butler’s Fantastic Maps: Erewhon, the ‘New Jerusalem’, and the Periplus of Odysseus,” Word & Image 4, no. 2 (1988).
What is intriguing about this map is that it is actually two maps: one is an outline of the entire colony of New Zealand that lacks specific features, whereas the other provides a detailed representation of a smaller part of that terrain. The first map allows the viewer to imagine the colony as a geopolitical entity within a broader worldwide context, whereas the second immerses the viewer in such detail that the question of what lies outside that frame appear irrelevant. The two images are, nevertheless, connected, both by cartographic principles of scale and by the simple fact that they are contained within the same document. As I will argue below, *Erewhon* works in a similar

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fashion to this double map, encompassing within its pages two conceptions of imperial spatiality whose different functions are reflected in their contrasting scales.

Butler's first model of imperial space, articulated in the “realist” narrative that surrounds the central depiction of Erewhon, highlights and reflects the trans-oceanic links between Britain and its colony. This “big picture” vision presents imperialism as a vast economic speculation that links the metropolis and colony. The novel begins,

When I left home it was with the intention of going to some new colony, and either finding, or even perhaps purchasing, waste crown-land suitable for cattle or sheep farming, by which means I thought that I could better my fortunes more rapidly than in England.13 I am not concerned so much with how precisely this “new colony” corresponds to New Zealand, but with the fact that it is a settler colony at all. By portraying Higgs’ ability to move as freely as his capital *between* England and this colony, and as easily *within* the latter as in the former, the novel deliberately engages with what Zemka terms “the myth of idyllic expansion.”14 This myth plays out as Higgs conducts his search for appropriate pastoral land, land that merely has to be claimed for it to enter the imperial economy. He observes,

It may be readily understood that when once Europeans set foot upon this territory they were not slow to take advantage of its capabilities. Sheep and cattle were introduced, and bred with extreme rapidity; men took up their 50,000 or 100,000 acres of country, going inland one behind

the other, till in a few years there was not an acre between the sea and the
front ranges which was not taken up, and stations either for sheep or
cattle were spotted about at intervals of some twenty or thirty miles over
the whole country. (40)
In other words, the “myth of idyllic expansion” involves transforming the colony into an
extension of metropolitan territory by transforming its territory from static “waste” land
to a productive part of the imperial economy.

The vast scale of the colonists’ endeavors—each seeking their “50,000 or 100,000
acres”—is proportional to the enormity of the colonial landscape and to the scope of an
dominion that reaches to the antipodes. Higgs’ first response to the landscape, while
employed as a cadet on a station in the shadow of the mountains that “seemed to mark
the extreme limits of pastoral country” (41), invokes the language of the sublime:

The country was the grandest that can be imagined. . . . Never shall I
forget the utter loneliness of the prospect—only the little far-away
homestead giving sign of human handiwork;—the vastness of mountain
and plain, of river and sky; the marvellous atmospheric effects . . . and
sometimes, which was best of all, I went up my mountain in a fog . . . I
would look down upon a sea of whiteness, through which would be
thrust innumerable mountain tops that looked like islands. (42)
Higgs’ alpine perspective erases virtually all signs of colonial habitation, achieving a
level of abstraction that defamiliarizes the land and renders it as a maritime archipelago.

This erasure of local detail enacts in miniature the workings of the spatial perspective
that can contemplate the colony and the metropolis within the same frame. In other
words, while this wide-angle experience of a colonial sublime elides the violent reality of
colonial expansion, it also comprises an engine for that expansion. Accordingly, Higgs’
thoughts move directly from this sight to contemplating the possibilities it might hold for his enrichment:

I could not help speculating upon what might lie farther up the river and behind the second range. I had no money, but if I could only find workable country, I might stock it with borrowed capital, and consider myself a made man. . . . I could not keep these thoughts out of my head as I would rest myself upon the mountain side; they haunted me as I went my daily rounds, and grew upon me from hour to hour. . . . Even if I did not find country, might I not find gold, or diamonds, or copper, or silver? . . . These thoughts filled my head, and I could not banish them. (43-44)

The settler colonial sublime is keyed to envisaging the colony in terms of commodity extraction—if not “country,” then “gold, or diamonds, or copper, or silver”—and it presents that perspective as arising inevitably, “naturally,” to the mind of the settler.

Higgs’ perspective is denaturalized at the end of the novel, where the poetic register of the colonial beginning is displaced by a more sardonic tone and a metropolitan setting. The two parts of the frame narrative similarly regard the settler colony in terms of its potential for economic speculation, but Higgs’ interest has shifted from land to labor. The novel concludes with him in Britain outlining a proposal to form the “Erewhon Evangelisation Company” (258), ostensibly to convert the Erewhonians he has found “farther up the river and behind the second range,” in order not to appropriate their land but to press them into servitude:

When the money had been subscribed, it would be our duty to charter a steamer of some twelve or fourteen hundred tons burden, and with accommodation for a cargo of steerage passengers. She should carry two or three guns in case of her being attacked by savages at the mouth of the river. . . . Should we be attacked, our course would be even simpler, for
the Erewhonians have no gunpowder, and would be so surprised with its effects that we should be able to capture as many as we chose; in this case we should feel able to engage them on more advantageous terms, for they would be prisoners of war. (256)

The scheme for enslaving the Erewhonians serves as a parodic critique of the Australian practice of “blackbirding,” the forcible abduction of Pacific Islanders to work in the Queensland sugar fields. It also makes visible the extent to which the apparently natural meshing of distant places and populations into a unified economic system, foregrounded in the beginning of the novel, is in fact enabled by Britain’s military power. Higgs’ contemplation of the sublime colonial landscape, which reflects the vision of empty “waste” land enabling the speculator, is thus revealed to be the flipside to the global reach of metropolitan force. Furthermore, the gunboat of the Erewhon Evangelisation Company is a parodic doubling of the ship on which Higgs once arrived in the colony. The novel thus emphasizes the specifically maritime connections between the metropolis and colony that buttress this global vision of imperial space, anticipating the thrust of the theory of Greater Britain.

Higgs regards the Erewhonians very differently in the utopian center of the novel. While Higgs is in Erewhon, its inhabitants are depicted as a curious hybrid of “natives” from an imperial romance and members of a parodic Victorian society:

On the one hand, Erewhon is a textual space comprised of unmasking projections of Victorian institutions and cultural beliefs—of a past that is not escaped but, as it were, ineluctably reproduced across temporal and spatial divisions. On the other hand, Erewhon is encoded as an alien
society, for despite the uncanny echoes of Victorian life, the Erewhonians are insistently a different people.\textsuperscript{15}

This ambivalent status is evident in one of Higgs’ earliest responses to the Erewhonians, after he has been discovered and is being brought to the “metropolis” (99). Britain, rather than ethnography, provides the yardstick against which he measures Erewhon:

The more I looked at everything in the house, the more I was struck with its quasi-European character. . . . And yet everything was slightly different. It was much the same with the birds and flowers on the other side, as compared with the English ones. On my arrival I had been pleased at noticing that nearly all the plants and birds were very like common English ones . . . not quite the same as the English, but still very like them—quite like enough to be called by the same name. . . . It was not at all like going to China or Japan, where everything that one sees is strange. (74-5)

In these remarks, three spaces are held here in the comparison of “not quite the same . . . but still very like”: Erewhon; “the other side,” namely, the settler colony; and England. This triadic economy of likeness-yet-difference is established on a different plane than one that presumes racial and cultural difference: “It was not at all like going to China or Japan”.

In apparent contradiction to the impression of antipodean Englishness, however, Higgs’ first response to the appearance of the Erewhonians had been to highlight their difference in cultural and ethnic terms:

Both the girls and the men were very dark in colour, but not more so than the South Italians or Spaniards. The men wore no trousers, but were dressed nearly the same as the Arabs whom I have seen in Algeria. . . .

\textsuperscript{15} Ibid.: 441.
My colour seemed to surprise them most, for I have light hair, blue eyes, and a fresh complexion. They could not understand how these things could be; my clothes also seemed quite beyond them. Their eyes kept wandering all over me, and the more they looked the less they seemed able to make me out. (71-2)

These conflicting representations of the Erewhonians as indigenes and metropolitans have been taken as evidence of a badly sutured or inconsistent text unable to sustain its own weight. By contrast, I shall suggest that these mixed impressions are indexed to Butler’s attempt to imagine the spatiality of a settler community completely isolated from the metropolis.

The complexities surrounding the representation of the Erewhonians, that is, are an effect of the narrator’s perspective as he tries to describe this isolated community. Higgs’ movement from “realist” to utopian space and back again is paralleled by his growing sense of geographic isolation from the maritime networks that constitute the British empire, and his conflation of the British and indigenous qualities of the Erewhonians. Sue Zemka argues along similar lines, “while the topic of a colonized indigenous people is omitted from the novel’s central scenes, it still functions in a repressed form as the principle of difference which perseveres in Erewhonian culture despite the string of English resemblances.”16 This shift in perspective arises as a result of the series of spatial and cultural dislocations that occur during Higgs’ journey to Erewhon. He begins his search on the dominant end of a master-slave dynamic, forcibly

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16 Ibid.: 452.
obtaining the assistance of the alcoholic native informant Chowbok as his guide. Soon, however, he is left lamenting his loss after Chowbok flees: “I thought . . . in how many ways I was the loser by his absence, having now to do all sorts of things for myself which he had hitherto done for me, and could do infinitely better than I could” (28). As Higgs continues on alone, his increasing separation from the supports of the empire is paralleled by a shift in the nature of his engagement with the landscape. This journey traces what Louis Marin identifies as the “gap between the interior space which is enclosed by the routes of travels, the terrae cognitae, and the unknown outer space” characteristic of the utopian genre. In Erewhon, the “gap” is constituted by the liminal space of the mountainous terrain, which marks the transition a new mode of imperial space. While Higgs does not in any sense become an indigene once he is abandoned by Chowbok, his isolation requires him to mimic that subject position. This mimicry is most apparent when is faced with crossing a dangerous river and, Crusoe-like, must improvise a raft from natural materials:

Next day I began gathering the dry bloom stalks of a kind of flag, or iris-looking plant, which was abundant. . . . I brought them to the waterside, and fell to making myself a kind of rough platform. . . . I made my raft entirely of them, binding bundles of them at right angles to each other, neatly and strongly, with strips from the leaves of the same plant, and tying other rods across. (27)

Rather than continuing to consider the land in abstraction from afar, Higgs’ struggle to survive necessitates a more direct engagement with the landscape. Specifically, this new
perspective requires him to adopt low technology solutions improvised from the local materials that lie to hand.

The principles underlying Higgs’ newfound survival skills are closely akin to those that characterize the Erewhonians themselves. Their difference from the British is ultimately not racial but originates in the “primitive character of their appliances” (75). Their exotic appearance, in other words, is a visible manifestation of their more localized, isolated version of colonial Britishness. While Erewhonian society superficially resembles the imperial world Higgs has left, it is at heart a low-technology state, for the Erewhonians have abolished machinery in a revolutionary upheaval several centuries earlier. In the “Book of Machines,” the prophetic work that provoked the upheaval, the anonymous author outlines a parodic account of Darwinian evolutionary theory as a justification for destroying Erewhon’s machines: “But returning to the argument, I would repeat that I fear none of the existing machines; what I fear is the extraordinary rapidity with which they are becoming something very different to what they are at present. No class of beings have in any time past made so rapid movement forward” (203). Although aimed at nascent Social Darwinist thinking, the parody nevertheless also usefully frames the abandonment of technology as a reversion in industrialized metropolitan expansion, for the Erewhonians now study machinery “with the feelings of an English antiquarian concerning Druidical monuments or flint arrow heads” (197), and their ongoing suspicion of the subject is at the root cause of their isolation.
Butler’s own experiences as a colonist inform his representation of the settler colony as both intimately connected to Britain and entirely isolated from it. In *Erewhon*, the extent of inclusion and isolation is conveyed through three factors: technological advancement, the strength and visibility of the connections between Britain and the settler colony, and the degree of abstraction with which the land is viewed. These two modes of imperial space, and the terms with which they are articulated, would be adopted and expanded by Victorian writers concerned about the strategic role of the settler colony, but the development of that strategic thinking would also prevent them from being articulated in tandem.

4.2. Greater Britain as Imagined Maritime Community

4.2.1. The Expansion of England and the Independence of Britannula

In this section I take up Butler’s first version of imperial spatiality, which emphasized the interconnection of Britain and settler colonies brought about by the free flow of populations and capital, and trace its development into the explicit ideology of

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17 This paradox is neatly expressed in an episode from Butler’s expedition to the Southern Alps recounted in *A First Year in Canterbury Settlement* (1863): “Here we were *bona fide* beyond the pale of civilization; no boarded floors, no chairs, nor any similar luxuries; everything was of the simplest description. Four men inhabited the hut, and their life appears a kind of mixture of that of a dog and that of an emperor, with a considerable predominance of the latter. . . . The men are all gentlemen and sons of gentlemen, and one of them is a Cambridge man, who took a high second-class a year or two before my time. . . . I asked where I should wash, he gave rather a French shrug of the shoulders, and said, ‘The lake.’ . . . I retired abashed and cleansed myself therein. Under his bed I found Tennyson’s *Idylls of the Kings.*” Samuel Butler, “A First Year in Canterbury Settlement,” in *A First Year in Canterbury Settlement and Other Essays*, ed. A. T. Bartholomew and Henry Festing Jones (London: Jonathan Cape, 1923), 99-100.
“Greater Britain” in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Although the term was originally coined by radical politician C. W. Dilke in 1868, it was historian J. R. Seeley who first popularized its more common, and narrower, association with the idea of a political union between Britain and the white settler colonies, as well as articulating the spatial model that underpinned it. Seeley’s *The Expansion of England* (1883), based upon a series of lectures delivered in 1881-2, is widely regarded as having inaugurated the field of imperial history. The attractiveness of his vision to the Victorians is evidence by the sustained popularity of the text throughout the rest of the century, but it is now most famous for its assertion that the British “seem, as it were, to have conquered and peopled half the world in a fit of absence of mind.” One of its most fundamental analytical principles is the careful differentiation between two contrasting models of colonization, exemplified by India and the settler colonies:

The colonies and India are in opposite extremes. Whatever political maxims are most applicable to the one, are most inapplicable to the other. *In the colonies everything is brand new.* There you have the most progressive

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18 “The development of the England of Elizabeth is to be found, not in the Britain of Victoria, but in half the habitable globe. If two small islands are by courtesy styled ‘Great,’ America, Australia, India, must form a Greater Britain.” Dilke, *Greater Britain*, I.vii-viii.
20 “It is reported to have sold 80,000 copies within the first two years of publication, and the political climate of the succeeding decade did nothing to diminish its appeal. . . . *The Expansion of England* did not finally go out of print until 1956, the year of Suez.” John Gross, “Editor’s Introduction,” in *The Expansion of England* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1971), xii.
race put into circumstances most favourable to progress. *They have no past and an unbounded future.* Government and institutions are all ultra-English. All is liberty, industry, invention, innovation, and as yet tranquillity. . . . India is all past and, I may almost say, no future. Thus the same nation which *reaches one hand towards the future of the globe* and assumes the position of mediator between Europe and the New World, stretches the other hand towards the remotest past, becomes an Asiatic conqueror, and usurps the succession of the Great Mogul. 

The racial distinction between India and the colonies is expressed in terms of a temporal contrast between a primitive, “native” past and a progressive, colonial future. Seeley’s settler colony is inherently utopian because it embodies the “unbounded future” of the progress narrative that is English history. Whereas history remains a troubling lack for a settler population seeking to assert a distinctive identity, futurity becomes another abundant resource to be derived from colonial soil that augurs for the prosperity of the colony.

The image of England “reaching one hand towards the future of the globe” also allies the colony’s futuristic orientation with its continued connection to the metropolis. Seeley understands the settler empire to be a simple extension of metropolitan territory, or, as he titles his work, an “expansion of England”: “Considered in the abstract then, colonies are neither more nor less than a great augmentation of the national estate. They

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22 Ibid., 140-1, emphasis added.
23 Butler highlights the disturbing lack of settler history when he describes a wool-shed in the colony: “It always refreshed me with a semblance of antiquity (precious in a new country), though I very well knew that the oldest wool-shed in the settlement was not more than seven years old, while this was only two.” Butler, *Erewhon*, 46.
are lands for the landless, prosperity and wealth for those in straitened circumstances.”

This conception of territorial expansion has two dramatic consequences. First, it
implicitly erases any indigenous populations from the politics of settlement because by
definition they belong in the past represented by India. Second, it promises to erase the
hierarchical distinction between metropolitan and colonial territoriality. “If Greater
Britain in the full sense of the phrase really existed,” he claims, “Canada and Australia
would be to us as Kent and Cornwall.” Seeley, in other words, anticipates the increasing
spatial homogenization of Greater Britain.

The vision of Greater Britain as homogeneous space invokes futurity in a second
sense, for it depends on new technologies to annihilate distance between England and
the settler colonies. Historian Duncan Bell argues that Seeley articulated “the most
authoritative expression of this shift in the imagination,” in advancing the claim that
the empire could remain unified in spite of the tendency towards fission imparted by
distance:

Science has given to the political organism a new circulation, which is
steam, and a new nervous system, which is electricity. These new
conditions make it necessary to reconsider the whole colonial problem.
They make it in the first place possible actually to realise the old utopia of
a Greater Britain, and at the same time they make it almost necessary to
do so.26

Seeley’s invocation of utopia suggests the suitability of that literary genre to imagine this form of political organization, partly because it is a vision of the future but also because it is essentially a territorial vision. From this global perspective, “nature” appears as a problem for empire for which technology is the solution. In particular, Seeley refers to the invention of the steamship (which first crossed the Atlantic in 1833) and the electric telegraph (which first reliably spanned the Atlantic in 1866, and reached Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa in the 1870s), which provided networks capable of transporting individuals and information at unprecedented speed around the globe. “No longer an eternally imprinted set of fetters,” Bell writes, “nature was now the subject of ‘annihilation,’ of forceful overcoming by the mind and practical works of humanity.”

The terms in which Seeley articulates Greater Britain are foregrounded and problematized in Anthony Trollope’s contemporaneous The Fixed Period, a short novel that has bewildered readers ever since its serialization in 1881-2. Set in 1980 and narrated by Jack Neverbend, the charismatic President of the fictional South Pacific colony of Britannula, the plot recounts his failed effort to impose the eugenicist policy of the “Fixed Period”—compulsory euthanasia for all who reach the age of 66—that had

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28 Ibid., 85.
been a founding tenet of the new nation. Recently, *Fixed Period* has attracted a small amount of critical interest because of its depiction of settler colonization: “Britannula is a certain type of colony. ‘Little Britain’ by name, it is also a future Britain, standing for what Britain will be like in a hundred years, or what will characterize the geographically transplanted successors to the British cultural traditions.”²⁹ The most sustained reading of the novel, by Helen Blythe, focuses on Trollope’s interest in the thematic nexus of “cannibalism, New Zealand, and the South Pacific”³⁰ in order to argue that the novel reflects greater skepticism about Britain’s imperial mission and its consequences for the cultures it has encountered than is evident in his earlier travel narrative, *Australia and New Zealand* (1873):

> When an aging Trollope came to write his novel and turned back to his earlier text for inspiration, he discovered that now he identified with people deemed of little use in England and the empire. . . . The innumerable parallels between *Australia and New Zealand* and *The Fixed Period*, and what is known of Trollope’s thoughts on his own age and work further reinforce the conclusion that by 1880, the gap had closed between Trollope and the ‘melting natives’ he had dismissed as dispensable.³¹

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As Nicholas Birns notes, though, any indigenous population is “totally absent” from the novel, reiterating the erasure characteristic of all discourse about settlement. Such an absence from a fictional colony, however, suggests that Trollope sought to focus not on the relations between indigenes and colonizers but on those between a New Zealand-like settler colony and metropolitan Britain.

It is not immediately apparent that *Fixed Period* will focus on the relationship between the colony and metropolitan Britain, because Britannula is depicted as an independent offshoot of New Zealand, itself imagined to be independent by this time. Indeed, the beginning of the novel so dwells on the excellence of the settlement that the reader is led to expect a narrative entirely contained within those national bounds:

> It may be doubted whether a brighter, more prosperous, and specially a more orderly colony than Britannula was ever settled by British colonists. . . . We were the very cream as it were that had been skimmed from the milk-pail of the people of a wider colony, themselves gifted with more than ordinary intelligence. We were the *élite* of the selected population of New Zealand. I think I may say that no race so well informed ever before set itself down to form a new nation.

If such an opening conveys the impression that this nation’s imperial origins have been relegated to the past, this expectation is not long sustained because it occurs at the moment of Britain’s forcible re-annexation of the colony. The British have been provoked by the policy of euthanasia to the point of sending a warship, the John Bright,

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armed with a “250-ton steam-swiveller” able to quell the colony into submission: “If [the captain] only touched the spring, we about the locality here would be knocked into little bits in less time than it will take you to think about it. Indeed the whole of this side of the hill would become an instantaneous ruin without the sing of a human being anywhere.” (117) Backed by this show of force, Neverbend is deposed—“I then received violent notice from the British Government that Britannula had ceased to be independent, and had again been absorbed by the mother country among the Crown Colonies” (11)—and the first act of the new governor, the flamboyantly named Sir Ferdinando Brown, is to veto the Fixed Period. What is remarkable—indeed, unprecedented—about this scenario, and yet has gone strangely unremarked by critics, is Trollope’s depiction of English gunboat diplomacy at work on a settler colony, which ought by rights belong to the imperial polity of Greater Britain.

The conceptualization and consequences are indeed to the fore in the novel because underlying its apparent independence, Britannula’s relationship with England has hitherto been characterized by the similarity of the law in the two places. This has effectively crated a homogeneous legal space akin to the extended metropolitan territory described by Seeley. “It was for us to make our own laws,” Neverbend reflects, “and we had hitherto made them in conformity with the institutions . . . of so-called civilisation” (11). The signs of that homogeneous territory, as the new governor indicates, are the racial and linguistic similarities between the two nations:
H.M. Government is under the necessity of putting an end to the constitution under which the ‘Fixed Period’ can be allowed to prevail. While you have made laws for yourselves, any laws so made must have all the force of law. . . . Great Britain cannot and will not permit the Fixed Period to be carried out among any English-speaking race of people. . . . It has therefore sent me out to assume the reins, and to undertake the power, and to bear the responsibility of being your governor during a short term of years. Who shall say what the future may disclose? For the present I shall rule here. But I shall rule by the aid of your laws. (147, emphasis added)

Brown’s excessive invocation of colonial law in the act of overthrowing the Britannulan constitution merely serves to emphasize the arbitrariness with which it can be applied in light of the military force that has authorized such a speech. Yet that military force was not applied arbitrarily, but specifically in service of reestablishing British law.

Something about the Fixed Period had so ruptured the enduring similarities between the two nations that the naval force that ostensibly demarcates the borders of Greater Britain had instead to be directed at one of its component parts.

The question remains as to why the Fixed Period should precipitate such a geopolitical crisis, and what Trollope uses it to say about the idea of Greater Britain.

There is an allegorical dimension to the Britannulan policy of compulsory euthanasia, for the colonial proposal to kill off the aged invokes Seeley’s temporal distinction between Britain and its colonies, where “everything is brand new.” This distinction is underscored by the observation of the fanatical Neverbend, who casts Britain as a place of static tradition that, like Seeley’s India, is “all past and . . . almost . . . no future.” Hence his dismay when he realizes that the English cricket team will be visiting during
the growing constitutional crisis: “But perhaps the worst feature of it all was the arrival just now at Gladstonopolis of a crowd of educated Englishmen. When I say educated I mean prejudiced. They would be Englishmen with no ideas beyond those current in the last century, and would be altogether deaf to the wisdom of the ‘Fixed Period’” (58).

What Trollope’s dystopia lays bare, in other words, is the disjunction between conceiving of Greater Britain as spatially homogeneous and temporally stratified. The emergence of colonial legal innovations that threaten the centrality of British law to Greater Britain provokes a demonstration of its continued naval power. That naval power, produced as if by reflex, serves in the novel to demonstrate what is only implicit in Expansion of England: that the internal and external “tranquillity” of Greater Britain are equally products of Britain’s status as the world’s sole superpower.

4.2.2. Anno Domini 2000 and the Ends of Greater Britain

In the last two decades of the century, the concept of Greater Britain was outlined in greatest detail by the advocates of a unified imperial defense strategy, most notably J. C. R. Colomb and C. W. Dilke.34 Colomb had first proposed an imperial defense strategy in his pamphlet The Protection of our Commerce and Distribution of our

Naval Forces (1867), in which he established the fundamental strategic tenets of the movement, namely, that Britain’s global preeminence depended on the uninterrupted flow of commerce within the empire, and that the navy was the primary guarantor of imperial trade. Such an analysis, as naval historian Donald Schurman describes, required Colomb to adopt a Higgs-like level of abstraction towards the subject: “He wanted to know what Great Britain’s special position was and how she should adapt her forces to maintain the position. The answers he produced provided a whole theory of defence that lifted the subject out of the small arena of technical debate and small island panic, and set it on a peak that surveyed the world.”35 It was only in the last quarter of the century, however, that the idea of a global naval strategy became yoked to the idea of Greater Britain. Peter Burroughs argues that debates about imperial defense in the last quarter of the nineteenth century became increasingly bifurcated, with discussions about the army centering on the strategic importance of India while the importance of the navy largely lay in manufacturing links with the settler colonies. Accordingly, the naval-based strategic thinking, initiated by Colomb and filtered through Seeley, notably privileges the latter colonies:

It must be remarked that with certain exceptions—prominently that of India—the frontiers of our Empire are practically sea frontiers. As a rule, the protection of our sea commerce is virtually the protection of our

territories. Trade is territorial in its source and origin, though maritime in
its main operations of exchange.\textsuperscript{36}
Colomb and Dilke’s writings on imperial naval defense portray the empire not primarily
in terms of discrete territorial holdings or subject populations (a stance associated
primarily with India and with standing armies) but as a dynamic network of maritime
trade routes.

The advocates of imperial naval strategy prioritized free trade, both because they
saw it providing the economic lynchpin of the empire and because the idea of the
unfettered movement of capital, people and goods provided them with the fundamental
metaphor by which they imagined the empire and their strategy. “The command of the
sea,” Colomb states, “is nothing more or less than the command of the Imperial roads,
the securing of the first lines of colonial defences.”\textsuperscript{37} This conceptual shift deemphasized
specific localities (the domain of the army, centered on fixed bases) in favor of constant
maritime circulation between those localities. Dilke goes so far as to argue for a
delocalized understanding of imperial sovereignty:

The ocean is, in fact, a British possession, not indeed a British property
conveyed and settled by treaties or title deeds, but English in the sense
that Englishmen incomparably more than any others use it and occupy it.
. . . The British Empire, in short, is the possession of the sea. . . . This British
ocean life needs only a nucleus to swiftly form a settlement, a colony, or
even an empire.\textsuperscript{38}

\textsuperscript{36} Colomb, \textit{Imperial Federation}, 6-7.
\textsuperscript{37} Colomb, \textit{Great and Greater Brittain}, 74.
\textsuperscript{38} Dilke and Wilkinson, \textit{Imperial Defence}, 41-2, emphasis added.
This refiguring of imperial sovereignty in this manner does not negate the importance of imperial territory, but resituates the importance of that territory in two ways that build upon Seeley’s vision of Greater Britain. First, focusing on “British ocean life” extends the principle of homogenization that renders the diverse spaces of the empire of equal importance. Second, and more significantly, it emphasizes that the value of these spaces arises from their relation to each other. In other words, the territorial primacy of the metropolis is indeed negated by imperial defence strategy, but only—in imitation of Trollope—insofar as all territory must now be effectively regarded as metropolitan and therefore equally worth defending.

Paradoxically, therefore, the gesture of extending the privilege of metropolitan territoriality across the empire actually privileges the Australasian settler colonies as being, in a sense, constitutive of that territory. This reversal is symbolized in Colomb’s map of imperial communications, which pictures New Zealand twice, representing the outer limits of the empire yet also peculiarly privileged within it (see figure 3).
Furthermore, as Dilke argues, because Britain can no longer supply its own needs it is in fact as dependent on those trade links as the furthest colonies: “The abandonment of Greater Britain would involve the destruction of our commerce and would be as severe a blow to the Empire as the invasion of England and capture of London itself.”

Likewise Colomb, in making the case for establishing an Australasian naval dockyard, emphasizes the strategic centrality of the Pacific Ocean: “Though Australia and New Zealand are first and chiefly concerned, it is not merely a colonial want. Every portion of the

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30 Colomb, *Great and Greater Britain.*
31 Dilke, *Problems of Greater Britain,* 653.
our Empire has an interest in that ocean, and therefore such a dockyard is a great Imperial requirement.\textsuperscript{41} The extreme distance of Australasia from Britain in itself provided a particularly important staging ground for the theorization of Greater Britain as a naval network of imperial defense. The vision of the free flow of commerce and capital rests on the assumption that Britain remains an unassailable superpower, able to function as the world’s policeman. Dilke best expresses the necessity for overwhelming military superiority, implicit in the concept of the “command of the sea,” that lies at the heart of Greater Britain:

The command of the sea, then, means the possession of an invincible fleet which has gained so decisive a victory, or series of victories, as to render hopeless any renewal of the struggle against it. The territories of the Power having the command of the sea are virtually safe against attack by the sea, and the territories of a Power which possesses any fighting fleet at all are unlikely to be attacked until its fleet has been defeated or destroyed.\textsuperscript{42} Such an “invincible fleet” can ring-fence the trade routes and colonial spaces of the empire, establishing a mobile border patrol along the edges of the empire’s homogeneous space.

Julius Vogel’s futuristic utopia \textit{Anno Domini 2000} is one of the most sustained fictional engagements with the imperial imaginary of Greater Britain. It is also one of the

\textsuperscript{41} Colomb, \textit{Great and Greater Britain}, 137-8.
\textsuperscript{42} Dilke and Wilkinson, \textit{Imperial Defence}, 48.
most ridiculous. Vogel had twice been Premier of New Zealand, and had gained notoriety in England for his enormous borrowings on the London market to pay for New Zealand’s public works and his imperial ambitions for New Zealand in the South Pacific. He wrote the novel in London at the end of his political career, while serving as New Zealand’s Agent-General, but despite his fame sales of the novel proved disappointing. Although published in London, Anno Domini has not garnered any specific attention within Victorian studies beyond being subsumed within more general acknowledgments of the late century flourishing of utopian literature triggered by Edward Bellamy’s Looking Backward (1888). As with Erewhon, it has been of sporadic interest to science fiction studies, but most attention has been paid to it by New Zealand literary critics. Read as a late Victorian fictional engagement with the ideology of

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43 By contrast, Niall Ferguson argues that the “idea of Greater Britain is nowhere more appealingly expressed” than in the novels of John Buchan. Ferguson, Empire, 208.
44 “The publisher, Hutchinson and Company, sent him a £50 advance in November 1888. This was all he received. Despite the publication of a colonial edition and a cheap edition, and a ‘very exceptional push’ by the publishers, the book was ‘a big failure’. By September 1890 there were still large numbers ‘in the hands of the trade both in this country & in Australia, Tasmania & New Zealand’. In 1892 the publishers pronounced it ‘absolutely dead’ and offered to sell Vogel the remaining stock.” Raewyn Dalziel, Julius Vogel: Business Politician (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1986), 304.
45 Virtually the sole sustained discussion of the novel thus far has arisen within this context, namely, Dominic Alessio, “Gender, ‘Race’ and Proto-Nationalism in Julius Vogel’s Anno Domini 2000; or, Woman’s Destiny (1889),” Foundation 91 (2004). Alessio helpfully emphasizes the capitalist structure of the utopia and its conflicted representation of gender, as well as discussing its attitude to nation and empire. See also Peter Brigg, “Sir Julius Vogel’s Anno Domini 2000; or Woman’s Destiny: On Mispredicting the Future,” Extrapolation 42, no. 4 (2001). For the novel’s place within New Zealand literature, see Patrick Evans, The Penguin History of New Zealand Literature (Auckland: Penguin, 1990); Roger Robinson, “Introduction,” in Anno Domini 2000; or, Woman’s Destiny, ed. Roger Robinson (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2002). Evans describes Anno Domini as a “mad utopian fantasy” (21), whereas Robinson argues that Vogel is “a utopian prophet of rare percipience” (15).
Greater Britain, however, *Anno Domini* is represents an attempt to blur the distinctions between Britain and Australasia, as well as providing an unintended critique of that ideology.

On the surface, *Anno Domini* appears to be little more than a lightly fictionalized articulation of the theory of Greater Britain. Set in the year 2000, the United British Empire (Vogel borrows the term from J. A. Froude) is a monolithic structure within the novel, and while Vogel describes its economic and political structures, he neither subjects them to critical examination or invests them with emotional depth: “Great Britain . . . has long ceased to be a bundle of sticks. The British dominions have been consolidated into the empire of United Britain; and not only is it the most powerful empire on the globe, but at present no sign is shown of any tendency to weakness or decay.”46 This portrayal of an impermeable empire highlights two important points about Vogel’s adaptation of Greater Britain. On the one hand, as shall be seen, it marks a transition from the futuristic utopia to the invasion novel, and by making the militarized state of Greater Britain so visible it denaturalizes that political formation. On the other hand, the unassailable military apparatus depicted as necessary to the success of this global utopian state stands in such marked contrast to the contemporary decline in Britain’s world power that its implausibility highlights the untenability of the theory of

Greater Britain in a manner that the more sober tones of its non-fiction counterparts would otherwise disavow.

The central chapter of *Anno Domini* is devoted to a futuristic technology that is itself central to the novel’s representation of delocalized imperial space. Entitled “Air-Cruisers,” it describes the invention of a means of air transport that not only revolutionized travel but also tipped the balance of world power decisively in Britain’s favor:

The inventor did not patent her invention. After making an enormous fortune from it, she sold it to the Government, who took over the manufactory and its secrets; and whilst they sold it in quantity for ordinary use, they jealously guarded against its accumulation in foreign countries for possible warlike purposes. This invention, as much almost as its vast naval and military forces, gave to the empire of Britain the great power it possessed. (114-5)

Vogel distinguishes this technology from the empire’s “vast naval and military forces” because its central achievement is the “annihilation of distance” that makes Greater Britain a reality. Moreover, the air-cruiser enables the extension of metropolitan space onto the settler colony, by literally setting the metropolis in motion: “It is difficult to say which is the seat of government, as the Federal Parliament is held in different parts of the world, and the Emperor resides in many places. With the utmost comfort he can go from end to end of his dominions in twelve days” (39). The narrative itself is similarly mobile, recounting events in multiple parts of the world. Part of the novel’s current
illegibility to criticism arises from this delocalized narrative, which resists being defined by a single national literary tradition.

While technology shrinks Vogel’s empire, as in *Erewhon* it is capitalism that homogenizes its territory and marks its borders. The politicians who people the novel spend a great deal of effort to ensure that the empire’s capital remains within its boundaries: “Foreign loans . . . were mischievous in more than one respect. They armed foreign nations, necessitating greater expense to the British Empire in consequence. They also created hybrid subjects of the Empire, with sympathies divided between their own country and foreign countries” (139). Nevertheless, within the homogenized space of Greater Britain, Vogel preserves Seeley’s temporal privileging of the settler colony as a realm of futurity by representing it as the acme of wealth generation and thus as the agent of positive political change within the empire. Most dramatically, *Anno Domini* relates that Greater Britain came into being as a political union as a result of a colonial intervention to solve the Irish problem:

> By this time the Canadian, Australasian, and Cape colonies had become rich, populous, and powerful. United, they far exceeded in importance the original mother-country. . . . In consequence of the deliberations that ensued [at an inter-colonial conference], a united representation was made to the Prime Minister of England to the effect that the Colonies could no longer regard without concern the prolonged disquiet prevailing in Ireland. . . . Ireland received the boon it had long claimed of local government, and the whole Empire was federated on the condition that every part of it should fight to the last to preserve the union. (38-9)
The homogenizing, modernizing power of capital is most clearly manifested, however, in the representation of colonial territory. The land is always seen in the novel as if from the aerial perspective of the air-cruiser, so that the typical colonial narrative of the transformation of these places from “waste” land to bountiful productivity is only represented in the broadest generalities. Australia’s Malee Scrub Plains, for example, “were once about as desolate and unromantic a locality as could be found; but a Canadian firm, Messrs. Chaffey Brothers, had undertaken to turn the wilderness into a garden by irrigation, and they had entirely succeeded.” (105) Likewise, in New Zealand, where the Buller family “had acquired immense wealth by turning to profitable use large areas of pumice-stone land previously supposed to be useless” (116), Vogel goes into some detail describing the financial details and technological innovations that led to this transformation but leaves the landscape itself entirely unrepresented:

Professor Buller first had numerous artesian wells bored, and obtained at regular distances an ample supply of water over a quarter of a million of acres of pumice land, which she purchased for two shillings an acre. . . . Once vegetation commenced, there was no difficulty. . . . Vast fruit-canning works were established; and a special effervescent wine known as Bullerite was produced, and was held in higher estimation than the best champagne. Whilst more exhilarating, it was less intoxicating. (116-7) The featurelessness of the Malee Plains and the “pumice-stone lands” reflects the enormous scale at which they are portrayed and the lens of economic productivity through which they are viewed. Interested primarily in its profitability, and driven by
the apparently unstoppable process of colonial growth, Vogel abstracts both
distinguishing features and the need for any human presence from the landscape.

In his enthusiasm for the potential inherent in the vision of Greater Britain, Vogel
inadvertently highlights the nature of its limitations at the fin de siècle. He makes
explicit that the United British Empire rests on its status as the sole world superpower,
and that the apparent openness of its role as guarantor of peace and free trade is based
upon an intense suspicion of what lies outside its borders. We are told early in the novel
that imperial federation was at heart a military pact among its partners:

All parts of the Empire joined their strength and resources. A federal fleet
was formed on the basis that it was to equal in power in every respect the
united fleets of all the rest of the world. . . . Two other empires and one
republic alone approach it in power, and a cordial understanding exists
between them to repress war to the utmost extent possible. They
constitute the police of the world. (39)

Dilke and Wilkinson similarly argued that the Pax Britannica depended upon the
empire’s willingness to use force: “[T]he Queen’s peace now rests, upon the credit
produces by the existence of an infinite stock of violence. . . . [O]rder in the largest
sense—the practical enjoyment of rights—is rendered possible by a perpetual threat to
restrain by violence those who would disturb it.”47 The stasis of “order” that defines the
beginning of the novel is dramatically disrupted at its conclusion, however, by a United
States incursion into Canada. The Emperor resolves, “This shall be a bitter lesson to the

47 Dilke and Wilkinson, Imperial Defence, 17.
Yankees. . . . [T]hey shall learn there is a limit to their power, and that they are weak as water compared with the parent country they abandoned” (145). Accordingly, the massed imperial forces invade the United States, humiliate it by capturing the President, and the New England states eventually agree by plebiscite to join the Dominion of Canada. This overwhelming triumph of military superiority—the emperor’s “gigantic revenge” (146)—is both fundamental to Greater Britain, and in striking contrast to Britain’s late-century decline from such a position of dominance. Its sheer implausibility only serves to highlight the achilles heel of the Greater Britain ideology, namely, its complete dependence on being the sole and unchallengeable world superpower.

4.3. Lesser Britain: The Imperial Outpost

4.3.1. Imperial Threats to Imperial Identity on the Settler Periphery

Thus, Anno Domini marks something of an impasse in a late Victorian imperial imaginary constituted around the idea of its unchallenged might. Although Britain remained the world’s most powerful nation well into the twentieth century, the rapid rise of Germany and the United States necessitated the ability to imagine the security of imperial territory in different terms. Such a need had already come into focus in

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48 “In the mid-nineteenth century all the other navies of the world put together were hardly larger than the British navy alone. By the end of the century this was no longer so.” E.J. Hobsbawm, The Age of Empire, 1875-1914 (New York: Vintage, 1989), 315.
Australasia over the preceding few decades, where a sense of affiliation to the empire balanced by a sense of isolation from it and a consequent vulnerability to invasion gave rise to a model of spatiality I have termed the imperial outpost. Put in light of the possibilities explored in *Erewhon*, the imperial outpost represents an elaboration of the isolated, low-technology space of Erewhon. Rather than being associated with a single school of thought, this fear of invasion or inundation emerged through the coincidence of a variety of Australasian concerns over importation, immigration and invasion, concerns that draw attention to the smallness, vulnerability and isolation of the settler colony. In response to these concerns, the imperial outpost makes a virtue out of necessity by locating a positive sense of settler identity in an immediate, low technology and localized relationship to territory. This was, moreover, a defensive conception that was increasingly framed in national terms, and found expression in the economic language of tariff controls and the definition of population by immigration restrictions. The imperial outpost is therefore a nativist, indigenizing version of settler identity, and I shall argue that it could only arise in Australasia because it was appropriated from the representation of New Zealand’s Maori population after the end of the colonial wars against them.

In *Greater Britain* (1868), Dilke had observed stirrings in Australia towards the tariff protection of colonial goods and manufactures. Despite his commitment to free
trade, he nevertheless admired the financial sacrifices that settlers were willing to make.

He regarded their stance as an attempt to establish a local culture:

In short, the tendency . . . of Free Trade, in the early stages of a country’s existence, is to promote universal centralization, to destroy local centres and the commerce they create, to so tax the farmer with the cost of transport to distant markets, that he must grow wheat and corn continuously, and cannot but exhaust his soil. With markets so distant, the richest forest lands are not worth clearing, and settlement sweeps over the country, occupying the poorer lands, and then abandoning them once more. *Protection in the colonies . . . is to a great degree a revolt against steam*. Steam is making the world all one.

Dilke’s observations are particularly striking because the concepts he invokes are diametrically opposite to those of Greater Britain. Privileging the local, counteracting rapid expansion across the land, and resisting a globalized economy: all run counter to the homogenization of imperial territory ascribed to free trade and technology. By the turn of the century, Richard Jebb was able to conclude in *Studies in Colonial Nationalism* (1905) that tariff policies had contributed to the growth of nationalist sentiment in the settler colonies: “In the self-governing colonies . . . fiscal policy has been influenced by political considerations as well as by economic theory. The utility of an embracing and protective tariff, as a means of creating national sentiment and political unity, has been recognised in Canada and Australia no less than in Germany or Italy.” In other words, the establishment of tariff barriers helped create more independent and self-sufficient

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49 Dilke, *Greater Britain*, II.64, emphasis added.
settler communities whose horizon was more closely restricted to the borders of the colony.

Although tariffs were aimed at fending off other parts of the imperial economy as much as foreign goods, immigration policy performed an analogous function of territorial demarcation that was more explicitly structured around extra-imperial racial difference. In the case of Australia, for example, David Walker argues that settlers increasingly came to see their own presence on the continent threatened by the growing power of Asia during the second half of the nineteenth century: “As ‘rising tide’ or ‘flood’ the East threatened to overwhelm boundaries and destroy distinctions. Entire peoples and nations might be submerged. This was a vision of drowned cities, lost kingdoms and defeated races tossed aside by forces too powerful to resist. This was the fear of racial annihilation.”51 Such concerns also animate the concluding chapter of William Pember Reeves’ _State Experiments in Australia and New Zealand_ (1902), a catalog of colonial progressiveness by a New Zealand poet and politician who would later become Director of the London School of Economics. Attempting to explain and justify Australasia’s immigration policies, Reeves invokes the threat of inundation in describing the various legislative measures aimed at excluding Asian immigrants:

They come of their own accord only too readily; the difficulty is to keep them out. For steam has brought Australia within a few weeks’ voyage from the swarming hives of Southern and Eastern Asia, within easy reach of races which, though without the ability to discover the Far South for themselves, or build a civilisation there, are prepared in multitudes to use the discoveries of the white man and build on the foundations laid by his pioneers.52

As was the case with Dilke’s discussion of tariffs, Reeves’ racist analysis posits that steam transportation threatens the settler colony by weakening its nascent sense of local (white) identity. In these examples, the technological “annihilation of distance” works counter to the effects envisaged by the theorists of Greater Britain, paradoxically bringing potential invaders closer even as Britain now seems further away.

Thus a combination of external economic and social pressures combined as the century progressed to inform a more localized sense of spatiality on the Australasian imperial periphery. Rather than investing hope in the expansion of metropolitan territoriality through the technological compression of distance, settlers began to articulate a nativizing ethos that associated the (male) settler with the figure of the guerrilla fighter. The strength of that figure derives from his improvisatory ability to know and master a localized terrain, and Australasian settlers appropriated this model from the anti-colonial resistance of the New Zealand Maori. Historian of guerrilla warfare Walter Laqueur observes that, of Great Britain’s many “small wars” in the

52 William Pember Reeves, State Experiments in Australia & New Zealand, 2 vols. (London: Grant Richards, 1902), II.328, emphasis added.
nineteenth century, “The Maori wars in the north of New Zealand went on for twelve years from 1860 to 1872 and, more perhaps than any other, bore the characteristics of a guerrilla war.” In his revisionist history of the New Zealand Wars, James Belich posits that the stereotype of the Maori as being closer to nature informed the representation of their resistance as a guerrilla campaign, and was overly emphasized by European commentators in order to explain the unexpected degree of Maori success: “The emphasis on ‘natural advantages’ not only provided false but acceptable explanations of defeat, but also helped to create a false picture of the wars as guerilla conflicts where the problem was not beating the enemy but finding him.” Both accounts do, however, concur that the Maori were commonly portrayed in the nineteenth century as guerrilla fighters, and I shall suggest why that portrayal proved particularly suited to being appropriated by Australasian writers for the purpose of depicting settler identity.

For a variety of reasons, Maori were given more respect by Victorians than many other ‘primitive’ peoples that their empire had colonized. As a result, while negative qualities, such as savagery and cannibalism were foregrounded by colonists during the

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55 Australian Aborigines were consistently placed at the bottom of the evolutionary ladder because of what were presumed to be their nomadic, “stone age” ways (see chapter 1), while the New Zealand Maori were regarded more highly because of their aristocratic social structure, more settled habitations, and “warlike” propensities (see chapter 4).
wars, the cessation of conflict in New Zealand in 1870 was followed by their reconfiguration of the Maori resistance into a form of patriotism, a futile but noble defense of the land of their forefathers. Belich argues that the tendency to ascribe qualities such as courage and chivalry to the Maori “increased greatly soon after then, growing almost to the point where it subsumed all else. Through histories, novels, poems, school texts, painting, and film it perpetuated the notion of the wars as a limited fight with gloves on, a breeding-ground of mutual respect.” Such representations served to create a settler myth of racial harmony, and to establish the settler population as successors to the Maori patriotic mantle. As settlers became increasingly fearful of invasion, the positive representation of the Maori resistance provided the armature that allowed them to regard themselves as akin to an indigenous population threatened with invasion and to imagine a successful defense of the colony arising from their local territorial knowledge.

4.3.2. The Indigenous Australasian Settler

The indigene-like guerrilla settler came to prominence in New Zealand as a result of the invasion scares of the 1890s, and was first fully articulated in a short pamphlet, *New Zealand in the Next Great War* (1894), published in Nelson, New Zealand.

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56 Belich, *Victorian Interpretation*, 319.
by A. A. Grace. The pamphlet imagines the dystopian scenario of the empire at war with a Franco-Russian alliance, where a French attack on England ties up the British navy and leaves the settler colonies vulnerable to the depredations of Russia. This situation, claims Grace, requires that New Zealand be thought of as an imperial outpost, and raises the question of how it might possibly be defended against an overwhelming imperial force:

It is perfectly plain . . . that our Empire would be harassed at its weakest points. Those points are, as it was with the Roman Empire, her Colonies. Though we New Zealanders hold dear the prosperity and safety of our sister colonies . . . yet it is but natural that we should consider our own position to be of the first importance. . . . I shall therefore proceed to speak of the defence of this Colony against attack . . . considering Great Britain—the dear Mother of us all—safe, beyond all doubt.

The scenario of an attack on the empire by an alliance of great powers was first raised by imperial defense advocates such as Dilke and Colomb, but Grace deviates from the rhetoric of Greater Britain because of the expectation that the British navy will be of no use in such a situation. Assuming that Australasia’s sole naval defense will come from the imperial fleet permanently stationed there, he uses simple arithmetic to demolish the viability of the superpower doctrine for defending the periphery: “This fleet consists of one ironclad and eleven cruisers, whose duty it is to protect the coasts of New Zealand

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57 Grace is now best known for several collections of short stories that depict the Maori as a “dying race.” See Stafford and Williams, Maoriland, 110-33.
58 A. A. Grace, New Zealand in the Next Great War: A Note of Warning by Artemidorus (Nelson: Alfred G. Betts, 1894), 14, original emphasis. Further quotations will be cited parenthetically in the text.
and Australia, some nine or ten thousand miles of coast-line in all. We should therefore have something like one and a half to defend the whole of New Zealand . . . supposing the fleet to have been divided” (14-15). The problem arises, therefore, that the settler population is simply too small to defend the territory that it claims to possess with the orthodox imperial mechanisms of armies and navies as they currently exist.

Having dispelled the aura of imperial invulnerability, Grace invests a remarkable amount of imaginative energy in envisaging the Russian invasion of New Zealand. In particular, he inflicts the hypothetical Russian invaders with savage characteristics associated with what Reeves termed the “swarming hives of Southern and Eastern Asia.” Having foregrounded the threat of violence against the women of the colony in the prefatory matter— “We owe it to the women of our country to be able to protect them from ill-treatment at the hands of invaders” (i)—he continues the theme when, without any apparent irony, he observes, “After a calm and collected consideration of the Russian character, I am distinctly dubious of the likelihood of her soldiers and sailors waging a war of invasion in a humane manner. ‘Scratch the Russian and you find the Tartar’ is a common saying—and the Tartar is cruel” (18). Grace’s “calm and collected” vision is of the invading force as a savage horde descending upon a defenseless pastoral landscape:

I would picture an armed force landing at Picton or Tasman Bay, and I would ask what resistance could the inhabitants . . . give to prevent the invaders gaining a foothold? . . . Nelson and Blenheim would become a
prey and would, no doubt, be pillaged, and the inhabitants would be forced to take to the hills for protection. . . . And I fear that no force that we possess would be able to prevent them from extending their conquests southwards. In other words, we could not call the property, which we have acquired with so much labour, the land, which we have changed from a wilderness to fertile fields, our own, but would have the chagrin of seeing men of a foreign nation possessed of what we so value. (21-22)

In this vision the settlers are cast in the light of an indigenous population faced with “seeing men of a foreign nation possessed of what we so value.” Their identity is directly associated with the land and they have no place else to go.

Grace’s response is not, however, to imagine a Vogel-like fantasy of imperial technology negating these problems through the annihilation of distance and the massing of military power. Instead, it deliberately abandons that dream and proposes in its place a more localized relationship to colonial territory personified by the guerrilla fighter. In a gesture that affiliates the settler with Butler’s pseudo-indigenous Erewhonians, Grace explicitly derives this strategy from the Maori resistance in New Zealand’s own colonial wars: “New Zealand is an easy land to defend on account of the numberless natural defences it possesses. We have the recollection of our struggles with the Maoris to remind us of the fact” (22-23). This fleeting observation provides him with the impetus to propose mobilizing of the entire male population to maximize the strategic value of knowing the colony’s terrain:

There are in New Zealand some 100,000 men, physically developed and strong, capable of bearing arms. . . . I believe that with such a force of armed men, roughly drilled and trained though they might be, our lives
and those of our wives and children, together with the bulk of our property, would be safe so long as we chose to fight. I feel convinced that such a force of armed guerillas would so harass a force that might have gained a landing on these shores . . . that . . . we might gradually reduce the numbers of the enemy to zero. (23)

Faced with an imperial threat, the settlers do not become Maori but they certainly become like them. Grace relegates the Maori population to the past and in its place proposes an indigenized settler population whose strength is its ability to know and inhabit the local.

The indigenizing logic of the imperial outpost outlined by Grace had a broader Australasian appeal. Its traction in Australia thought is most clearly evident in Kenneth Mackay’s invasion scare novel, *The Yellow Wave: A Romance of the Asiatic Invasion of Australia* (1895), published the year he was elected to New South Wales’ house of representatives as a Protectionist.59 The novel is set in 1954, and its plot is reminiscent of *New Zealand in the Next Great War*, for it concerns the dystopian scenario of an alliance between Russia and China against the British empire. In this case, a Russian invasion of India gives the Russian-led Chinese free reign to descend upon the colony of Queensland. With the Australian colonies unable for constitutional reasons to cooperate for the purpose of mutual defense, the invading forces, led by the traitorous Australian soldier General Leroy, are able to sweep rapidly through Queensland. The invaders are

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represented in virulently racist terms, with the “yellow wave” of the book’s title referring to the horde of “Mongol” soldiers that descends on Australia and engages in an orgy of rape and pillage. The Australian hero, bushman Dick Hatten, observes such a scene of carnage during the fall of the town of Hughenden:

For a moment his eyes took in the whole fearful scene: the screaming women pushed back by frantic men only to fall on the bloody bayonets of their foes; the children tossed from point to point in wanton devilry. Then his ears caught the shriek of the whistle and the fearful cries of those who were being ground to death between the wheels and the bloody pavement, and over all rang the yells of the Mongols as they thrust their bayonets into the passing trucks, and dragged back struggling women by their hair from the still open doors.\(^{60}\)

Following the collapse of the unprepared and neglected Queensland defense forces, an emergent resistance to the invaders begins to coalesce around Hatten, but the narrative breaks off as the seemingly unstoppable invading army prepares to march on Brisbane.

Like Grace, Mackay emphasizes that the vast size of the land and the relative paucity of the isolated settler population have made Australia acutely vulnerable to invasion. While en route with the invasion fleet, General Leroy reflects that “in its [Australia’s] colossal limits lay its impotency, and that once the barriers were forced, numberless thousands were ready to rush in through the opened breach” (165). Building upon the pro-tariff and anti-immigration sentiment described above, the novel casts this

\(^{60}\) Kenneth Mackay, *The Yellow Wave: A Romance of the Asiatic Invasion of Australia*, ed. Andrew Enstice and Janeen Webb (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2003), 201. Further quotations will be cited parenthetically in the text.
vulnerability as having been exacerbated by the annihilation of distance worked by steam, for it has brought a flood of foreign capital and labor into Australia. Queensland in particular has been depopulated of its white settlers by the combined intrusion of Russian capital and cheap Asian labor, lured there by a misguided government policy aimed at expanding the colony’s infrastructure. The ensuing public works, constructed in exchange for land grants, in fact provide a beachhead for the invasion:

On the map [of Queensland] the three great areas divided by watersheds were carefully traced, as also every railway line, road and town; positions also of artesian bores and distances between stages were all ticked off. ‘The lines marked red are those which I have constructed,’ remarked [the mastermind of the invasion] Zenski; ‘but all these are practically in our hands. . . . The whole country is practically held by land-grant railway syndicates and Melbourne and London corporations: all the properties worth mentioning are worked on the tributary system by means of cheap alien labour. The white population, never numerous, has, with the exception of a few poor whites, vanished.’ (80-1)

Fittingly, the invasion has been enabled by transnational corporations and it proceeds by appropriating the technologies—railways and telegraphs—that have enabled the annihilation of distance and the homogenization of imperial territory. Indeed, it is as if such technologies are the sole domain of imperial powers, and the isolated colony must instead depend on more “primitive” means of defense.

The nature of that new defense strategy is outlined through two particularly telling analogies with colonized indigenous populations. The first, and more negative comparison, arises in the context of Leroy’s expectation that the settlers inhabiting the countryside around Charleville will provide only limited resistance:
At present they were no more fit to face Leroy’s machine-guns and automatic weapons than were the gallant Matabeles who fell fighting for their country before the Maxims of the English invaders, who differed only from the Mongols in that they cloaked their designs and justified their actions under the twin catch words of English hypocrisy, ‘God and free trade.’ (213)

The anti-imperial rhetoric, filtered through the context of Africa, allows Mackay to establish the Australian settlers as an indigenous resistance to imperialism while evading the question of Aboriginal dispossession closer to home.

The second comparison also builds upon the image of the patriotic indigenous fighter, but functions more positively by raising the possibility of an effective strategy of low-technology resistance derived from knowledge of the land. With the governments of the Australian colonies disunited and in disarray, Dick Hatten joins a group of similar minded settlers who have formed a communal settlement by the name of Fort Mallarraway:

Before him rose a line of iron-bark and box logs, set after the fashion of a Maori pah, and as he rode up under them, he noticed that the outer line stood between two trenches, and that the stakes, while loose at the bottom, were securely bound together by chains along the top. Higher up, concrete cottages afforded excellent cover for riflemen. ‘It’s ingenious,’ [he] mused . . . admiringly. ‘This palisade, while letting [rifle] balls through without injury to self, should stop any rush if well defended.’ (144)

The most remarkable aspect of this passage is the comparison of the fort to a Maori pa, or defensive fortification. While Andrew Enstice and Janeen Webb disparage the old-fashioned nature of Mackay’s speculations about future warfare as “less than adventurous,” citing the fact that “both sides rely on horses for transport, using cavalry
extensively,” David Walker identifies a deeper symbolic logic in the valorization of such an anachronistic defensive structure: “It is not that Mackay failed to anticipate that a box log fortification was unlikely to be state of the art defence in 1954, but rather that his purpose was to depict a stout guerrilla action mounted by a troop of race patriots true to their bush inheritance.”61 The allusion is, however, not a general appeal to the Australian “bush inheritance” but a specific reference to a Maori pa.62 This trans-Tasman borrowing of markers of indigeneity underlines that the extent to which imagining a low-technology resistance to invasion depends upon a nativist identification with the landscape.

Indeed, Hatten and his comrades are repeatedly described as guerrilla fighters. The President of Fort Mallaraway, upon meeting him, “saw in him the beau-ideal of a guerilla leader” (147). Hatten had earlier been commissioned by a sympathetic member of the Queensland government to take charge of the Northern Mounted Infantry, later nicknamed the “Ringers,” which had fallen on hard times. Faced with a shortage of weapons—“there was not a spare sword in the colony” (186) and they must be ordered from England—he strikes on a method for improvising lances out of common objects:

62 Lydia Wevers has discussed an analogous example, the popularity of New Zealand’s colonial wars as a subject for Australian novelists during the 1890s. She argues that these authors “use the New Zealand Wars to project a narrative of legitimate possession, of successful colonisation” to compensate for a lack of similar historical grounding for Australian settlers. Wevers, “Becoming Native,” 327.
There are cases of old shears in the stores at Hughenden, and odd packets lying about most of the stations. Now that the machines have taken their place, the store-keepers will, I dare say, let us have them for the asking. Let each man get a pair, break off one blade, and level down the shoulder so that it will offer no resistance when being withdrawn, then sharpen the back and rivet the handle on to a strong, light shaft of wood, and he will have an Australian lance, not as well finished, certainly, as an English one, but quite as reliable as most of them. (186-7, emphasis added)

Hatten’s Ringers are remarkably enthusiastic—“Struck by the originality of the idea, the men took it up on the spot”—considering that they are being told to fight the Mongols’ machine guns with scissors bolted onto broom handles. What is most telling about Hatten’s strategy, and the positive reception it is given in the novel, is its avowedly archaic quality—the shears are surplus because “machines have taken their place”—that informs and guarantees its local value as a specifically “Australian” weapon. The later description of a minor character as “one of those self-reliant, dare-devil guerilla leaders of which the Australian Bushman is the ideal prototype” (266) only emphasizes Mackay’s intensely narrow focus on the available resources of the colony.

What hope there is for the settlers is ultimately, and emphatically, located by Mackay in the resources that lie immediately to hand: “As to the future, Dick realized that everything depended on the rallying powers of his countrymen. Not only armies, but also arms and ammunition, must now be evolved from local resources, if the enemy were to be seriously resisted” (289). Indeed, the importance of local knowledge within the imperial outpost imaginary is evident in the map of Queensland included at the beginning of the novel when it was originally published (see figure 3).
Figure 4: "Map of Queensland."[63]

The map, strongly reminiscent of the detailed part of the map of Erewhon discussed above, shows just a section of the continent and does not even bother to indicate the direction from which the invasion will come. This representation reflects the extent to which settler identity in the imperial outpost is effectively landlocked, necessitating a more direct and active knowledge of the local terrain. Hatten’s concluding thoughts after the rout of the Australian forces in battle point to the way in which the dystopian scenario of imperial invasion strengthens a utopian vision that persists at the core of the imperial outpost: “Absolute as the rout was, it had cleared away many foolish illusions, and exposed weaknesses which might now be repaired; for defeat often teaches more valuable lessons than victory” (289-290). The value of conceptualizing imperial space in this more localized, low-technology, nativist fashion was thus established in Australasia during the last decade of the century. It now remains to demonstrate to what extent and by what means it was ultimately imported to late Victorian Britain.

4.4. The Riddle of the Sands: Metropolitan Territory as Colonial Frontier

When Thomas Richards claims that The Riddle of the Sands articulates the “systematic use of low technology” in a manner which “has no parallel in previous invasion novels,” he clearly has not read The Yellow Wave, but he is nevertheless correct in making this claim about the British invasion novel. British examples of the genre had previously framed the resistance to invasion in terms of technological conflicts
reminiscent of Greater Britain. Yet to argue that the different approach taken by *The Riddle of the Sands* originates in an Australasian model of resistance is to beg the question of how this model became legible and necessary to the metropolitan writer. I argue that its dissemination throughout the empire occurred as a result of the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902). As Laqueur notes, “ Guerrilla warfare as a legitimate subject of study received a new, albeit short lease of life in Britain in the wake of the Boer War” (121).

The Boers’ unexpected success against the imperial forces was ascribed to their use of guerrilla tactics, and the prior Australasian identification with this mode of warfare allowed the British to regard those guerrilla tactics as arising from the Boers’ nativist engagement with the land. Not only did Erskine Childers serve in that conflict, but he later edited the fifth volume of the definitive *Times History* of the conflict, focused on the guerrilla aspects of the war. In his prefatory comments, Childers advances the theory that guerrilla warfare constitutes the paradigmatic example of all armed conflict:

> Although ‘regular war’ and ‘guerilla war’ are convenient terms to denote two widely different forms of military activity, it would be a profound mistake to assume that they have nothing in common. Both pursue the same end and both are governed by the same fundamental principles. . . . Moreover, it is the peculiar interest of guerilla war that it illuminates much that is obscure and difficult in regular war. Just as the Röntgen rays obliterate fleshy tissues and reveal the bony structure, so in the incidents

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64 In a moment of patriotic fervor, Childers had enlisted with the City Imperial Volunteers in late 1899, and soon after returning from South Africa published his first book, a chronicle based on his diaries, *In the Ranks of the CIV* (1900), which quickly ran to several editions. Andrew Boyle, *The Riddle of Erskine Childers* (London: Hutchinson, 1977), 87-99.
of guerilla warfare there may be seen, stripped of a mass of secondary
detail, the few dominant factors which sway the issue of great battles and
great campaigns. . . . It is in this spirit that the guerilla war should be
studied. It will be found that the qualities which made for success in it are
qualities which make for success in operations of the grandest scope.  
This statement marks a remarkable transformation of prevailing Victorian notions about
war. Rather than dismiss it as an ‘improper’ form, guerilla warfare is now “pure”
warfare, conflict reduced to its essence. Just prior to the Boer War, C. E. Callwell had
defined the “small war” as an irregular form of conflict defined by a tactical asymmetry
that reflects the difference between modernity and barbarism: “It comprises the
expeditions against savages and semi-civilized races by disciplined soldiers . . . in all
parts of the world where organized armies are struggling against opponents who will
not meet them in the open field.”  
By contrast, Childers further inverts received wisdom
by claiming that larger conflicts can best be understood as examples of guerrilla warfare.
Yet he is not arguing that future wars will be smaller in scale, but rather he is expanding
the scope of guerrilla warfare to an international level. This step is somewhat akin to
filling the form of Greater Britain with the content of the imperial outpost.

At least one other prominent British writer penned a history of the Boer War. In
contrast to Childers’ analysis of war on the frontier, Arthur Conan Doyle’s jingoistic The

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(London: Sampson, Low, Marston, 1907), xi-xii.
Great Boer War (1900) dwells on the consequences for British defense at greater length.\textsuperscript{67}

In his conclusion, Doyle argues that that the British population ought to be permanently upon a war footing:

\begin{quote}
The very first of all the military lessons of the war, as it seems to me, is that there must be no more leaving of the army entirely to the professional soldier and to the official, but that the general public must recognise that the defence of the Empire is not the business of a special warrior caste but of every able-bodied citizen. . . . With his pen, with his voice, and with his rifle, every man who has the privilege of a vote must do what he can to strengthen the fighting force of his country.\textsuperscript{68}
\end{quote}

If Childers advocated the broadening out of guerrilla warfare to the more general category of armed struggle, then Doyle argues that the example of the Boer War requires the broadening of the category of guerrilla fighter to encompass Britain’s civilian population. Yet this does not simply require the arming of the entire population, as Grace proposed with his cadre of 100,000 New Zealand men, but also entails the yoking of other civilian practices—symbolized by pen and voice—to the project of establishing society on a permanent warlike footing. Doyle proposal illustrates how the principles of the imperial outpost help contribute to the mindset of a society geared towards total war, where all the knowledge and activities of the civilian populace can potentially be pressed into the service of the war effort.

\textsuperscript{67} For more on Doyle’s engagement in the propaganda battle within Britain regarding the Boer War, see Paula M. Krebs, Gender, Race, and the Writing of Empire: Public Discourse and the Boer War (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 80-108.

\textsuperscript{68} Arthur Conan Doyle, The Great Boer War (London: Smith, Elder, 1900), 515.
The Riddle of the Sands is narrated by Carruthers, a minor functionary in the
Foreign Office, who agrees to a mysterious request from his old acquaintance, Davies, to
join him on his yacht Dulcibella on a sailing expedition around the German Frisian
Islands in the North Sea at the end of the yachting season. Davies’ request is motivated
by the conviction that the Germans are secretly fortifying the islands, although he
cannot comprehend precisely how, and he persuades Carruthers to join him on this
quest. Davies’ initial suspicions are derived from the theory of Greater Britain, for he
regards the establishment of German coastal defenses to be a precursor to an attempt to
extend its empire by increasing its naval power:

Here’s this huge empire, stretching half over central Europe—an empire
growing like wildfire, I believe, in people, and wealth, and everything. . . .
What I’m concerned with is their sea-power. . . . They’ve got no colonies
to speak of, and must have them, like us. They can’t get them and keep
them, and they can’t protect their huge commerce without naval strength.
The command of the sea is the thing nowadays, isn’t it? Davies is an excellent navigator, and his strategy is to accurately chart the treacherous
waterways around the coastal islands, reflecting his conviction that this small stretch of
sea coast is of disproportionate importance to Germany’s ambitions: “In the event of war
it seems to me that every inch of it would be important, sand and all. . . . But the trouble is
that I doubt if there’s a soul in our fleet who knows those channels” (103, original

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emphasis). His intense focus on the coastline, however, signals that the novel is scrambling the spatial protocols of Greater Britain. In fact, in its illegibility to the British sailors, the coast bears the hallmarks of the imperial outpost.

Davies even goes so far as to compare the Germans’ defensive situation to a guerrilla resistance to invasion:

Follow the parallel of a war on land. People your mountains with a daring and resourceful race, who possess an intimate knowledge of every track and bridle-path, who operate in small bands, travel light, and move rapidly. See what an immense advantage such guerillas possess over an enemy which clings to beaten tracks, moves in large bodies, slowly, and does not ‘know the country.’ . . . See, too, how the strong invader can only conquer his elusive antagonists by learning their methods, studying the country, and matching them in mobility and cunning. The parallel must not be pressed too far; but that this sort of warfare will have its counterpart on the sea is a truth which cannot be questioned. (144-5, emphasis added)

Here Childers translates the defensive spatial reckoning of the imperial outpost directly into a scenario of potential conflict between two European powers. Furthermore, the passage translates the associated guerrilla strategy from the land to the sea, a realm previously associated with the superpower theory of Greater Britain. Finally, in the need for the “strong invader” to adopt the methods of the guerrilla defenders, the defensiveness of the imperial outpost begins to be translated into a more aggressive register.

Richards argues that Davies and Carruthers’ investigations also blur the epistemological basis of the spatial theories of Victorian naval strategy. Specifically, their
attention to the coastline undermines American naval theorist Alfred Thayer Mahan’s assertion that the sea can be given structure through mapping:

As a naval geographer Mahan views land and sea as complementary mirror images, each structured according to a system of regularities, each composed of a distinct element (earth or water). Childers, however, directs his attention at the narrow and shifting front that divides and connects land and sea. . . . Neither sea nor land, this constantly shifting terrain registers the growing derealization of the confident archival gaze of Mahan and other late Victorian geographers.70

The blurred territorial boundary that Richards usefully highlights here also signifies Childers’ merging of the aggression of Greater Britain’s naval strategies with the defensive techniques of the imperial outpost’s territorial concerns. Dilke and Wilkinson had previously argued that Greater Britain requires the conceptual erasure of the distinction between attack and defence: “But the essential elements of combative strength are mobile. . . . Thus, the vital element of defensive strength is from its nature equally available for offensive operations, and no efficient preparation for defence is possible that will not also serve for attack.”71

This need to be able to move readily from defense to attack is also the key to the riddle at the centre of the novel. As Carruthers relates, the protagonists eventually come to realize that they have been completely misinterpreting the activities on the German coast:

You will see how perversely from first to last circumstances drove us deeper and deeper into the wrong groove, till the idea became inveterate

70 Richards, *Imperial Archive*, 127.
that the secret we were seeking was one of defence and not offence. . . . To neglect obvious methods, to draw on the obscure resources of an obscure strip of coast, to improve and exploit a quantity of insignificant streams and tidal outlets, and thence, screened by the islands, to despatch an armada of light-draught barges, capable of flinging themselves on a correspondingly obscure and therefore unexpected portion of the enemy's coast; that was a conception so daring, aye, and so quixotic in some of its aspects, that even now I was half incredulous. (305)

The mental leap that Carruthers first makes from defense to attack marks the successful translation of the techniques privileging the local associated with the imperial outpost into the aggressively imperial framework associated with Greater Britain.

Parallel to their efforts to decode the riddle of the sands, the protagonists also articulate a strategic response to the threat of a German invasion. This task is devolved to Davies in particular, for he is convinced that the battle will not be won by the side that possesses the superior technology, but by the side that possesses greater local knowledge. It is the sailing enthusiast, with his low-technology craft and his vast experience of a regional geography, upon whom the fate of the nation depends:

Childers’s scheme of English response locates power in sets of low-ranking knowledges, dominated knowledges, disqualified knowledges outside the purview of the state and beneath the contempt of the dominant. This is local knowledge, differential knowledge dispersed regionally, forgotten or barely remembered at the centers of power, a folkloric archive preserved by eccentrics like Davies. . . . In The Riddle of the Sands, then, the defense of England resides in an arsenal of hobbies. . . . In nineteenth-century Britain hobbies were the graveyard for subjugated knowledges and superseded technologies.72

72 Richards, Imperial Archive, 133.
For Richards, Davies’ defensive strategy marks a crucial turning point in the evolution of imperial power, revealing that the nation’s security depends upon the extent to which the civilian population is integrated into a state apparatus geared towards war. Yet this “arsenal of hobbies” is also highly reminiscent of the strategy previously proposed by A. A. Grace and adopted by Dick Hatten. In accordance with those Australasian texts, Davies advocates the compulsory training of the empire’s male population in rudimentary seamanship for the purpose of imperial defence:

There must be hundreds of chaps like me—I know a good many myself—who know our coasts like a book—shoals, creeks, tides, rocks; there’s nothing in it, it’s only practice. They ought to make some use of us as a naval reserve. . . . They’ve tinkered with fishermen, and merchant sailors, and yachting hands, but every one of them ought to be got hold of; and the colonies, too. . . . My own idea is that we ought to go much further, and train every able-bodied man for a couple of years as a sailor. (119, emphasis added)

It is also worth emphasizing, as Richards does not, that this “arsenal of hobbies” is not actually being applied to British defense; rather, Britain requires this arsenal to be deployed against foreign territory. While Davies and others “know our coasts like a book,” it is the application of those techniques to the German coastline that will secure the nation’s safety. Childers thus goes one step further than Grace and Mackay by casting the characteristics of the imperial outpost—the defensive mobilization of a population and its range of amateur knowledges—in a new context of metropolitan aggression.
This cross-pollination of the spatial models of Greater Britain and the imperial outpost is demonstrated by the series of maps and charts interspersed throughout the novel, which are reminiscent of the double map of Erewhon in their need and ability to juxtapose different geographic scales and levels of spatial awareness. Moreover, as Childers’ editor argues, they are virtually essential to comprehending a narrative that is characterized by the featurelessness of its physical setting: “A glance at the maps is essential to understand the action. Study of the charts is not so important . . . but it is likely that even a landbound reader, once captured by the story, will find himself trying to puzzle them out.”73 The first map—akin to Colomb’s world map of communications networks—locates the German Frisian Islands in relation both to the neighboring nations of Holland and Denmark, as well as the east coast of England (see figure 5).

This map reflects the broader geopolitical awareness that lies behind and motivates the English sailors’ local investigations:

Our great trade rivals of the present, our great naval rival of the future, [Germany] grows, and strengthens, and waits, an ever more formidable factor in the future of our delicate network of empire, sensitive as gossamer to external shocks, and radiating from an island whose commerce is its life, and which depends even for its daily ration of bread on the free passage of the seas. (120)

The quote and the map make clear that the threat posed by German naval expansion is not only that anticipated in the imperial outpost—namely, invasion—but is also a

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broader towards Greater Britain, for any disruption of its networks unavoidably implicates the security of Britain itself.

The second map—similar to Mackay’s map of Queensland—zooms in on the specific area of coastline under investigation, and maps the infrastructure of railways and canals that prove to be fundamental to the invasion (see figure 6).

![Figure 6: “East Friesland and the German or East Frisian Is.”](image)

This map points to the novel’s disruption of the neat oppositions asserted by the advocates of Greater Britain between land and sea. Only when Carruthers leaves the *Dulcibella* to explore the mainland does he begin to decipher the mystery, and his

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75 Ibid., 13.
growing enlightenment is framed as the realization that a solely maritime perspective is inadequate to the strategic riddle in front of him: “Something else, too, immediately caught my eye, and that was a stream running to Bensersiel. . . . [I]t arrested my attention now because it looked more prominent than I should have expected. [Naval] Charts are apt to ignore the geography of the mainland, except in so far as it offers sea marks to mariners” (282-3). This new insight does not lead Carruthers to abandon a broader, maritime-geopolitical perspective, requires him to hold it in tension with a much more focused interest in the specificity of enemy territory.

In addition to the two maps, however, Childers includes that add a new dimension to the two models of spatiality already encountered (see figure 7).
These charts focus on small areas of coastline, but differ from the maps in bearing Davies’ annotations of depths and channel markers. These annotations signify the merging of the amateur’s knowledge—Carruthers reflects, “In plain fact we were merely two young gentlemen in a seven-ton pleasure boat, with a taste for amateur hydrography and police duty combined” (121)—with the broader political concerns of empire and invasion. The significance of amateur knowledge anticipates Childers’ later dictum that guerrilla war comprises the “bony structure” of regular war, for Carruthers’

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76 Ibid., 14.
expertise enables the two protagonists to undertake a daring journey in dense fog in order to spy on the German conspirators. Moreover, Doyle’s handwritten numbers represent the visible trace of an individual contribution to the state’s preparedness for war, fulfilling Conan Doyle’s demand that “with his pen . . . every man who has the privilege of a vote must do what he can to strengthen the fighting force of his country.”

Yet rather than having “no parallel in invasion novels,” as Richards would have it, *Riddle of the Sands* marks the culmination of a pattern of ideological and generic circulation within Greater Britain. Childers’ novel maps the imperial outpost onto metropolitan Britain at the turn of the century, transforming a largely defensive construct into a more aggressive model that sought to mobilize the civilian population of Britain in the approaching shadows of World War I.
5. The South Pacific Celtic Periphery, or, Walter Scott in the Antipodes: The Temporality of Settlement and the Colonial Imitation of the Waverley Novel

I stood there on the extreme shore of the West and of to-day. Seventeen hundred years ago, and seven thousand miles to the east, a legionary stood, perhaps, upon the wall of Antoninus, and looked northward towards the mountains of the Picts. For all the interval of time and space, I, when I looked, from the cliff-house on the broad Pacific, was that man’s heir and analogue: each of us standing on the verge of the Roman Empire (or, as we now call it, Western civilization), each of us gazing onward into zones unromanised.

Robert Louis Stevenson and Lloyd Osbourne, *The Wrecker* (1892)¹

In this final chapter, I remain largely focused on the colony of New Zealand but turn from the subject of spatiality to that of temporality. I will argue that the tendency of Victorian literature in imagining and justifying colonization as a temporal process of modernization was a consequence of formal legacy of Walter Scott. John Henry Raleigh has observed, “In the nineteenth century Scott was ubiquitous; in the twentieth he virtually disappears. Never before or since in Western culture has a writer been such a power in his own day and so negligible to posterity.”² In contrast to Raleigh, however, this chapter will argue that Scott migrated to the South Pacific, before returning to late Victorian Britain in another influential guise. To the question, What did the Victorians do to (and with) Walter Scott?, this chapter therefore proposes two answers. The first

answer traces his legacy to the New Zealand settings of F. E. Maning’s *Old New Zealand* (1863) and Rolf Boldrewood’s *War to the Knife* (1899). These texts demonstrate, and account for, the energetic death throes of the Waverley novel on a colonial periphery that ought to, but doesn’t quite, look like the Highland Line. The second answer heads north from New Zealand to Samoa, where in the 1890s Robert Louis Stevenson began to reinvent Scott in works set in the Pacific such as *The Ebb-Tide* (1893), writing them in a grand house that he joked ought to be called Subpriorsford—a Subprior being, after all, two ranks lower than an Abbot.³ Both answers investigate the widespread assertion that the Waverley novels allowed the Victorians to imagine and justify colonization as the displacement of archaic, indigenous cultures by a homogeneous, imperial modernity. Moreover, these answers demonstrate how and why this model struggled to articulate the distinct balance between “local” and “imperial” commitments that characterizes a settler society, requiring the reconfiguration of the temporal framework of the Waverley novels and in doing so giving it a surprising new lease of life.

It is now almost a critical commonplace that Scott’s Waverley novels, and *Waverley* in particular, provided an archetypal literary formulation of imperial

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expansion as a temporal project.\textsuperscript{4} This reading is developed most extensively by Saree Makdisi in \textit{Romantic Imperialism} (1998), which argues that the novel’s two spatio-cultural zones, the Highlands and Lowlands of Scotland, are “temporally and historically coded as an opposition between past and present.”\textsuperscript{5} These temporalities are incommensurable, and the Highland invasion of the Lowlands demonstrates the inherently violent and illiberal nature of what is cast as a more primitive society. Thus the British “pacification” of the Highlands, which expanded Britain’s internal empire by integrating the Highlands into Great Britain, is understood in temporal terms as the necessary imposition of an imperial form of modernity. As Katie Trumpener notes, advancing a similar reading, \textit{Waverley} reconfigured the national tale around a stadial conception of history: “The historical novel . . . [now] finds its focus in the way one developmental stage collapses to make room for the next and cultures are transformed under the

\textsuperscript{4} This chapter assumes that \textit{Waverley} provided the primary model for appropriation precisely because it lays out this temporal framework and its imperial dimensions so clearly. Nevertheless, Ian Duncan has objected that critics of Scott mistakenly assume that \textit{Waverley} provides a fair representative of his entire oeuvre. See Ian Duncan, “Primitive Inventions: \textit{Rob Roy}, Nation, and World System,” \textit{Eighteenth-Century Fiction} 15, no. 1 (2002).

\textsuperscript{5} Saree Makdisi, \textit{Romantic Imperialism: Universal Empire and the Culture of Modernity} (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 85. Johannes Fabian, writing about the discipline of anthropology, has famously termed this temporal disjunction the “denial of coevalness,” “a persistent and systematic tendency to place the referent(s) of anthropology in a Time other than the present of the producer of anthropological discourse.” Johannes Fabian, \textit{Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes its Object} (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), 31.
pressure of historical events.” Relegated to a prior stage of cultural evolution, the Highlands clans can only be modernized at the cost of their political autonomy.

“Along with the works of Shakespeare and then of Dickens,” Trumpener notes, “Scott’s Waverley novels were the most widely circulated British literature in [the] nineteenth century . . . English-speaking world.” Victorian writers found the Waverley model especially useful for imagining and depicting the colonization of the South Pacific. That model—of an adventure into romantic indigenous territory, followed by the inevitable modernization of that territory—proved readily transportable and readily imitable. Scott’s colonial legibility was heightened in the South Pacific because certain indigenous populations, in particular the New Zealand Maori and Pacific Islanders, displayed strikingly similarities to Highland Scots. They lived in clan-like tribes, inhabited specific territorial boundaries, were socially stratified and “feudal,” were “warlike” and “proud,” and even wore kilts. Hume Nisbet’s Scott-influenced romance

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7 Ibid., 246. Patrick Evans expands upon Trumpener’s claim for Scott’s popularity, by pointing to his significance as a model for colonial writers in New Zealand: “When [nineteenth century] novelists turned to literary models to help them write . . . they turned to old ones: Scott, with his unlikely plots and high-falutin manner, was particularly popular” Evans, The Penguin History of New Zealand Literature, 58-9.
8 As late as the 1930s, New Zealand ethnography was asserting the similarities between Maori and Celtic cultures: “Many a year ago colonists from the Scottish Highlands and from other Celtic lands were interested to find a remarkably close resemblance between the Gael and Maori in some of the everyday customs and in tribal beliefs and concepts, as well as in social and political organization. . . . Governor Sir George Bowen, in his dispatches to the Colonial Office, frequently remarked on the close resemblance between Maori clan customs and those of the Highlands, especially in time of war. The average Maori of that day, had he been transplanted suddenly to a glen in Appin or an isle in the Hebrides, would have been able to adjust himself quickly to
set in New Zealand, *The Rebel Chief* (1896), provides a typical example of this South Pacific Celtic periphery at work in the Victorian popular novel. There, the Maori inhabit “a forest something after the kind that covered Great Britain in the Druidical days,” they conduct themselves “much as Scottish clansmen and the more ancient Athenians did,” and they provide a sight “as might have been witnessed in any Saxon township during the seventh or eighth centuries . . . before Alfred was king.” The strength of such comparisons was only heightened by the contrast with the nomadic character of Australia’s Aboriginal populations.

Despite the remarkable scope of Trumpener’s account of the global reach of Celtic modes of writing, her mode of analysis unintentionally demonstrates the difficulty of applying the Waverley novel to the settler colony. She focuses on the ambiguous status of the Celtic colonist, whose role in imperial expansion was itself a product of British internal colonization, and she consequently argues that Scott provided a means for those colonists to rationalize their imperial allegiance:

> The empirewide influence of the Waverley novels lies in their ability to harmonize Scottish materials with British perspectives, as they reconstruct the historical formation of the Scottish nation, the simultaneous formation of the Britain that subsumes it, and a cultural

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nationalism that survives because it learns to separate cultural distinctiveness from the memory of political autonomy and can therefore be accommodated within the new imperial framework.\textsuperscript{10}

In focusing on how the Waverley novels “harmonize Scottish materials with British perspectives,” Trumpener is able to consider the relationship of the settler population to the metropolis it has left behind, but only at the cost of eliding the indigenous population. That is, whereas her analysis reflects the Waverley novel’s binary opposition of temporalities, there are three distinct spatio-temporal categories in play in the settler colony: namely, the “homogeneous, empty time” of Greater Britain (the “imperial”); the “archaic” time of the indigene (the “local”); and the hybrid temporality of the settler that arises out of the gap between them. This disjunction between the binary temporality of Waverley and the ternary temporality of the settler colony is at the heart of the Victorian fate of Walter Scott.

The categories of the “imperial” and the “local,” which I argue demarcate the limits of the temporal frame through which the Victorians understood settlement, are derived from Makdisi’s reading of Scott. It is, however, necessary to expand his framework in order to understand the role played by the Waverley novel in shaping and reflecting the archipelagic nation of Greater Britain. According to Benedict Anderson, “homogeneous, empty time” blankets the sovereign territory of the nation, and similarly to sovereignty, it is “fully, flatly, and evenly operative over each square centimetre of a

\textsuperscript{10} Trumpener, \textit{Bardic Nationalism}, 246-7.
legally demarcated territory,”¹¹ I use the term “imperial” to signify the extension of that
temporality, understood by the Victorians as modernity, over Greater Britain. Thus, the
imperial is shorthand for the globe-spanning, universalizing forces of free-trade
capitalism, communications technologies, and maritime mobility. By contrast, I use the
idea of “local” temporality to invoke the irreducible specificity of place and a
concomitant cultural isolation, embodied for the Victorians by indigenous populations
frozen in an earlier stage of evolution.¹² The distinction between the imperial and local is
foregrounded in the conclusion to Waverley:

There is no European nation which, within the course of half a century . . .
has undergone so complete a change as this kingdom of Scotland. The . . .
destruction of the patriarchal power of the Highland chiefs . . . [and] the
total eradication of the Jacobite party, which, averse to intermingle with
the English, or adopt their customs, long continued to pride themselves
upon maintaining ancient Scottish manners and customs, commenced
this innovation. The gradual influx of wealth, and extension of commerce,
have since united to render the present people of Scotland a class of
beings as different from their grandfathers, as the existing English are
from those of Queen Elizabeth’s time.¹³

¹¹ Benedict R. O’Gorman Anderson, Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism
¹² The sense of being frozen in time underpins Walter Bagehot’s claim in Physics and Politics (1872) that
“savage” races such as the Maori are unable to change because their minds are only capable of imitation, not
originality: “This extreme propensity to imitation is one great reason of the amazing sameness which every
observer notices in savage nations. . . . The higher savages, as the New Zealanders, are less uniform; they
have more of the varied and compact structure of civilised nations. . . . But much of the same monotonous
nature clings to them too. A savage tribe resembles a herd of gregarious beasts; where the leader goes they
go too; they copy blindly his habits, and thus soon become that which he already is. . . . There is nothing in
their minds to resist the propensity to copy.” Walter Bagehot, Physics and Politics; or, Thoughts on the
Application of the Principles of 'Natural Selection' and 'Inheritance' to Political Society (New York: Appleton,
1906), 100-1.
Where the Highlands were once the domain of the local, “maintaining ancient Scottish manners and customs,” they have now been forcibly incorporated within the imperial through “intermingl[ing] with the English” and the “gradual influx of wealth, and extension of commerce.” If the imperial is primarily the domain of the economic, the local is primarily the domain of the cultural; if the imperial or aspires to grid-like homogeneous, empty time, the local is by comparison timeless.

The Waverley novel seems at first glance to provide the perfect formula for narrating the colonization of New Zealand as if it were a Celtic periphery, providing another example of the conquest of “patriarchal . . . Highland chiefs.” Yet the ontological category of the settler complicates this formula by straddling the “Highland Line,” as it were, actively engaged in expanding the imperial yet turning to and appropriating aspects of the local as the basis of a distinct identity.14 There is, however, a second sense in which settlement can be understood as occurring on a Celtic periphery. The success of the Waverley novels ensured that a settler population seeking to comprehend its emergent collective identity had to do so within the temporal terms set by Scott. This legacy is evident in “Maoriland,” which from the 1880s until the 1910s was a synonym

14 P. J. Cain and A. G. Hopkins, focusing on British investment in the settler colonies after 1850, use slightly different terms to make a related claim about the coexistence of the imperial and the local: “The constitutional freedom of the emerging white Dominions was gained at the same time as their economic development bound them more closely to the financial system based on London . . . in this sense, the white colonies exchanged a position of political dependence for a place in a wider and looser framework of ‘free-trade imperialism.’” Cain and Hopkins, British Imperialism, 1688-2000, 209.
for New Zealand itself and for the aesthetic of settler literary production: “The central feature of Maoriland was the use of Maori sources to provide the descendants of the settlers with a history peculiar to themselves. . . . The contradiction at the heart of Maoriland is that its archaism cohabits with and compensates for the colony’s sense of its own modernity.”

Maoriland, where “archaism cohabits with and compensates for . . . modernity,” effectively straddles the Highland Line. In complicating the temporal structure of the Waverley novel, the narrative position of the settler also enabled the relationship between the local and the imperial to be reconfigured.

In what follows, I focus on three works of fiction that respond to and rework the temporal structure of the Waverley novels in the attempt to narrate settlement in the South Pacific Celtic periphery. New Zealand author F. E. Maning’s *Old New Zealand* (1863) is narrated by a “Pakeha-Maori,” a settler who lives as a “native” while facilitating the expansion of trade, and this narrative position collapses the imperial into the local, self-consciously frustrating the teleological momentum of the narrative.

Retracing the imperial circuits that allowed Maning’s text to be reprinted and reviewed in Britain, I argue that its extreme localization paradoxically allowed it to be slotted into a reading practice shaped by the Waverley tradition. Australian author Rolf Boldrewood’s *War to the Knife*; or, *Tangata Maori* (1899), was partly a product of the

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imperial circulation of *Old New Zealand*, but it imitates Scott much more closely, so that its ability to reflect the increasingly interconnected imperial economy comes at the cost of eliding the local dimension of settlement. Finally, I turn from New Zealand to Samoa, where Robert Louis Stevenson settled (I use the term deliberately) in 1890 and began to write about colonization in the contemporary Pacific in a way that merged and transcended the positions mapped out by Maning and Boldrewood. Stevenson’s novella *The Ebb-Tide* (1893-4) reconstituted the Waverley novels by representing the imperial present as a *horizontal overlapping* of temporalities, neither allowing the imperial to be entirely dominant nor permitting the local to be celebrated uncritically. This formal reflection of “uneven development” was transmitted from Samoa to Britain via the circuits of imperial cultural circulation, enabling it to contribute to the emergence of the modernist aesthetic.

### 5.1. Crossing the Highland Line in New Zealand

#### 5.1.1. *Old New Zealand* and the Pakeha Maori Parenthesis

In 1842, two years after New Zealand became an official colony of the British empire, the “Police” section of the *Illustrated London News* for the week of 21 May contained a brief account of an outbreak of drunken violence in London (see figure 8).
The otherwise unremarkable event was distinguished by the unusual appearance of the culprit: “Joshua Newborn, a young man about 25 years of age,” had a “swarthy face . . . tattooed [sic] like a native of New Zealand.” The magistrate, upon asking if the defendant spoke English, was told “the prisoner was a Londoner, born near St. Luke’s church; but . . . he had been made prisoner by the New Zealanders, and had passed several years amongst them, after having consented to be tattooed [sic] like one of themselves.” The article recounts that he was the sole survivor of a group of sailors captured from a whaling ship eleven years earlier, and that “his life was spared, upon his consenting to be marked and to live with them.” Upon his return to England, he had married and earned a living “exhibiting as a New Zealand chief at places of public amusement.” Newborn had been arrested late the previous night for “dancing around

Figure 8: “The New Zealand War-Dance; or Savage force versus Civil force.”

and disturbing the neighbours with his wild and terrific cries” and for assaulting the police:

Sergeant Lambert said, that he was exceedingly violent at the station-house, and vowed vengeance against the constable who took him there, threatening to feast upon his heart, and ‘lick his chops with his blood;’ and during the greater part of the night he appeared to be dancing his war-dance in the cell, and screeching at the top of his voice.17 Virtually nothing else is known about Newborn.

The name of Newborn is resonant with meaning, for he was indeed a new type of subject, a distinct product of contact zone between Britain and the New Zealand Maori. Newborn was a “Pakeha Maori,” a British subject (Pakeha) who was adopted into a Maori tribe and conformed to the tribal way of life, serving to facilitate trade with European society. In The Story of New Zealand (1859), the first major written history of the colony, A. S. Thomson claimed that the “golden age” of the Pakeha Maori lasted from the mid-1820s until the mid-1840s, when they were “valuable articles with the New Zealanders [i.e. Maori]” because of “the commercial spirit which spread among the natives, and the universal anxiety to procure fire-arms.”18 Thomson figures the Pakeha Maori as inhabiting a Celtic periphery, describing individuals who “felt like Highland chiefs in the midst of their clans, and laughed at the whimsical freaks of fortune which

17 Ibid.
had elevated them to be kings among savages.” Nevertheless, Thomson’s history is built upon a Waverley-like narrative of modernization—spelled out in its subtitle, *Savage and Civilized—Past and Present*—and he accordingly highlights the role played by Pakeha Maori (“Pioneers of Civilisation,” as the chapter is titled) in extending the reach of empire through trade: “They taught the natives to trust white men, and encouraged industry, the promoter of peace and civilization, by opening up a steady market for flax and potatoes; their half-caste children were hostages for good behaviour, and stepping-stones to health and progress.” It was a lot easier, however, to compare this colonial frontier to the Highlands in retrospect. During the “golden age” of the Pakeha Maori, I shall suggest, New Zealand did not seem like Scotland so much as Ireland.

In 1840, the newly-minted colony of New Zealand was divided into three provinces, named New Munster, New Ulster, and New Leinster. Later reduced to two—New Munster and New Ulster—by the New Zealand Constitution Act (1846), these provincial designations were soon effaced by an entirely different provincial structure and nomenclature in 1852. This fleeting designation of the new colony as a collection of Irish provinces—New Ireland?—evokes the possibility that a time when British sovereignty was far from being extended fully over the colony might suit an “Irish”

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19 Thomson, *Story of New Zealand*, II.300.
20 Ibid., I.303.
rather than “Scottish” narrative form. That is, whereas *Waverley* retrospectively narrates colonial contact and conflict in Scotland with the confidence of ultimate imperial success, a form reflecting the incomplete subjugation of Ireland might be better suited to the moment and perspective of the Pakeha Maori.

The text I have in mind is *Old New Zealand: A Tale of the Good Old Times* (1863), by the Irish settler F.E. Maning, first published in Auckland and then in London as the anonymous work of “A Pakeha-Maori.” Maning was born in Dublin in 1811, and after leaving Ireland for Van Diemen’s Land in 1823, he eventually came to reside in the Hokianga region of New Zealand in 1833. He eventually married into the Hikutu tribe, purchased land and by the 1850s had established a profitable sawmilling operation. During the 1840s, he appears to have advised the local chiefs against signing the Treaty of Waitangi, yet he also fought with his tribe against the “rebel” Hone Heke in the first major conflict between the British and the Maori, the “Northern war” of 1845-6. *Old New Zealand* is a fictionalized version of Maning’s early life as a Pakeha Maori, and was published at a time when Maning was trying to enter into the upper echelons of the rapidly expanding colonial administration—he was appointed a judge of the Native

22 The London edition published by Smith and Elder was a pirated version that led Maning to take action in defense of his copyright. The Smith and Elder edition also participated in a tendency to “nudge the text further towards ‘proper’ written English.” Alex Calder, “Introduction,” in *Old New Zealand and Other Writings*, ed. Alex Calder (London: Leicester University Press), 15.

Land Court in 1865—\textsuperscript{24} and when war seemed inevitable for British rule to be fully implemented. Thus, while \textit{Old New Zealand} is largely committed to imperial rule, it remains “the central witness of the nation’s border period,”\textsuperscript{25} so that the local and imperial meet in the narrative perspective of the Pakeha Maori without the former being completely absorbed by the latter.\textsuperscript{26}

The title of Maning’s work, with its invocation of “Old” New Zealand and the “good old times,” marks its descent from Waverley. Set thirty or forty years in the past, it seeks to replicate Scott’s antiquarianism by asserting the authenticity of its ethnographic content. As his preface states,

\begin{quote}
The writer has . . . thought it might be worth while to place a few sketches of old Maori life on record before the remembrance of them has quite passed away; though in doing so he has by no means exhausted an
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{24} “This Court endeavoured to ascertain which Maori persons could be said to ‘own’ some block of land, and issued freehold titles to those it deemed to be owners. These people (by statute, there could be no more than ten owners) were then entitled to sell, and Maori lost many millions of acres of tribally held land in this way.” Alex Calder, “Maning’s Tapu: Colonialism and Ethnography in \textit{Old New Zealand},” \textit{Social Analysis} 39 (1996): 7.


\textsuperscript{26} \textit{Old New Zealand} has been read by critics as a racist text that unequivocally endorses the violent conquest of Maori society. Joan Fitzgerald, for instance, argues “In writing \textit{Old New Zealand} Maning is not merely nostalgically recording a past which is dead and gone: he is launching a warning to his readers.” Joan FitzGerald, “Images of the Self: Two Early New Zealand Autobiographies by John Logan Campbell and Frederick Edward Maning,” \textit{Journal of Commonwealth Literature} 23, no. 1 (1988): 38. Peter Gibbons likewise observes, “Reconsidered as a call to arms, a tract for the times rather than a memoir, Maning’s humour becomes mordant, mocking, his contempt for Maori horribly clear. It is possible that the continuing appeal of this ‘classic’ was not based simply on Maning’s attractive prose style but in large measure rested on his carefully crafted production of the stereotypical Maori that the settler society wanted to believe in—cunning, shrewd, lacking in compassion, careless of life, unregenerate.” Peter Gibbons, “Non-Fiction,” in \textit{The Oxford history of New Zealand literature in English}, ed. Terry Sturm (Auckland ; New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 46.
interesting subject, and amore full and particular delineation of old Maori life, manners, and history has yet to be written.  

These prefatorial comments seem to locate *Old New Zealand* within the tradition of what Patrick Brantlinger has termed the “proleptic elegy,” a nation-founding genre framed around the mournful confidence that savagery has been replaced by civilization. Such a description, however, only tells half the story of the text’s form and its relationship to colonial history.

Although *Old New Zealand* shares the temporal elements of the Waverley novels, those elements are reconfigured as a result of its equally strong formal allegiance to Laurence Sterne’s *Tristram Shandy*. Joan Fitzgerald notes, “External evidence exists that Maning had read Sterne, and *Old New Zealand* clearly shows its debt to *Tristram Shandy* in its structural framework. The most obvious ‘borrowing’ is Maning’s play on authorial versus chronological time.” Along with the digressive tendencies Fitzgerald alludes to, other notably Shandean features of the text include the self-ironizing humor of its first-person narrator, its meta-textual self-consciousness, and its creative citational practices. These “Irish” borrowings from Sterne disrupt the linear temporality of a narrative that

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30 “Tristram Shandy is neither simply nor primarily a formalist text about text. Instead, this formalism is generated by, and has behind it, a political purpose: to tell, through the account of Tristram and his family, the story of the conception and birth of Ireland and the effects of religious persecution and English policies on it, from the time of Elizabeth until the period when the novel was published.” Joan Meyler, “The ‘Body
would otherwise be unequivocally allied to Scott, portraying that moment of incomplete colonization—the moment of the Pakeha Maori—through the mixed and unreconciled coexistence of local and imperial temporalities.

Time and temporality is a central theme in Old New Zealand. It begins, “Ah! those good old times, when first I came to New Zealand, we shall never see their like again. Since then the world seems to have gone wrong, somehow. A dull sort of world this, now. . . . But those were the times!—the ‘good old times’—before Governors were invented, and law, and justice, and all that” (1). This text is not just set in the historical past, but it is also set in evolutionary terms in a pre-modern world, “before Governors were invented, and law, and justice, and all that.” These lines also introduce the pseudo-Shandean narrative voice that Maning will maintain throughout the book, foreshadowing the association between his bluff, “hearty” tone and the local temporality of “old New Zealand,” a correlation that I shall consider at greater length below. At this point it is important to note that Maning figures the primitive space of Old New Zealand as a timeless space: “I always held a theory that time was of no account in New Zealand, and I do believe I was right up to the time of the arrival of the first Governor” (3). The narrator is caught between “the time . . . of the . . . Governor” and a society where “time

was of no account,” and this disjunction immediately begins to affect the mode of
Maning’s storytelling.

The first two chapters of Old New Zealand center on Maning’s struggle to recount
his landing. It transpires that this event was somewhat inglorious—being carried ashore,
he falls into the sea and “drifts slowly with the tide . . . ballasted with heavy pistols,
boots, tight clothes, and all the straps and strings of civilisation” (23)—but an apparently
innate tendency to digress begins to manifest itself. This frustrates his attempt to depict
what should be the ostensible beginning of the narrative: “I have not got on shore yet; a
thing I must accomplish as a necessary preliminary to looking about me, and telling
what I saw. I do not understand the Pakeha way of beginning a story in the middle; so to
start fair, I must fairly get on shore, which, I am surprised to find, was easier to do than
to describe” (3-4). Landing presents a formal problem to Maning, one that derives from
crossing the threshold between imperial and local time. The text’s most concrete
example of imperial time is the ship he has left, and its homogeneous, empty time
appears to oppose the mode of storytelling appropriate to Old New Zealand by
threatening to artificially regularize the narrative:

As long as I am on board ship I am cramped and crippled, and a mere
slave to Greenwich mean time, and can’t get on. Some people, I am
aware, would make a dash at it, and manage the thing without the aid of
boat, canoe, or life preserver; but such people are, for the most part,
dealers in fiction, which I am not: my story is a true story, not ‘founded
on fact,’ but fact itself, and so I cannot manage to get on shore a moment
sooner than circumstances will permit. . . . I confess I don’t know any
more about the right way to tell a story, than a native minister knows how to ‘come’ a war dance. (8)

The episode appears to offer the promise that if Maning can “fairly get on shore,” equivalent to crossing the Highland Line, his narrative will proceed through time more smoothly. Yet subsequent episodes demonstrate the persistence of this temporal indeterminacy once he is on shore, manifesting itself as a continued tendency to digress, and suggesting that the Pakeha Maori must by definition continue to occupy the Highland Line.

This continuing indeterminacy is best highlighted by the two extended and intersecting narratives that make up the core of Old New Zealand, concerning Maning’s attempt to purchase land and his experience of tapu (taboo). The myth of peaceful settlement hinges upon the appearance that the settlers’ land has been acquired in a lawful fashion, so Maning’s account of his attempt to purchase land holds deep symbolic and political importance. The first version of this event emphasizes how the confusion caused by tribal ownership militates against the stability of private property: “I really can’t tell to the present day who I purchased the land from, for there were about fifty different claimants, every one of whom assured me that the other forty-nine were ‘humbugs,’ and had no right whatever” (76-7). Yet soon after describing the moment of purchase—“I . . . handed over . . . a great lot of blankets, muskets, tomahawks, tobacco, spade, axes, &c., &c.; and received in return a very dirty piece of paper with all their marks on it, I having written the terms of transfer on it in English to
my own satisfaction” (80)—Maning launches into a series of digressions regarding his later endeavors to legitimate that purchase before the colonial Land Commissioners. (Legally, only the Crown had the right to “extinguish” native title”). His self-reflexive frustration at this plot discontinuity reveals that landing has not simplified the form of *Old New Zealand*:

I never yet could get the proper knack of telling a story. Here I am now, a good forty years ahead of where I ought to be, talking of ‘title deeds’ and ‘land commissioners,’ things belonging to the new and deplorable state of affairs which began when this country became ‘a British colony and possession,’ and also ‘one of the brightest jewels in the British crown.’ I must go back. (85)

Rather than unfolding linearly in accordance with a Waverley-esque modernizing teleology, the narrative jumps—apparently unintentionally—into an imperial future that proves unable to be dissociated from the local past. I shall return to this question of temporal indissociability, after a digression of my own.

What intervenes in the next chapter, and takes up a significant part of the rest of the text, is Maning’s putatively ethnographic account of “two great institutions, which reigned with iron rod in Maori land—the Tapu and the Muru” (105). This content serves a parallel function to that of Scott’s antiquarianism, creating the impression of an authentic and inherently anti-modern past, and it is on the basis of these chapters that
Old New Zealand continues to gain attention as a work of ethnography.\textsuperscript{31} For Maning, 
tapu is the aspect of Maori culture that best characterizes the local temporality of Old
New Zealand:

Earth, air, fire, water, goods and chattels, growing crops, men, women, and children,—everything absolutely was subject to its influence, and a more perplexing puzzle to new pakehas who were continually from ignorance infringing some of its rules, could not well be imagined. The natives . . . themselves, though from infancy to old age enveloped in a cloud of tapu, would sometimes fall into similar scrapes. (119)

Maning himself becomes tapu after handling a human skull, and is ostracized from tribal society. Having struggled to live in isolation for almost a week—“I began to think of Robinson Crusoe, and to wonder if I could hold out as well as he did” (140)—he is visited by a tohunga who possesses the ability to lift the tapu. Realizing he has no other choice if he wishes to reenter Maori society, Maning submits to the tohunga’s orders despite his misgivings: “I . . . accepted the offered food, took a bite, and as I ate he mumbled his incantation over me. I remember I felt a curious sensation at the time, like what I fancied a man must feel who had just sold himself, body and bones, to the devil” (142). Recounting the scene in the same comic style that he has used throughout, Maning undercuts what would otherwise be a familiar Victorian critique of “ancient superstition” by contrasting his own “warlike and rebellious attitude” at these events to

\textsuperscript{31} “Maning’s anecdotes about tapu have been widely and uncritically disseminated as anthropological ‘examples,’” in works by Frazer, Freud, Margaret Mead and Franz Steiner among others. F. E. Maning, Old New Zealand and Other Writings, ed. Alex Calder (London: Leicester University Press, 2001), 205n3.
the “perfect coolness” of the tohunga. Yet his deployment of ironic self-reflection also serves to defuse a point in the narrative where the exigencies of the local overwhelm imperial certainty.

Although Maning’s tapu is lifted, suspicion lingers amongst members of the tribe that he was “let off very easy, and might therefore be supposed to retain some tinge of the dreadful infection” (146). Indeed, the persistence of “the dreadful infection” of tapu manifests itself as a continued digressiveness. Maning had, after all, been trying to tell the story of his land purchase when the story of the tapu intervened. As he reflects, after having tried to tell that latter story,

I begin to fancy I have not been born under a story-telling planet, for by no effort that I can make can I hold on to the thread of my story, and I am conscious the whole affair is fast becoming one great parenthesis. If I could only get clear of this tapu I would ‘try back.’ I believe I ought to be just now completing the purchase of my estate. . . . I must get rid of this talk about the tapu the best way I can, after which I will start fair and try not to get before my story. (165)

The persistence of tapu in the person of the Pakeha Maori and in the digressive form of Old New Zealand signals that the local continues to haunt the imperial, upsetting the linearity of a narrative that otherwise would unreservedly testify to the expansion of imperial time over the colony. As evidence of the power of the local, Maning goes on to reveal that his “great lot of blankets, muskets, tomahawks, tobacco, spade, axes, &c., &c” was not the whole cost of his land purchase: “I consequently was therefore a part, and by no means an inconsiderable one, of the payment for my own land” (180). Through his
purchase, despite its dubious legal status, Maning is mixed with the soil of the colony, though not in the Lockean sense of mixing his labor with the soil in order to transform it into his property. Rather, the purchase—the supposed sign of legitimate settlement—has to some extent unsettled his identity by localizing it.

The importance that Old New Zealand ascribes to local temporality (albeit, filtered through a comic register) usefully highlights the potential for the idea of settlement to complicate the Waverley model of imperial temporal expansion. Rather than recounting the establishment of homogeneous, empty time, which Benedict Anderson argues is reflected in novelistic form as the “presentation of simultaneity” or temporal coincidence, Maning’s digressive portrayal of the settler colony as an anachronistic intersection of the imperial and the local is more akin to Benjamin’s notion of “Messianic time, a simultaneity of past and future in an instantaneous present.”

Maning has inherited from Scott the conceptual logic with which to articulate such a necessary intersection, but the consequences of his modification of those terms is made clearer when he applies them to the subjects of law and language:

I may as well inform the New Zealand public that I am going to write the whole law of this land in a book, which I shall call ‘Ko nga ture;’ and as I intend it for the good of both races, I shall mix the two languages up in such a way that neither can understand; but this does not matter, as I shall add a ‘glossary,’ in Coptic, to make things clearer. (73)

Anderson, Imagined Communities, 24, 5.
Alex Calder translates *Ko nga ture* as a bilingual pun, literally meaning “Of the Laws,” but also suggesting “Law of Nature,” which underscores the fact that the thrust of *Old New Zealand* is to suggest that military force is the only means “to make things clearer.” Nevertheless, the impulse to “mix the two languages up” also reflects the unresolved temporal tension inhabited by the Pakeha Maori.

At the same time, however, *Old New Zealand*’s emphasis on the local also generates a certain amount of resistance to imagining the imperial. Maning draws attention to this situation when he observes, “I am conscious the whole affair is fast becoming one great parenthesis”: the image of the parenthesis suggests on the one hand that the Pakeha Maori is somehow bracketed off from the broader story of imperial history; on the other hand, that the persistence of the local might render his text only partially legible to Victorian readers. Therefore, the question I turn to in the next section is the status of *Old New Zealand* within broader Victorian literary culture, and how it was read.

5.1.2. Reading *Old New Zealand* in the Victorian Cultural Archipelago

The Victorian afterlife of *Old New Zealand* began in 1871, at the end of the second South Pacific sailing trip of George Robert Charles Herbert, Earl of Pembroke, and George Henry Kingsley, brother of writers Charles and Henry Kingsley. While in New

33 Maning, *Old New Zealand and Other Writings*, 202n3.
Zealand, Pembroke met Maning and was so impressed by him and by his writing that, on his return to Britain, he advocated for the republication *Old New Zealand*. Bentley and Son—who had published Pembroke and Kingsley’s book about their travels, *South Sea Bubbles, by the Earl and the Doctor*, in 1872—brought out the new edition in 1876, to which Pembroke contributed an introduction. There is something of an irony to this apparent success, for *Old New Zealand* appears to have increasingly frustrated Maning by proliferating beyond his control: “That infernal book *Old New Zealand* is worse than the monster in *Frankenstein*. I no sooner get it under in one place than it crops up in another. . . . I won’t write any more books and I shall burn my manuscript less some damned publisher should publish them.”  

Maning’s somewhat disingenuous complaint (his most recent biographer regards it as “unlikely” that Pembroke was acting against Maning’s wishes) usefully highlights that Pembroke’s intervention had set a colonial literary intervention adrift in an imperial literary market, raising the question of whether it might be read any differently in the metropolis than its Pakeha Maori predecessor, Joshua Newborn, was more than thirty years previously. 

Pembroke’s preface and the extant reviews of the Bentley edition demonstrate that, despite its formal complexity, *Old New Zealand* was easily slotted into the Waverley

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paradigm. That is, while it was not in any way seen as an explicit imitation of Scott, that precedent contributed to the apparent ease with which it was categorized as an account, albeit particularly well-written, of the vanishing customs of a dying race. Hence the anonymous reviewer for the *Athenaeum* could describe it as “a reprint of the best book ever written about a savage race,” and position the text as documenting a diminishing cultural authenticity:

‘Old New Zealand’ contains the best picture of a state of society and of a people which both have all but passed away, and which will soon be gone. It is but once in several years that a first-class war-dance, such as is here so vividly described, is to be seen, and each time now that one occurs the performance becomes more theatrical and artificial, and less terrible in its reality and mimicry of bloody war. *Muru*, here explained at length, is never now exacted except in the remotest districts of the interior, and the better-known *tapu* has all but disappeared.36 Similarly, the *Academy* praised the “series of sketches and descriptions of Maori life and manners of past times, vividly depicted scenes and incidents given exactly as they occurred,” observing that the author’s experiences had allowed him to “enter . . . perfectly into the spirit and mode of thought and action of this strange people, now so rapidly decreasing.”37 Such evidence suggests that the local specificity of Maning’s depiction of Pakeha Maori life and identity was such a “great parenthesis” that it could be almost entirely erased by distance, allowing reviewers to read it as little more than a narrative Newborn, “exhibiting as a New Zealand chief . . . [as a] public amusement.”

The closest that the British reviewers get to acknowledging that Maning’s text might possess any formal distinctiveness comes in their recognition of his “Irish” humor. Responding to this Shandean trace, the Athenaeum remarked, “the Pakeha Maori’s book is one of the most mirth making that we know,” while Pembroke’s introduction (which the Athenaeum summarily dismissed as “A silly little Preface”\textsuperscript{38}), is mainly notable for its attempt to mirror Maning’s comic tone in order to critique Britain’s “philanthropical” approach to race relations in New Zealand: “At moments like these,” he jokes, “I have had ideas on native policy that I dare not utter in the latitude of Exeter Hall, and the era of the nineteenth century.”\textsuperscript{39} Pembroke does, however, conclude by emphasizing Maning’s Irishness and connecting it to his comic style:

He was, I believe, sixty years old when I first saw him, but . . . looked the finest man for strength, activity, and grace I had ever seen. Six feet three in height and big in proportion, with a symmetry of shape that almost disguised his immense size, I felt I could well understand the stories I had heard of his popularity and his feats amongst the Maories [sic], especially when I watched the keen, bright expression of his humorous Irish face. In manner and conversation he was the very opposite of what one would expect of a man who had lived since his boyhood amongst savages. With

\textsuperscript{38} “Review of Old New Zealand,”, 653.
\textsuperscript{39} George Robert Charles Herbert, Earl of Pembroke, “Introduction,” in Old New Zealand: A Tale of the Good Old Times; and A History of the War in the North (London: Bentley, 1876), xii. The lengthiest review of Old New Zealand remarkably occupies some 17 pages of Temple Bar magazine, but given the humorous tone adopted in the review—“One thing, I think, one learns by wandering about this curious cricket ball of ours . . .” (518)—and its articulation of ideas about the relative ages of the world’s races also found in South Sea Bubbles, as well as the fact that Temple Bar was published by Bentley, its seems highly likely that the author is Pembroke. “Musings on Manning’s [sic] Old New Zealand,” Temple Bar 51 (1877). See also Royal A. Gettmann, A Victorian Publisher: A Study of the Bentley Papers (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960), 26.
a real love, and a considerable knowledge of literature, a keen appreciation of all intellectual excellence, and a most delightful humour, I think I never came across so charming a talker as the man whom I not inaptly christen the ‘Lever’ of New Zealand.\textsuperscript{40}

In designating Maning the “Lever of New Zealand,” Pembroke positions him as little more than an antipodean variant of the most prominent mid-century purveyor of Irish stereotypes.\textsuperscript{41} The reviewer for \textit{Temple Bar} goes further, however, and argues that Maning’s Irishness made him “thoroughly able to understand those most Hibernian of Antipodeans—the Maories [sic].”\textsuperscript{42} Maning’s humor, seen to reflect the Irishness of the Maori as much as his own ethnicity, persists as a sign of the settler’s mixed temporal status and I shall discuss its reemergence in the fiction of Robert Louis Stevenson as bleak irony in the final section of this chapter.

While the formal complexity of \textit{Old New Zealand} made little direct impact in Britain, its entry into Bentley’s catalog nevertheless enabled it to circulate within the empire. The publisher would reissue the novel again in Britain in 1884, and release an Australasian edition as part of its Colonial Library in 1887.\textsuperscript{43} This Australasian edition

\textsuperscript{40} Herbert, “Introduction,” xx-xxi, emphasis added.

\textsuperscript{41} Andrew Blake, in recent attempt at revaluating Lever, only goes so far as to claim “his importance to the scholar lies precisely in his ability to capture and express the Irish stereotypes offered by the British periodical press.” Andrew Blake, “Writing from the Outside In: Charles Lever,” in \textit{Writing Irishness in Nineteenth-Century British Culture}, ed. Neil McCaw (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), 116.

\textsuperscript{42} “Musings on Manning’s [sic] \textit{Old New Zealand},” 523.

\textsuperscript{43} After Bentley was purchased by Macmillans in the 1880s, \textit{Old New Zealand} would be published as part of its Colonial Library series in 1900 and 1912. The first text in Macmillan’s Colonial Library also hailed from the antipodes, Lady Barker’s \textit{Station Life in New Zealand} (1886). Luke Trainor, “Colonial Editions,” in \textit{Book \& Print in New Zealand: A Guide to Print Culture in Aotearoa}, ed. Penny Griffith, Ross Harvey, and Keith Maslen.
was read and reviewed by Rolf Boldrewood, lifelong devotee of Walter Scott and soon to become Australia’s most internationally successful author with the publication of *Robbery Under Arms* (1889).⁴⁴ Maning’s text fed into Boldrewood’s longstanding interest in New Zealand, and a decade later he would rewrite it as an antipodean Waverley novel, “War to the Knife”; or, *Tangata Maori* (1899), set during the colonial wars. Before discussing Boldrewood’s reworking of Maning in the name of Scott, however, I wish to briefly consider what this example tells us about the circulation of settler writing within the archipelagic literary culture of Greater Britain. Tony Ballantyne has recently articulated a concept of the empire as a web made up of “horizontal linkages between colonies,” bound by flows of “capital, personnel, and ideas,”⁴⁵ and Trumpener has argued that the prevalence of Celtic modes of writing—such as, but not restricted to, the Waverley novel—throughout the settler colonies provides evidence of a similar phenomenon, namely, “The transcolonial consciousness and transperipheral circuits of influence to which empire gives rise, as disparate cultures find themselves connected . . . by a constant flow of people—administrators, soldiers, merchants, colonists, and

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travelers—back and forth between different imperial holdings.”\textsuperscript{46} Both Ballantyne and Trumpener’s accounts usefully draw attention to the existence of archipelagic cultural circulation, but the example of War to the Knife demonstrates that Maning’s text did not simply move “transperipherally” or “horizontally” from New Zealand to Australia. Rather, the literary institutions of Victorian Britain played a vital yet unwitting mediating role that enabled that transperipheral flow.

5.1.3. “This is hardly progress. . . . It is transformation!”: Reasserting the Waverley Paradigm in War to the Knife

Rolf Boldrewood (the penname adopted in 1875 by Thomas Alexander Browne) had come to Australia as a young child in the early 1830s, emigrating with his family aboard a convict transport carrying 112 prisoners. Central to Boldrewood’s success was his adaptation of Scott to antipodean circumstances:

Of Browne’s literary masters the principal, Sir Walter Scott, was often acknowledged (“my favourite author—both in prose and in verse. I think I began to read him at six or seven years old—and I read him yet,” he said in 1909 at the age of eighty-three). . . Browne . . . was to choose his . . . \textit{nom de plume} from a Scott poem; and he quoted freely from Scott’s works. Literary historians have seen the Waverley novels as a model for the adventure, excitement, Romantic action and simplified moral idealism of Browne’s novels, and they have noted the parallels between Scott and Browne as devotees of the gentleman and of aristocratic virtues, and as local patriots.\textsuperscript{47}

\textsuperscript{46} Trumpener, \textit{Bardic Nationalism}, xiii.
\textsuperscript{47} de Serville, \textit{Rolf Boldrewood}, 175-6.
Boldrewood had been fascinated with New Zealand prior to writing the novel in question, having considered emigrating there in the early 1860s, and his interest also appears to have been shaped by Scott: “I spent last winter in New Zealand having some idea of settling there. What a magnificent country it is. A second England about the time of the Picts and the Scots, less roads, bridges, railways, houses and other trifles which go to make England the wonderland it is.” He made a return visit to New Zealand in 1896, when he conducted the research for *War to the Knife*, which is probably the historical romance most closely modeled on Scott of all nineteenth century literature set in New Zealand.

The difficulty of locating *War to the Knife* within any single national literary category, let alone finding something to say about it, is reflected in the fact that it is completely unknown within Victorian Studies, is routinely name-checked and summarily dismissed in accounts of New Zealand literary history, and occupies a less prominent but similarly awkward position within Australian literature. A brief plot

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48 Ibid., 129.
49 In possibly the only British review of the novel, the anonymous reviewer for the *Athenaeum* concludes his description of the novel with the backhanded and somewhat bewildering observation, “Rolf Boldrewood never leaves his readers in doubt about his desire to give them a faithful and reasonable account of English life in Australasia.” “Review of “War to the Knife”; or, Tangata Maori,” *The Athenaeum*, no. 3744 (1899): 154. Paul de Serville cites the unintentionally hilarious account of one of Boldrewood’s contemporary readers, Lady Tennyson, wife of the Governor of South Australia: “I read & finished Boldrewood’s *War to the Knife*, so interesting, all about the Maori wars & makes one love the Maoris even more than I always have from quite a child.” de Serville, *Rolf Boldrewood*, 275. Ken Arvidson describes the novel in the *Oxford Companion to New Zealand Literature* as Boldrewood’s “worst novel,” “a botch in the post-Scott heroic romance tradition” characterized by “unreadable stylistic abominations.” Ken Arvidson, “Boldrewood, Rolf,” in *The Oxford
summary is not only necessary, therefore, but also highlights some of the reasons for its critical oblivion. After being rejected in love by the New Woman figure of Hypatia Tollemache, the Waverley-like British protagonist, Roland Massinger, decides to immigrate to New Zealand at the moment when fighting between the colonists and Maori is about to erupt. “Like Edward Waverley,” Robert Dixon observes, “Roland Massinger now crosses the ‘Highland Line.’” His guide is the alluring Erena Mannering, a Flora MacIvor-like half-caste Maori aristocrat whose father is modeled on F. E. Maning. When she falls in love with Massinger, he earns the enmity of Ngarara, her savage Maori cousin. Following the outbreak of war, Mannering enlists with the colonial forces and is wounded by Ngarara during the humiliating defeat of the British forces at Gate Pa. Hypatia, who in the meantime has also immigrated to New Zealand, happens to be working at the missionary station where the wounded Massinger is brought by Erena, who has rescued him from the fray. A captivity narrative ensues, as Ngarara turns up and proceeds to hold them all hostage. During their rescue, Ngarara escapes

Companion to New Zealand Literature, ed. Roger Robinson and Nelson Wattie (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1998), 61. The sole critic to take the novel seriously is Australian critic Robert Dixon, who abstracts it from the specificity of its New Zealand setting, seeing it “as a displacement, in both time and space, of Boldrewood’s troubled response to the tumultuous events of the 1890s in Australia: the maritime, coal miners’ and shearers’ strikes; the rise of the labour and women’s movements; and Australia’s increasing military involvement in Africa.” Dixon, Colonial Adventure, 53. See also Robert Dixon, “Rolf Boldrewood’s War to the Knife: Narrative Form adn Ideology in the Historical Novel,” Australian Literary Studies 12, no. 3 (1986).

Dixon, Colonial Adventure, 54.
after firing a shot at Massinger that kills Erena instead. With the possibility of miscegenation conveniently disposed of, Massinger and Hypatia return to England, where he repurchases his family estate and they ultimately marry, managing from an enormous distance their “incredibly large domain, which must prove of great value in time to come.” The novel is melodramatic, stilted, and implausible—yet these are not the reasons why it so usefully illustrates the opposite difficulty to that of Old New Zealand, namely, the erasure of the settler through applying the Waverley formula to an opposition between the British and the Maori.

The formal differences between Old New Zealand and War to the Knife reflect to a significant extent the different moments at which they were written. By the 1890s a hegemonic and increasingly distinct settler population had been established by military force and the colony was effectively self-governing, even as innovations such as refrigerated shipping further enmeshed the colony within the imperial economy. Boldrewood’s novel seeks to express this process of colonial consolidation by charting a linear narrative from “Old” to “New” New Zealand and restricting the Pakeha Maori the status of a historical curiosity. Echoing and elaborating upon Pembroke’s

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51 Rolf Boldrewood, “War to the Knife”; or, Tangata Maori (London: Macmillan, 1899), 418. Further quotations will be cited parenthetically in the text.

52 For the growth of New Zealand’s “protein industry,” which began with the first refrigerated shipment to Britain in 1882 and increased steadily until by 1933 it was the source over fifty percent of its imported mutton, lamb and cheese, see Belich, Paradise Reforged, 53-75.
introduction to Old New Zealand, Massinger extravagantly praises Maning’s avatar, the Pakeha Maori Mannering:

Never, at home or abroad, had he encountered a companion like to this one. A wonderful admixture of the heroic and social attributes! The reckless courage of a berserker; the air of born command . . . the iron constitution which could endure, even enjoy, the privations of savage life, joined to an intellect of the highest order; speculative, daring, fully instructed in the latest results of science and sociology, yet capable of presenting every subject upon which he touched in a new and original light; while around the most grave issues and important questions played a vein of humour, comic or cynical, but irresistibly attractive. (195-6)

While the novel celebrates the humorous (i.e. Irish) Mannering for his ability to combine archaism and modernity, “savage life” and “the latest science and sociology,” Massinger remains ultimately unconvinced by the type of settlement he embodies. The Pakeha Maori’s local excellence is seen to come at the expense of the cultural and political touchstone of the imperial:

To any eminence in the wide realms of Greater Britain might he not have ascended . . . had he chosen to select a career and follow it up with the unflinching determination for which he was proverbial! And . . . what had he done? what was he? A leader of men, certainly—a chief in a savage tribe in a scarce known island, at the very end of the world, content to live and die far from the centres of civilization, the home of his race, the refinements of art, and intellectual contact with his peers. (196-7, emphasis added)

Massinger’s unease in part reflects the time when War to the Knife was written, when it was no longer necessary, or even possible, to imagine any kind of sustained Maori authority over the settler population. Yet that unease, explicitly framed as an opposition between the imperial “Greater Britain” and the local obscurity of a “scarce known
island," also identifies the Pakeha Maori as a formal problem. In accordance with the Waverley paradigm, such a strong commitment to the local amounts to secession from the narrative’s linear flow towards modernity.

Emphatically rejecting the Pakeha Maori mode of settlement, Massinger follows up his touristic escapades by enlisting with the colonial forces, “until Massinger began to look upon himself less as a colonist than a soldier” (258). The overt thrust of the Knife is, after all, to retroactively justify the dispossession—even extinction—of the Maori population by military force, to which task the temporal framework of Waverley is ideally suited. The Maori are accordingly compared to the Celtic population of Britain, most explicitly by the missionary with whom Hypatia is conducting her charitable work: “It cannot be denied that the advance of civilization has mainly depended upon conquests and the doctrine of force. In our own lands the ancient Britons were dispossessed by the Romans and the Iberian Celts; these, again, by Jutes and Saxons, who in turn were conquered by the Normans” (309-10). The novel takes pains to emphasize that “the advance of civilization” presumes, and requires, an absolute and forceful temporal break between the archaic and the modern. For this reason, when Massinger first arrives in New Zealand and surveys “the picture of a thriving settlement destined to perform its function notably as a component part of the British Empire,” he exclaims emphatically: “This is hardly progress. . . . It is transformation!” (90, original emphasis)
Yet if what is at stake is finding an appropriate form to articulate the status of a settler colony that remains “a component part of the British Empire” while attaining an increasingly distinct identity, then *War to the Knife* unintentionally highlights the irony of Maoriland by ascribing the sole sources of the colony’s local distinctiveness to those archaic elements that colonization is predicated upon erasing. Massinger chooses to immigrate to New Zealand because ethnology is one of his “strongest predilections” and, unlike Australia, where “an uninteresting aboriginal population” holds “few attributes” of interest, “among the warrior tribes of New Zealand there would be endless types available for a philosophical observer” (59). This ethnological interest merges seamlessly with the exoticism of the colony’s scenery, which is also frozen in time: “Here might one fancy that one of great Nature’s laboratories had been arrested until its beneficent purpose was fulfilled; that, until the missing cycle of centuries had rolled by, some high and glorious development of the Almighty Hand had been delayed” (162). Massinger’s touristic attitude towards “the land of Maui” (60) even extends to his understanding of colonization. Shortly after the protagonist’s arrival in New Zealand, the reader is told “an estate of some sort he was determined to acquire” (91), and by the end of the novel he has indeed established an estate there, remarkably named Waikato Court and Chase. Yet Massinger does not stay to enjoy the spoils of war, but returns to England to repurchase his ancestral home:
Sir Roland had no duties connected with the antipodean estates beyond supervising the sale of wool, frozen mutton, butter, cheese, cocksfoot grass seed, and other annual products, which so excited the admiration of his neighbours and tenants that they could hardly be made to believe that such satisfactory samples could be produced out of England, his frozen lamb, equal to ‘prime Canterbury,’ notwithstanding. (420)

Such a conclusion is in keeping with the logic of the Waverley formula, for it marks the displacement of the local by the imperial, but Massinger’s departure reflects the erasure of the settler as a distinct temporal category. Despite this, that formula seems appropriately keyed to the provincialism of the colony’s economic relationship with late Victorian Britain. That is, Boldrewood’s rigid and somewhat absurd application of Scott to the settler colony at a time of proto-national consolidation anachronistically, but nevertheless usefully, demonstrates that such a temporal framework provides one of the few formal mechanisms available for the Victorian writer to depict and theorize an oceanic imperial world.

5.2. “A Polynesian Walter Scott”

5.2.1. Stevenson Settles in Samoa

Possibly the most famous literary settler of the Victorian period was Robert Louis Stevenson. After coming to the South Pacific for the sake of his health in the late 1880s, he conducted three extensive cruises with his wife and stepson through the region,
before purchasing 400 acres of land on the Samoan island of Upolu in 1890.⁵³ There he employed the proceeds of his writing in constructing a mansion which he named Vailima (“five rivers”), where he settled and would ultimately die in 1894. While living in Samoa, Stevenson sought to find a form appropriate to the complexities of contemporary imperialism in the Pacific. Of the first product of that search, The Beach of Falesá (1892), he wrote with some pride to his literary agent:

> It is the first realistic South Sea story; I mean with real South Sea character and details of life; everybody else who has tried . . . got carried away by the romance and ended in a kind of sugar candy sham epic, and the whole effect was lost. . . . You will know more about the South Seas after you have read my little tale, than if you had read a library. . . . Everything, the life, the place, the dialects . . . the very trades and hopes and fears of the characters, are all novel and may [therefore] be found unwelcome to that great, hulking, bullering whale, the public.⁵⁴

In what follows, I will suggest that Stevenson’s attempt to produce a “realistic South Sea story,” informed by the perspective of the settler and a belief that Pacific Islanders are analogous to Celts, necessitated his rewriting of the Waverley novel in a manner that both built upon and transcended the formal possibilities that were mapped out by Maning and Boldrewood.

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⁵³ Stevenson’s three voyages are referred to by the name of the yachts involved: Casco (1888-9); Equator (1889); and Janet Nicoll (1890). See Claire Harman, Robert Louis Stevenson: A Biography (London: HarperCollins, 2005), 354-91, 402-5. For the purchase and clearing of Vailima, “entirely overgrown and virtually inaccessible except for a stony track that connected it to Apia, three miles away,” see Harman, Robert Louis Stevenson, 396, 405-08.

While living in the Pacific, Stevenson had Walter Scott and his legacy in mind. Soon after arriving in the area, he sent an urgent request to E. L. Burlingame, editor of *Scribner’s Magazine*: “I want (if you can find them) in the British sixpenny edition; if not, in some equally compact and portable shape—Seaside Library for instance; The Waverley Novels entire, or entire as you can get ‘em. . . . [Also] a complete set of my own works.”[^55] Not only was Stevenson reading Scott, but he provided something of a model for Stevenson as a writer. As he half-jokingly observed to his agent, Sidney Colvin, about his progress in writing *Catriona* (1892-3; US title, *David Balfour*), “It is my fair intention to be done with it in three months; which would make me about one half the man Sir Walter was for application and driving the dull pen.”[^56] Stevenson’s contemporaries also found the comparison with Scott sprang readily to mind. As Edmund Gosse memorably observed, after reading Stevenson’s *Ballads* (1890),

> I confess we are all disappointed here. The effort to become a Polynesian Walter Scott is a little too obvious, the inspiration a little too mechanical. . . . The fact seems to be that it is very nice to live in Samoa, but not healthy to write there. Within a three-mile radius of Charing Cross is the literary atmosphere, I suspect.”[^57]  

Gosse’s mocking reference to the “Polynesian Walter Scott” nevertheless touches on two important points informing his Pacific writings, both fictional and non-fictional, that I will develop below. On the one hand, Stevenson followed along with Scott’s imitators in

[^55]: c. 2 April 1889. Ibid., 6.277.  
[^56]: 9 March 1892. Ibid., 7.246.  
[^57]: Cited in Harman, *Robert Louis Stevenson*, 414, original emphasis.
regarding the South Pacific as a Celtic periphery, seeing its indigenous populations as inhabiting a similar colonial context to that of the Highland Scots. On the other hand, Stevenson translated Scott’s “vertical” model of historical emergence through temporal displacement into a “horizontal” model of temporal overlap in order to describe the Pacific present.

Stevenson’s most extensive reflections on the impact of imperialism on the peoples of the South Pacific, *A Foot-Note to History: Eight Years of Trouble in Samoa* (1892) and *In the South Seas* (1896), are set in a South Pacific Celtic periphery. The beginning of the latter work makes clear that he regarded himself as an authoritative observer in significant part because of his knowledge of the subjugation of the Highlands:

> It was . . . important that I had enjoyed in my youth some knowledge of our Scots folk of the Highlands and the Islands. Not much beyond a century has passed since these were in the same convulsive and transitory state as the Marquesans of to-day. In both cases an alien authority enforced, the clans disarmed, the chiefs deposed, new customs introduced, and chiefly that fashion of regarding money as the means and object of existence.  

While the colonization of the Celts recurring in the Pacific, a crucial difference in narrative perspective arises from Stevenson’s perception of the latter as still in a “transitory state” of incomplete subjugation. Stevenson’s writing is further informed by a second history of imperialism, however, for he romanticizes the uncolonized Pacific as existing in a state of nature that he regards as analogous to the state of the Celtic tribes

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who lived beyond the “Roman wall” and the concomitant system of law that continues
to structure western culture.\textsuperscript{59}

But I was now escaped out of the shadow of the Roman empire, under
whose toppling monuments we were all cradled, whose laws and letters
are on every hand of us, constraining and preventing. I was now to see
what men might be whose fathers had never studied Virgil, had never
been conquered by Caesar, and never been ruled by the wisdom of Gaius
or Papinian.\textsuperscript{60}

Here the touristic impulse of Stevenson’s writing appears closely allied to that espoused
by Edward Waverley, for the Pacific offers the promise of crossing the Highland Line, or
Roman wall, and entering into a barbarian past.

Yet that touristic ideology of temporally divergent spaces and cultures is
complicated by the “transitory state” of the Pacific, so that the frisson driving the Pacific
writings centers more on the juxtaposition of these temporalities than their spatial
incommensurability. This interest in temporal juxtaposition is made explicit in the first
chapter of \textit{Foot-Note to History}, which attempts to delineate the aspects of indigenous
culture that have contributed to Samoa’s political unrest:

The story I have to tell is still going on as I write; the characters are alive
and active; it is a piece of contemporary history in the most exact sense.
And yet, for all its actuality and the part played in it by mails and
telegraphs and iron war-ships, the ideas and the manners of the native
actors date back before the Roman Empire. They are Christians, church-

\textsuperscript{59} “He was less interested in Roman law as a subject of study than as a tool for mapping the boundaries and
contours of modernity.” Roslyn Jolly, “Robert Louis Stevenson, Henry Maine, and the Anthropology of
\textsuperscript{60} Stevenson, \textit{South Seas}, 9.
goers, singers of hymns at family worship, handy cricketers; their books are printed in London . . . but in most other points they are the contemporaries of our tattooed ancestors who drove their chariots on the wrong side of the Roman wall. We have passed the feudal system; they are not yet clear of the patriarchal. We are in the thick of the age of finance; they are in a period of communism. And this makes them hard to understand.61

The familiar, “vertical” narrative of stadial economic development, from communalism to finance capital, is flattened out because the Samoans appear equally “contemporary” with modernity and the archaic past. Yet it is also important to emphasize that, to use the terms at the center of my analysis, the Celtic analogy allows Stevenson to understand the imperial in cultural as well economic terms: “The commercial age, in each, succeeding at a bound to an age of war abroad and patriarchal communism at home. In one the cherished practice of tattooing, in the other a cherished costume, prescribed.”62

Faced with the task of narrating such a “convulsive and transitory” moment, therefore, Stevenson does not follow Scott in portraying the inevitable triumph of modernity and the concomitant erasure of archaic indigenous society. Rather, the example of the contemporary Pacific leads him to redefine the imperial as a space of persistent temporal disjunctions. He expresses this concept most clearly in a letter written during one of his cruises: “The Pacific is a strange place, the nineteenth century only

62 Stevenson, South Seas, 12.
exists there in spots; all round, it is a no man’s land of the ages, a stir-about of epochs and races, barbarisms and civilisations, virtues and crimes.”

Undoubtedly the Pacific remains an exotic space for Stevenson, but what is interesting is that his experiences force him to disrupt the rigid binary oppositions of time and place that Scott had so powerfully defined in terms of a single border. The “strangeness” of the Pacific derives from its “stir-about of epochs and races, barbarisms and civilizations,” that is, its multiple and overlapping centers of the imperial and the local.

In attempting to understand the relationship between the form of Stevenson’s Pacific fiction and Stevenson’s conception of Pacific imperialism, it is helpful to consider the colonial politics of Samoa. After settling in Samoa, Stevenson became increasingly notorious in Britain for his strident critique of the island’s governance, which was unique in being administered jointly as a “tridominium” by Britain, Germany, and the United States between 1889 and 1899.

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64 Samoa had been the center of German trading operations in the Pacific since the middle of the century, but it had effectively come under tripartite control from the late 1870s through the signing of various treaties. An uprising led by Mataafa against the puppet king, Tamasese, led the German consul to proclaim the annexation of Samoa, a move that proved unacceptable to the United States in particular and led to the establishment of formal tridominium under the Berlin Act, 1889. This established a Supreme Court comprising a single judge, the Chief Justice of Samoa, who was also designated official advisor to the King of Samoa; it also formalized a municipal council to govern Apia. The President of the council was a Prussian, Baron Senfft von Pilsach, while the Chief Justice was a Swede, Conrad Cedercrantz. See Ann C. Colley, Robert Louis Stevenson and the Colonial Imagination (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), 144-53; Paul M. Kennedy, “Germany and the Samoan Tridominium, 1889-98: A Study in Frustrated Imperialism,” in Germany in the Pacific and Far East, 1870-1914, ed. John A. Moses and Paul M. Kennedy (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1977).
beginning in November 1891, and then in *Foot-Note to History*, he inveighed with increasing bitterness against the colonial leadership and in support of the rebel chief Mataafa and increased Samoan independence. Yet Stevenson’s correspondence reveals the extent to which he also viewed Samoan politics through the lens provided by Scott. In a letter dated “17 August 1745,” he outlined a secret plan for his cousin, Lady Jersey, to meet the “King over the Water” (Mataafa), describing the escapade as “our little adventure into the Waverley Novels.” In a letter to Sidney Colvin describing the same plan, however, Stevenson seems less silly than cynical: “I would not in the least wonder if the visit proved the signal of war. With this I have no concern . . . the thing wholly suits my book [i.e. *Foot-Note to History*] and fits my predilections for Samoa.”

Stevenson’s attitude towards Samoa was thus a complex mix of local commitment and imperial amusement, reflecting his ambivalent status as a settler and informing his understanding of a spatially-stratified imperialism.

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65 Lord Roseberry remarked in 1893 in a speech about his role as Foreign Secretary, “I can transfer myself to the Southern Pacific, where three of the greatest States in the world are endeavouring, not always with apparent success, to administer one of the smallest of islands—the island of Samoa—in close conjunction and alliance with one of our most brilliant men of letters.” Cited in Booth and Mehew, eds., *Letters*, 8.92n16. Stevenson’s newfound prominence also led Oscar Wilde to ruefully observe, “I see that romantic surroundings are the worst surroundings possible for a romantic writer. . . . In Gower Street Stevenson could have written a new *Trois Musquetaires*. In Samoa he wrote letters to *The Times* about Germans.” Cited in Harman, *Robert Louis Stevenson*, 443.


67 Ibid., 7.347.
At the beginning of the chapter in *Foot-Note to History*, “The Elements of Discord: Foreign,” Stevenson introduces Samoa’s competing colonial forces by way of an imagined journey through the municipal (that is, tridominium) territory of Apia: the reader “will find more of the history of Samoa spread before his eyes in that excursion, than has yet been collected in the blue-books or the white-books of the world.”  

The bridge of Mulivai “is a frontier . . . behind, Germans are supreme; beyond, with but few exceptions, all is Anglo-Saxon” (388-9). While walking through the town, the reader encounters a bustling population, “many varieties of white” and “all ranks of natives,” but comes to the realization that the latter do not live in this place: “The handful of whites have everything; the natives walk in a foreign town” (389, 90). The reason soon becomes apparent:

He will remember that he is in the Eleele Sa, the “Forbidden Soil” or Neutral Territory of the treaties. . . . At the boundary of the Eleele Sa, Europe ends, Samoa begins. Here, then, is a singular state of affairs: all the money, luxury, and business of the kingdom centred in one place; that place excepted from the native government and administered by whites for whites; and the whites themselves holding it not in common but in hostile camps, so that it lies between them like a bone between two dogs, each growling, each clutching his own end. (390-1) 

Stevenson’s guided walk through Apia attunes the reader to the spatial stratification of imperial power, and his stance as a settler enables and motivates him to cross the “boundary” between the local and the imperial. Indeed, his concept of the “Foot-Note to

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68 Stevenson, *Foot-Note to History*, 388. Further quotations will be cited parenthetically in the text.
History” bears a family resemblance to Maning’s “parenthetical” story, for both suggest a commitment to local particularity that to some extent disaggregates that narrative from the homogenizing narrative of imperial expansion. Yet the tour of Apia also points to a further complication of the formal possibilities of settlement, for it draws attention to the fragmentation of imperial power—“it lies between them like a bone between two dogs”—between multiple centers. That is, the Pacific setting, with its small territories, diverse and disparate population groups, and competing imperial interests, requires Stevenson to disrupt the ternary structure of imperial—settler—local that is the hallmark of the settler colony.

Despite Stevenson’s sustained polemic against the imperial governance of Samoa, and his identification with the Celtic Pacific, he maintained strong link to Britain’s literary culture and he lived the life of a colonial planter. One reason for choosing to settle in Samoa was because it was one of the few Pacific islands where the mail steamers of the Oceanic Line halted en route between Australia and San Francisco. Stevenson’s letters could reach the United States in two weeks and Britain in one month,69 and he conducted an extensive correspondence with agents and publishers in both nations, as well as with other writers. At the beginning of In the South Seas, he

69 Regular mail service by steamship was established between New Zealand, Sydney and San Francisco in the mid-1870s. The mail ships sailed every fourth week, with mail on average taking forty-one days to reach London from Auckland. Howard Robinson, Carrying British Mails Overseas (New York: New York University Press, 1964), 215-6.
directly invoked the privilege as well as the challenge of settling in the Pacific as a Victorian writer:

I began to prepare these pages at sea, on a third cruise, in the trading steamer Janet Nicoll. If more days are granted me, they shall be passed where I have found life most pleasant and man most interesting; the axes of my black boys are already clearing the foundations of my future house; and I must learn to address readers from the uttermost parts of the sea. The sight of his “black boys” laboring to lay the foundations of his settlement is a reminder of the complicated politics of Stevenson’s local commitment. At the same time, the certainty that his writing and its reception must be modified by inhabiting “the uttermost parts of the sea” suggests he did not perceive the trade and communication networks maintaining his links to Britain to be entirely homogenizing forces.

The complex intersections of the imperial and the local that Stevenson’s Pacific non-fiction describes are also reflected in his Pacific fiction. That fiction is distinctive for its attempt to encompass a variety of spatio-temporal logics and its refusal to resolve the resulting tensions by appealing to the inevitable expansion of modernity. It is a fiction,

\[\text{\textsuperscript{70}}\text{Stevenson, \textit{South Seas}, 5. Stevenson’s correspondence about Vailima reveals a similar mix of ironical and unselfconscious colonial rhetoric: “On my ancestral acres, which I purchased six months ago from a blind Scots blacksmith, you will please address me until further notice. The name of the ancestral acres is going to be Vailima. . . . The ancestral acres run to upwards of three hundred . . . they are all at the present moment under a trackless covering of magnificent forest which would be worth a great deal if it grew beside a railway terminus. To me as it stands it represents a handsome deficit. Obliging natives from the Cannibal Islands are now cutting it down at my expense. . . . But if it can only be built as now intended, it will be with genuine satisfaction and a growunded [sic] pride that I shall welcome you at the steps of my Old Colonial Home, when you land from the steamer on a long-merited holiday.” To Edward L. Burlingame, 13 July 1890. Booth and Meheu, eds., \textit{Letters}, 6.393.}\]
in other words, of “uneven development,” such as Fredric Jameson associates with modernist fiction:

In an age of monopolies (and trade unions), of increasing institutionalized collectivization, there is always a lag. Some parts of the economy are still arcaic, handicraft enclaves; some are more modern and futuristic than the future itself. Modern art, in this respect, drew its power and its possibilities from being a backwater and an arcaic holdover within a modernizing economy: it glorified, celebrated, and dramatized older forms of individual production which the new mode of production was elsewhere on the point of displacing and blotting out. . . . Modernism must thus be seen as uniquely corresponding to an uneven moment of social development, or to what Ernst Bloch called the ‘simultaneity of the nonsimultaneous,’ the ‘synchronicity of the nonsynchronous’ . . . the coexistence of realities from radically different moments of history—handicrafts alongside the great cartels, peasant fields with the Krupp factories or the Ford plant in the distance.  

If Jameson’s Modernism is defined by the formal reflection of “the coexistence of realities from radically different moments of history,” then it is not surprising that Stevenson’s attempts to write what he claimed to be the “first realistic South Sea story” have been described in terms of proto-modernism. Yet, the language of temporality encompasses the cultural and political as well as the economic, and as his non-fiction indicates, he imagines the multiple facets of these diverse temporalities to be geographically stratified across the Pacific.

72 See, for example, Alan Sandison, Robert Louis Stevenson and the Appearance of Modernism: A Future Feeling (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1996).
5.2.2. Interrupted Imperialism in *The Ebb-Tide*

Stevenson’s Pacific aesthetic of uneven development, focused through settler figures such as traders and beach-combers, attained its fullest scope in *The Ebb-Tide* (1893-4), a short novella he co-authored with his stepson, Lloyd Osbourne. The story is divided into two parts, “The Trio” and “The Quartette,” ostensibly in reference to the number of principal characters. Those musical terms also signal Stevenson’s formal awareness and control over his narrative, highlighting the self-containment of the two episodes and the lack of continuity between them. This self-containment proved upsetting to the anonymous reviewer in the *Saturday Review*:

> The suggestion of the undeveloped is a radical weakness in the story. . . . Brilliant as are the successive incidents of the narrative of the voyage that forms the first part . . . there is something inoperative, something of sterility, when looked at collectively and retrospectively from the final scene of the story. They have not the air of inevitableness. They seem to have been designed independently of the end in view, and tend towards no tremendous culmination.

These complaints, of “undevelopment” and of a lack of “tremendous culmination,” reflect *Ebb-Tide’s* resolute disruption of form and content that the Waverley novels, and Stevenson’s own romances, had led his reviewers to expect.

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73 Osbourne’s contribution appears to have been minimal. Stevenson, apparently worried about the reception of such a bleak story, at one point suggested to his agent that his relative not be credited with its joint authorship: “I propose, if it be not too late, to delete Lloyd’s name. He has nothing to do with the last half. The first we wrote together, as the beginning of a long yarn. The second is entirely mine; and I think it rather unfair on the young man to couple his name with so infamous a work.” Booth and Mehew, eds., *Letters*, 9.155-6.

The “Trio” begins “at the far end of the town of Papeete . . . on the beach,”75 with three down-and-out European characters—the main protagonist, Robert Herrick, alias Hay; Davis, alias Brown, an American, “known to be a master-mariner in some disgrace”; and Huish, a “vulgar and bad-hearted cockney clerk” (27)—who seize on the chance of escape offered by the arrival of the schooner Farallone. The ship’s white crew has died of smallpox, and the three volunteer to take their place, intending to divert the ship to Peru and sell its cargo of champagne. The plan founders, however, when they realize that the cargo is largely bottled water and they have unwittingly inherited a worthless floating insurance. The “Quartette” begins at this point, with their sighting of a mysterious island where they surmise is the center of a secret pearl-diving operation. The diving operation is run by the mysterious Attwater, a Kurtz-like figure whose indigenous Kanaka workforce has been decimated by smallpox, and the three sailors concoct a plan to kill him and steal his pearls. Attwater thwarts their plan, first by winning Herrick over and later by killing Huish, and the novel concludes abruptly with Davis and Herrick working in his service. As this plot summary implies, the two parts of the story are not joined at all smoothly but exist in a more static, end-stopped

relationship to each other. The nonlinearity of the plot, in other words, reflects the characters’ uneven movements through the uneven temporalities of the Pacific.

The Pacific of *Ebb-Tide* has been thoroughly pervaded and damaged by imperialism. The opening sentence sets the tone for a grim analysis of colonial contact—“Throughout the island world of the Pacific, scattered men of many European races and from almost every grade of society carry activity and disseminate disease” (123)—and trade (“activity”) and disease remain yoked throughout *The Ebb-Tide*. Because disease is spread by the trading ships that link the Pacific with the distant powers of Europe and the Americas, illness serves as a marker of the reach of those networks. Hence the reader’s introduction to French-controlled Papeete is by way of “the sound of men coughing, and strangling as they coughed”: “Not long before, a ship from Peru had brought an influenza, and it now raged in the island” (128). Yet neither disease nor its analogue, trade, is *evenly* disseminated in the region. Rather than marking the expansion of homogeneous, empty time, trade and disease are spatially and temporally variable events in the Pacific that reflect the uneven effects of imperialism within the region. This is usefully illustrated by the *Farallone*, which arrives flying “the yellow flag, the emblem of pestilence” (134). At first, it appears as if the pestilence has been a random event that has interrupted the otherwise smooth flow of commerce, and to take over command of the ship the must make a pretence of their willingness to restore imperial trade to its customary efficiency: “In the stern . . . sat Herrick, dressed in a fresh rig of slops, his
brown beard trimmed to a point, a pile of paper novels on his lap, and nursing the while between his feet a chronometer, for which they had exchanged that of the Farallone, long since run down and the rate lost” (152). The new chronometer, essential to the ship’s navigation, is appropriately paired with the “pile of paper novels,” for both invoke the “homogeneous, empty time” of Greater Britain. The Farallone thus appears restored to its place within the homogenizing network of imperial trade, which the three adventurers hope to exploit for their own profit.

As the voyage gets under way, however, the new order rapidly begins to break down again. Herrick, who “carrie[s] the character of one thoroughly incompetent” (126), demonstrates that he has not been transformed by responsibility when he first takes the wheel and forgets to record the ship’s progress: “here was the old incompetence; the slate must be filled up by guess” (164). Worse flaws of character are demonstrated by Huish and Davis, however, who soon begin to drink the cargo, and whose continual drunkenness appears to demonstrate their inherent unsuitability for imperial service:

The first evening set the model for those that were to follow. Two cases of champagne scarce lasted the four-and-twenty hours, and almost the whole was drunk by Huish and the captain. Huish seemed to thrive on the excess. . . . But with Davis things went worse. In the drooping, unbuttoned figure that sprawled all day upon the lockers, tippling and reading novels . . . it would have been hard to recognize the vigorous seaman of Papeete roads. He kept himself reasonably well in hand till he had taken the sun and yawned and blotted through his calculations; but from the moment he rolled up the chart, his hours were passed in slavish self-indulgence or in hoggish slumber. (164-5)
While Davis can maintain course, “blott[ing] through his calculations,” he leads the ship to the brink of catastrophe when he orders the sails set as a squall is about to hit. These episodes reflect the ineradicability of their character weaknesses, but they also raise the possibility that the cargo itself is able to generate unpredictable effects, infecting Huish and Davis like a plague and causing the ship to deviate from its course and possibly out of imperial time.

Herrick becomes alienated from his partners in crime because of their drunkenness, and this leads him into friendship with the kanaka crew. From one crewmember, whom they had nicknamed Uncle Ned but who reveals to Herrick that his real name is Taveeta, Herrick learns the story of the previous voyage of the Farallone. His tale suggests that, far from being an aberration, the whites’ drunkenness is a recurring phenomenon: “The ship had scarce cleared the Golden Gates before the captain and mate had entered on a career of drunkenness, which was scarcely interrupted by their malady and only closed by death” (169). The vessel had wandered the ocean, “they knew not whither,” and on landing on an island in the Dangerous Archipelago the two sailors had blundered into a village devastated by smallpox. Herrick is horrified: “Sickness fell upon him at the image thus called up; and when he compared it with the scene in which himself was acting, and considered the doom that seemed to brood upon the schooner, a horror that was almost superstitious fell upon him” (170). Herrick’s horror stems from the possibility that history is repeating itself, and that they will meet a
similarly sordid fate. In addition, the cyclical time that governs the *Farallone* also scrambles the reader’s expectations of the temporality of empire, for its oceanic wanderings appearing closer to Maning’s digressive time than Boldrewood’s linear progressiveness.

Before concluding the “Trio,” Stevenson applies one further turn of the screw to the scenario of diseased, digressive imperial trade. Despite Davis and Huish sobering up, it soon becomes apparent to them that the *Farallone*’s cargo cannot be transported to Peru or its intended destination. Huish opens one last bottle of champagne, only to discover that it is full of water:

> The mug passed round; each sipped, each smelt of it; each stared at the bottle in its glory of gold paper as Crusoe may have stared at the footprint; and their minds were swift to fix upon a common apprehension. The difference between a bottle of champagne and a bottle of water is not great; between a shipload of one or of the other lay the whole scale from riches to ruin. (176)

The image of each adventurer as a Robinson Crusoe is heavily ironized, as Stevenson recasts the prototypical capitalist individual as the dupe of an insurance scam. The *Farallone*, they surmise, was sent by its owner to the Pacific with the express purpose of being lost from the sight of capitalism: “One thing,” Davis observes, “this explains the Kanaka crew. If you’re going to lose a ship, I would ask no better myself than a Kanaka crew” (178). From the perspective of the schooner’s owner, the Pacific is valuable not as an emerging market for trade or source of raw materials, or as a blank space on the map—“Nobody wants to lose a schooner; they want to lose her *on her course*” (178-9,
original emphasis)—but as an imperial space whose uneven temporality allows trade to go awry even while it remains on course. Stevenson reinforces this point by also allowing the story to become “lost on its course” at this moment. Rather than continue to follow the developing story of the *Farallone*, it abruptly switches focus when Taveeta sights an island that doesn’t appear on their charts.

The “Quartette,” which begins with the discovery of the mysterious island, neatly parallels the “Trio” insofar as both narrate the unsettling effect of local conditions upon imperial conduct. Nevertheless, there is virtually no continuity between the two sections beyond the persons of the three adventurers. According to their chart they are “in the midst of a white field of paper” (184), a blankness that suggests the need for a new form of writing to describe what they have found. The narrative difficulty posed by the mysterious island is underscored by the navigational directory Davis consults:

*New Island.* According to M. Delille this island, which from private interests would remain unknown, lies, it is said, in lat. 12°49′10″ S. long. 133°6′ W. In addition to the position above given, Commander Matthews H.M.S. *Scorpion*, states that an island exists in lat. 12°0′ S. long. 133°16′W. This must be the same, if such an island exists, which is very doubtful, and totally disbelieved in by South Sea traders. (185)

The description, with its hints of mystery and profit, sends a strong signal that the narrative is about to veer into full-blown romance. Yet the comment of the Oxford-educated Herrick, “It’s rather in the conditional mood,” equally suggests that the island’s inability to be pinned down to specific spatial coordinates foreshadows that the
The unfolding adventure will be an ambiguous romance at best. As shall be seen, the ambiguities of the “Quartette” arise because it is a narrative of settlement, and the island’s multiple coordinates anticipate the tension between local and imperial temporalities that will come to the fore there.

As the Farallone enters the lagoon around the island, the adventurers are confronted by a mystery of settlement. Far from finding it in the state of nature, or peopled only by “natives,” they are faced with the hallmarks of empire:

From a flagstaff at the pierhead, the red ensign of England was displayed. . . . The place had the indescribable yet unmistakable appearance of being in commission; yet there breathed from it a sense of desertion that was almost poignant. . . . Only, on the top of the beach and hard by the flagstaff, a woman of exorbitant stature and as white as snow was to be seen beckoning with uplifted arm. (190)

The gigantic white woman turns out, on closer inspection, to be the figurehead from a shipwreck, but even more than the flag, the “leprous whiteness” of this beached, bleached Britannia signifies that the adventurers have entered another space of disease and trade. Yet when the trio meets Attwater, who is running a pearl fishing venture on the island with impressed kanaka labor, he makes it abundantly clear that his actions are not solely governed by economic concerns. Attwater is a “huge fellow,” a Cambridge graduate and a religious zealot, as well as a ruthless capitalist. Despite the similarity of their educational backgrounds, Herrick has difficulty comprehending his Kurtz-like host: “he laboured in vain . . . to adjust again into any kind of focus with itself, his picture of the man beside him” (203). Attwater is as hard to locate as the island he
inhabits because his investment in it exists simultaneously in multiple temporalities, simultaneously local and imperial. He found the island by accident, he tells Herrick, “And since then I have had a business, and a colony, and a mission of my own. I was a man of the world before I was a Christian; I’m a man of the world still, and I make my mission pay” (204). Attwater is both a colonist and a trader, and his indecipherability arises because it is not clear which aspect is subordinate to the other. On the one hand, as a trader, “a man of the world,” he is attuned to the temporality of international capitalism. On the other hand, he is consumed by his local, colonial project of conversion and discipline. His project, nothing less than “making a new people here” (204), is sustained by unflinching Calvinist rhetoric and uncompromising violence. The dual faces of Attwater, the local and the imperial, are inseparable, but while his local evangelizing clearly assists in knitting the island into the global economy, that evangelizing also symbolically disrupts that economy by halting the adventurers’ movement across the Pacific.

The educated but ineffectual Herrick has already provided a range of cultural images that invoke the mixing of local and imperial temporalities in the Pacific. His assumed name brings to mind that poet’s most famous work—“To the Virgins, To Make Much of Time”—and he carries a copy of the Aeneid that “has been made native in the memory; so that a phrase of Virgil speaks not so much of Mantua or Augustus, but of
English places and the student’s own irrevocable youth” (125). Attwater is similarly educated, but his lack of sentimentality is signaled by the fact that, like everywhere else in Stevenson’s Pacific touched by trade, his island has been devastated by plague. Whereas smallpox only killed the Europeans aboard the Farallone, here it has wiped out the vast majority of Attwater’s workforce of indigenous converts. “Twenty-nine deaths and thirty-one cases, out of thirty-three souls upon the island.—That’s a strange way to calculate, Mr Hay, is it not? Souls! I never say it but it startles me” (194). Attwater’s arithmetic, which “calculates” in “souls,” unites his investment in imperial trade and his local interest in conversion. His comment reflects how plague (and the forces that it stands for) has devastated and reconstituted the content of the local, yet it the conclusion of the story demonstrates that the imperial cannot fully account for what is happening at that local level, or even guarantee its effects. This doubleness is reflected in Attwater’s appearance: “A complexion, naturally dark, had been tanned in the island to a hue hardly distinguishable from that of a Tahitian; only his manners and movements, and the living force that dwelt in him, like fire in flint, betrayed the European” (192). Visibly straddling the global and the local, the figure of Attwater embodies perhaps the most scathing critique of the settler colonial project in Victorian fiction.

The classically-educated Herrick thus proves to be an unwitting descendant of the Pakeha Maori: “High up the Wanganui river a copy of Shakespear [sic], a classical dictionary, and a stone for grinding maize were shown to me by a chief, as the property of his former Pakeha Maori.” Thomson, Story of New Zealand, I.301.
At the local level, Attwater is motivated by the burning clarity of his religious convictions to reform and purify his subjects. He regards the production of disciplined island workers as an “educational” task (215), but he also proves able to “educate” the imperial wanderers Herrick and Davis. To Herrick, crushed by a sense of his own uselessness after the failed attempt to steal the pearls, Attwater’s certainty offers a hope of redemption:

Here I am. I am broken crockery; I am a burst drum; the whole of my life is gone to water; I have nothing left that I believe in, except my living horror of myself. Why do I come to you? I don’t know; you are cold, cruel, hateful; and I hate you, or think I hate you. But you are an honest man, an honest gentleman. I put myself, helpless, in your hands. (230)

In contrast to a life “gone to water,” Attwater offers the apparent stability of place. Davis is brought to a similar state of penitence after Attwater pins him against the enormous figure of the white woman with his sharp shooting: “immediately above the middle of his forehead, a black hole marred the whiteness of the figure-head” (248). The final chapter, “A Tail-Piece,” immediately follows this scene, and is set a month later. Attwater’s business partner is arriving on another schooner, and Herrick sets fire to the Farallone in anticipation of leaving the island. Yet Davis the penitent seems resolved to settle: “Well . . . you mayn’t just see the way that I view it in, but I’d ‘most rather stay here upon this island. I found peace here, peace in believing. Yes, I guess this island is about good enough for John Davis” (251-2). If the island offers the possibility of redemption through being anchored to a place, Stevenson’s portrait of Attwater
nevertheless highlights the physical and ontological violence that has been necessary to create and sustain such a possibility of “peace.” The abrupt ending of *Ebb-Tide*, which concludes at the point where the island is to be temporarily reconnected with imperial time, also underscores the extent to which the semi-autonomous temporality of the local works to disrupt, but not completely destroy, the linear narrative that reflects the global expansion of Greater Britain.

5.3. “*Not the Stevenson We Love*”: *The Pacific Form of Late Victorian Fiction*

One anonymous reviewer of *Ebb-Tide* concluded plaintively, “This is not the Stevenson we love, but it is something to be read and remembered, nevertheless.”

Certainly, this disrupted story of settlement in the Pacific appears to have left Walter Scott far behind. Yet that apparent distance is belied by a letter Stevenson wrote the day after completing the novella, where he recounted that morning’s experience of feeling transported almost bodily from Samoa to Scotland:

> I was standing out on the little verandah in front of my room this morning, and there went through me or over me a heave of extraordinary and apparently baseless emotion. I literally staggered. And then the explanation came, and I knew that I had found a frame of mind and body that belonged to Scotland, and particularly to the neighborhood of Callander. Very odd these identities of sensation, and the world of connotations implied; Highland huts, and peat smoke, and the brown swirling rivers, and wet clothes, and whisky, and the romance of the past,

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and that indescribable bite of the whole thing at a man’s heart, which is—or rather lies at the bottom of—a story.\textsuperscript{78}

In a sense, what I have been pursuing in this chapter has been an analysis of the logic behind “identities of sensation, and the world of connotations implied” between Scott’s account of imperialism as temporal modernization and homogenization, and later writers who worked with and against that temporal model in trying to narrate the settler colony. With \textit{Ebb-Tide}, Stevenson outlined a narrative technique capable of transporting the formal signature of settler temporality into the mainstream of Victorian literature.

In response to the bewildered and largely negative reviews of \textit{Ebb-Tide}, novelist and critic Israel Zangwill mounted a defense of its method and concerns. One of the strengths of the story, he claims, is what he terms “the romance of the modern”:

Yet another of Mr. Stevenson’s \textit{Leit-motifs} is the romance of the modern, which exists this very day contemporaneously with type-writers and county-councils, though it would have been a greater achievement to have found it here at home and not gone questing for it to the South Seas for it as for a buried treasure.

The treasure lies here, under our eyes, at our very feet. . . . Never was there more romance than to-day, with its ferment of problems and propaganda, its cosmopolitan movement, its contrasts of wealth and poverty, its shock and interactions of populations and creeds, its clash of mediaeval and modern. The ends of the ages meet in every Atlantic liner.\textsuperscript{79}

While Zangwill astutely discerns what is distinctive about the novella, he critiques Stevenson for neglecting more metropolitan sources of the “romance of the modern.” It

\textsuperscript{78} 6 June 1893. Booth and Mehew, eds., \textit{Letters}, 9.91.

has been my contention, however, that it was in the Pacific that the “shock and interactions of populations and creeds,” understood as the “clash of mediaeval and modern,” became apparent to Stevenson, precisely because it was there that settlement—as a narrative position and as an experience—brought these contradictions into focus without being able to easily resolve them in the name of progress.

Stevenson is no anti-colonial revolutionary, but he is perhaps unique amongst Victorian writers for the extent that his fiction reflects his awareness of the violence and complexity of imperial expansion, and his own compromised yet critical place in that process. That awareness stems in part from a complex series of intersecting biographical factors, including his Scottish heritage, his marriage to an American, and his decision to settle in the Pacific. It is also shaped by the unique geography of the Pacific, for the combination of small islands and the presence of so many western powers presented a more complex political and narrative setting than New Zealand had for Maning and Boldrewood. Furthermore, the generic inheritance of Scott also followed Stevenson to the Pacific, where it proved of mixed use in trying to write about the region and in trying to make that project legible in Britain. One brief scene from *Ebb-Tide* highlights this process of generic reappropriation that this Pacific form of settlement necessitates. During his guided tour of the island, Attwater shows Herrick a storage shed filled with the detritus of wrecked ships, which “seized on the mind of Herrick with its multiplicity and disorder of romantic things”:
Therein were cables, windlasses and blocks of every size and capacity; cabin windows and ladders; rusty tanks, a companion hutch; a binnacle with its brass mountings and its compass idly pointing, in the confusion and dusk of that shed, to a forgotten pole; ropes, anchors, harpoons, a blubber-dipper of copper, green with years, a steering wheel, a tool-chest with the vessel’s name upon the top, the Asia: a whole curiosity-shop of sea-curios, gross and solid, heavy to lift, ill to break, bound with brass and shod with iron. (201)

Responding to Herrick’s imaginative tumult, Attwater observes, “Yes, [it makes] a powerful impression. . . . The ruins of an empire would leave me frigid, when a bit of an old rail that an old shellback leaned on in the middle watch, would bring me up all standing” (201-2). Staring at the melancholy detritus of romance, however, the two Oxbridge graduates are not looking at the collapse of the imperial system. What is symbolized in this scene—“And does Mr Hay find a parable?” Attwater asks—is the conclusion to the Victorian story of settlement, that is, the cultural fragmentation of the empire in the very moment of the extension of its commercial reach.

If Stevenson’s formal innovations were in response to the specificity of the South Pacific, which he understood in terms of temporal heterogeneity, those innovations were shorn of their local immediacy by their transmission to Britain and subsequent publication. Because of this delocalizing effect, those innovations became available as generalizable literary techniques. Thus, in the process of “learning to address [Victorian] readers from the uttermost parts of the sea,” Stevenson became a vector for metropolitan formal change. If at first glance the mail steamers of the Oceanic Line only seemed to keep him informed of metropolitan innovations, another look reveals those same
steamers enabled the transmission of Stevenson’s local innovations into the core of late Victorian writing. Arthur Quiller-Couch reflected on Stevenson’s death, “Surely another age will wonder over this curiosity of letters—that for five years the needle of literary endeavour in Great Britain has quivered towards a little island in the South Pacific, as to its magnetic pole.” The image is useful, for Stevenson’s writings on and about “a little island in the South Pacific,” rather than “idly pointing . . . to a forgotten pole,” provide one particularly powerful example of how the project of settlement subtly helped change the course of Victorian literary culture.

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Biography

Philip Steer was born in New Zealand in 1979 and studied at Victoria University of Wellington, where he received a BSc in Chemistry in 2001, a BA with Honors (first class) in English literature in 2003, and an MA (with distinction) in English literature in 2004. His MA thesis was titled, “Disputed Ground: The Construction of Pakeha Identity in Novels of the New Zealand Wars.”

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He received a Fulbright Graduate Student award to study at Duke. At Duke, his awards included a James B. Duke Fellowship (2004) and the Department of English’s Award for Outstanding Graduate Teaching (2008). He will begin an appointment as Assistant Professor of Australasian Literature at Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, in Fall 2009.