
# THE IMPERIAL WOMAN'S COLONISING MISSION: MAKING SPACE IN THREE COLONIAL CRISES

A Thesis submitted by

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# Abstract

The aim of this thesis is to apply a postcolonial gender perspective to the writings of British women during crises in the nineteenth century. Using this theoretical framework, this thesis addresses a gap in research as it explores the perspectives and actions of women across three colonial outposts of the British Empire, to understand how crises in a concentrated span of time affected the roles and perceptions of these women. By tracking patterns and inconsistencies across the case studies of conflicts in Australia, India and New Zealand, the thesis highlights how crises could and did affect each other, providing incentive and space for British women to grow into roles previously denied them in a male-dominated world. Having positioned the women within the intersectional categories of class, race and gender, this thesis provides a wider purview of the barriers British women encountered and how Victorian femininity was used to create space for their politically independent perceptions, new opportunities and public voices. Crises are found to have been an opportunity for British women to adapt and change their actions and perceptions. This examination of select diaries, memoirs and letters gives insight into how these literate women manipulated and expanded the category of femininity to promote their wide range of capabilities.

# Certification of Thesis

This Thesis is entirely the work of Anne Sengstock except where otherwise acknowledged. The work is original and has not previously been submitted for any other award, except where acknowledged.

Principal Supervisor: Dr Libby Connors.

Associate Supervisor: Dr Catherine Dewhirst.

Student and supervisors signatures of endorsement are held at the University.

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# Chapter 1.

# Introduction

## Aims and Objectives

Within this thesis British women's writings during imperial crises of the nineteenth century are examined, to determine how their actions and perceptions evolved and were influenced by each successive clash. Furthermore, women's roles in the crises are studied to identify how such conflicts allowed them to navigate the inherent contradictions of the British Empire, particularly concerning domesticity, politics and the silences which were encouraged by the imperial and male-dominated culture across the colonial outposts of Australia, India and New Zealand. During the nineteenth century, the far-reaching expansion of the British Empire provoked a number of crises in colonial outposts. This included conflicts such as the Upper Canada Rebellion (1837) and the Anglo-Zulu War (1879), with multiple crises against others also interspersed throughout the nineteenth century as the Empire fought to expand their trading routes and accumulation of land. Such a rich history has often been investigated for the overarching themes of the Empire, including the political, military and economic factors as events transpired across the globe; the 'smaller' factors at play, such as women's experiences across the Empire, have often been relegated to the margins of these texts rather than given equal consideration. Yet the experiences of the conflicts in the colonial outposts, which was largely the province of men in roles such as soldiers, outraged settlers and administrators, was also shared by the British women who accompanied them. It shall be hypothesised that the crises of the Eureka Stockade, India's First War of Independence (the Indian 'Mutiny') and the New Zealand Land Wars and Parihaka invasion (the Māori Wars) were a factor which enabled some British women to manipulate socially-constructed roles as well as assisting their evolving expression of forthright opinions within their writings. The three chosen crises, either between the imperial populace and Indigenous people or that of the colonialists against the 'establishment', have been selected for the importance of their respective proto-nations and the British Empire overall. This thesis

hypothesises that these crises were crucial to British women adapting and changing their actions and perceptions; each successive clash providing further incentive and space for women to grow into roles previously denied them in the male-dominated British world. Questions guiding this analysis include such queries as to how expansive did women's actions become, not only with regards to their experience with firearms, but also the effort of straddling the fine line between safety and active participant in crises? How did British women's perceptions of conflict vary between these three colonial outposts? Furthermore, how did their perceptions inform women's outlook regarding both the international and national context of the crises, as well as that of the political decisions made by both the metropole and colonial Governments?

This thesis explores how categorisations that were policed by society could be manipulated and redefined over a relatively short span of time during crises. By focusing on the crises of the Eureka Stockade of 1854, India's First War of Independence in 1857-1859, as well as the Land Wars and invasion of Parihaka in New Zealand of 1843-1881, a concise examination of conflicts at the height of Queen Victoria's reign can be undertaken. This thesis aims to identify the limits on women's roles and show how crises and time affected the negotiation and expansion of their roles within Victorian culture. It will do this by investigating imperial women's actions through a selection of their firsthand accounts and texts, which have been chosen for their interaction with, and focus on, respective crises. Times of crisis challenged gender, class and race norms and often placed extra pressure on the populace to monitor how these categories intersected and maintain social boundaries, in an effort to retain imperial control.[1] Gender and class relations were being redefined throughout these decades; men were increasingly defined by physicality and aggression, and women's identity too was being reshaped, through the constructed and fluctuating boundaries of domesticity and femininity.[2] From elite and upper class women's writings it shall be determined the affect each crisis had on the other, as well as the opportunities these conflicts allowed women to explore, including that of public expression concerning political ideologies. How women's identity changed over time

[1] Philippa Levine, 'Introduction: Why Gender and Empire?' in Philippa Levine (ed.), *Gender and Empire,* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006, pp. 6-7.
[2] John Tosh, 'Masculinities in an Industrializing Society: Britain, 1800-1914', *Journal of British Studies,* Vol. 44, No. 2, 2005, p. 337.

in relation to the intersectional categories of class and race as a result of these three crises shall also be investigated, to determine British women's adaptability and evolving perception of their role and voice within both the colony and the British Empire.

Women's diaries, memoirs, letters and poetry have been selected to investigate how they interacted within the socially acceptable roles of domesticity and subsidiary partners to their husbands and male family members, and more importantly how they manipulated and expanded such categories of femininity to promote their wide range of capabilities. By broadening the close audience that normally shared these private texts or writing directly to society through newspapers and published books, women's experiences and perceptions were preserved even as they increased society's knowledge of events. In some situations this was a direct challenge, particularly if printed in sources with wide circulation at the time, to the overwhelming output of media stereotyping women's fate during crises and effective refashioning or muting of women's own accounts and deeds.[3] The media, particularly newspapers, had assisted in bringing the crises home with a feeling of immediacy and forged a key connection between outposts and the metropole; yet it was women's writings which exposed the fallacy of relying on such male-dominated texts and their over-reliance on depicting the vulnerability of women. The Eureka Stockade did not involve fighting the Indigenous populace, allowing for a greater identification of how class and gender intersected for British women when not threatened by race. The crises of the Indian Mutiny and the New Zealand Land Wars and Parihaka invasion were both conflicts in which suppression of Indigenous uprisings were key, although the New Zealand study also provides insight into how women fared when they felt threatened by both Māori as well as the colonial authorities. It is in these instances that women's participation or knowledge provides depth for our understanding of how gender, class and race intersected during moments of upheaval. It is the overarching aim of this thesis to explore the social construct of femininity and how gender relations in terms of domesticity, politics and silences evolved during the nineteenth century through select women's writings across the British Empire. Asking questions such as how British

[3] Alison Blunt, 'Embodying war: British women and domestic defilement in the Indian 'Mutiny', 1857-1858', *Journal of Historical Geography,* Vol. 26, No. 3, 2000, p. 423.

women expanded their normal domestic roles in response to conflict, how their political opinions became more pronounced within their writings, and in what ways the relegation of women's actions and perceptions to silences were countered, highlight how women made space in these three specific colonial crises. Furthermore, the fluidity of women's roles in the three locales are explored, highlighting how the instability of crises and new spaces created an opportunity for the metropole's social composition to be reworked and redefined as the need arose.

After the second chapter of the Literature Review, the subsequent chapters each follow a certain conflict. This begins with the Australian Eureka Stockade in chapter three, in which four women's writings are used to examine their interaction with the crisis that came to a climax on 3 December 1854. The selected women are Ellen Frances Young (1810-1872, Lady Jane Hotham (1817-1907), Martha Clendinning (1822-1908) and Margaret Brown Johnston (1831-1888). Both Hotham and Brown Johnston were married to figures of colonial authority and this position is reflected in the writings within their respective journal and diary; as the wife of the Governor of Victoria, Hotham in particular was well placed to identify how her husband's decisions affected the colony.[4] The grievance which ignited the conflict was the exorbitant licence tax demanded of diggers, although the frequent tax hunts and lack of men's political enfranchisement in particular were also causal factors for the crisis on the Ballarat goldfields.[5] Both Young and Clendinning were sympathetic of the diggers' plight, even if they diverged in opinion over the chosen militant approach and its violent outcome; Young was an outspoken poet who wrote quite often for the newspapers to share her political perceptions, and Clendinning a lady of business and Doctor's wife who kept a journal to express her thoughts.[6]

[4] Lady Jane Hotham, *Journal*, Hull University Archives, Hull, U DDHO/10/42. This archival material is part of a much wider parent collection, Papers of the Hotham Family of Scorborough and South Dalton; Margaret Brown Johnston, *op. cit.*, *Diary 1854-1856*, MS, National Library of Australia, Canberra, 13610, Box 4018/2.
[5] Craufurd D. Goodwin, 'British Economists and Australian Gold', *The Journal of Economic History*, Vol. 30, No. 2, June 1970, p. 425.
[6] Ellen Young, *Volume of Verse*, 1870. MS, National Library of Australia, Canberra, 1019; Martha Clendinning, *Recollections of Ballarat: Lady's Life at the Diggings Fifty Years Ago,* MS, National Library of Australia, Canberra, 10102, Box 4820.

The fourth chapter concentrates on the First War of Independence in India, the 'Mutiny' which sent shockwaves across the British Empire. This conflict was a tumultuous event which spanned the years 1857-1859, although the last year was predominantly spent by British soldiers in tracking down the remaining Indian ringleaders such as Tantia Tope. This crisis was a culmination of issues between Indians and the East India Company, a British held trading company which was continually working to increase its foothold and dominance within India. Many of the problems were a result of the changing British attitude towards Indigenous values and cultures, with threats to Indian caste as well as the annexation of Oudh (Awadh) major factors in the ensuing uprising.[7] Lord Dalhousie in particular was a key figure in this conflict, for even though his time as Governor-General of India ended in 1856 it was his legacy which promoted feelings of unrest, as many annexations continued despite available heirs (such as the infamous Nana Sahib).[8] Indeed, it was Nana Sahib who would create the most impact in the memory of the War, with British women and children killed at Cawnpore (Kanpur) under his command despite the agreement he made with Sir Hugh Wheeler at the garrison. The selected women within this chapter are Adelaide Case, Georgina Harris, Ruth Coopland, and Frances Isabella Duberly (1829-1903). These women were scattered across the Bengal presidency where the conflict occurred, Case and Harris were under siege at Lucknow and expressed their experiences within diaries which would eventually be published for a wide audience to read.[9] Coopland at Gwalior fled to Agra with her child and other ladies, also keeping a diary of the events and speaking candidly of both the actions and political views she held.[10] The only deliberately public author of the four, Duberly, accompanied her husband and the 8th Hussars as they traversed the presidency and detailed the fighting she witnessed, as well as her experiences and perceptions of the War of Independence.[11]

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[7] Charles Ball, *The History of the Indian Mutiny: A detailed account of the sepoy insurrection in India; and a concise history of the great military events which have tended to consolidate British Empire in Hindostan.* Vol. 1, Lahore: Sang-e-Meel Publications, [c. 1860-1861] 2005, p. 50; Christopher Hibbert, *The Great Mutiny: India 1857,* London: Penguin Books, 1980, pp. 75-76.
[8] Frances Isabella Duberly, *The Two Wars of Mrs Duberly: An Intrepid Victorian Lady's Experience of the Crimea and Indian Mutiny,* Milton Keyes: Leonaur, [1855; 1859] 2009, pp. 349-351; Hibbert, *op. cit.,* pp. 24-25.
[9] Adelaide Case and G. Harris, *Ladies of Lucknow: the experiences of two British women during the Indian Mutiny 1857,* Milton Keyes: Leonaur, [1857-1858] 2009.
[10] R. M. Coopland, *The Memsahib and the Mutiny: An English Lady's Ordeals in Gwalior and Agra During the Indian Mutiny 1857,* Milton Keyes: Leonaur, [1859] 2009.
[11] Duberly, *op. cit.*

The fifth chapter of the thesis investigates British women's writings from the New Zealand Land Wars and Parihaka invasion (1843-1881); although this crisis consisted of a number of smaller conflicts, to gain a more comprehensive understanding this thesis looks at the Land Wars as a whole, but it has been placed as the last of the crisis chapters because of the culminating Parihaka invasion in 1881.[12] British women's writings across this entire timeframe are pertinent; therefore the perspectives of Helen Wilson (c.1793/1794-1871), Grace Hirst (1805-1901), Jane Maria Atkinson (1824-1914), and Jessie Mackay (1864-1938) are all used to gain an insight into how they experienced the New Zealand crisis, as well as their perceptions of the politics at play and their role within society as the conflict progressed. Figures such as Governor George Grey, Chief Land Purchase Commissioner Donald McLean, as well as Māori leader Te Whiti, are some of the key figures across this crisis. Land held by Māori belonged to different iwi (an extended kinship group or tribe), yet the British authorities decided that land could be sold or leased by individuals.[13] Disagreements arose between Māori, but the overarching concern for the Indigenous populace was the power of the New Zealand Government in overruling Māori dissent; the militaristic aspect of this crisis was significant, as settlers and the colonial Government attempted to forcibly sway the Indigenous populace into giving up large tracts of land. The idea that Te Whiti, leader of the Parihaka pā, was a peaceful man was hard to fathom for British settlers, who were used to previous Māori leaders' and the King movement's military prowess. Te Whiti undermined settlers who put fences up, encouraging his followers to tear them down and continue to plough the land; furthermore, the meetings between the two factions were unsuccessful, as colonial authorities discovered Te Whiti could not be bribed to give up Parihaka.[14] Atkinson wrote copious amounts of letters, just as Hirst and Wilson did, to familial relations as well as close friends.[15] The writings of Mackay were in a public format, and her poetry concerning

[12] The crises of the Land Wars consist of the Wairau confrontation (1843), the Northern War (1845-1846), Whanganui Wars (1846-1848), the First Taranaki War, also named the North Taranaki War (1860-1861), Waikato War (1863-1864), Tauranga War (1864), Central-South Taranaki War, also known as the Second Taranaki War (1865-1869) and the East Coast War (1864-1872.

[13] Danny Keenan, *Te Whiti O Rongomai and the Resistance of Parihaka,* Wellington: Huia Publishers, 2015, p. 103.

[14] *ibid,* pp. 124-125; 138-140.

[15] Guy Scholefield (ed.), *The Richmond-Atkinson Papers* 2 vols., Wellington: R E Owen Government Printer, 1960; Grace Hirst, MS, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, 0994-1006 Hirst family: letters; Grace Hirst, Micro-MS-Coll, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, 20-2773; Helen

the Land Wars in particular were a scathing indictment of both the Government and the settlers.[16] By using the same subheadings across all three content chapters, aspects of life which influenced British women in their homes are identified and highlight how these women responded to the crises in a variety of ways. Furthermore, it assists in the identification of patterns for women's roles during conflict and how British women's responses changed over time in each successive clash, as crises were prolonged and disagreements not only with the 'other' of Indigenous populations but also the colonial authorities arose.

## Scope and Methodology

The concentrated three case studies, ranging from 1854 to 1881, are a way to engage with women's actions and perspectives regarding the fixed roles the Empire wanted to maintain. The utilisation of private documents in conjunction with those works by women which were published at the time gives selected insights into how imperial women engaged in crises, particularly as every effort has been made to find conflicting political voices for each situation. This thesis consequently analyses women's writings, cross-examining their experiences and perceptions with women who endured the same crisis. Furthermore, by identifying emerging patterns throughout the conflicts and how women might have gained strength in their convictions from awareness of previous crises, it is possible for this thesis to add to recent discussions in gender history on the fluidity and intersectionality of social categories pertaining to women's lives. Such discussions concerning the highly nuanced social categorisations of women's lives would be incomplete without acknowledging Penny Russell's contribution to the exploration of women's 'genteel femininity' in colonial settings,

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Wilson, MS, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, 1712 Wilson family: letters, 1712-2; Helen Wilson, MS, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, 0032-0644 The Papers of Sir Donald McLean – Series One inward letters (English) <https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/manuscripts?sort_by=byDA&items_per_page=50&snippet=true&person=45608%2FWilson%252C+Helen+Ann%252C+1793%3F-1871&series=Series+1++Inward+letters+%28English%29> Accessed 13 November 2020. All of Helen Wilson's letters within this 'Papers of Sir Donald McLean' collection are preserved within this Papers Past archival source and can be accessed from this link.

[16] Jessie Mackay, *The Spirit of the Rangatira and other Ballads*, Melbourne: George Robertson and Company, 1889.

particularly her book '*A Wish of Distinction': Colonial Gentility and Femininity*.[17] Each conflict has at least one text from each sphere of influence (private and public) and is critically analysed for women's manipulation of categories in society, as well as analysis pertaining to how public and private spheres in which these texts were initially meant to be read could have been adapted to suit their marginalised voices.

The women within each chapter are chosen for their range of views among literate white women, not only in relation to the crises but also for the perception of their own standing within their respective colonial outposts and the Empire. Australian women's writings, located in the National Library of Australia in Canberra, were accessed via the State Library of Victoria and further insight was gained from visiting the now defunct Museum of Australian Democracy at Eureka (MADE), which held the Eureka Flag and provided an interactive experience with a number of narratives interspersed throughout the building. Selecting women's writings from the Indian crisis were chosen by delving into the publishing company Leonaur's catalogue of important historical texts, as well as locating facsimiles of original copies of women's writings and nineteenth-century texts by historians via the non-profit library site, Internet Archive.[18] Although there was a significant amount of women's writings available for the Land Wars of New Zealand, the selected women had a heightened interaction with prominent members of society, as well as varying perceptions towards the causal factors of the conflict. Their work is located within the Alexander Turnbull Library of Wellington, as original, microfilm and digitised archives. It should be noted that the difficulty in finding a large range of women's writings for Australia, as well as details of the chosen British women's lives from India, highlight the continued power of archives to control memory as these institutions choose what is preserved, to cement 'national and imperial concepts of belonging and identity'.[19] While some letters and diaries have survived in the archive or been published, there are still many unknown aspects regarding the lives of the selected British women; the difficulty in locating more information about them during the selection process is indicative of this, as is

[17] Penny Russell, *'A Wish of Distinction': Colonial Gentility and Femininity,* Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1994; see also Penny Russell, *Savage or Civilised? Manners in Colonial Australia,* Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 2010.
[18] *Internet Archive: Books* <https://archive.org/details/books> Accessed February 2017.
[19] Catharine Coleborne, 'Institutional case files: Insanity's archive', in Kirsty Reid and Fiona Paisley (eds.), *Sources and Methods in Histories of Colonialism: Approaching the Imperial Archive,* London: Routledge, 2017, p. 123.

the lack of photographic images for most of these women. While photos of Hotham and Duberly have been found for the Australian and Indian chapters, this is likely a product of their higher class in contrast to their contemporaries, rather than solely the work of the archive in diligently preserving histories.

Employing only British women's writings for this thesis is indicative of the lack of written expression by Indigenous women throughout the chosen regions, an inherent bias in archival research pertaining to women's writings.[20] However, it is also an acknowledgement that ethically this author feels it is inappropriate for a non-Indigenous woman to attempt to analyse and interpret the writings of the Indigenous voices across all three crises.[21] This particular study of gender awaits Indigenous women's contributions in all three settings, for a deeper understanding of their part during the conflicts. Furthermore, the British women in this current bracket of analysis are often limited to that of the educated middle class, women who could spend time writing diaries, journals and various public correspondence; working class women were often unable to contribute their voices due to time constraints and other restrictions, such as familial duties and housekeeping that limited their written expression.[22] It is also a realization of the power structure inherent in archival documentation, providing a pertinent illustration of how 'worthy' material was rarely chosen outside of the strata of educated and white middle class women. This thesis seeks to overcome such partiality in women's perspectives, by selecting episodes that have particular influence on the construction of gender and varying levels of impact on the social constructs of race and class that affected women's engagement with crises. Where possible, private manuscript versions of public texts were located to establish if any amendments were made prior to wider circulation, a conventional historical process for checking for editorial intervention or self-censorship for a public audience.

[20] Durba Ghosh, 'National Narratives and the Politics of Miscegenation: BRITAIN AND INDIA', in Antoinette Burton (ed.), *Archive Stories: Facts, Fictions, and the Writing of History,* Durham: Duke University Press, 2005, p. 33.
[21] A similar struggle is discussed in Victoria Haskins, 'The White Woman's Burden: Encounters between White and Indigenous Women in Australia Domestic Service', *Journal of Australian Indigenous Issues,* Vol. 18, No. 1, 2015.
[22] Levine, 'Introduction: Why Gender and Empire?', p. 8.

Within this thesis a narrative methodology is employed, by identifying a number of similar themes experienced and discussed by British women in each crisis. Using these themes that run through the experiences of the selected women, the following are consistently applied across the crisis chapters: local context, men affected, domesticity, safety, social networks, political perceptions, new opportunities, superiority, private writings, public writings and silence. The use of narrative methodology is ably discussed by historian A. R. Louch, who proposes that 'the technique of narrative' is an essential one to 'historical explanation'; the historian 'makes continuity visible' by filling in the gaps that had previously shown a disconnection.[23] Furthermore, the use of themes and narrative 'is not presuming similarities', but rather a focus for locating and acknowledging the 'persistent thing or process' across the three chosen historical events within this thesis.[24] The narrative methodology has been used in conjunction with the method of collective biography, a particularly useful approach in social and feminist histories which 'retains a focus on the individual' even as it uses these 'individual lives to explore collective experiences'.[25] Collective biographies have often been used to 'transform women's experience into a matter of historical record', and by utilizing the voices of a group of women across the three selected crises, British women's thoughts, ideas and assertions are interweaved into a collective narrative, thus allowing this thesis to fully engage with the experiences and perceptions voiced by British women during the conflicts.[26]

A critical issue researchers often face and fail to address is the binary complex of oppressed/liberated voice; Jeanne Boydston asserts that scholars have often infused their literary analysis of women's voices with this restrictive binary and interpreted them out of context, imposing 'late twentieth-century feminism' perspectives on history without qualification, something this thesis attempts to move beyond in its own analyses.[27] Furthermore, Penny Edwards discusses the importance of treating a 'colony as comprising many different agents, as opposed to the notion of colonial

[23] A. R. Louch, 'History as Narrative', *History and Theory,* Vol. 8, No. 1, 1969, pp. 54; 56.
[24] *ibid,* p. 57.
[25] Krista Cowman, 'Collective Biography' in Simon Gunn and Lucy Faire (eds.), *Research Methods for History,* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012, pp. 83; 85; 96.
[26] *ibid,* pp. 87; 90.
[27] Jeanne Boydston, 'Gender as a Question of Historical Analysis', *Gender & History,* Vol. 20, No. 3, 2008, p. 567.

power as monolith' and this also applies to imperial power.[28] By treating the British women's voices as the individual entities that they are, this thesis follows Edwards' example of acknowledging the diversity of voices and perceptions in any given locale. Gender as a social construct can be a significant force in literature analysis and this thesis will also use their writing to assess women's security as to the British Empire's ideologies and dominance at the height of the nineteenth century; Tamara Wagner believes that commentators in the nineteenth century were increasingly concerned with a shrinking world and their works were 'an articulation of growing anxiety'.[29] Vron Ware understands the category of gender to have 'played a crucial role in organizing ideas of 'race' and 'civilization'', including the regulation of relations between the Indigenous and British populace, as women in particular were symbols of 'the idea of moral strength that bound the great imperial family together'.[30] Furthermore, the role of gender informed the maternalistic discipline adopted by British women towards both Indians and Māori; this criticism of the Indigenous populace could thus be discussed from a stance of both imperial and gendered authority, with white women's moral importance in society giving a certain freedom to their ideas regarding the reinforcement of a racial hierarchy.

Suzanne Bunkers and Cynthia Huff have analysed diary writing conventions, bringing to light the differences women consciously or subconsciously made for their different intended audiences.[31] It has been noted that the written word of British women during the Victorian era was often shared with family and friends, even though texts such as diaries and journals were a form of self-expression and introspection.[32] Letters were 'usually spurred by separation and the need to sustain and develop relationships breached by distance', even as memoirs were an opportunity 'to create a family legacy… [or] set the record straight' in certain matters; epistolary writings were often

[28] Penny Edwards, 'Archival detours: Sourcing colonial history' in Kirsty Reid and Fiona Paisley (eds.), *Sources and Methods,* p. 43.
[29] Tamara S. Wagner, 'The Nineteenth-Century Pacific Rim: Victorian Transoceanic Studies Beyond the Postcolonial Matrix', *Victorian Literature and Culture,* Vol. 43, No. 2, 2015, p. 227.
[30] Vron Ware, *Beyond the Pale: White Women, Racism and History,* London: Verso, 2015, pp. 36; 161.
[31] Suzanne L. Bunkers and Cynthia A. Huff (eds.), *Inscribing the Daily: Critical Essays on Women's Diaries,* Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1996.
[32] Lynn Z. Bloom "I Write for Myself and Strangers": Private Diaries as Public Documents' in Suzanne L. Bunkers and Cynthia A. Huff (eds.), *Inscribing the Daily: Critical Essays on Women's Diaries,* Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1996, p. 23.

shaped by relationships, but also 'imagined readers' at times, who might delve into the author's writing for answers.[33] Utilising approaches to literary analysis as proposed by feminist, gender and postcolonial scholars allows for an understanding of the complexities that need to be taken into account when relying on private and published writings that were 'infused with an [everyday] imperial presence'.[34] Lucy Frost remarks that, while women worked long hours, women's 'personal motivations [to write] could be as strong as economic ones' and this research understands personal motivators to include women's desire to express their political views and engagement with crises, not just motivation to keep families up to date with news.[35] Carole Gerson highlights that women's prefaces to published texts became an important tool to express their adherence to convention, even as it manipulated readers into reading their words with the idea that the text was completely unaltered and without an ulterior motive.[36] Analysis of these prefaces in conjunction with the text itself can illuminate inconsistencies in the grammatical usage of past and present tense, highlighting amendments that changed the published work from its private text.

The postcolonial perspective that this thesis takes supports current trends in the field of research, which recognise that the experiences and perspectives of the British Empire's ideologies are fraught with contradictions.[37] While postcolonialism is now most defined by its investigations on the effect imperialism had on Indigenous populaces, Robert Young has shown that at its core postcolonialism is more than just a history of European expansionism, its focus having always been on making the 'invisible visible'.[38] This can and does include women's engagement with crises, as this relates to the postcolonial need to 'turn the power structures… upside down', by

[33] Alistair Thomson, 'Life Stories and Historical Analysis' in Gunn and Faire (eds.), *Research Methods for History,* pp. 105-107; Natalie Zemon Davis, 'The Historian and Literary Uses', *Profession,* 2003, p. 24.
[34] Catherine Hall and Sonya O. Rose 'Introduction: being at home with the Empire' in Catherine Hall and Sonya O. Rose (eds.), *At Home with the Empire: Metropolitan Culture and the Imperial World,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006, p. 2.
[35] Lucy Frost, *No Place for a Nervous Lady: Voices from the Australian Bush,* St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1995, p. 5.
[36] Carole Gerson, *Canadian Women In Print: 1750-1918,* Waterloo: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 2010.
[37] Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler (eds.), *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World,* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997; David Lambert and Alan Lester (eds.), *Colonial Lives Across the British Empire: Imperial Careering in the Long Nineteenth Century,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.
[38] Robert J. C. Young, 'Postcolonial Remains', *New Literary History,* Vol. 43, No. 1, 2012, p. 23.

locating what is invisible or unspoken in the 'interrelated histories of violence, domination, [and] inequality'.[39] Will Jackson and Emily Manktelow in a recent text state that the colonial world became a place of deviancy, a place where the social structures transferred from the British Empire were continually reworked and adapted. Even through transgressions, the boundaries which formed colonialism's 'synthetic, constructed ideologies' could still be invoked 'while appearing to have been undermined'.[40] Their focus on socially-constructed aspects during the nineteenth century shows the direction postcolonial history has taken since its inception in the 1970s, when the word was solely applied as a 'periodising term', a definition for an historical event or moment.[41] Although Neil Lazarus posits that postcolonial scholars have neglected to address how 'colonialism is part and parcel of a larger, enfolding historical dynamic, which is that of capitalism in its global trajectory', this thesis is concerned with making British women's writings and their significance to social constructions of gender, race and class understood in terms of domesticity, political perceptions and historical silences. It has been reiterated throughout postcolonial discussions that 'power and resistance are central themes', with Anne Deepak emphasising that this entails 'multiple power positions between and across identities reaching beyond the binary divides of colonizer-colonized'.[42] This issue of advancing beyond binary terms is a fundamental one, not only to postcolonial research but also gender history, and needs further exploration as situated in the combined postcolonial gender field.

Postcolonial and gender theories are applied in this thesis to explore current questions in the field about binary classifications that have led to simplifying historical analyses. The term, gender, has often been used as a binary marker between male and female bodies without further historical context.[43] Gender essentialism theory has in recent years been regularly applied to research, but by identifying gender in this binary position as a naturally predetermined and fixed state it has neglected the critical impact

[39] *ibid,* pp. 20-21.
[40] Will Jackson and Emily J. Manktelow (eds.), *Subverting Empire: Deviance and Disorder in the British Colonial World,* Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015, pp. 2;5.
[41] Neil Lazarus, 'What Postcolonial Theory Doesn't Say', *Race & Class,* Vol. 53, No. 1, 2011, p. 6.
[42] Anne C. Deepak, 'Globalization, power and resistance: Postcolonial and transnational feminist perspectives for social work practice', *International Social Work,* Vol. 55, No. 6, 2011, pp. 784-785.
[43] Boydston, *op. cit.*

social constructs have had on gender identification.[44] Jeanne Boydston argues that a case in point is when scholars subsume all of women's roles into wives and mothers, on the assumption that they had no other 'complex social/economic identities' and that the domestic sphere held no other involved positions.[45] Three pioneering texts for exploring how gender is socially-constructed through a myriad of factors are *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest* by Anne McClintock, Philippa Levine's edited *Gender and Empire* and Catherine Hall and Sonya O. Rose's edited *At Home With the Empire: Metropolitan Culture and the Imperial World*.[46] The research by these scholars includes the categories of culture, race, class and sexuality among other causal factors of how women engaged with the British Empire, exposing how women in particular were meant to promote imperial interests.

The category of class has recently reappeared in gender research debates with scholar Eileen Boris tracing how class became absorbed into the category of race without qualification and added to gender in the early twenty-first century.[47] The field of gender history and its core objective is continually evolving, as can be seen by the move from Theodore Koditschek's discussions on working class women and the Marxist patriarchal dynamic, to Elisa Camiscioli's elucidation of the intersectional work that has marked a progressive analysis of gender classification, particularly for women.[48] Applying a postcolonial gender approach to this thesis rather than a feminist one promotes an encompassing perspective, instead of what Camiscioli has coined as 'additive histories' that attached women to pre-existing historical research.[49] While the feminist approach has often either sidelined men's experiences in an effort to bring the lives of women forward, or inserted their actions without making space for a nuanced analysis, this thesis prefers to weave these threads of history together to

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[44] Rosemary Crompton and Clare Lyonette, 'The new gender essentialism – domestic and family 'choices' and their relation to attitudes', *The British Journal of Sociology,* Vol. 56, No. 4, 2005, pp. 601-602; 616.

[45] Boydston, *op. cit.,* pp. 569-570.

[46] Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest*, New York: Routledge, 1995; Philippa Levine (ed.), *Gender and Empire,* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006; Catherine Hall and Sonya O. Rose (eds.), *At Home With the Empire: Metropolitan Culture and the Imperial World,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

[47] Eileen Boris, 'Class Returns', *Journal of Women's History,* Vol. 25, No. 4, 2013, pp. 74-75.

[48] Theodore Koditschek, 'The Gendering of the British Working Class', *Gender & History,* Vol. 9, No. 2, 1997, pp. 333-363; Elisa Camiscioli, 'Women, Gender, Intimacy, and Empire', *Journal of Women's History,* Vol. 25, No. 4, 2013, pp. 138-148.

[49] Camiscioli, *op. cit.*, pp. 139-141.

negate the problems of additive history. Tamara Wagner posits that current research that explores the Pacific Rim and not just regions like India and South Africa, can realise 'Victorians' very divergent conceptualisation of different kinds of empire'.[50] This approach, combining recurring sites with the often overlooked region and employing a postcolonial gender framework, consolidates a rich and complex field of research.

Certain terminology shall be employed throughout the thesis due to its common usage when the events took place, including that of using the name the Indian Mutiny for the First War of Independence in India. Similarly, the Land Wars of New Zealand were often called the Maori/Māori Wars and places were misspelled, such as Whanganui becoming Wanganui. To highlight categories of analysis, especially that of race, gender and class these terms and some of the derogatory names for the Indigenous peoples of India and New Zealand have been kept within the text, although they do not reflect the author's stance in any shape or form. Furthermore, while the term 'colonial outpost' is used throughout this thesis, this is not a reversion to the older metropole-periphery terminology in the classic sense; this outpost reference is instead used to illustrate the isolation felt by colonists during times of crisis, when their identity and self-assurance wavered owing to their sense of neglect by the monarch and politicians who were running the British Empire.

## Contributions and Significance

While scholars have provided research into women in moments of upheaval during the nineteenth century and even looked at women in some of these specific crises, this research project offers an original contribution in its choice of using women's own writings in conjunction with these three colonial outposts and conflicts. Furthermore, the concentrated span of time and choice of texts by women gives perspective from both the private and public spheres in which British women moved. Through an examination of women's writing this thesis plans to track patterns in the roles women upheld and how the crises affected domestic life, politics and the silences women

[50] Wagner, *op. cit.*, p. 230.

encountered in each outpost. The manipulation or adherence to the intersectional categories of race, class and gender is a powerful indicator of Victorian culture and women's place within it. The study of the Eureka Stockade, India's First War of Independence, the New Zealand Land Wars and invasion of Parihaka stresses the complex linkages that existed not only between outposts, but also between the colonies and the heart of the British Empire. The multiple factors that affected women, not least the locale and crises in which they were involved, ensured a variety of reactions and experiences in their private and public texts. British women's complex range of views creates an opportunity to follow their increasingly more active role in both the private and public spheres within the colonies. They promoted the continuance of empire, albeit a reformed one in which local settlers had more control especially vis-à-vis Indigenous peoples. Through this specific project another perspective on women's place in imperial and colonial cultures will be provided, with their engagement in these crises a tool for recognising and analysing concepts of gender, race and class.

# Chapter 2.

## Literature Review

The expansion of women's roles during times of conflict was largely rejected by men and the historians of their era; when it was acknowledged it was couched in terms that pressed the idea that extreme conditions were what made it necessary. Even then, this adaptability was argued to be either much more limited than what men were capable of or of less significance in terms of experience than men's involvement in the crises.[51] Consigning white women to what were deemed passive, supportive roles in conflict such as nurses or victims made it possible for the British Empire to justify the use of extreme force during these struggles in colonial outposts. Identifying women's stance on what they were capable of, their experiences and their perspectives regarding crises is integral to research for any of the chosen crisis points and the Victorian era in general. The three conflicts have been selected on the basis of available women's primary sources and their closeness in time so any effect these crises had upon influencing gender roles in each might be detected.

The historiography of the British Empire during the nineteenth century is largely one in which women and the discussion of gender have historically been marginalised, as historians have tended to observe the actions and experiences of men and governments to determine how events unfolded. The plethora of such texts includes Andrew Porter's edited *The Oxford History of the British Empire: The Nineteenth Century* and C. A. Bayly's *The New Cambridge History of India: Indian society and the making of the British Empire*.[52] Both of these texts ably demonstrate the political and economic factors which influenced decisions made by the Empire, both at home and abroad. However, like the edited text by David Lambert and Alan Lester (*Colonial Lives Across the British Empire: Imperial Careering in the Long Nineteenth Century*), their discussion of women's contributions to the Empire have been minimal, if not

[51] Tosh, 'Masculinities in an Industrializing Society', pp. 336-337.
[52] Andrew Porter (ed.), *The Oxford History of the British Empire: The Nineteenth Century,* Vol. 3, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999; C. A. Bayly, *The New Cambridge History of India: Indian society and the making of the British Empire,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988.

completely non-existent.[53] Such enthusiasm for developments in politics, science, culture and migration as evidenced in these texts give preference to male dominated events; yet as this thesis suggests, British women were just as central to the processes of the Empire, including within the traditionally masculine territory of crises.

## The Eureka Stockade

Although Clare Wright locates the Australian struggle within a wider context in terms of the Upper Canadian Rebellion (1837) and suffrage experiences in the United States of America and Britain, her gendered history prioritises the experiences of white women in Ballarat and does not engage with subsequent crises across the Empire.[54] Wright touches on the realisation that women's part in the conflict held a gendered power that was not as binary as Anne Summers' powerful *Damned Whores and God's Police* had originally highlighted in 1975. Both Wright and Summers give great credence to the impact class had on women's sense of identity, although Summers situates women's lives in Australia within the prominent imperial ideologies that intersected race, class and gender.[55] *The Eureka Encyclopaedia* is a compilation of facts regarding people who engaged with the Eureka Stockade crisis, linking the band of mismatched men and women in the goldfields with their earlier lives and struggles in different regions to that which they found themselves in Ballarat.[56] An in-depth examination of people's lives by alphabetical order, similar to the *Encyclopaedia*, is Dorothy Wickham's *Women of the Diggings Ballarat 1854,* which is nonetheless both postcolonial and gendered in its approach to the crisis. Wickham acknowledges that women have been placed into a stereotypical and binary view that continually limits their capabilities to only that of whore or "God's Police"; her examination of women's contestation for power and agency does not place the category of gender in its intersectional framework with other social classifications such as class and race,

[53] Lambert and Lester (eds.), *Colonial Lives.*
[54] Clare Wright, *The Forgotten Rebels of Eureka,* Melbourne: Text Publishing, 2013.
[55] Anne Summers, *Damned Whores and God's Police: The Colonisation of Women in Australia,* Sydney: New South Publishing, 2016.
[56] Justin Corfield, Dorothy Wickham and Clare Gervasoni (eds.), *The Eureka Encyclopaedia,* Ballarat: Ballarat Heritage Services, 2004.

treating them as distinct categories instead.[57] Angela Woollacott's texts, *Gender and Empire* and *Settler Society in the Australian Colonies: Self-Government and Imperial Culture*, investigate the importance of gender within historical episodes such as Australia and India, particularly regarding how gendered roles assisted the imperial mission within the colonies and settler society.[58] By building upon such a foundation as set by Woollacott and other historians, and including selected women's writings and perceptions during crises, the evolving actions and perceptions of British women as the century progressed can be analysed and emerging patterns explored.

British women in Australia had to work hard in both the domestic area and the public area as well to ensure some kind of livelihood was achieved in the goldfields of Ballarat. During the crisis some women manipulated their literary capacities politically to fight the establishment through whatever means possible, including writing pieces for the newspapers, *Geelong Advertiser* and *Ballarat Times.*[59] When the private thoughts of women were deliberately made public in sources such as Ellen Frances Young's poetry and writing in the *Ballarat Times,* they showcased the beginnings of a nationalistic perspective and women's desire to use their own gendered backgrounds to assist the cause in any possible way. A digitised copy of Young's handwritten book of verse is available through the National Library of Australia and includes her poem, 'A Digger's Lament' which was previously simply titled 'Ballarat' in the *Geelong Advertiser*.[60] From this auspicious beginning at the start of the conflict in Ballarat, Young would continue to write in defence of the men of the goldfields, not holding back her scorn for the establishment which refused to back down to the demands of the diggers. Meanwhile, women such as Martha Clendinning, a doctor's wife and a store owner in her own right whose personal papers can be found in the State Library of Victoria, are to be used for their more privately held musings, although she too held an oppositional stance to the Victorian Government. A popular figure in Eureka history, Clendinning's time on the goldfields has been the subject of

[57] Dorothy Wickham, *Women of the Diggings: Ballarat 1854,* Ballarat: Ballarat Heritage Services, 2009, pp. 18-19.
[58] Angela Woollacott, *Gender and Empire,* Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006; Angela Woollacott, *Settler Society in the Australian Colonies,* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015.
[59] These women included Clara Seekamp, the editor of the *Ballarat Times*, who ran the newspaper alongside her husband out of their own home. See Wright, *The Forgotten Rebels*, pp. 204-5; 359-60.
[60] Young, *Volume of Verse.*

authors such as Louise Asher, but also documented alongside other women's experiences in texts such as Laurel Johnson's *Women of Eureka* and Margaret Anderson's contribution to *Gold: Forgotten Histories and Lost Objects of Australia*.[61] The contrasting values to Young and Clendinning, held by Lady Hotham and Margaret Brown Johnston, are evidenced within their private journal and diary; with husbands of authority (a Governor and Assistant Gold Commissioner, respectively), their stance was rather based on proposing the goodness of the colonial Government and adhering to the more conventional roles women were expected to uphold in society.

## The First War of Independence

India's First War of Independence has been given different names since it occurred in the years 1857-1859, but Mutiny was the term affixed by the Anglo-Indians and British Empire to what was an excessively bloody and, in their opinion, extremely unjust rebellion. The Uprising rocked the British Government and its belief in its power, captivating news outlets from the metropole to the most far-flung colonial outposts with the upheaval and subsequent brutal retaliation by imperial troops. What this has created is an abundance of texts, not only primary resources but secondary texts which investigate the First War of Indian Independence in detail. Rosemary Raza's *In Their Own Words: British Women Writers and India 1740-1857* is a particularly valuable feminist source, detailing Anglo-Indian women's lives prior to the mutiny and showing how the changing opinions of the British towards both genders with regards to racial superiority and acceptable pastimes assisted in deteriorating the relationship with Indians.[62] Discussions about the crisis generally fall into two categories, the first centering on the origin and military events of the Indian Mutiny connecting the conflict with the wider context of the British Empire's efforts

[61] Louise Asher, 'Martha Clendinning: A Woman's Life on the Goldfields', in Marilyn Lake and Farley Kelly (eds.), *Double Time: Women in Victoria – 150 Years*, Ringwood: Penguin Books, 1984; Laurel Johnson, *Women of Eureka*, Ballarat: University of Ballarat, 1995; Margaret Anderson, 'Mrs Charles Clacy, Lola Montez and Poll the Grogseller: Glimpses of Women on the Early Victorian Goldfields', in Iain McCalman, Alexander Cook and Andrew Reeves (eds.), *Gold: Forgotten Histories and Lost Objects of Australia*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.
[62] Rosemary Raza, *In Their Own Words: British Women Writers and India 1740-1857*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2006.

to maintain dominance, but with little interaction with women's experiences.[63] The other general theme of research is highly focused on women's engagement in the uprising and their part in the imperialist project, but can become overwhelmed by examining the allusion, if not the act, of rape during the War in their feminist analysis.[64] The text, *War of No Pity: The Indian Mutiny and Victorian Trauma* by Christopher Herbert, is a relatively new addition to the abundance of postcolonial research highlighting the contradictions within the colonial project, as Herbert argues that the British were not always pro-imperialists.[65] Herbert deconstructs not only Victorian literature but key contemporary historians' texts of the time, such as Charles Ball, R. Montgomery Martin and Colonel G. B. Malleson. By doing so, *War of No Pity* identifies the imperial pressures that were placed upon these writers to maintain a certain position regarding the crisis.

India's First War of Independence of 1857-1859 was a watershed moment in terms of the high output of texts by British women. While there are few examples of women's writings during the Australian crisis, the Indian Mutiny had wreaked havoc on such silences and the clear gender demarcations as British (Anglo-Indian) lives were completely disrupted. In a bid to reiterate how men were still protectors and saviours in a crisis that had torn apart imperial complacency, women's engagement in crises was often belittled in masculine and contemporary texts. This damage control was manipulated by women when their texts were published, as readers soon discovered that what they had believed would be harrowing tales in which women were complete victims, instead were an illustration of women's own opinions and diverged from the

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[63] Kenneth Ballhatchet, *Race, Sex and Class Under the Raj: Imperial Attitudes and Policies and their Critics, 1793-1905,* London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1980; E. I. Brodkin, 'The Struggle for Succession: Rebels and Loyalists in the Indian Mutiny of 1857', *Modern Asian Studies,* Vol. 6, No. 3, 1972; Michael H. Fisher, 'Indirect Rule in the British Empire: The Foundations of the Residency System in India (1764-1858)', *Modern Asian Studies,* Vol. 18, No. 3, 1984; Christopher Hibbert, *op. cit.*; Kaushik Roy (ed.), *The Uprising of 1857,* New Delhi: Manohar, 2010.

[64] Blunt, *op. cit.*; Lionel Caplan, 'Iconographies of Anglo-Indian Women: Gender Constructs and Contrasts in a Changing Society', *Modern Asian Studies,* Vol. 34, No. 4, 2000; Gautam Chakravarty, *The Indian Mutiny and the British Imagination,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005; Levine (ed.), *Gender and Empire*; Nancy L. Paxton, *Writing Under the Raj: Gender, Race, and Rape in the British Colonial Imagination, 1830-1947,* New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1999; Jane Robinson, *Angels of Albion: Women of the Indian Mutiny,* London: Viking, 1996; Jenny Sharpe, *Allegories of Empire: The Figure of Woman in the Colonial Text,* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993.

[65] Christopher Herbert, *War of No Pity: The Indian Mutiny and Victorian Trauma*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008.

common image. The women particularly chosen for this research were the wives of military officers and clergymen. Adelaide Case, Georgina Harris, Ruth Coopland and Frances Isabella Duberly endured a variety of experiences that included marching with their husband's troops, being under siege in Lucknow and the painful loss of loved ones.[66] Their opinions on military matters and expression of roles during crises was proof that they were more than victims or nurses. Refusal to erase their judgment on how the British Empire handled the Indian Mutiny, but also their beliefs as to whether the Indians were justified or not in pursuing a rebellion, speaks volumes about women's active responses to British men's construction of the conflict. Duberly and Coopland are particularly assertive in their public accounts, which were diaries from that period and reworked for publication, which is an interesting difference when compared with Case and Harris, whose journals and letter writing were intended for a private audience if they ever escaped Lucknow. While it might have been expected that the public realm was a great deterrent to speaking strongly about Empire and men's actions during the Mutiny, Coopland and Duberly instead took constant care to assert women's military opinions and engagement with the conflict.

## The Land Wars and Parihaka invasion

One of the furthest colonial outposts of the British Empire also became a site of upheaval, in a prolonged series of mini-crises which are now termed the Land Wars. The Land Wars in New Zealand began in 1843 and would officially last until 1881, when the peaceful settlement or pā in Parihaka was invaded by local militia, but the effects of the conflict continue to make an impact on New Zealand culture more recently.[67] New Zealand was uniquely situated as a contributor towards conflict, not least because of the convoluted application of the Treaty of Waitangi which had been signed by a number of Māori chiefs on 6 February 1840. Furthermore, when the Indian Mutiny occurred and news reached the shores of New Zealand settlers enthusiastically argued that applying excessive military force and Government checks against the

[66] Case and Harris, *op. cit*.; Duberly, *op. cit.*; Coopland, *op. cit.*

[67] Deena Coster, 'Last iwi in Taranaki embarks on treaty negotiations with Crown', in *Stuff* [New Zealand News Site], <http://www.stuff.co.nz/national/86929172/last-iwi-in-taranaki-embarks-on-treaty-negotiations-with-crown> Accessed 29 November 2016.

Indigenous populace was the way to crush any opposition; the Taranaki region was to be flooded with troops when Māori maintained a guerrilla war. Two texts that are particularly essential in any study of the Land Wars are Dick Scott's *Ask That Mountain: The Story of Parihaka* and Hazel Riseborough's *Days of Darkness: The Government and Parihaka*.[68] Although Riseborough is critical of some of Scott's conclusions written some three decades earlier, this can be explained by her later postcolonial approach which is continually aimed to be respectful of Māori wishes even as she explored the significance of the crisis in national and imperial terms. This text, like *Contested Ground Te Whenua I Tohea: The Taranaki Wars 1860-1881* edited by Kelvin Day in which she has contributed a chapter, does not isolate British and colonial reactions from that of the Māori populace.[69] This impressive new Indigenous-centred research is boosted by the text *The Great War for New Zealand: Waikato 1800-2000* by Vincent O'Malley; although O'Malley does not engage with white women's role in the conflict, his Indigenous and world history focus highlights how New Zealand historiography has embraced postcolonial analysis.[70] Furthermore, Tony Ballantyne's *Webs of Empire: Locating New Zealand's Colonial Past* and *Entanglements of Empire: Missionaries, Māori, and the Question of the Body*, examines New Zealand's crises amongst the international arena and the British Empire as a whole.[71] While British women's own writings, perceptions and actions are not given Ballantyne's full attention, these two texts are useful for identifying the complicated relationship between colonial outposts and the metropole. In fact situating the conflict in New Zealand in the imperial context, and not just the national position, strengthens the recent emergence and drive to recognise the Pacific Rim as an integral region for understanding the contradictions within the British Empire during the nineteenth century.

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[68] Dick Scott, *Ask That Mountain: The Story of Parihaka*, Auckland: Reed Books, 1975; Hazel Riseborough, *Days of Darkness: The Government and Parihaka*, revised edn, Auckland: Penguin Books, 2002.

[69] Kelvin Day (ed.), *Contested Ground Te Whenua I Tohea: The Taranaki Wars 1860-1881*, Wellington: Huia Publishers, 2010.

[70] Vincent O'Malley, *The Great War for New Zealand: Waikato 1800-2000*, Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 2016.

[71] Tony Ballantyne, *Entanglements of Empire: Missionaries, Māori, and the Question of the Body*, Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2015; Tony Ballantyne, *Webs of Empire: Locating New Zealand's Colonial Past*, Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 2012.

British women in New Zealand were on edge during the Land Wars as the crisis moved closer towards their homes, even more so for those isolated residences with few colonial neighbours. Significant postcolonial feminist and gender research exploring the lives of these women has been achieved by New Zealand scholars and is demonstrated in texts such as Charlotte Macdonald's *A Woman of Good Character* and Barbara Brookes' *A History of New Zealand Women*, exploring white women's experiences in New Zealand in general and that of both colonial and Māori women during the Land Wars respectively.[72] While Lydia Wevers does not center on women's writings in her text, *Country of Writing: Travel Writing and New Zealand 1809-1900*, it is a postcolonial perspective on how written expression was used to voice contradictory feelings towards both outposts and the British Empire itself.[73] Additional texts, such as *The Book of New Zealand Women: Ko Kui Ma Te Kaupapa* that alphabetically lists women of interest in the history of New Zealand and '*My Hand Will Write What My Heart Dictates'* which gives snippets from predominantly British women's writings during the nineteenth century, further strengthens knowledge of women's engagement with the colonial outpost and the New Zealand Land Wars.[74]

While there are numerous women's writings from which the crises can be understood in relation to imperial ideologies, four in particular have been chosen. Jane Maria Atkinson, part of a large extended family and a critic of the slow move to purchase all the Māori land possible off the Indigenous populace, was a prolific writer in family circles and some of her texts have been compiled into the two volumed *Richmond-Atkinson Papers* edited by Guy Scholefield, the actual collection remaining in the care of the Alexander Turnbull Library in Wellington.[75] Taking a different approach to the upheaval, young Jessie Mackay used her pen in the public arena to criticise and mock the Government's methods against Māori. Her most notorious work, 'The Charge of

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[72] Charlotte Macdonald, *A Woman of Good Character: Single Women as Immigrant Settlers in Nineteenth-Century New Zealand*, Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 1990; Barbara Brookes, *A History of New Zealand Women*, Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 2016.
[73] Lydia Wevers, *Country of Writing: Travel Writing and New Zealand 1809-1900*, Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2002.
[74] Frances Porter and Charlotte Macdonald (eds.), *'My Hand Will Write What My Heart Dictates': The unsettled lives of women in nineteenth-century New Zealand as revealed to sisters, family and friends*, Wellington: Auckland University Press and Bridget Williams Books, 1996; Charlotte Macdonald, Merimeri Penfold and Bridget Williams (eds.), *The Book of New Zealand Women: Ko Kui Ma Te Kaupapa*, Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 1991.
[75] Scholefield (ed.), *The Richmond-Atkinson Papers* 2 vols.

Parihaka', was a parody of Alfred Tennyson's 'The Charge of the Light Brigade' and clearly ridiculed the use of force against an unarmed gathering of Māori at Parihaka.[76] Furthermore, her sharp satire brought into question the continuing impulse of masculine and imperial forces to claim bravery against adversity, especially when the threat of armed opposition was no longer credible. Other women whose work helps to contextualise these sources are Grace Hirst and Helen Wilson, whose manuscripts are held in the Alexander Turnbull Library and range from private documentation to digitised writings. Wilson in particular held a unique place in New Zealand history, addressing Sir Donald McLean as her son in their correspondence even though she was no blood relation to the Chief Land Purchase Commissioner and then Native Minister.

This thesis aims to fill a gap in current knowledge by comparing women's responses to conflicts in several colonial peripheries with the aim of elucidating both imperial gender history and the shaping of its social structure. Writing was an outlet which allowed women to reclaim their significance and contribution and can be a marker of women's adherence to or deviance from roles that society allocated them. The effect conflict had upon British women and their fluidity with intersectional social categories, such as gender and class, is of significance for women's history and world history, particularly as these classifications were normally made and reworked by men and the political arena which was dominated by men. By focusing upon aspects of British women's lives, such as domesticity, politics and historical silences, this thesis will build upon previous historians' work and provide another perspective on how their role within the colonies and Empire at large evolved as each crisis demanded more adaptability on their part.

The ability of women to use the colonial outposts and crises to expand their space and assert a proactive agency deserves further attention, and this thesis is another step in that direction. Furthermore, the easy adaptability of white women in new places and dangerous conflicts highlights the extent of the fluid social structures outside of the metropole, allowing this study to contribute to the vast postcolonial studies concerning the British Empire. By beginning the case studies in Australia, the changes as crises

[76] Mackay, *The Spirit of the Rangatira*, pp. 30-32.

grew in number and strength can be monitored as the network of the Empire and the years progressed. The constant reworking of gendered boundaries was an integral part to British women's experiences and perceptions of the colonies and conflicts.

# Chapter 3.

# AUSTRALIA: The Eureka Stockade Rebellion, 1854

**Figure 1 Map showing the route taken by Police at Eureka Stockade[77]**

Less than two decades after the Upper Canada Rebellion, in which settlers demanded answers from the Empire's Government regarding how their colony was being run, a faction of people from the Victorian Ballarat goldfields rose up against perceived injustices committed by the colonial Government. A precedent had been set by those in the colonial outpost of Upper Canada and many of the British subjects of Ballarat believed they deserved more respect and freedom than they were accorded, the licence

[77] Map showing the route taken by Police at Eureka Stockade. Ref: VPRS5527/PO Unit 3 item. Public Record Office of Victoria, Melbourne. <https://beta.prov.vic.gov.au/collection/PID1168234441> Accessed 7 June 2021. The original copy of this map was used by the prosecution, as an exhibit in the Treason Trials of thirteen of the men who were part of the Eureka Stockade, in Melbourne 1855.

tax and frequency of tax hunts foremost in their grievances. Lady Jane Hotham (1817-1907), Ellen Frances Young (1810-1872), Margaret Brown Johnston (1831-1888) and Martha Clendinning (1822-1908) were just four of the women caught up in the events of the Eureka Stockade and their responses to the conflict varied. Situating the Eureka Stockade within both the wider context of the British Empire and the national struggles of Australia allows for an examination of external influences, providing a foundation for discussing how these women interacted with the conflict, gender and other social divisions shaping their reactions. It is also necessary to identify how the Eureka Stockade disrupted the domestic sphere by affecting men close to these women and impeding the upkeep of the household, displacing social gatherings and presenting new opportunities for women to discuss politics and giving them new opportunities.

By reading the heightened interactions of Hotham, Young, Brown Johnston and Clendinning in their public and private writings of diaries, journals and published poetry, it is possible to see how gendered roles were negotiated in the Australian crisis and begin to identify the shifts and continuities in women's responses to conflict; the Eureka Stockade pitted settlers against colonial authorities and prompted discussions of diggers' rights, highlighting how the hierarchical status within the colony and Empire at large was just as vital between the classes as it would be against the 'other'. Without women's writings it would be almost impossible to gauge their reaction to such a crisis and analyse how this in turn affected British women's response in other crises across the Empire during the nineteenth century. As historian Anne Beggs-Sunter writes, the history of Eureka is 'capable of constantly being cut up, yet always able to renew and reinvent itself' and it is this evergreen reality which lends Eureka to being a worthy starting point for the comparative transnational exploration this thesis is intent on.[78] Members of the middle-class, Clendinning and Brown-Johnston wrote of their own private ruminations, although Clendinning would eventually publish her reminiscences for the public to scrutinise. Hotham also wrote for herself, her journal giving her solace as it became an outlet for the thoughts and feelings on how her husband was treated in the Victorian colony. Part of the upper-class within Victoria, Hotham still attempted to be circumspect in her criticisms even within her journal;

[78] Anne Beggs-Sunter, 'Contested Memories of Eureka: Museum Interpretations of the Eureka Stockade', *Labour History*, No. 85, November 2003, p. 29.

whereas Young's identification with the middle and lower-class digger struggle appears to have given her freedom, allowing her to write public letters and poetry to express condemnation of the colonial authorities, which were published within the Ballarat newspapers.

The work of previous authors such as Clare Wright, Dorothy Wickham and Angela Woollacott are vital to understanding the Eureka Stockade crisis and the place of women within such conflict. Wright in particular has addressed the roles and power of British women at the goldfields in *The Forgotten Rebels of Eureka*, allowing them to take their place in this historical episode alongside the men.[79] However, Wright's text never intended to analyse how this crisis affected subsequent conflicts faced by the British Empire. Nor did Wickham's *Women of the Diggings, Ballarat 1854*, which discusses women's roles in both the private and public sphere of Ballarat during the Eureka Stockade, ranging from domestic endeavours to the entrepreneurship such as that shown by Clendinning when she opened a general store with her sister.[80] Yet Woollacott's *Gender and Empire*, as well as her *Settler Society in the Australian Colonies: Self-Government and Imperial Culture*, look towards the importance of gender as a classification for analysing historical episodes.[81] These two texts by Woollacott are insightful for their grasp on the interplay between the Empire's metropole and colonial outposts. This chapter builds upon such a foundation by including selected women's writings and examining how their new home impacted their roles within the domestic and social spheres, as well as their political perceptions with regards to the Eureka Stockade crisis. By engaging with 'debates about identity' and its construction, the British women within this chapter can elucidate not only the women's experiences and perceptions during the Victorian crisis, but assist in identifying the shifts across the colonial outposts of the Empire.[82] Although the crisis itself would have less of a pervasive impact on every aspect of women's lives than those in India and New Zealand, it nevertheless began to influence British women's ability to transform. By exploring the writings of Hotham, Young, Brown Johnston and Clendinning their ability to navigate the turmoil within Victoria can be analysed,

[79] Wright, *The Forgotten Rebels.*
[80] Wickham, *Women of the Diggings.*
[81] Woollacott, *Gender and Empire*; Woollacott, *Settler Society.*
[82] Beggs-Sunter, 'Contested Memories', p. 33.

just as their place within the colony and the Empire itself can be assessed. This in turn gives depth to understanding gendered history during the height of the British Empire.

While the majority of Ballarat residents were British, the gold rush also brought other nationalities to the location with an opportunity to spread their ideas and experiences to others. Diggers from the United States and Canada were particularly useful during the unfolding Eureka Stockade crisis; because of the events that had helped to shape their nation's future (the American War of Independence and Upper Canada Rebellion), their influence could be effectively used to further the interests and position of the gold diggers protesting the licence tax system enforced by the Victorian Government. Woollacott states that 'Australians looked to the developments in Canada for their model of political progress' and some newspapers were quick to blame foreigners for the unrest and violent turn of events.[83] Without the tales of egalitarianism and a blueprint of how it could be achieved from such a group, it was believed that the British people of Ballarat would never have transformed from socially respectable, moral men and women into aggressive and allegedly immoral residents. In 1848, the same year as the extensive gold rush in California from which many Americans travelled to Australia, revolutions had occurred throughout Europe and unsettled the established status quo within their respective nations. Contemporary news outlets such as the *Manchester Guardian* argued that the British populace would not employ violence if they truly wanted to succeed against the establishment, for the work of people within foreign nations in which 'insurrections, and barricades, and fights' were a common occurrence would only bring about the downfall of civilisation in the colonial outposts of the British Empire.[84] However, uneasiness about these external influences on Britain are clear even in Australian newspapers such as the *South Australian Gazette and Mining Journal*, which wrote that 'England is not without apprehension of foreign disturbance' and 'the European system hangs on a thread'.[85] With immigrants pouring into Ballarat coming from foreign and potentially menacing locations, it is little wonder that their potential to influence the British

[83] Woollacott, *Settler Society*, p. 6; Paul A. Pickering, "Ripe for a Republic': British Radical Responses to the Eureka Stockade', *Australian Historical Studies*, Vol. 34, No. 121, 2003, p. 76.
[84] *Manchester Guardian*, 21 June 1848.
[85] *South Australian Gazette and Mining Journal*, 6 May 1848, p. 4.

residents was feared.[86] Indeed the *Manchester Guardian* epitomises the turmoil felt by those throughout the British Empire, condemning other newspapers that celebrated the revolutions in Europe and deriding foreigners' 'ignorance of the true mode of improving their political institutions. Their insurrections, and barricades, and fights' were unacceptable and the editors refused to admit that the British could violently rebel against their social and political foundations.[87] These historical events, paired with the distraction of the Crimean War (1853-1856) and the close involvement of the British military power in defeating Russia, helped to create an opportunity for the men and women of Ballarat to rebel against the Victorian Government without fear of severe reprisals from the motherland.[88] Indeed, Ellen Young would highlight this awareness with her reference to 'the mad Russkies hoardes [sic]' in her poem 'A Digger's Lament' which foreshadowed the Australian crisis.[89] The Eureka Stockade disturbed the self-assurance and assumption of the metropole that their Australian colony was a settled environment as far as their British populace was concerned, becoming another aspect of tension within their own Government regarding their responses to the rebellion.[90] The impact of international circumstances on the crisis in Ballarat was clearly significant, considering 'settlers in Australia understood that their own prosperity and security were linked to the fortunes of the British Empire in [their colony as well as] other colonies'.[91] By contending the security of the Victorian Government's rule over the goldfields, men and women of Ballarat highlighted their struggle with an overarching dual identity, that of an invested member of the British Empire who needed the endeavours of colonial Governments to succeed, and the Australian goldfield digger who demanded a fairer existence than the current laws sanctioned.

## Selected Women

[86] Wright, *The Forgotten Rebels*, p. 51.
[87] *Manchester Guardian*, *op. cit.*
[88] Pickering, *op. cit.*, pp. 70; 89.
[89] Ellen Young, 'A Digger's Lament' in Ellen Young, *Volume of Verse*, 1870. MS, National Library of Australia, Canberra, 1019, 41.
[90] Pickering, *op. cit.*, pp. 71-72.
[91] Woollacott, *Settler Society*, p. 4.

When Hotham, Young, Brown Johnston and Clendinning discussed the lead up to, and culmination of, the Eureka Stockade their writing was affected by their gender as well as the differing social statuses in which they and their families were situated. The ideologies their spouses or families held also made an impact, for even if these ideologies were disagreeable in the women's eyes it was another factor which helped shape their personal stance regarding the Stockade. For Clendinning and Young, the conflict and its aftermath became their chance to be politically minded, an opportunity to strive for gender equality and fairer circumstances while their husbands either searched for gold or upheld a status of prominent subject. For Hotham and Brown Johnston, it was instead a conflict which threw their lives into turmoil because of their husbands' occupations.

**Figure 2 Lady Hotham[92]**

[92] Camille Silvy, 17 March 1863. Jane Sarah (née Hood), Lady Hotham. Ref: NPG Ax62470. National Portrait Gallery, London. <

Lady Jane Sarah Hotham (née Hood, 1817-1907) was the second wife of the Lieutenant-Governor Sir Charles Hotham, having married him in 1853. As his wife, Hotham was particularly required to be a moral support for her husband and she would defend his intentions and actions through her own writing during his time in Australia, 1853-1855. This defence would include burning 'most of her Melbourne journal', which could have recounted their thoughts during the Eureka Stockade and painted an unfavourable perspective on prominent characters within the populace.[93] While Hotham's role as a paragon of morality for Victorian society and overall positive 'powerful influence' was not enough to stop Ballarat society from criticising her husband, her dedication to promoting charitable efforts around the Victorian community and carrying herself with 'gentle deportment' ensured he at least had a significant reputable standing amongst those within the charitable organisations of which Lady Hotham was patron and founder, as well as the social elite of society in Melbourne.[94] By working to maintain social and humanitarian endeavours, Hotham attempted to ensure that political disagreements from the Eureka Stockade crisis were tempered by her actions and restore a modicum of respect for Sir Charles.

Martha Clendinning (née Holmes, 1822-1908) married Dr George Clendinning in 1845 and in 1853 with their young daughter they migrated to Australia, choosing Ballarat to be their new home.[95] There they would join Clendinning's sister and brother-in-law, as well as Clendinning's brother who was a digger on the goldfields. Unlike England, social standing in Australia was largely based on 'money and respectable behaviour', rather than the 'birth, background and money' the imperial centre held in high esteem.[96] This social reconfiguration undoubtedly assisted Clendinning in her joint venture with her sister of opening a general store in Ballarat; while it was still an unusual occupation and had been the cause of some mirth to their

https://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/portrait/mw195663/Jane-Sarah-ne-Hood-Lady-Hotham?LinkID=mp122869&role=sit&rNo=0> Accessed 29 October 2020.

[93] Marguerite Hancock, *Colonial Consorts: The Wives of Victoria's Governors 1839-1900*, Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2001, p. 6.

[94] Hotham, *op. cit.*, p. 85.

[95] Sara Maroske and Alison Vaughan, 'Ferdinand Mueller's female plant collectors: a biographical register', *Muelleria*, Vol. 32, 2014 as cited on Australian National Herbarium <https://www.anbg.gov.au/biography/clendinning-martha.html> Accessed 25 November 2020.

[96] Alison Alexander, *A Wealth of Women: Australian women's lives from 1788 to the present*, Sydney: Duffy & Snellgrove, 2001, p. 36.

respective husbands, as they believed the women 'would be the laughing stock of the diggers all round' it was to be a respectable endeavour for the middle class women and provided money while the search for gold and a decent living continued.[97] By the time the Ballarat conflict erupted, Clendinning's husband had reasserted his position as a doctor in the community and was kept busy, attending to the wounded and at one point loaning his medical equipment to another surgeon for an amputation he could not attend.[98] Situated in Ballarat as a storeowner, as well as being wife to a doctor who had initially tried his hand at gold digging, Clendinning was vocal in her discussion of the conflict.

Poet Ellen Frances Young (1810-1872) was married to Frederick Young, a chemist turned digger, and upon experiencing the hardships faced by diggers Young became keen to protest for a fairer treatment from the Government.[99] Her political poetry and letters to the editor of the *Ballarat Times* were strident in tone and almost unrestrained by the conventional constraints which attempted to hinder women being so vocal in public. Her husband would go on to become the first Mayor of Ballarat East before his passing in 1868 and never stood in the way of Young's outspoken politicism.

Margaret Brown Johnston (née Howden, 1831-1888) kept a private diary, consisting of short and sparsely detailed entries for each day. Discussion regarding her husband, James Johnston, is indicative of this private record as it is only from Dorothy Wickham's *Women of the Diggings Ballarat 1854* that Johnston is revealed as the 'Assistant Gold Commissioner in Ballarat' and being 'present at the inquest of murdered miner James Scobie'.[100] Afterwards, Johnston's husband would turn to farming even as she gave birth to fifteen children, although only eleven would outlive their parents.[101]

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[97] Clendinning, *op. cit.*, p. 7.
[98] *Ibid.*, pp. 16; 27.
[99] Clare Wright, "New Brooms They Say Sweep Clean': Women's Political Activism on the Ballarat Goldfields, 1854', *Australian Historical Studies*, Vol. 39, No. 3, 2008, p. 308.
[100] Dorothy Wickham, *Women of the Diggings*, p. 196.
[101] Susie Douglas, 'From the Borders to Ballarat and Beyond', <https://www.bordersancestry.com/blog/from-the-borders-to-ballarat-and-beyond> Accessed 25 November 2020.

By selecting these four women it is possible to not only understand and reflect on the roles women assumed during the Eureka Stockade, but also identify the varied perspectives that were held within Ballarat society. The heightened interaction of Hotham, Young, Clendinning and Brown Johnston also presents an opportunity to understand how gendered roles and perceptions may have begun to shift since the Upper Canada Rebellion of 1837-1838 and just before the watershed crisis that was the Indian Uprising of 1857-1859.

## Local Context

The Victorian colony was a relatively new addition to the Australasian British territories, having only separated from New South Wales three years earlier in 1851.[102] However, it was significantly in debt when Sir Charles Hotham arrived in June as the Lieutenant-Governor of Victoria and he utilised every means available to him to reduce this deficit as quickly as possible. The lure of gold in townships such as Bendigo and Ballarat enticed not only the people already within the Australian colonies but also emigrants from Great Britain and other nations.[103] However, this boost to the townships population during the gold rush was not cheap for the settlers. The mineral resources belonged to the crown which taxed subjects who wanted the chance to find a metal that was proving to be lucrative but elusive. Unsurprisingly, the diggers 'who had not yet made significant "finds" were incensed at requests for fees' and the Victorian Government's taxes were deemed excessive; furthermore, the frequency of licence tax 'hunts' when officials checked that all diggers were in possession of a licence disrupted the political and social stability of Ballarat.[104] In a retrospective account concerning the violence of 3 December 1854, the Ballarat correspondent for the *Age* emphasised that a lack of representation for the digger

[102] Wright, *Forgotten Rebels,* p. 91.
[103] Deborah Fahy Bryceson, 'Artisanal gold-rush mining and frontier democracy: Juxtaposing experiences in America, Australia, Africa and Asia' in Kuntala Lahiri-Dutt (ed.), *Between the Plough and the Pick: informal, artisanal and small-scale mining in the contemporary world,* Acton: ANU Press, 2018, pp. 36-37.
[104] Goodwin, *op. cit.,* p. 425.

community had also been a contentious point.[105] It could be argued that this was not only a sore point due to the license fees and frequency of hunts but also a result of the Eureka Hotel murder fiasco which saw the accused, James Bentley, effectively released without consequences. Ellen Young was one who witnessed Bentley escape the group of rioters who set fire to a Eureka Hotel in protest and wrote that 'a man [Bentley] gallop[ed] furiously on a trooper's horse towards the camp… [with] a trooper closely following' and thinking it was a race Young had laughed; it was only later she realised the man had been Bentley and 'he was riding for his life, the trooper armed to protect him'.[106] The political unrest soon became a divisive issue itself within the community, as the populace disagreed about how they could best ensure a solution from the Government. A violent clash, albeit defined as defending themselves, was the answer for a large majority of the Ballarat diggers. However, a faction of diggers and their families in Ballarat were intent on peaceful protests and diplomatic solutions, understanding that a bloody conflict would only exacerbate tensions and further fracture the rift between the Victorian Government and its subjects. Clendinning and her husband were 'of the peace portion' of protesters concerning the authorities treatment of diggers in Ballarat, but it seemed even Young had misgivings regarding the brutal reality of violence although she was extremely politically outspoken for a fairer resolution than what the authorities were offering.[107] Young was particularly dismayed upon learning 'an executioner' had been chosen from the Bentley rioters to kill Bentley and was glad the man had escaped as 'such Lynch Law is too dreadful for our English ideas'.[108] While it was necessary in her eyes to fight the injustices of the Victorian Government, to lose their civilised English ways in the process would be disastrous. The newspapers, particularly *The Ballarat Times*, were also quick to blame the authorities for the rough treatment the people of Ballarat had been subjected to and called for action, drastic or otherwise, to address the perceived injustices.[109] While the lower social class of men and women have not left a significant amount of writing to study their viewpoint on the Australian crisis, the silence is alleviated through the written words of Young, Clendinning, Brown Johnston and Hotham.

[105] *The Age*, 12 December 1854, p. 4.
[106] Young, *Volume of Verse*, pp. 163-164.
[107] Clendinning, *op. cit.*, p. 25.
[108] Young, *Volume of Verse*, p. 164.
[109] Rod Kirkpatrick, 'Eureka and the editor: A reappraisal 150 years on', *Australian Journalism Review*, Vol. 26, No. 2, December 2004, pp. 3-4.

Situated 120 kilometres south of the neighbouring district of Bendigo, it is important to note that the goldfields there also endured licence fees and the diggers had protested for a year, which culminated 'in the seminal "Red Ribbon" protest and ten-thousand signature petition of August 1853'.[110] So not only were the influences of international conflicts and emigrants intrinsically part of the Ballarat conflict, but neighbouring Bendigo also assisted the Ballarat diggers' approach towards demanding an overhaul of the fees and licence hunts they had endured. The prevailing early myth of 'old Bendigo' was that it was a success story of egalitarianism on the goldfields and a place where gold was readily available for miners who were willing to 'work hard'.[111] Another facet to the Eureka Stockade conflict was based on this ability to band together for a common cause; while gold was not as easily obtained in Ballarat as it was in Bendigo, the community was intent on receiving a fairer opportunity that would allow them the chance to make life changing finds. The arrival of Hotham had been welcomed by the Ballarat populace, Young's 'A Digger's Lament' stating the hope that 'New brooms they say sweep clean…He'll make a change I ween' but in her *Volume of Verse* she added that 'So he did – for the worse – till he was swept off the scene himself'.[112] While the fees were excessively high for diggers uncertain in their prospecting, according to Clendinning it was the 'mode of collecting' the fees that was 'in fact insulting' and this was a large contribution to the Ballarat conflict as 'The feeling of resentment against it increased' until the dissension culminated in the Eureka Stockade on 3 December 1854.[113] While Clendinning and Young were nearby when the confrontation occurred and gave great detail, Brown Johnston had been largely absent from the field up to that day and only wrote in her diary entry that it was 'The awful day of the attack made at the Eureka at five in the morning'.[114] The next two days Brown Johnston seemed to have lost the taste for writing, as her only remark on 4 December stated that 'All day long funerals passing' and the next day was 'Somewhat similar'.[115] In a retrospective poem, Young pointed out that the fight

[110] Lloyd Carpenter, 'Lighting a gen'rous, manly flame: the nostalgia for "dear old Bendigo"', *Journal of Australian Studies*, Vol. 37, No. 1, 2013, p. 83.
[111] *ibid.*, p. 79.
[112] Young, 'A Digger's Lament', 50;52.
[113] Clendinning, *op. cit.*, p. 10.
[114] Brown Johnston, *op. cit.*, p. 26.
[115] *ibid.*, p. 26.

in Ballarat was one sided and the diggers had been undeniably the 'Victims in the unequal strife', as they were both outnumbered and outpowered by the troops sent in to face them.[116] Early on the morning of 3 December 1854, the short-lived Eureka Stockade battle took place. 'A short battle lasting about twenty minutes ensued, which left many dead and wounded' on both sides and the 'military took over one hundred prisoners', even as warrants were placed on the supposed ringleaders of the conflicts.[117] According to Young the efforts of Governor Hotham were responsible for 'Blighting the young Victoria's fame,/ It's such that's brought proud England shame'.[118] However this indictment may have been unjustly harsh considering Hotham chiefly persisted in this pursuit because he strove to reduce the state deficit and build the Victorian colony into something worthy of its namesake. While his methods were hard on a community largely too poor to afford the licence taxes, upon his death there was an acknowledgement amongst the Victorian community that he had had the best of intentions.[119] The colonial crisis would lead to the goldfields administration being 'overhauled and revised', as well as achieving 'manhood suffrage' for the diggers and two representatives being elected from Ballarat into parliament.[120] However the battle for this recognition had taken a toll on the residents of Ballarat, the lead up to and culmination of the Eureka Stockade was a brutal example of their lower position in the grand schemes of the Victorian colony.

## Men Affected

The men of the Ballarat goldfields, whether opposed to the high licence fees and licence hunts or those in charge of enforcing these Government edicts, were the visible face of the Eureka Stockade conflict. While women were present at the goldfields and some, like Young, were publicly vocal with their opinions they either were not given or did not utilise the same opportunities as men in the conflict. Through an examination of the experiences that women's husbands or male family members

[116] Ellen Young, 'Twelve Months Ago' in Ellen Young, *Volume of Verse,* 1870. MS, National Library of Australia, Canberra, 1019, 50.
[117] Corfield, Wickham and Gervasoni, *op. cit.,* p. vii.
[118] Young, 'Twelve Months Ago', 81-82.
[119] Hotham, *op. cit.,* p. 3.
[120] Corfield, Wickham, Gervasoni, *op. cit.,* p. vii.

underwent, any fluidity of demarcated gender roles the crisis had upon any facet of people's lives in Ballarat can be identified. The biggest contrast of men's and women's roles occurred on 3 December 1854, yet even prior to the conflict Clendinning noted that it was 'every *man* on the [gold]field' who had to pay the gold tax, 'no matter what his employment might be'.[121] This was a significant divergence to the women's situation, as approximately sixty in number were exempt from acquiring the licence because of their gender, although Clendinning herself had to pay a storeowner's fee.[122] While witness to the Eureka Stockade from the vantage point of her tent with her brother, Clendinning did not take part in aiding the diggers within the hastily erected defences, nor did she assist her husband in nursing the wounded when they were under his care.[123] Her condemnation of the battle is noticeable within her writings, as is her anger over the unjust treatment which had provoked the miners in Ballarat; yet even this was not enough to persuade her to assist the diggers in a tangible way. When the Eureka Stockade was imminent and Clendinning's husband was commanded to hand over any firearms he possessed to the miners he lied (as his wife had before him) that he no longer had one within their tent, instead it had already been 'lent to one of themselves'.[124] She noted that the diggers not only seemed more inclined to believe her husband, but that they appeared 'relieved' they would not have to argue with a woman regarding a search of the tent.[125] The aspiration of a peaceful solution had been denied and Clendinning refused to be brought into a violence that she did not believe in. Her s steadfast adherence to her principles despite her sympathy with the diggers was remarkable, for even though her husband was a relatively neutral figure in his vocation as a Doctor, this had been no guarantee that either of them would be spared in the short conflict if things were to somehow escalate throughout Ballarat.

Married to an employee of the Government, Brown Johnston detailed how in the lead up to the conflict she spent a few days 'anxious' and concerned for how her husband was faring with the rising tension, as 'Every day this week… the diggers threatened

[121] Clendinning, *op. cit.*, p. 23. Added emphasis.
[122] Asher, *op. cit.*, p. 56.
[123] Clendinning, *op. cit.*, pp. 25-27.
[124] Clendinning, *op. cit.*, p. 25.
[125] *ibid.*

all sorts of horrid things'.[126] Having been removed from the site of the conflict and only returning the evening before 3 December, Brown Johnston's only mention of the conflict was upon the continuous procession of funerals passing where she lived in the aftermath of the crisis; her concise notes show no disagreement regarding her general absenteeism from the Battle of Ballarat.[127] This acceptance is a clear indication that for some women, such as Brown Johnston and Clendinning, it was more important that they remained separate from the violence and solely concentrated upon their own family's wellbeing. To offer more than this moral support in their husband's endeavours would be to reduce or hinder the men's efforts in a conflict that had far-reaching consequences for the budding male egalitarianism within Australia. That Brown Johnston returned to the goldfields to support her husband was no small thing, particularly as her husband being the Assistant Gold Commissioner was an undoubtedly unpopular figure among the diggers.

The Eureka Stockade pitted the 'common' digger against elite power governing the Ballarat goldfields and Victoria. Understanding that it was a crucial conflict, particularly as it consisted of members of the British Empire fighting among themselves instead of against the 'other' of the Aboriginal or Chinese communities, moderate and peaceful protestors were dismissed as ineffective, making a brutal confrontation purportedly inevitable. Wright notes that it was this 'sheer ordinariness of the situation' which outraged some like Samuel Lazarus, whom she wrote was horrified 'at how far the British officials had strayed from their national and racial superiority as agents of civility and progress'.[128] To fight their own countrymen and women was absurd and an alarming reflection of the dire straits Victoria had fallen into. Young's political poetry and letters to the editor were her individual contribution to the struggle her husband faced in his endeavours; her lack of physical action in the conflict yet another example of the differing roles of men and women within the conflict. In her foreshadowed 'A Digger's Lament' Young wrote that the diggers were 'men high taxed, ill lodged, worse fed' but that 'Better was ne'er by hero led/ Or

[126] Brown Johnston, *op. cit.,* pp. 25-26.
[127] *ibid.,* p. 26.
[128] Clare Wright, "An Indelible Stain': Gifts of the Samuel Lazarus Diary', *History Australia,* Vol. 6, No. 2, 2009, p. 45.4.

crown'd with hero's fame'.[129] Young's revised appraisal of Hotham was particularly scathing and a factor in her writings which elevated the status of the diggers above the Governor of Victoria and the laws he sanctioned. Her lack of mention of her husband individually in her public political writing is an important factor; Young lumping his struggles in with the everyday man, the common digger who fought for justice and an end of the perceived tyrannical rule of the Victorian Government.[130] The Governor himself did not return to Ballarat during the lead up to, or aftermath of the Eureka Stockade. Sir Charles had cut the licence fees by more than half their cost before the crisis, yet enforced 'twice-weekly searches for licences, thus incensing the diggers'.[131]

Upon the death of her husband on 31 December 1855, Hotham diligently collected addresses of condolence and received numerous sympathetic expressions stating they believed the Governor worked himself into the grave for Victoria.[132] This was an oblique reference to the Eureka Stockade conflict and the burdens placed on Governor Hotham. It is telling that Jane Hotham had kept a newspaper report from *The Argus* which remarked that 'Sir Charles had [unjustly] been blamed for his too great devotion' to serving the British Empire; while he may not have suited nor wanted the post of Lieutenant-Governor of Victoria 'had he been the worst enemy of our interest, had he been the most truculent and base of oppressors… he could scarcely have been attacked with fiercer vehemence'.[133] Hotham's own recounting of the final days of her husband echoed the sentiment that he had devoted his life (and sacrificed his health) to Victoria, as she noted he continued to try and work from his sick bed and near the end, 'After the first fit when I was lying by his side he said "I have worked too hard"'.[134] Hotham had acted as support for her husband, yet Sir Charles' experience of the Eureka Stockade had weighed heavily on him. The eruption of conflict had felt like an aberration to much of the population within the state, yet the violence was not so surprising considering it was at the Ballarat goldfields, a place where political and social norms were constantly being reinvented.

[129] Young, 'A Digger's Lament', 37; 39-40.
[130] Wright, *Forgotten Rebels of Eureka,* p. 211.
[131] Kirkpatrick, *op. cit.,* p. 2.
[132] Hotham, *op. cit.,* pp. 25-26; 31; 34-35; 38; 67 are some examples of this sentiment.
[133] *Argus* in Lady Jane Hotham, *Journal,* Hull University Archives, Hull, U DDHO/10/42, p. 140.
[134] Hotham, *op. cit.,* p. 111.

## Domesticity

The accepted domain of women had for some time been the domesticated life, the private sphere in which married couples and their families resided. The interdependence of roles which allowed a woman and her husband to navigate society assumed that women were, as the moral force behind civilisation, more suited to the nurturing efforts of the home rather than facing public pressures such as employment and politics. As Anne Summers states, the economic security with which men provided women was a large facet of the division of gendered roles, which were intended to neatly 'dovetail' the female role consisting of 'domestic and sexual services… [As well as] emotional security'.[135] For some women, the domesticity they had practiced in the old country was easily transferable and they strove to maintain these standards. Brown Johnston applied her musical talent in the drawing room while residing in Melbourne and kept up a constant stream of visits between herself and friends while in town.[136] Contrasted to this resemblance of the metropole, Ballarat required significant adjustments for women's domestic life on the goldfields as they had 'to work hard both inside and outside the home'; the family's livelihood relied on women working alongside their husbands in their endeavours and doing what chores they could to ease the process of finding gold or eking out a living in Ballarat.[137] The women at the heart of the British Empire had been warned before making a long journey to colonial outposts that they might need to do their own work, even though this conflicted with the 'British ideal of genteel leisure' and Ballarat in particular necessitated their adaptability to new roles.[138] Clendinning is an example of the new expectations women faced when living in tents, as she noted 'Our house work (if I may use the term) would take up very little time… Teaching and needle-work, the usual womanly employments, were out of the question; they were not needed on the gold fields'.[139] Furthermore, rather than solely relying on the money the men might bring in as they may have in the old country, Clendinning and her sister 'felt we should

[135] Summers, *op. cit.,* p. 251.
[136] Brown Johnston, *op. cit.,* p. 21.
[137] Alexander, *A Wealth of Women,* p. vii.
[138] Lorinda Cramer, 'Making a Home in Gold-rush Victoria: Plain Sewing and the Genteel Woman', *Australian Historical Studies,* Vol. 48, No. 2, 2017, p. 214.
[139] Clendinning, *op. cit.,* p. 7.

much like some way of making a little money to help our husbands in their hard work'.[140] The malleability of gender roles had also occurred on the road to Ballarat, when a fellow traveller offered to cook their meals as the Clendinning sisters were unsure how to prepare the meat; Clendinning paid attention to the man's efforts so she would know what to do when they reached their new home, but it was a novel experience for her.[141] There is no mention of the domestic sphere in which Young and her husband resided, as her public role of denouncing Governor Hotham and the Victorian Government did not require her to detail that aspect of her life. However, in 'A Digger's Lament' she had noted the lack of quality food in the region as she wrote 'sorry fare is what you'll get,/ From butcher, baker, store,/ And all your just complaints are met,/ With threats to have no more'.[142] These conditions could have played a factor in women responding to the crisis, as not only was the gold rarer to find than expected, but the fees and hunts carried out by the Government continually reduced the men's time to search for it and gain the necessary income to pay for wares. Outside the flexible gendered roles within Ballarat, Jane Hotham retained a closer connection to the 'ideology of domesticity' which saw her in charge of a small household of servants and later nursing her husband through his ultimately fatal illness, as well as writing his correspondence, reading him newspapers and tending to him throughout the days and nights.[143] The contrasting experiences within the domestic sphere, for those outside Ballarat and those on the goldfields highlight how malleable gendered roles could be when survival, or at the least the comfort, of women and their families depended on the successful adaptability of women.

## Safety

The lack of a quintessential domestic sphere in Ballarat provided another dilemma when it became clear the Eureka Stockade was imminent - whether the women should be removed from the area to ensure they would not be accidentally harmed or continue to remain in their homes. As Wright explains, this crisis was not 'an isolated scene of

[140] *ibid.*
[141] *ibid.,* p. 8.
[142] Young, 'A Digger's Lament', 5-8.
[143] Wickham, *Women of the Diggings,* p. 17; Hotham, *op. cit.,* pp. 100-113.

skirmish in the bush… [The] diggings encompassed a domestic environment where the rattle and hum of work and commerce co-existed with the daily rhythms of family life'.[144] While this domestic life and the gendered divisions were not a carbon copy of the British experience in the metropole, it was arguably not so different that women did not need to be sheltered from violence. Their political writings, whether public or private, show that the women on the goldfields were engaged in the conflict even if they did not seek the violence that produced the Eureka Stockade on 3 December 1854. Clendinning had been warned by her brother-in-law that 'the diggings was no fit place for any respectable woman', yet this was his reflection concerning non-conformist women whom Summers terms 'Damned Whores', rather than the idea that the Clendinning sisters would be in fear of bodily harm.[145] In fact Clendinning was surprised 'in those early days' prior to the conflict that no one tried to rob their dwellings even though they were only canvas tents.[146] Just prior to the Eureka Stockade Brown Johnston noted in her diary that on 22 November she and a Mrs Lane had their 'first flight from camp'; their return to the Ballarat camp on this occasion did not occur until three days later, when her husband came to escort them home and they 'Found everything alright'.[147] It may have been due to having the resources, not just the thought of facing the furious diggers, that influenced officials such as Johnston to evacuate their loved ones or family friends rather than have the women caught up in a skirmish.[148] On 27 November Brown Johnston was once again evacuated, yet returned just a day prior to the Eureka Stockade conflict.[149] She had evacuated because, as the wife of one of the authorities at the goldfields, it was difficult to predict her safety if a crisis broke out. This was different to Clendinning, who had noted that as she and her husband 'did not belong to the Government officials, the universal objects of hatred… we had no special cause for fear; *but it was not pleasant*' remaining to see the conflict as they had been wanting a peaceful resolution.[150] Left to herself if the Doctor was called away, Clendinning recruited her brother to stay at the tent the night before the unrest began and the siblings 'stood outside the tent, whence we could get a good view of the attack on the Stockade' in the morning after hearing the first sounds of

[144] Wright, "An Indelible Stain", p. 45.4.
[145] Clendinning, *op. cit.,* p.6; Summers, *op. cit.,* p. 103.
[146] Clendinning, *op. cit.,* p. 19.
[147] Brown Johnston, *op. cit.,* pp. 25-26.
[148] Wright, "New Brooms", p. 310.
[149] Brown Johnston, *op. cit.,* p. 26.
[150] Clendinning, *op. cit.,* p. 25. Added emphasis.

gunshots.[151] Patricia Jalland notes that 'European women were almost entirely ignored in the heroic representations of death… except as supporting characters'.[152] This could explain why the injuries that befell some women that day were soon forgotten, such as 'Emma Leman [who] fled back into her tent' after attempting to come 'to the aid of an innocent fellow... [Which resulted in her] being pursued like an animal by a British servant of the state' and another who wrote she had been wounded as the 'bullet fired from the Government Camp had grazed her head'.[153] The conflict had boiled over because a plethora of civilians in Ballarat were tired of their protestations against the Government being ignored, and it seemed that it was the Government officials who were also responsible for firing at women instead of concentrating their firepower on the men barricaded in the Stockade.

## Social Networks

Within Ballarat the social gatherings were numerous and varied before the Eureka Stockade transpired, and this included the political meetings which would play a large part in mobilising a faction of miners against the authorities. Although the conventional British customs of receiving callers was a rarity for the lower and middle classes of society, due to the plentiful work women were required to do inside and outside their homes, it is clear that it was still a practice when the women had a more comfortable existence. Brown Johnston, upon arriving in Melbourne and then Ballarat retained British customs and made notes in her diary when her social visits to Church or to and from other ladies were made.[154] Other social interactions included Clendinning serving customers (particularly women) from her tent, as well as the general digging community's constant exchanges due to the close quarters in which they were mining for gold.[155] This community included the women, as their 'pervasive economic participation' had been 'encouraged by gold rush conditions'; although the goldfields were still class conscious, the relative egalitarianism of working together

[151] *ibid.,* p. 27.
[152] Patricia Jalland, *Australia Ways of Death: A Social and Cultural History, 1840-1918,* Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 2002, p. 6.
[153] Wright, "An Indelible Stain", p. 45.4; Wright, *Forgotten Rebels of Eureka,* p. 12.
[154] Brown Johnston, *op. cit.,* pp. 21-25.
[155] Clendinning, *op. cit.,* pp. 9; 11; 15-17.

ensured that women were soon demanding 'political inclusion' for themselves and they closely observed the path that was being created by the political meetings men had initiated.[156] Young described one such meeting in her *Volume of Verse,* giving context to a letter she had written to the *Times* in 1854 during the 'turbulent period' of unrest, about how 'A man of education – abusing his abilities by engineering the excited and unharmed public to revolutionary acts… [Had then abandoned them, leaving] them to their fate'.[157] To describe one of the men with such clarity and the effect he had upon the gathering, it is possible that Young had attended the meeting. While in many contemporary accounts any attendance of women at such a meeting was not mentioned, the political gatherings addressed "the inhabitants of Ballarat" and were therefore inclusive of the women residing there; it was also women who had constructed the Eureka Flag and their accounts of the diggers' political leaders and reactions show evidence of their awareness, if not participation, at such political meetings.[158]

Upon the first arrival of Sir Charles Hotham to Victoria, the Lieutenant Governor had toured Ballarat with his wife and been warmly welcomed; the residents hoped he would abolish the licence fees and end the tax hunts which constantly hounded them. As Wright notes, the 'private tour, an unobtrusive, inconspicuous visit' which did not demand formality amongst the mining community was well received, yet such a social visit was not entertained again.[159] Governor Hotham ensured any representatives of the Ballarat community had to travel to Melbourne to request or demand changes, and as these were not guaranteed to succeed the hatred for the Victorian Government increased, despite the charity works Hotham oversaw in her role as the matriarch of Victoria's society. Hotham's work was noted as invaluable and amongst the addresses of condolence she received upon the death of her husband the Church of England and Ireland in Melbourne had written that her contributions to charities and her example would forever 'remain as an illustration of the power' such good deeds could work

[156] Catherine Bishop and Angela Woollacott, 'Business and Politics as Women's Work: The Australian Colonies and the Mid-Nineteenth-Century Women's Movement', *Journal of Women's History,* Vol. 28, No. 1, Spring 2016, p. 100.
[157] Young, *Volume of Verse*, p. 162.
[158] Wright, "New Brooms", p. 310.
[159] Wright, *Forgotten Rebels of Eureka,* p. 228.

upon a society.[160] The ever fluctuating function social gatherings played in Ballarat ensured that women without charities to attend to or a 'proper' social circle, such as working bees consisting of needlework and other activities, were still contributing in other ways and giving their time to whatever their community required.

## Political Perceptions

The political landscape of Ballarat in 1854 was in disarray, with splintered factions unable to agree on what approach was needed for a successful outcome. The diggers had essentially formed into three parties, one uninterested or disheartened enough to believe nothing could be changed for a better life, with the other two factions determined to change their fortune with the Victorian Government either peacefully or violently.[161] While 'British citizens expected to be governed by the organisations and ethos of British justice', the failure of the state Government to respond to their needs was unacceptable and the people of Ballarat demanded a better response from the Queen's representatives.[162] Susan Baggett Barham theorises that women in any situation can be a significant 'motivator for the sacrifice of man, [as] woman represents the man's point of vulnerability' in their interdependent roles within society; as more and more men were settling down with wives on the goldfields it added extra pressure on their need to find gold and keep an income flowing into the household.[163] Clendinning's political efforts centred on circumventing the system, rather than using her voice to publicly decry the fees, hunts and other laws which the Government had implemented upon the Ballarat community. It was Clendinning who approached the Commissioner's tent to apply for her husband's licence, and due to her receiving an abnormally courteous and chivalrous response from the officials, many of the waiting diggers remarked they would send their wives too, saving them the time and hassle.[164] As Clendinning noted, her husband was relieved when the licence had been procured, as he could now 'defend himself against any inquisitive trooper'.[165] Her choice of

[160] Hotham, *op. cit.,* p. 27.
[161] Kirkpatrick, *op. cit.,* p. 4.
[162] Wright, *Forgotten Rebels of Eureka,* p. 102.
[163] Susan Baggett Barham, 'Conceptualisations of Women within Australian Egalitarian Thought', *Comparative Studies in Society and History,* Vol. 30, No. 3, July 1988, p. 503.
[164] Clendinning, *op. cit.,* pp. 11-12.
[165] *ibid.,* p. 12.

word highlights the insecurity among the miners on the goldfields and is a condemnation of the actions of troopers; furthermore the exclusion of the diggers 'from the passing of all laws, to which, however, they were obliged to pay unquestioned obedience' was in her eyes a significant factor in the political unrest.[166] The splintered factions of diggers had soon emerged after a public meeting on 17 October 1854, in which the diggers had gathered in outrage at the Eureka Hotel murder and a riot occurred at the site, with rocks thrown through windows and a fire setting the building ablaze.[167] It was soon apparent that some of the men were not in favour of such aggressive violence which could result in bloodshed, while they agreed something needed to be done it was a slippery slope for a civilised British subject to embark upon. It was in the 'final weeks of November… some diggers burned their licences in open protests' of the Government Board's report regarding the fiasco at the infamous Eureka Hotel.[168] There was no mention of women at this political rally or others, yet Young had discussed the unrest in terms that were parallel to those spokespeople, including her strident public letter to the editor of the *Ballarat Times* on 10 November whereupon she insisted: 'The diseased limbs of the law must be lopped off… Is this the way to listen to the voice of the people as you [Sir Hotham] promised on your visit to the Diggers?'[169] Politics was, at the best of times, a volatile area and predisposed toward disagreements. The developing situation in Ballarat elevated this instability, leading to the Eureka Stockade conflict.

Without swift action across all of the complaints brought to Governor Hotham's notice, it was incongruous to think the diggers of Ballarat would retreat from their demands. The men and women of the community did not think their requests unreasonable, as their livelihood depended upon being able to afford the licence fee and the hunts were reminiscent of such miserly treatment given to those of the 'other', non-British subjects who lived under the sovereignty of the Queen. Deborah Fahy Bryceson states that those who had no allegiance to the British Crown 'contributed to the growing disgruntlement against licence fee enforcement' and the 'consensual moral economy [which] existed at the diggings, where trust and morality were

[166] *ibid.*, p. 24.
[167] Kirkpatrick, *op. cit.*, p. 2.
[168] *ibid.*, p. 3.
[169] Young, *Volume of Verse*, p. 160.

considered' to be prominent, made for a varying mixture of ideologies.[170] The prevailing philosophy was that the diggers needed to fix a corrupt Government, that had not only sought to bleed them dry but let a murderer in James Bentley get an easy escape; the ideal solution being to present a united front in which the diggers would fight for one another. The initial Reform League had not meant a literal fight, as Young and Clendinning attest in their writings, Young stating she would 'ever respect Mr Humphrey MLA for the unceasing efforts he made to preserve peace and [who] pointed out what would be the result of violence'.[171] Although Young supported the diggers in their demand for justice and representation, it was distasteful to demand bloodshed, despite her public letter in which she had stated that certain limbs of the Government needed to be lopped off. Clendinning was more vocal about her desire for a peaceful resolution, writing 'We of the peace portion… learned with great satisfaction that our magistrates had applied to the Government authorities in Melbourne to despatch some troops to assist' bringing order to the diggers, 'for as yet they had it all *their* own way'.[172] Her remark highlights two aspects of life on the goldfields: although Clendinning had scorned the actions of the Government and had no love for their heartless conduct, her desire for reform in a democratic and law abiding manner insisted that the authorities should crush any outbreak of fighting. While the requests and demands had not been met for law abiding subjects, Clendinning had still believed in that process and clearly expressed this sentiment when discussing ringleader Peter Lalor's loss of his arm from the conflict, for 'his empty sleeve… [Told] the tale of his follies and his misfortunes'.[173] Sir Charles Hotham was still relatively new to the Governor position and his responses of halving the fees, yet doubling the hunts, as well as of failing to declare a general amnesty straight away after the conflict were heavily critiqued by writers such as Young and numerous newspapers.[174] Upon his death the *Argus* scathingly remonstrated with the people of the Eureka Stockade conflict, for 'no allowance was made for him, no apology permitted. He was not treated with the respect due to his office, nor with the frankness which his nature required' and instead Hotham faced suspicion and contempt for his efforts to further the standing of Victoria in the eyes of other

[170] Bryceson, *op. cit.,* p. 38.
[171] Young, *Volume of Verse,* p. 163.
[172] Clendinning, *op. cit.,* p. 25. Added emphasis.
[173] *ibid.,* p. 27.
[174] Hancock, *op. cit.,* p. 39.

Australian colonial Governments and the British Empire.[175] Such a maelstrom of political differences and arguments had resulted in the Eureka Stockade, but Ballarat and the conflict also presented new opportunities for men and women that were previously unusual, if not inconceivable.

## New Opportunities

Conflict is a disruption of normality, yet even before 3 December 1854 the Ballarat goldfields had been a place of new opportunities and a reinvention of what would have been termed 'normal' for a society that based itself on the British metropole. Women in particular were initially encouraged to go to the goldfields to find husbands and help maintain civilisation in the manner the British were accustomed to living in the motherland.[176] However, the colonial outpost of Australia and in particular the goldfields of Ballarat were unable to fully replicate British social and gendered divisions; 'newly articulated gender roles' were required to forge a living and women were adaptable.[177] As discussed, Clendinning opened a store with her sister in defiance of the derision she faced from her brother-in-law, as well as the man from whom they had bought store supplies, who wished what they bought would be 'so profitable that I might soon be able to *give up* a business'.[178] The new opportunities for women in Ballarat soon extended to other areas including public and political writing, as tensions rose on the goldfields and a mix of international and national concerns created an unstable environment through which the residents of Ballarat had to navigate. While other authors used pseudonyms to protect their names, Young made a point to attribute work to herself. Her hope for a better outcome with a change in leader was expressed in poetry and letters to the *Ballarat Times*, praising Sir Charles Hotham's arrival and stating he would fight 'for Truth – fearless in her cause', before the situation turned for the worse.[179] In a retrospective poem titled 'Twelve Months Ago' Young expounded upon her disappointment with what had occurred during the conflict and Hotham's part in exacerbating the situation, 'He came and spoke us fair you know,/No

[175] *Argus* in Hotham, *op. cit.,* pp. 141-143.
[176] Wright, "New Brooms", p. 305.
[177] Woollacott, *Settler Society,* p. 124.
[178] Clendinning, *op. cit.*, p. 8. Added emphasis.
[179] Young, *Volume of Verse,* p. 120.

croaking harbinger of woe'.[180] Young took the opportunity to berate anyone she deemed as ineffective to furthering the causes close to her heart were undertaken, as evidenced in a letter which listed the demands of the people and asked 'Is there not one man… to insist on the above demands – and if refused let us demand them of England'.[181] While new avenues had opened for Hotham as she accompanied her husband to Victoria, supervising numerous charitable works and social functions 'in the fulfilment of the duties of her exalted station', her role in society was essentially only a new opportunity because of their home in a colonial outpost.[182] Although Hotham's experiences most closely observed the civilising ideologies her husband had wanted for the goldfields of Ballarat, the women's inability to adhere strictly to such constraints there was simply a reflection of the different needs a colonial outpost required than the towns and cities of Britain. While Lorinda Cramer contests that even at such a place as the Ballarat goldfields taking outside work was to dismiss gentility as part of a woman's status, this rule did not apply to everyone.[183] Clendinning was an eminently respectable and genteel middle class figure in society and it was only in 1855 that she decided to end her business, as Ballarat had become a 'settled township' and larger stores had now surpassed what she could supply.[184] However it is clear that her consideration was only partially based on how times had moved on and a woman could no longer 'carry on her business without invidious remarks'; above all her practicality shone through in Clendinning's remark that 'it was no longer worth my while to give up my time for *diminished returns* arising from increased competition'.[185] Opportunities and perceptions of the possibilities within the Ballarat landscape made for a determined and strong-willed community, the women's writing highlighting how these perceptions and their reactions continued to shift and adapt as each new opportunity or calamity arose.

## Superiority

[180] Young, 'Twelve Months Ago', 73-74.
[181] Young, *Volume of Verse,* p. 162. Original emphasis.
[182] Hotham, *op. cit.,* p. 30.
[183] Cramer, *op. cit.*, p. 219.
[184] Clendinning, *op. cit.*, p. 28.
[185] *ibid.,* pp. 28-29.

In any writing a particular bias, in which the author's perspective is given a certain credence over opposing voices, can and does arise and it is important to retain an awareness regarding perceptions of importance. While the European community felt assured of their superiority over the Aboriginal communities they came into contact with, Young, Brown Johnston and Clendinning were more keenly aware of other social differences within Ballarat such as class which separated the 'right' kind of people from others. Presenting themselves to society entailed a myriad of largely unspoken rules, including wearing clothing that was neither too gaudy or dirty, with just the right modest cut for respectability.[186] Clendinning knew the power of dress when she went to purchase a digger's licence for her husband, dressing in her best clothes to pay the visit to the Commissioner's tent. Clendinning remarked 'Never had I seen them more astonished than they all looked at my appearance', as her attention to such a seemingly minor detail as her choice of clothing generated a courteousness from the men and a faster process to receive the licence.[187] Clendinning, while often uncaring about describing her choice of dress for the day, did remark that by donning her best clothes on this occasion she had shown herself to be a respectable lady and taken more seriously as 'A few women then resident on the gold fields were of a very rough class' and rarely dressed as well as she had.[188] Many women, if their families could afford it, procured a washing woman even if they did not need a housekeeper or servant to look after the rest of their domestic upkeep. It was a sign of middle class gentility if not affluence to afford such help and the Clendinning household took advantage of the services of an older, 'respectable' woman to wash their 'clothes and linen'.[189] The term, respectable, was often used in Clendinning's writing and it is this sign of 'civilisation' which demanded her devotion; the gaudiness or rough appearance of others on the goldfields was remarked upon and given quick judgment, even so far as their moving to another area in Ballarat so that her child would have a 'respectable playmate'.[190] Both Clendinning and Young in particular thought their perception of the Eureka Stockade events were well informed and the correct interpretation of the conflict, believing their important roles within society as storeowner and Doctor's

[186] Lorinda Cramer, 'Keeping Up Appearances: Genteel Women, Dress and Refurbishing in Gold-Rush Victoria, Australia, 1851-1870', *Textile,* Vol. 15, No. 1, 2017, p. 55; Wickham, *Forgotten Rebels of Eureka,* p. 46.
[187] Clendinning, *op. cit.,* p. 11.
[188] *ibid.*
[189] *ibid.,* pp. 17-18.
[190] *ibid.,* p. 22.

wife, or poet and digger's wife gave them a legitimate reason to voice their opinions and declare them correct. Young and Clendinning's understanding of the conflict diverged regarding the arrival of troops to Ballarat, Clendinning initially welcoming their arrival as her contention that the turmoil would have been better resolved peacefully and through a democratic, lawful process allowed her an opportunity to question whether the diggers were completely in the right.[191] In contrast, Young's belief in the superiority of her interpretation firmly refused to publicly address any of the concerns of the Government and their reasoning behind catastrophic decisions such as the licence fees and hunts.[192] As Young's writing was given in the public arena it was hers that was given credibility over other, more private voices such as Clendinning's as to what the township's sentiment was. This boosted Young's perception of importance and gave her further confidence to continue her defence of the diggers with little thought of a legitimate rebuttal from Governor Hotham's side. The importance each woman gave to their perspective was only natural, but with each entry or public address their intended audience was pushed towards their slanted understanding of life on the goldfields and the crisis with very few contradictory messages amongst the pages to give a more balanced view of the Eureka Stockade.

## Private Writings

Private expressions of ideas and concerns regarding life in Australia in 1854 have, for the most part, disappeared as they were often kept within families and discarded without thought of preserving such writings for historical significance. Furthermore, lower class residents of Ballarat rarely had time to jot down thoughts of the day even if they had an education and had spare paper on which they could write. Other diaries or journals which were initially private, as noted in the Introductory chapter, were often passed to family members to serve as their news from home rather than rewriting events.[193] Therefore, although technically intended for private use, such writings encompassed a larger audience than just the author and required more detail than the barest notations. Brown Johnston's diary is the most notable private record out of the

[191] *ibid.,* 24-25.
[192] Young, *Volume of Verse.*
[193] Bloom, "I Write for Myself and Strangers", p. 23.

four Australian women selected for their interaction and perception of the Eureka Stockade. While her entries were longer on the voyage to Australia, Brown Johnston was placed in a unique position of authority via her husband's role for the Government and her quick descriptions of certain days stand out for their frankness. She had no need to consider what anyone else might think if they read her diary and her perception of the conflict on the Ballarat goldfields was unhindered by a need to question her bias in favour of her husband's position. The domestic life was not only the domain in which women were encouraged to remain, but from Brown Johnston's own account it was her preferred sphere as she devoted most of her writing to noting social commitments or how she set up her household for comfort.[194] Any sympathy she may have felt for the diggers was reserved for her observation of the two days of funerals after the Eureka Stockade; Brown Johnston's abiding perception of the turmoil in Victoria was restricted to wishing her husband safe from harm and a sense of loss when the order of her private domain turned chaotic and she had to flee from home on two occasions with other official's wives.[195]

Contrasted to the very private ruminations of Brown Johnston, Clendinning's private thoughts eventually became a public memoir, an outlet in which she reminisced on the turbulent period in Australian history. Her emphasis in the title that she was a lady ('*Recollections of Ballarat: Lady's Life at the Diggings Fifty Years Ago*') is a constant reminder that class distinctions continued to mark society and present some perceptions or experiences as more valid than others.[196] While it is impossible to know whether Clendinning changed some entries or her view on certain aspects of the conflict, it is unlikely she made any great changes to her initial observations. Specific comments, particularly regarding Clendinning's delight in owning a store and working as a business woman despite what some of her gentlemen acquaintances thought appropriate for a lady, highlight her concern for maintaining an accuracy with her original thoughts.[197] Furthermore, Clendinning could feel some satisfaction that she had been in close proximity to the Battle of Ballarat and her accounts gave a different gendered perspective on the conflict to the numerous accounts men had written

[194] Brown Johnston, *op. cit.*, pp. 4-7; 21-25.
[195] *ibid.*, pp. 25-26.
[196] Clendinning, *op. cit.*
[197] Clendinning, *op. cit.*, pp. 7; 14; 17.

regarding the Eureka Stockade. Clendinning's private musings turned public made no effort to cut ideas that were contrary to others who had been more vocal, calling the mining leaders foolish for their violent approach and welcoming the idea of troops to settle life on the goldfields to a more stable status quo.

## Public Writings

Fear of public derision or anger could be a powerful motivator for changing initial writings women had expressed in their journals. Hotham was one such woman and could have given an invaluable insight into her husband's thought process in how he proceeded with the unrest in Ballarat. However, as the wife of the Governor of Victoria it was always likely that their papers and journals would end up in the public domain for others to read. Whether from grief after her husband's death or from a desire to retain her status as a leader of morality for Victorian society, Hotham burnt most of her Melbourne journal.[198] Maintaining her role as a support for Sir Charles it was imperative that even upon his death Lady Hotham protect his name, keeping any possible disparaging remarks regarding the people of Ballarat out of the public eye and reducing her journal to some pages concerning the final days of Governor Hotham and the numerous addresses of condolence she received upon his death.[199] This was markedly different to Young's approach, who was unrelenting in her public condemnation of the injustice the diggers faced in 1854 through her poetry and letters to the editor of the *Ballarat Times*. However, Young's work was best preserved in her *Volume of Verse,* in which she handwrote her previous works and made notations to explain certain phrases or express the disappointments that cropped up when hopes for the diggers were crushed.[200] Wright notes that Henry Seekamp, the editor of the *Ballarat Times*, 'actively encouraged' Young's political stance and was always eager to add her voice to his newspaper.[201] This was an exciting development as, whereas other female authors used pseudonyms to preserve their anonymity and have their work speak for itself, Young felt assured of her social position and with the backing

[198] Hancock, *op. cit.*, pp. 6; 44.
[199] Hotham, *op. cit.*
[200] Young, *Volume of Verses.*
[201] Wright, *Forgotten Rebels of Eureka,* p. 204.

of the editor himself enjoyed having her work attributed to her name.[202] Although Wright states 'No one disputed her [Young's] authority or right to become the mouthpiece for the people of Ballarat', it is clear in a later poem that Young herself had felt her political work to be disparaged because of her gender.[203] In 'Erin's Brave Daughter' Young referenced her significant political contributions, for even as she defended her writing from those who enjoyed 'Scorning a woman's voice and pen,/There's many more than them beside,/ Find't will rouse to action men'.[204]

A voice in the public sphere, a political voice, was for Young an essential element of bringing the grievances of the diggers to the Government and ensuring that they could not be easily swept aside. Self-censorship may have been at work in some parts of Young's book, yet is unlikely considering her original discussion of the escapee James Bentley was retained, in which the possibility of a lynching was mentioned even though it would be 'too dreadful for our English ideas'.[205] This expression is particularly surprising considering, with the benefit of hindsight, Young may have wanted to focus on actual events rather than the possibility of one. Furthermore, other significant crises across the British Empire had seen 'English ideas' go awry and become a distorted and brutal simulation of the heroic imperial ideal, to reference this possibility in 1854 was to link the Australian conflict to other, brutal conflicts. Mentioning what a civilised culture could do, instead of solely focusing on the demands and ideals of the mining community was a delicate balancing act. Public writing relied upon a self-awareness and censorship, even if vociferous and politically charged writing like Young's seemed to overlook such a convention. Above all, protecting the women's perception of the conflict and maintaining an equilibrium that painted the side they favoured in the best possible light was essential, even as it inevitably opposed other viewpoints of the conflict.

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[202] *ibid.*
[203] *ibid.*
[204] Ellen Young, 'Erin's Brave Daughter', in Ellen Young, *Volume of Verse,* 1870. MS, National Library of Australia, Canberra, 1019, 282-284. Original emphasis.
[205] Young, *Volume of Verse,* p. 164.

## Silence

Censorship in women's own writings was markedly different to the silence foisted upon them by society at large. The contradictory and fluid nature of Ballarat's gendered society had allowed women to impose their presence on the goldfields and work alongside their families while commenting in private, if not in public, on their perspective regarding the crisis. However, the idea that women were mostly absent from the goldfields and only a rough, lower class of women were present has been a persistent misconception that has only comparatively recently been overturned by authors such as Wright and Wickham.[206] While Gerald Porter states that the silence or gaps in history are normal and researchers need to uncover the missing 'real history', this is an uphill battle when not only did the literary women measure their own words, but newspapers and men tried to reduce their part in the narrative to that of a bystander or a helpless and grieving woman bereft of husband or family after the conflict ended.[207] This is evident even in Rod Kirkpatrick's own words, whereupon women are associated with the material things of the goldfields and as a symbolisation of civilisation ruined:

> Ballarat wept tears of grief and anger amid the cries of some of the women whose tents had been subject to attacks that Sunday morning. Loved ones lay smashed, homes were in ruins, and belongings were strewn about and charred or covered in blood.[208]

Kirkpatrick's description of the conflict centres on terms such as 'tears of grief', crying women, the ruination of homes and material possessions from the women's domestic sphere. The waves of emotions that everyone on the goldfields must have experienced are in this quotation reduced to the experience of women, the emotional and nurturing gender, with little regard for men's perception of the destruction or for other women's perspectives. Women like Clendinning and Young, while distraught at the bloodshed were more intent on seeing justice prevail and the folly of some of these men rectified

[206] Baggett Barham, *op. cit.*, p. 494; Wright, *Forgotten Rebels of Eureka*; Wickham, *Women of the Diggings.*
[207] Gerald Porter, 'The English Ballad Singer and Hidden History', *Studia Musicologica*, Vol. 49, No. 1/2, March 2008, p. 127.
[208] Kirkpatrick, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

for the betterment of the community. Perhaps the diggers' 'determination and camaraderie, a 'Eureka ethos', which sometimes transgressed local social boundaries of propriety' was unable to cope with the specific naming of women who were present at the skirmish, as distinctions between gendered roles had already blurred enough before the Eureka Stockade.[209] The persistent myth of 'weeping widows, 'mourning over their dead relations" was presented as the standard experience of women in Ballarat; other women such as Young were excused as an anomaly of 1854 even though they were important figures of society.[210] In fact Young explored the silencing of different voices in her poem 'Twelve Months Ago', asking 'Who'd chain the People's thoughts and pen' when these very voices could bring about a change for the better?[211] Reducing their outlet or attempting to silence their contribution was sweeping aside the involvement of a multitude of women and a travesty when compared with the relatively acceptable fluidity of their physical actions on the goldfields. Accepting their manual labour both in the home and outside of it, yet ignoring the substance of women's writings and their differing perspectives on the Eureka Stockade, was to disconnect women's interpretation of the crisis from their actions.

Clendinning, Young, Brown Johnston and Hotham offered four differing perspectives regarding the events of the Eureka Stockade. Their interaction with the conflict was discussed in private journals and public newspapers, in defence of the miners' grievances or resolutely defending the Government and the democratic process through which hard laws could change. One of the most noticeable aspects amongst their writings was in regards to the violence surrounding the events of the Eureka Stockade; Hotham despaired of the toll it took on her husband's health, whereas Brown Johnston morbidly noted the large body count as the funeral processions passed by. Young and Clendinning were firmly on the side of the diggers, yet neither were truly comfortable with the extreme violence espoused by some of these men; it was a sign of uncivilised bloodlust which, in their eyes, could cause more problems than fix their grievances. The spectrum of the British women's emotions towards the crisis was

[209] Bryceson, *op. cit.,* p. 51.
[210] Wright, "An Indelible Stain", p. 45.2
[211] Young, 'Twelve Months Ago', 36.

complex, just as their roles within Ballarat and the crisis were versatile to allow their adaptability on an everchanging political and social landscape. The newness of the colonial outpost and Ballarat goldfields gave women a chance of fluidity with acceptable gender roles they could undertake, yet contemporary texts attempted to shift focus from such malleability and silence the unfeminine. Young was the exception in her time as a voluntary spokeswoman for Ballarat and as 1855 was coming to a close Clendinning noted social positions were reverting towards the more conventional culture that was prevalent in the British metropole, the novel roles performed by women disappearing. Ballarat's encouragement of a unique and fluid status quo prior to the crisis was largely unaffected by the conflict and only changed as the township settled after the turbulent period of 1854. However, Young and Clendinning in particular had used the unusual circumstances of the goldfields to expand their space, something the metropole could not manage. This first step away from the imperial power in England allowed white women to find their voice and presented an opportunity to expand on their gendered roles. This adaptability would similarly challenge the proscribed narrow definitions of gender roles in the next crisis, when British women in India would face a significant conflict named the Indian Mutiny.

# Chapter 4.

## INDIA: First War of Independence, 1857-1859


**Figure 3 Crutchley's Map of the Indian Mutiny[212]**

[212] Crutchley's Map of the Indian Mutiny. Courtesy of britishempire.co.uk. <https://www.britishempire.co.uk/forces/armycampaigns/indiancampaigns/mutiny/mutiny.htm>

While the conflict in India during 1857-1859 has had many names applied to it, India's First War of Independence is erroneously but persistently known as the Indian 'Mutiny', based upon the British Empire's understanding of the conflict. Both international and national issues played a factor in the events of the uprising, resulting in a significant number of deaths and displaced peoples on both sides and across the countryside. The shifts and continuities in the selected women's experiences are of particular interest when recalling the colonial conflict just three years earlier in Australia; whereas the British women in Australia had found the outpost, more than the crisis, as the catalyst for changes, the uprising in India had a far more significant impact on women's experiences even as it also challenged their outlook on imperial politics. The expansion of socially proscribed feminine roles was substantial, and within British women's writings the gendered boundaries during the Mutiny were traversed with little trepidation. This chapter delves into how the First War of Independence came to mark a pivotal moment, not only in the British Empire itself, but also on British women's adaptability, political perceptions and using their voice to speak their experiences to a wider public, rather than keeping the experience just to themselves.

Although the selected women of Adelaide Case, Ruth Coopland, Georgina Harris and Frances Isabella Duberly (1829-1903) all experienced the Indian conflict in varying locales within the Bengal presidency, their local circumstances are just one reason for their selection. These women were middle-class, although Case was of the upper echelon because of her husband's Colonelcy, and they all provide unique insights into the actions and experiences of white women during the First War of Independence. Case, Coopland and Harris wrote at first for themselves and their close family members, to maintain some connection to the wider Empire even as their outpost seemed to be burning around them. Yet their musings would eventually morph into something for a wider audience to read at their leisure, giving the reader more accounts of the horrors the British society endured in India during 1857-1859. Duberly was instead already a published author because of her account of the Crimean War, and determined to do the same journalistic representation of India during her time there

Accessed 23 May 2021. The Bengal presidency is coloured red, with locales such as Lucknow and Cawnpore circled in red within this area.

with her husband. The choice of clergymen's and soldier's wives demonstrate the powerful presence of the East India Company and the Empire, for just as the lives of British men within India was proof of masculine dominance in trade and their alleged worth as rulers over Indian men, the feminine domesticity of their wives to keep them civilised was also required.

The work of historians such as Jane Robinson, Jenny Sharpe, Rosemary Raza and Christopher Herbert have all formed part of the rich historiography of the War of Independence; the first three all examine British women's roles within India prior to and during the conflict, while Herbert gives an insightful view into the various causal factors and experiences of the British during the uprising.[213] The work of Alison Blunt is also used as a key text for the examination of women's experiences during the crisis, as this chapter builds upon this foundation by using British women's own writings to analyse how the Indian Mutiny expanded gender roles and women's voices in key aspects of colonial life.[214] The contemporary historians G. B. Malleson, Charles Ball and R. Montgomery Martin in particular have been used as a crucial gauge, to understand how women were perceived during the crisis and to identify what nineteenth century historians personally believed to be the cause of the War of Independence.[215] Through these texts it is clear that the administrators of Empire comprised of a number of men, and they used women's perceived vulnerabilities during the Indian conflict as a rallying point and justification for the reprisals that ensued. This exaggeration of women's defencelessness was used to reinforce an imperial ideology, as well as that of a racial and gender ideology; in a time of crisis the stereotyping of white women as fragile and Indigenous men as violators guaranteed that the protection of the British women was seen as a sacred duty of Empire.

[213] Robinson, *op. cit.*; Sharpe, *op. cit.*; Raza, *op. cit.*; Herbert, *op. cit.*
[214] Blunt, *op. cit.*
[215] G. B. Malleson, *The Indian Mutiny of 1857 - The Illustrated Edition*, Stratford upon Avon, Warwickshire: Coda Books, [1891] 2013; Charles Ball, *The History of the Indian Mutiny: A detailed account of the sepoy insurrection in India; and a concise history of the great military events which have tended to consolidate British Empire in Hindostan.* 2 Vols., Lahore: Sang-e-Meel Publications, [c. 1860-1861] 2005; Robert Montgomery Martin, *The History of the Indian Empire*, Vol. 2, London: The London Printing and Publishing Company, c. 1860-1861.

Historian Erika Rappaport divulges the unstable environment through which men and women moved during the height of the British Empire, with the War of Independence in particular imploding the security of domestic life and the surety of patriarchal authority.[216] Furthermore, Lionel Caplan's article 'Iconographies of Anglo-Indian Women: Gender Constructs and Contrasts in a Changing Society' discusses a common theme of the Indian Mutiny, the idea that women were to blame for the racial tensions. Within this article the ideology of white women policing society and the growing racial tensions were explored and it is clear that the mimicry of 'half-caste' or Indian women, wherein they mimic the dress and social intricacies of the British populace, was a sore point for British women.[217] Although Deirdre David focuses on women's texts and women in fiction for their intended role in the Empire, her twofold conclusion is that British women were not only enabling Empire but were also unaware of how events took place.[218] This chapter disagrees with the idea that women did not perceive the unfolding events before them, even as it agrees with the statement by Grace Amelia Watts that 'British portrayals reduced women to the status of a pawn… their bodies depreciated to a site upon which rival males' contended in a barbaric manner of warfare.[219]

Tumultuous events across the British Empire produced a certain amount of complacency regarding the East India Company's work in India. Any potential for disaster was ignored, if not completely unobserved, as the Empire looked to its interests within their official colonial assets and recovered from their efforts in the recently ended Crimean War. W. H. G. Kingston argued that it was in fact partly the Crimean War which factored into the Indian uprising, as the Indian leaders may have been 'misled by false accounts of the result of the war with Russia' and a lack of knowledge about British success influenced the timing of their own crisis.[220] The

[216] Erika Rappaport, 'The Bombay Debt': Letter Writing, Domestic Economies and Family Conflict in Colonial India', *Gender & History,* Vol. 16, No. 2, August 2004.
[217] Caplan, *op. cit.*
[218] Deirdre David, *Rule Britannia: Women, Empire, and Victorian Writing,* New York: Cornell University Press, 1995.
[219] Grace Amelia Watts, 'Can the memsahib speak? A re-examination of the tropes and stereotypes surrounding the Anglo-Indian female during the Indian Rebellion of 1857', *The South Asianist,* Vol. 3, No. 1, 2014, p. 200.
[220] W. H. G. Kingston, *Blow the Bugle, Draw the Sword: The Wars, Campaigns, Regiments and Soldiers of the British & Indian Armies During the Victorian Era, 1839-1898,* Milton Keyes: Leonaur, [1910] 2007, p. 147.

British interest in expanding trade into China had also intensified in 1856 with the 'Second Opium War'; the desire to continue to sell opium and for a firmer foothold in the trade markets of China focused political attention on forcing a way through such foreign impediments, rather than on ensuring that interests in India were secure.[221] In fact as early as 1829 Sir Charles Metcalfe had predicted that this lack of focus and funding for the tenuous British hold over India meant, with only 'a very little mismanagement', the end of British trade and power within India would become a reality.[222] Even when news first came to the metropole that there had been a 'mutiny' at Meerut it was dismissed, as the possibility that British forces could be overpowered by Indian soldiers was inconceivable.[223] Furthermore, it seemed that those in England 'were [also] disputing and squabbling among themselves over the Causes of the mutiny… forgetting the fearful loss of life going on in the meantime'.[224] Case, the widow of Colonel William Case at Lucknow, captured the incongruity of their situation in India as opposed to the metropole's calm milieu, writing how 'death seems ever before us… [And this] could scarcely be understood by those who are enjoying the privilege of peace and quiet by their happy firesides in England'.[225]

Having to turn troops bound for China back to India was proof that the Empire's capacities were spread too thinly to be effective at the beginning of the War of Independence, just as sending troops to the Australian colonies highlighted the vast spread of the Empire's interests.[226] Under siege at Lucknow, Case drew strength from knowing 'a great many regiments are on their way out from England', remarking that 'The Crimean War… was nothing' to this crisis.[227] Yet Coopland, widow of Reverend George Coopland from Gwalior, contemplated on the effect this overextension of military forces had upon those within India; many Indians questioned whether help really was coming for the British when overseas troops continued to be scarce, for all that the British insisted they were on the way.[228] Duberly, as a seasoned campaigner

[221] Bayly, *op. cit.,* p. 117.
[222] Sir Charles Metcalfe quoted in C. A. Bayly, *The New Cambridge History of India: Indian society and the making of the British Empire*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988, p. 121.
[223] Sharpe, *op. cit.,* pp. 58-59.
[224] Blunt, *op. cit.,* p. 406; Coopland, *op. cit.,* p. 136.
[225] Case, *op. cit.,* p. 139.
[226] Case, *ibid,* p. 131; Bayly, *op. cit.,* p. 184; Woollacott, *Settler Society*, p. 186.
[227] Case, *ibid*, p. 179.
[228] Coopland, *op. cit.,* p. 137.

from her travels with her husband during the Crimean War, constantly drew comparisons between the two campaigns and remarked upon the impact this War would have upon those at home in the metropole, aware that the loss of women and children was a particularly grievous cost for the Empire.[229] Even though the Indian conflict was a significant distance from the British metropole, historian Erika Rappaport notes that the mutiny 'exposed the instabilities of domesticity and the security of home, in India and in Britain', just as it also 'damaged Britain's perception of its imperial mission'.[230] The interconnection between the heart of the British Empire and its outposts around the world was always a fluid and responsive dynamic, navigating previous turmoil with a solid foundation at its core, yet this Indian crisis brought a volatile instability to the relationship and fractures threatened to overturn the belief in imperial culture.

Prolific rumours regarding other international forces at play behind the Indian Mutiny were also prevalent, as the English looked to Russia, France and even Persia as co-conspirators and influencers of the timing of a widespread rebellion. Montgomery Martin wrote that as the Persian War of 1856 left India bereft of their 'most reliable troops… one-third [of whom] were Europeans' this dispatchment could have been part of the reasoning behind the timing of the Mutiny, with fewer trusted troops within the area to hold back the disaffection.[231] Even as rumours of Russia's plans to invade India were disregarded in England, exaggerated rumours abounded via multiple sources within the colonial outpost itself. This was not to say that Russia did not take advantage of such confusion, as documents suggest that the 'Russian state hierarchy' manipulated rumours to gain ground on their various political schemes and enabled closer ties between Russia and India.[232] France also offered scathing remarks on British rule; rumours suggested that France was 'involved in the shipment of arms and military personnel to India to help the rebels', renewing a bitter rivalry between England and France, yet within the numerous primary historical accounts there are no

[229] Duberly, *op. cit.*
[230] Rappaport, *op. cit.*, p. 244.
[231] Montgomery Martin, *op. cit.*, p. 117.
[232] Elena Karatchkova, 'The 'Russian Factor' in the Indian Mutiny' in Marina Carter and Crispin Bates (eds.), *Mutiny at the Margins: New Perspectives on the Indian Uprising of 1857,* Vol. 3, New Delhi: SAGE, 2013, p. 121.

significant mentions of a French or Russian power visibly at work within the colony.[233] India had many grievances over which to rebel against the East India Company and consequently the British Empire, the multiple international conflicts and influences not least among those which set in motion the timing and size of the outbreak. Historian Antoinette Burton posits that 'the Mutiny brought images of empire home to Britons like no other event of the century – thereby revealing the fragility of British imperial rule to a generation of Victorians'.[234] Whereas the British Empire had felt assured of its superiority and dominance in every situation for much of the nineteenth century, the previously unshakable belief in British civilisation dominating every scenario it was placed in was now destroyed. The Indian Mutiny would thus become a conflict through which the Empire attempted to navigate its newfound inadequacies and reassert superiority over foreign cultures.

## Selected Women

The British women selected for this case study were chosen for their insightful comments and experiences during the uprising. However, although much has been written about their presence during this conflict, a gap continues to exist between these women's works and knowing more about them than what is written in their own hand. Whereas basic information on women has been obtained for Australia and New Zealand, the births and deaths of three of these women in India are unknown. That such information can remain elusive after all this time is indicative of the continuing need to identify and explore the lives of women within the British Empire.

Adelaide Case was perhaps the most unfortunate of the selected women as her husband, Colonel William Case, died when a skirmish went wrong at Chinhut.[235] Case herself would fall into depression and sickness for some time and wrote that 'I firmly

[233] Marina Carter, 'General d'Orgoni and French Military Conspiracies in 1857', in Marina Carter and Crispin Bates (eds.), *Mutiny at the Margins: New Perspectives on the Indian Uprising of 1857,* Vol. 3, New Delhi: SAGE, 2013, p. 138.
[234] Antoinette Burton, 'New narratives of imperial politics in the nineteenth century', in Catherine Hall and Sonya O. Rose (eds.), *At Home With the Empire: Metropolitan Culture and the Imperial World*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006, p. 215.
[235] Case, *op. cit.*, p. 127.

believe I should not have lived, had not my two kind nurses' (her friends Carrie and Inglis) helped her through it.[236] Case kept herself close to these two women's sides throughout the siege of Lucknow and rarely mentioned others, unless it was to remark upon the noisy and crowded rooms as they waited and prayed for assistance from British troops.[237] Without a child to look after, Case found it difficult to rouse from her grief for some time, particularly as there was little in the way of keepsakes to remember her husband by.

Georgina Harris was the wife of the Anglican Assistant Chaplain at Lucknow, James Harris, who served under Reverend Henry Polehampton until Polehampton's death 'of gunshot wounds followed by cholera' during the siege.[238] Harris tended to her husband and others throughout the Residency, remarking upon the need to be useful while keeping her mind occupied, as she would 'have gone melancholy mad' focusing on the threat of death.[239] An example of the British stereotype of femininity, Harris wrote 'I will strive to bear all we may have to endure with patience and fortitude, and, as much as I can, help and comfort my companions and husband'.[240] This approach was not only practical but also a reassertion of British feminine ideologies, which may have been comforting for Harris to follow when it seemed they were facing a likely defeat. Applying normality to her new tasks by situating it within the role of good wife, as well as good and charitable Christian lady, would give routine and structure back to Harris even with the addendums of extra housework and child minding that she had never before experienced.[241] In fact after the siege had ended James Harris remarked how his wife had 'behaved splendidly – [she] never gave in – and constantly occupied herself in doing acts of kindness to others less able than herself'.[242]

[236] *ibid*, p. 148.
[237] *ibid*, p. 118.
[238] Daniel O' Connor, *The Chaplains of the East India Company, 1601-1858,* London: Continuum International, 2010, p. 137.
[239] Harris, *op. cit.*, p. 92.
[240] *ibid*, p. 43.
[241] *ibid*, pp. 38; 48; 55; 60-61.
[242] *ibid*, p. 99.

**Figure 4 Henry Duberly Esqr., paymaster, 8th Hussars, & Mrs. Duberly[243]**

Frances Isabella Duberly (née Locke, 1829-1903) married a Lieutenant Henry Duberly in 1850, when she was twenty.[244] When she was younger, Duberly had gone to a boarding-school 'and became a skilled horsewoman' thanks to this education, something which would stand her in good stead when she determined to accompany her husband on his military postings.[245] Famous for having gone to the Crimean War beside her husband, she once again followed him to the Indian conflict and they arrived on Indian soil on 19 December 1857; her published account of the Crimean conflict had been met with both interest and amazement at her closeness to the battles the 8th Hussars had fought and she proposed to do something similar for the Indian Mutiny as she rode at her husband's side. While Duberly enjoyed being respected and treated with kindness afforded to her by both her gender and the uniqueness of her position amongst the troops, she did not hesitate to question some of the actions of the British Empire during her time in India, even though she was now wife to a Captain.[246]

[243] Fenton, Roger, photographer. Henry Duberly Esqr., paymaster, 8th Hussars, & Mrs. Duberly. Photograph. Retrieved from the Library of Congress, www.loc.gov/item/2001696376/ Accessed 6 December 2020.
[244] Alan Palmer, 'Duberly [née Locke], Frances Isabella [Fanny]', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* < https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/46353> Accessed 6 December 2020.
[245] *ibid.*
[246] Duberly, *op. cit.*

Ruth Coopland was married to an Anglican Reverend, George William Coopland, and they arrived in Calcutta on 17 November 1856. George Coopland had been appointed to Gwalior and when the uprising occurred it was his death in particular which would lead to Coopland questioning the imperial mission in India, even as she asked for bloodshed and a brutal retaliation against Indians for the deaths across the country of husbands, women and children.[247] Near the end of her time in Delhi it was almost too much for Coopland to see the city thrive after the number of deaths there and across India. She believed the city should have been burnt to the ground, replaced by a church or monument with a 'list of all the victims of the mutinies', for 'Not only our victories of 1857 must be remembered, but the cruel massacres… which preceded them. Such atrocities ought never to be buried in oblivion'.[248] Her biased view of Indians, which she openly acknowledged in her preface of *A Lady's escape from Gwalior and Life in the Fort of Agra during the Mutinies of 1857*, was one that many of the British populace held.[249]

## Local Context

The international distraction of other conflicts such as the Crimean and Second Opium Wars were a signal that Indians now had an opportunity to address their complaints through a militaristic approach, as other avenues had been ignored. Although the crisis of 1857 was not the first time Indians had rebelled, either amongst themselves or against the East India Company, the Uprising 'was the first instance of sepoys killing officers and their families'.[250] The lack of sufficient British troops within India was also a regret for the Empire, for although it was addressed after the events of 1857-1859, James Harris had remarked at the beginning that the 'number of European troops in this country would, in case of a general insurrection, only go to swell the death

[247] Coopland, *op. cit.*, pp. 63; 180.
[248] *ibid*, p. 197.
[249] *ibid*, p. 9. *A Lady's escape from Gwalior and Life in the Fort of Agra during the Mutinies of 1857* was the original title of Coopland's book.
[250] Bayly, *op. cit.*, pp. 169-170; Sharpe, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

list'.[251] The First War of Independence was particularly widespread throughout the Bengal presidency and would only end in May 1859, when one of the last remaining ringleaders in Tatia Tope was executed on 18 April 1859; although tensions in Bombay and Madras were also high the crisis did not reach a critical tipping point within their borders.[252] This was something the British in India were grateful for, even as they wondered why the area of Bengal had descended into chaos.

Case wrote that the 'ladies scarcely knew that things looked so dark', yet the uprising did not shock her as she used to hear her late husband talk of such matters with Colonel Inglis at Lucknow.[253] Harris was also frank regarding the beginnings of rebellion and remarked that after hearing rumours for some time regarding the 'discontent and mutinous spirit among the *sepoys*', it was incongruous that the Government 'shut its eyes to and laughed at it, till now it may be too late'.[254] With hindsight Coopland stated how it was 'strange that so little notice was taken of the impending danger by those whose duty it was to care for the safety of a mighty empire'.[255] She added that there were few or no 'European regiments at many of the largest stations' and all the while the 'Government at Calcutta, in serene complacency, was coolly issuing orders for the disbanding of regiments: as though that could in any way stop the evil'.[256] In May 1857 the Indian crisis began with a mutiny at Meerut and a number of British women and children were killed during the action. It has been argued that this was a consequence of the notorious greased cartridges the Indian soldiers were issued, which would destroy their caste if used.[257] This, along with the annexation of Oudh, was seen as just two of the many reasons the Indians had risen up against the East India Company. Further interpretations of the national context of the Indian Mutiny pronounced that the crisis was a reaction against the agrarian policies employed by the British authority, as well as 'from fears and tensions arising from cross-cultural encounters, notably around religion, and from the grievances of subordinated groups

[251] James Harris quoted in Adelaide Case and G. Harris, *Ladies of Lucknow: the experiences of two British women during the Indian Mutiny 1857,* Milton Keyes: Leonaur, [1857-1858] 2009, p. 14.
[252] Roy, *op. cit.,* p. 19; Blunt, *op. cit.,* p. 404; Malleson, *op. cit.,* p. 335.
[253] Case, *op. cit.,* p. 110.
[254] Harris, *op. cit.,* pp. 16-17.
[255] Coopland, *op. cit.,* p. 63.
[256] *ibid.*
[257] Hibbert, *op. cit.,* pp. 75-76.

of soldiers and peasants'.[258] The lack of promotional options for Indians within the army also caused resentment, just as the 'the increasing disdain of overbearing British officers for the sepoys contributed to the breakdown of the loyalty bond'.[259] While the relationship and tolerance between the British and Indian populace had been present in the beginning of the East India Company's time in India, it was nearly non-existent by the time the War of Independence began.

For quite some time the East India Company had refused to let anyone interfere with the religion of Indians, knowing that its foothold in the subcontinent was largely dependent on the good grace of the Indigenous inhabitants. As such, Christopher Herbert asserts that the East India Company 'never failed to parade its tolerance and even its financial support of native religions', even as Hugh Tinker believed that the 'Mutiny in the Bengal Army was not a consequence of caste being flouted but a result of caste being pampered, in contrast to the Madras Army'.[260] Yet the annexation of territory, including Oudh, was better understood by the British people as being the reason why the crisis erupted; the religious system of India was alien to the orthodox Christian teachings and discounted as a truly integral part of Indian culture, whether it was 'pampered' or not.[261] Over the next two years British troops were poured into India to put down the mutiny and then assert military dominance over the country as the East India Company's foothold was signed over to Queen Victoria. Through the 'disappearance of British authority' there was a 're-emergence of traditional rivalries in the [Northern] area', which at times assisted the British in their regaining control of India throughout this crisis, for such rivalries factored in to allegiance or rebellion against the imperial power.[262] While Delhi had taken months to reclaim, even after its fall some Indian ringleaders such as Tatia Tope and Nana Sahib (Dhondu Pant) traversed the country, retaining a following which needed to be defeated. Although

[258] Joanna De Groot, 'Depicting Conflict in India in 1857-8: The Instabilities of Gender, Violence, and Colonialism', *Cultural and Social History*, 2017, p. 2; Penelope Tuson, 'Mutiny narratives and the imperial feminine: European women's accounts of the rebellion in India in 1857', *Women's Studies International Forum,* Vol. 21, No. 3, May-June 1998, p. 292; Herbert, *op. cit.,* pp. 9-11; 167; Roy, *op. cit.,* p. 36; Malleson, *op. cit.,* pp. 24-28.
[259] Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism,* London: Vintage Books, 1994, p. 177; Roy, *ibid,* p. 22.
[260] Herbert, *op. cit.,* p. 42; Hugh Tinker, '1857 and 1957: The Mutiny and Modern India', *International Affairs,* Vol. 34, No. 1, 1958, p. 64.
[261] Ball, *Volume One,* p. 50.
[262] E. I. Brodkin, *op. cit.,* p. 278; Chakravarty, *op. cit.,* p. 23.

India's First War of Independence was unable to secure a victory for the Indigenous populace, the prolonged nature of the conflict was in itself a favourable outcome as it taught the British Empire of the fragility of their dominance and a sign of what the future might hold in their colonial outposts.

## Men Affected

The effect this crisis had upon men was just as harrowing and demanding as that on British women, and this was acknowledged in the women's writings concerning not only their husbands but the other men around them. When the conflict first broke out, the widespread volatile nature of the crisis caught the majority of the Anglo-Indian population unprepared. The burden of being the provider and heroic stereotype the British Empire idolised and required in its men catastrophised an already fraught experience. Because of a dependence on 'particular constructions of masculinity', which included white men being the 'protector of women', many men were killed in their attempt to maintain a façade of calm and unshakable belief in their Indian troops.[263] In fact Coopland insisted that 'the lives of men, women, and children were [unnecessarily] sacrificed, through the efforts to avoid arousing the suspicions of the troops'.[264] Furthermore, while Coopland's husband had wanted her to leave for Agra 'he would not desert his post, and I would not leave him. I have often thought since that had I done so he might have escaped, by riding off unimpeded by me; many unmarried officers having escaped in this way'.[265] Without the hindrance of wives or families it was clear to Coopland that the men could have had more military success; failing that, the men would at least have been faster at retreating from the unrest and survived rather than be killed. It was Duberly who questioned if the English, particularly the soldiers, had not stayed too long in India. Her suggestion that the men remaining in India for such an extended period of time 'have [now] almost ceased to be Englishmen' broached the uncomfortable idea that their racial identity was weak,

[263] Mrinalini Sinha, 'Nations in an Imperial Crucible' in Philippa Levine (ed.), *Gender and Empire*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004, pp. 194-195; Andrew Ward, *Our Bones Are Scattered: The Cawnpore Massacres and the Indian Mutiny of 1857*, New York: Henry Holt, 1996, p. 99; Robinson, *op. cit.*, p. 34; Hibbert, *op. cit.*, p. 62; Thomas Lowe, 'The Siege at Dhar' in James Humphries (ed.), *Mutiny: 1857*, Milton Keyes: Leonaur, 2007, p. 370.
[264] Coopland, *op. cit.*, p. 82.
[265] *ibid.*

and British culture was not static, its principles could be forgotten or distorted.[266] This breakdown of culture was a perilous slope for an Empire that prided itself on leading the way in civilisation, although even as they bemoaned violent acts committed against them, it was common for the British soldiers to retaliate in kind.

As the British within the Bengal presidency fought for survival, retribution for both real and alleged violence committed by Indians was both severe and culturally insensitive. This was highlighted in both contemporary historian's accounts and women's writings as they recounted the defilement of sacred buildings and the forcible punishments with which the British destroyed the caste of captured Indians, doing so with a sense of duty if not delight.[267] Furthermore, the practice of 'blowing the enemy away' by tying them to the cannon guns and firing it so that they were literally blown apart, was a common occurrence. The unflinching honesty and, at times, distress over some of these men's actions from the women's accounts is at odds with contemporary historian Malleson's acceptance of the brutality, whereupon he insisted that 'not only was the retaliation not excessive, it did not exceed the bounds necessary to ensure the safety of the conquerors'.[268] The evidence of men 'routinely bayonet[ing] wounded enemy soldiers in captured hospital wagons' and the 'genocidal, exterminating impulse' for all Indians would prove otherwise.[269] Duberly noted that at one point in the 8th Hussars campaign an officer was asked to severely punish a number of Indian men and it was decided 'their horses would be sold and the price put into the prize fund', just as they would also receive fifty lashes and 'be imprisoned for six months'.[270] However, the officer 'double checked this was 'sufficient' punishment' as he feared the punishment was too lenient.[271] While the women's writings clearly described the general violence of the Mutiny, they also reiterated the noble and just

[266] Duberly, *op. cit.,* p. 189.
[267] Herbert, *op. cit.,* pp. 4; 37-38; 46; Ward, *op. cit.,* pp. 256; 343; 442; Chandrika Kaul, "You Cannot Govern by Force Alone': W. H. Russell, *The Times* and the Great Rebellion' in Marina Carter and Crispin Bates (eds.), *Mutiny at the Margins: New Perspectives on the Indian Uprising of 1857,* Vol. 3, New Delhi: SAGE, 2013, p. 31; Hibbert 201-202; 215; Lydia Murdoch, '"Suppressed Grief": Mourning the Death of British Children and the Memory of the 1857 Indian Rebellion', *The Journal of British Studies,* Vol. 51, No. 2, 2012, p. 368.
[268] Malleson, *op. cit.,* p. 338.
[269] Herbert, *op. cit.,* pp. 188; 199; 203-8; Arshad Islam, 'The Backlash in Delhi: British Treatment of the Mughal Royal Family following the Indian "Sepoy Mutiny" of 1857', *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs,* Vol. 31, No. 2, 2011, p. 201.
[270] Duberly, *op. cit.,* p. 257.
[271] *ibid.*

Britishness of their own husbands or those they were close to, in an effort to maintain the appearance of civility even during crises.

Because Coopland, Duberly, Case and Harris were with their husbands it was imperative that their socially proscribed role of moral, angelic wife was seen to be upheld even in the darkest of moments. Describing their husbands' experiences allowed the women to show the possibility that the spouses could go through a significant conflict without losing anything of their civilised culture. An example of this was how, before his demise, Case's husband William was dedicated to overseeing his camp and how 'his soldiers were ever his first object' as he attempted to help stem the tide of bloodshed in Lucknow with Sir Lawrence and Colonel Inglis.[272] Yet this dedication was not at the exclusion of their marriage ties, as 'every morning' Case received a letter from her husband containing news, reassurances and his affections.[273] His determination to be courageous was bolstered by faith, for as William mentioned in a letter to Case 'if I am cool and collected, darling, it is because my prayers to be so under all difficulties and dangers are answered'.[274] While some men, such as two of Coopland's acquaintances, survived the mutiny of their regiments due to their troops giving them safe passage before violence ensued, it was uncommon to be spared.[275]

Of constant concern for the Anglo-Indian populace was the threat to the women; while some women faced this threat with their own determination of suicide rather than to ever fall into the enemy's hands, Coopland noted in their fort that 'the soldiers said they would themselves shoot us rather than that we should be treated like the poor Cawnpore ladies'.[276] Jenny Sharpe argues that men's fear for women's purity, if not their lives, was not only a natural reaction to a bloody conflict, but also one of the ways they could negotiate and come to terms with 'a crisis in British authority', whereupon 'the violated bodies of English women' became 'a sign for the violation of

[272] Case, *op. cit.*, pp. 112; 117.
[273] *ibid*, p. 115.
[274] *ibid*, pp. 127-128.
[275] Coopland, *op. cit.*, pp. 54-55.
[276] *ibid*, p. 154.

colonialism'.[277] Saving women was a sign of restoring the masculine power and authority back to the East India Company and thus the British Empire, a 'restoration of moral order'.[278] Even before the massacre at Cawnpore, Harris hoped the rumours about disaster there were untrue, not only because it would be devastating but because she realised 'the poor soldiers would be frantic… There would be no holding them. Their indignation is already intense at the murders of helpless women and children that have occurred at Meerut and Delhi'.[279] What this revealed was an awareness that the civilised British Empire's culture was a delicate construction, liable to shatter at the death of those deemed helpless in its charge.

The conflict was inevitably a chance to highlight the fragility of the Empire's socially-constructed gendered roles, with Cawnpore confirming their worst fears. As Andrew Ward elaborates, 'Anglo-Indian men entertained Arthurian notions of the inherent purity and virtuousness of English womanhood' and with the massacre at Cawnpore their masculinity had 'utterly failed' to protect their women, so that the 'soldiers' grief and outrage thus mingled with an intolerable sense of humiliation and guilt'.[280] The grief and uncivilised cruelty that became an intertwined response from the imperial soldiers would eventually be condemned in the metropole, but during the height of the conflict the failure to protect women and children demanded immediate reparation. To neglect to do so, or at least gain revenge on the perpetrators, was to fall short of the socially proscribed masculine gender role of strong protector. It was Coopland who noted how 'soldiers, inured to sights of horror, and inveterate against the *sepoys*, were said to have bribed the executioner to keep them [prisoners] a long time hanging, as they liked to see the criminals dance… as they termed the dying struggles of the wretches'.[281] Although Coopland intensely disliked India and its people, her remark highlights the break in sensibilities during warfare, as this immunity to any horror against the British modes of retribution is clear in her statement. By the 1850s the men who had risen in the ranks to positions of authority had conversely lost any practical 'authority until they were mere figureheads', effectively powerless to arbitrate

[277] Sharpe, *op. cit.*, p. 4.
[278] *ibid*, p. 6; Blunt, *op. cit.*, p. 409.
[279] Harris, *op. cit.*, p. 19.
[280] Ward, *op. cit.*, p. 438.
[281] Coopland, *op. cit.*, p. 190.

disagreements amongst the troops and negate the misunderstandings that arose due to this separation between authority and the common ranks.[282] The dysfunction that arose from such a change in the sahib-sepoy relationship, coupled with new officers who were 'arrogant' at the expense of Indians' beliefs ' further completed the breakdown', as evidenced by the harsh measures British men would carry out against Indians.[283] The men's actions were not always regarded in a positive light by these selected women, yet to be ungrateful for them was a challenge that continued to be a problematical issue for the rest of the Indian Mutiny.

The men's capabilities were stretched as the uprising progressed, Case noting that by 10 October 1857 there were few artillerymen left in Lucknow, so few in fact 'that the men who manned the guns had actually to run from one to the other as they were required to load and fire'.[284] Enduring the same siege as Case, in July 1857 Harris wrote that James' performing so many funerals each night meant that he was 'exposed to a hot fire the whole time' from the enemy's guns, causing her great anxiety until he would return safely.[285] Explaining the issues surrounding her husband's duties, later in the siege he no longer accompanied the dead to the gravesite, for as the sole remaining chaplain he believed 'he must think of his duties to the living before the dead'.[286] According to a report Colonel Inglis wrote, 'the mortality among the women and children… has been perhaps the most painful characteristic of the siege' and perhaps the comfort Harris' husband felt he could give them with his religious duties outweighed the duty to those who were now beyond the reach of the enemy.[287] Inglis' report was also a nod to how dire the circumstances at Cawnpore must have been, with men unable to help women and children; while the men may have held out longer at the Cawnpore siege it was hard to not only 'endure the cries for drink which were almost perpetual' but the constant suffering they witnessed amongst the ladies and children.[288] When the relief force arrived at Lucknow Harris noted that 'big rough-

[282] Ward, *op. cit.,* p. 70.
[283] Roy, *op. cit.,* p. 22; Ball, *Volume One,* pp. 56-57.
[284] Case, *op. cit.,* p. 188.
[285] Harris, *op. cit.,* p. 50.
[286] *ibid,* pp. 51; 55.
[287] Colonel Inglis quoted in Adelaide Case and G. Harris, *Ladies of Lucknow: the experiences of two British women during the Indian Mutiny 1857,* Milton Keyes: Leonaur, [1857-1858] 2009, p. 233.
[288] Ward, *op. cit.,* p. 206.

bearded soldiers were seizing the little children out of our arms, kissing them with tears rolling down their cheeks, and thanking God they had come in time to save them from the fate of those at Cawnpore'.[289] This was a marked deviation from the stoicism one would have expected from the soldiers, and the femininity of crying was such an unusual reaction that it was often mentioned in texts regarding the men's arrival into Lucknow. In Duberly's eyes there was a distinct lack of common sense during the crisis, including how men were required to perform in a uniform which was completely inadequate in the heat, yet 'Individual suffering counts for nothing where the movements of an army are concerned. The strong fight through – the weak lie down and die; and the brigade marches on just the same'.[290] Because of the widespread upheaval it was impossible for men to experience the conflict while keeping women separate from it. By its sheer scope the Indian Mutiny attacked the socially-constructed domestic sphere as much as it attempted to destroy the East India Company's hold on the country.

## Domesticity

Prior to the Mutiny, British women had arrived in India as the wives of soldiers, political officials and missionaries. Their role was to be a good moral influence even as they were used to 'police the growing racial divide' between the two cultures.[291] As wives, they also displaced Indian mistresses and reasserted a British dominance in domestic and social circles, a role the British Empire demanded as a sign of their superiority over the inferior 'other'.[292] British men had for some time lived with Indian mistresses, but with strengthening racial ideologies which presented the Indigenous populace as 'less than', India in particular became the site in which racial divisions were encouraged and white women given the task of policing this new facet of the Empire's ideology. When British women arrived in India it was initially a surprise to learn just how many servants were needed within their household. Coopland was 'astonished to see [that] the number of servants' needed for simply travelling to

[289] Harris, *op. cit.*, p. 65.
[290] Duberly, *op. cit.*, pp. 239; 274; 283.
[291] Caplan, *op. cit.*, p. 872.
[292] Ballhatchet, *op. cit.*, p. 144.

Gwalior with her husband involved 'a tribe of thirty natives' to carry items.[293] The explanation for this was that the Indian caste system ensured 'they will do only their own particular work' and it was a sign of middle-class prominence to manage a household of servants, rather than personally tending to the housekeeping and other domestic duties.[294] Travelling with her husband's regiment, Duberly expressed her astonishment that 'so large an establishment' was needed on the march, and 'yet without each and every man of them, it was next to impossible to move at all'.[295] Each entry in Duberly's writings contained accounts of her pushing the normative feminine roles; Duberly drew attention to her feminine abilities with remarks such as one regarding how carefully packed her 'bottles of lemonade and ginger beer' were, and her fear that they 'would be broken if trusted upon the back of a camel'.[296]

In contrast, a picture of domesticity was readily available through Harris' account of the Lucknow siege, as she worked industriously on her own as well as with Mrs Inglis to benefit the more unfortunate around them. Harris remarked 'It is such a rare thing in this country to find ladies interesting themselves about the poor women and children', yet Mrs Inglis was keen to do so with her.[297] While the servants remained Harris contented herself with helping care for the children and making clothes for the soldiers and children who were in desperate need of some outfits.[298] Once the Indians within the Residency 'ran away' Harris remarked 'We are all obliged to put our shoulders to the wheel and divide the work between us'.[299] Work was given to each woman to carry out daily, yet neither Case nor her friend Carrie were required to do this. It is possible that the death of Case's husband so early in the siege was cause for her to be omitted from such duties, as her grief overwhelmed her. The most intensive labour Case carried out was the day she and her friend were given a room to stay in for the duration of the siege; the room had been used for storage and the women cleaned it up as best they could, even as an Indian servant would pass 'through the

[293] Coopland, *op. cit.*, pp. 13; 33-34.
[294] *ibid*, pp. 49-50.
[295] Duberly, *op. cit.*, p. 205.
[296] *ibid*, pp. 266-267.
[297] Harris, *op. cit.*, p. 20.
[298] *ibid*, p. 33.
[299] *ibid*, pp. 48-49.

room at all hours of the day'.[300] Domestic roles, while still carrying some semblance to what they were prior to the Mutiny, were inevitably reworked during the crisis. The women who could adapt to such an abrupt change found the conflict a rewarding challenge, in which their duties were expanded and their abilities tested to maintain something resembling their view of civilisation despite the adversities.

It was necessary that as rationing came into effect someone had charge of managing it; for those sharing the room with Case and Carrie it was Mrs Inglis who was given the task and together they made a 'dinner party of twelve', a comment referring to times before the crisis.[301] Sleeping arrangements consisted of mattresses on the floor and Case on a sofa during the night, requiring the mattresses to be stored away come morning and the room made as neat as possible so it could become a drawing-room.[302] As historian Sharpe points out, 'Maintaining a household was no easy task for members of a class that was completely dependent upon native labor', yet this was what many women had to undertake during the crisis and some excelled at such a challenge of domestic and even nursing duties.[303] Colonel Inglis reported 'Several ladies have had to tend their children, and even to wash their own clothes, as well as to cook their scanty meals, entirely unaided'.[304] Coopland stated in their own area the ladies 'had to cook, wash our clothes, and clean out our "dens", and those who had children had the double task of attending to them and keeping them inside… it was dangerous to let them be outside on the stone walk alone'.[305] The East India Company had had reservations about allowing women to live in India, as 'the Company would be ultimately held responsible' for the fate of British women in the colonial outpost.[306] As Penelope Tuson notes the Indian Mutiny 'created an unprecedented and unique situation in which… domestic femininity and public and private attitudes towards the role and status of women were tested'.[307] Yet without the women adapting and

[300] Case, *op. cit.,* p. 113.
[301] Case, *op. cit.,* p. 117.
[302] *ibid,* p. 139.
[303] Sharpe, *op. cit.,* p. 62; Hibbert, *op. cit.,* pp. 238-240; Robinson, *op. cit.,* pp. 174-175; Ward, *op. cit.,* pp. 140; 296.
[304] Colonel Inglis quoted in Adelaide Case and G. Harris, *Ladies of Lucknow: the experiences of two British women during the Indian Mutiny 1857,* Milton Keyes: Leonaur, [1857-1858] 2009, p. 233; Murdoch, *op. cit.,* p. 379.
[305] Coopland, *op. cit.,* p. 133.
[306] Ward, *op. cit.,* p. 13.
[307] Tuson, *op. cit.,* p. 291.

changing their roles to suit each aspect of the crisis, the Company and Empire would have faced more devastation. The British ladies caught up in the War of Independence continued to perform what domestic duties they could under siege or on the move, negotiating each crisis as it arose.

Maintaining some semblance of normal domesticity was a key factor for women during a crisis such as the Indian Mutiny. Blunt asserts that British women exerted a 'Christian moral influence both on a domestic and an imperial scale', to act as a measure of influence regarding 'the conduct of soldiers and officers' throughout India.[308] Yet they were also convenient scapegoats, for it was part of the victim blaming that occurred towards women as an argument was made that they were part of the reason behind the crisis, because British women had replaced Indian mistresses within the household. Thus not only were women the convenient reason behind men's cruel acts of retribution against any Indians they encountered, they were also an excuse as to why the camaraderie between the British and Indians had been destroyed in recent years when men returned to their homes instead of socialising with the Indian men under their command.[309] The 'scenes of domestic horror' and everything which that entailed became a central image for all discussions and a unifying cause behind the British Empire's reprisal.[310] The deaths of those who were defenceless had 'revealed not only the violence at the heart of the imperial project but also the ultimate instability of British domestic life and identity'.[311] Yet the irony was that British men and the Empire at large 'alternatively valorized' British women 'for their domestic strength or mocked them for domestic frivolity in the midst of war' when they did manage to retain this semblance of normality.[312] Wanting women to continue their domesticated duties was a sign that civilisation was still strong, yet berating them for upholding this social role contradicted the demands they placed upon British women.

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[308] Blunt, *op. cit.,* p. 411.
[309] Pamela Lothspeich, 'Unspeakable Outrages and Unbearable Defilements: Rape Narratives in the Literature of Colonial India', *Postcolonial Text,* Vol. 3, No. 1, 2007, p. 17; Caplan, *op. cit.,* p. 866; Tuson, *op. cit.,* p. 293; Woollacott, *Gender and Empire,* p. 91; Sharpe, *op. cit.,* p. 91; Paxton, *op. cit.,* p. 29; Satyaki Kanjilal, 'Writing Fiction and Constructing History: A Case Study of the Literature on 1857' in Kaushik Roy (ed.), *The Uprising of 1857,* New Delhi: Manohar, 2010, p. 192; Montgomery Martin, *op. cit.,* p. 11.
[310] Andrea Kaston Tange, 'Maternity Betrayed: Circulating Images of English Motherhood in India, 1857-1858', *Nineteenth-Century Contexts,* Vol. 35, No. 2, 2013, p. 190.
[311] Murdoch, *op. cit.,* p. 364.
[312] Murdoch, *op. cit.,* p. 377.

As Rosemary Raza points out, their dismay at this frivolity was peculiar, for 'British men were a controlling part of the culture' and it had 'suited colonial authority' to demand women place emphasis on maintaining domesticity.[313] It was the woman's socially-constructed 'natural' role 'to reproduce the race… maintain their men, and make families and households' because 'civilization required a particular gender order' and the domestic sphere was their domain.[314] Furthering their gendered roles, adapting to what the crisis demanded, was inevitable. Although within the Indian outpost the civilisation of domestic life had been the driving factor behind British women emigrating there, it was a restrictive role. Certainly, white women in India had been more restricted than what was allowed on the goldfields in Ballarat just three years prior.

Furthermore, although British society tried to maintain that their culture was a fixed entity, it was a fact that 'Neither families nor empires were particularly cohesive or stable entities in the 1850s and 1860s', even as they were interdependent so as to form a base for the British Empire.[315] It was the domestic defilement at Cawnpore which produced the 'most grievous trauma of the war'.[316] The massacre of women and children, compounded by their bodies being thrown into a well affected not only the British soldiers who found their bodies, but the rest of the Empire as well. Deirdre David asserts that in crises 'native savagery can be tamed only by the sacrifice of Englishwomen', yet this savagery which the civilised British abhorred was transferred onto their own actions, even as they defended their approach because of this sacrifice of women.[317] The extremely volatile situation exposed the reality of the empire's heavy handed approach to grasping foreign land; taming the 'savagery' demanded British women's moralising influence, and when that failed, their deaths were utilised as an opportunity to effectively pour troops into an area and overwhelm the native populace into submission. The fragility of women was exposed during the conflict

[313] Raza, *op. cit.,* p. 85.
[314] Catherine Hall, 'Of Gender and Empire: Reflections on the Nineteenth Century' in Philippa Levine (ed.), *Gender and Empire,* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006, p. 47.
[315] Rappaport, *op. cit.,* p. 233.
[316] Herbert, *op. cit.,* p. 62.
[317] David, *op. cit.,* p. 63.

within India, even as these women's writings highlight how their normal roles could be expanded to shore up the inherent weaknesses in imperial culture.

## Safety

The British Empire was more than that of a one sided relation emanating from the metropole, as it consisted of 'dense connections among imperial sites, and the multivalent forging of imperial culture'.[318] Angela Woollacott notes that, certainly prior to the Indian Uprising, the 'newly articulated fears of white women's vulnerability to lustful indigenous men [had] reflected a growing confidence on the part of British men' to defend them 'against sexual assault, and the ascendant naval might of the British Empire'.[319] Yet the reality of women and children dying during the Indian Mutiny made this fascination with defending the vulnerable an unhealthy fixation, as the men and Empire initially failed to protect the defenceless and the fantasy became a nightmare, particularly regarding Cawnpore. Furthermore, with 'the luridly embellished accounts of rape… punitive counteratrocities [sic] on the part of the British' occurred with few repercussions in the heat of the moment, as the female role of helpless victim and 'a sacrificial agent of empire' became a disturbing reality to justify the extreme countermeasures.[320]

The sieges at Cawnpore and Lucknow are renowned for the number of women and children amongst the besieged, with very different outcomes. Indeed, the defensive position of Cawnpore was ineffective and almost non-existent, as Case noted in her remark that some of the women were safer during that siege within the ineffective shallow trenches than in the buildings.[321] Sir Hugh Wheeler eventually believed he had no choice but to surrender to Nana Sahib when protection within their defence was no longer viable and it was clear that aid would be too slow to arrive for their survival.[322] Although promised an evacuation via boats, a massacre followed upon the

[318] Woollacott, *Gender and Empire,* p. 12.
[319] *ibid,* p. 43.
[320] David, *op. cit.*, p. 151.
[321] Case, *op. cit.*, p. 216.
[322] Ball, *Volume One,* pp. 469-470; Hibbert, *op. cit.*, p. 189.

British leaving the entrenchments and attempting to put their boats into the water. This horror was compounded when the few women and children who survived this event were kept prisoner until Major-General Henry Havelock and his forces had nearly reached Cawnpore, whereupon they were killed by Indian forces and their bodies thrown into a well.[323] In contrast to this, Lucknow was able to hold out for months before relief came, first by the forces of Major-Generals Sir James Outram and Henry Havelock and finally with the arrival of Sir Colin Campbell's force which allowed for a safe evacuation of the Lucknow survivors, the five hundred women, children and a large number of the evacuees.[324] Prior to the rescue, when Mrs Inglis was told about their prospects in Lucknow by her husband Colonel Inglis, she had merely 'commented resignedly that she was glad to know what to expect as it enabled her to prepare for the worst'.[325] These two sieges, although only a small part of a larger conflict throughout India, captured the British imagination and attention. It gave them validation for the harsh punishments delivered to Indian soldiers and an excuse for burning villages along the way with little remorse; the downfall of British civilisation in the form of women and children at Cawnpore in particular became a common reason behind the often 'sadistic' reprisals that followed, including Colonel James Neill's forcible defilement of Indian caste protocols by forcing Indians to wipe or lick 'up blood from the pavement where the great massacre had taken place'.[326] The Indian Mutiny became 'a profoundly traumatic cultural crisis', for those at home in the metropole as well as those caught up in the War throughout the Indian countryside.[327]

Many of the British women in India during the War of Independence were unwillingly caught up in areas of conflict. It was a constant query for the Empire as to why the ladies and children had not been taken to safety before the mutiny occurred, yet the idea that the men should have taken the Indians' grievances more seriously was largely ignored just as the warnings had been.[328] At one point the ladies and children of Gwalior were moved into the palace's apartments as a safety precaution, yet Duberly

[323] Hibbert, *op. cit.,* pp. 206-207.
[324] *ibid*, pp. 399-400; 346.
[325] *ibid*, p. 228.
[326] Tuson, *op. cit.*, pp. 291-2; Herbert, *op. cit.,* pp. 49; 100-101; 120; 155; 176; Ward, *op. cit.,* p. 388.
[327] Herbert, *ibid*, p. 7.
[328] Ward, *op. cit.,* p. 109.

noted that 'as the officers of the contingent steadily refused to believe in the approach of danger, [this] was received on the part of the ladies with many complaints and much discontent'.[329] When they were allowed back into the cantonments, Duberly was scathing regarding the lack of 'doubt or suspicion' amongst the British and noted 'To the last moment they would listen to no voice warning them of the disaffection of the troops'; even when a messenger rushed in to warn them that the 'soldiers were loading the guns, an officer… returned laughing, and treated the whole affair as a jest' before death came to many of them.[330] Ball quoted Mrs Peile, who wrote 'Had any one of sense and thought ordered the ladies and children away from Delhi in the early part of the day' she would not have hesitated to leave and thus avoid many of the hardships she encountered.[331] The crisis complicated men's ability to keep women and children safe, for they could no longer accurately predict where it would be safe to send their loved ones to, nor whether it was safer to keep them close by so they knew where they were and could protect them. This explains the reasoning behind the failure to 'contrive some plan for sending the ladies and children up to Agra, or to some place where there are English troops', just as Harris herself wished they 'were safe at home'.[332]

Instead, Harris and Case experienced the siege of Lucknow from within the city's fortified Residency compound and Harris noted that if Sir Henry Lawrence 'had not sent all the women and children out of cantonments, we should inevitably, every one of us, have shared the fate of our countrywomen at Delhi and at Meerut'.[333] Coopland remarked that they were under orders not to evacuate until the 'mutiny really broke out at Gwalior', yet by this time it was too late to leave without encountering dangers along the way.[334] However, Duberly's writing reveals that the Indians were just as wary of the British troops, describing how 'the careful inhabitants [of Bheelwarra] locked up their women' when the 8th Hussars camped before their walls.[335] Perhaps unknowingly, this statement highlights the Indian's fear of mistreatment, if not rape,

[329] Duberly, *op. cit.,* p. 297.
[330] *ibid,* pp. 297-298.
[331] Ball, *Volume One,* p. 125.
[332] Harris, *op. cit.,* pp. 67;69.
[333] *ibid,* p. 27.
[334] Coopland, *op. cit.,* p. 82.
[335] Duberly, *op. cit.,* p. 238.

by the Empire's troops during the War of Independence. Duberly does not ever mention mistreatment of Indian women at the hands of the 8th Hussars, in fact describing them within this same passage as 'the gallant 8th Hussars' to counteract the subtle reference of assault and rape, yet even this allusion highlights an uncomfortable position within the conflict.[336] The constant threat of death, and news of how women were 'insulted, mutilated, and murdered before their husbands' brought strict enforcement of confining women to certain rooms for fear of the worst happening to them while under siege.[337] Without the knowledge of women and children being safe, British soldiers reflected this insecurity with tougher measures against the Indians they encountered, believing that somehow this would deter more deaths.

For those unlucky enough to be caught outside a fortified area some Indians assisted them to safety, yet many more died when discovered. Case and her friend Caroline had kept 'a little bundle ready by our bedsides at night, for instant flight' to the Lucknow Residency, wherein 'there are upwards of one hundred ladies and children'.[338] Raza wrote that prior to the mutiny by only a decade or so, women had felt safe even when 'palanquin bearers carried them hundreds of miles across India' for 'No danger was perceived to exist – nor did any materialize – from these unprotected relationships'.[339] Yet now, a place underground at Agra was 'made shot and bomb-proof' where the women and children could retreat if danger came too close and at Poonah 'an elderly officer… was in great request to sleep in the houses of the ladies where husbands were absent, by way of guard'.[340] The Cawnpore fiasco was a stark reminder of the consequences of women being caught up in a crisis and not taken to safety; for as many acknowledged, 'Had the Entrenchment been occupied solely by soldiers it might have withstood an extended siege'.[341] Women were both a burden on men's actions and conversely a reason for them to fight harder, as some of the women acknowledged in their writing when they stated the Englishmen "would shed the last drop of their blood in our defence".[342] In some areas, including Cawnpore, the

[336] *ibid.*
[337] Harris, *op. cit.,* p. 67.
[338] Case, *op. cit.,* pp. 112-113; Harris, *ibid,* p. 38.
[339] Raza, *op. cit.,* p. 165.
[340] Coopland, *op. cit.,* pp. 115; 154; Duberly, *op. cit.,* pp. 236-237.
[341] Ward, *op. cit.,* p. 115.
[342] *ibid,* p. 122.

realisation that the women needed to get away from the indefensible area and towards somewhere like Calcutta came too late, when they were under siege or the roads were in the hands of the Indians. It was imperative that when the areas of conflict arose the women were moved 'into the safest or least dangerous building possible, preferably fortified' if they could not be sent further afield.[343] The awful truth was, in certain cases when it would have been prudent to leave, women felt obliged to stay, even though this put more pressure on resources and on men's actions. One such woman was Emma Larkins, who would happily have left Cawnpore but for the example Lady Wheeler who stayed, 'refusing to be frightened by what was going on' and disagreeing with 'the cowardly plan' of sending them to Calcutta.[344]

Refugees, particularly women, in a 'potential battlefield [were]… considered at best distracting and at worst a military liability' and overall it was thought that the crisis 'would not have been half so humiliating to the British had the women not been there… restricting honourable officers and men both physically… and emotionally'.[345] Yet Robinson's statement regarding restrictions facilitates attempts at suppression, which would argue that British soldiers did not themselves commit atrocities against the Indians, particularly when their women were close by. Lieutenant W. O. Swanston provided just one voice which makes it clear that this at least was not something they concerned themselves about, writing 'I would make India feel that England would never forgive such insults and such barbarity, as have been heaped upon her daughters'.[346]

The consequences of being in an indefensible position was brought home to the Anglo-Indian society when the disaster at Cawnpore occurred. At Cawnpore the offer of safe passage from Nana Sahib became irresistible, for although Wheeler did not want to surrender, it was unlikely that any help could reach them in time before an inevitable defeat.[347] The massacre that ensued there, first at the boats and later at the Bibighar,

[343] Robinson, *op. cit.,* p. 60.
[344] *ibid*, p. 104.
[345] Robinson, *op. cit.,* pp. 194; 248-249.
[346] W. O. Swanston, 'Cawnpore to Lucknow' in James Humphries (ed.), *Mutiny: 1857,* Milton Keyes: Leonaur, 2007, p. 183.
[347] Ward, *op. cit.,* pp. 299-300.

led to men questioning how they would save women under impossible circumstances. Decisions such as the option to shoot their women before they could end up in the enemy's hands was, according to Herbert, a sign of the "terrible break" in British culture 'where their cherished principles… [Were] drastically incongruous with the crisis at hand' and they struggled to cope.[348] Furthermore, there was no concerted reaction; although the ability of the British community to rise to the occasion of a crisis was often espoused, at Simla when a rumour spread that they were about to be overrun by the enemy the 'Europeans fled… [With] many of the men *abandoning* the women as they rushed for safety'.[349] Others, like the magistrate at Mynpoorie, 'immediately made arrangements' to send European women and children to Agra, whereupon because the men were 'thus relieved from the office of protecting a helpless crowd… [They] prepared to lay down their lives in defence of their public charge'.[350] In another area, a Mrs Stewart was advised to take refuge at the commissioner's house, yet when she arrived and saw that it was rather a defenceless position 'she pronounced the position unsafe, returned to her home, and was one of the first party of refugees' to leave the area when given the opportunity.[351] This spoke volumes as to the effect the crisis had upon men, when they could not see the indefensible position of a building but the women could. Furthermore, when the women at Lucknow were rescued, including Case and Harris, these survivors 'caused great offence by their gloomy, even surly expressions'; although the women of Lucknow were 'treated with great kindness' it seemed to insult the soldiers that the women were not more enthusiastic in their gratitude for being rescued.[352] The British women were thus, again, not matching their actions and reactions to the imagined ideologies of the Empire's men. Excuses were made that perhaps once the women were less fatigued or assured of their safety their gratitude would become apparent, but for now their lack of enthusiasm was grating on the nerves of the soldiers who had fought to save them. Of the 'three elected centres of British refuge in northern India' it was only Agra which avoided an 'all-out siege', as Cawnpore and Lucknow were bombarded.[353] Areas under siege procured limited space for the inhabitants, yet for women it was also a chance at

[348] Herbert, *op. cit.,* p. 190.
[349] Hibbert, *op. cit.,* p. 127. Added emphasis.
[350] Montgomery Martin, *op. cit.,* p. 190.
[351] *ibid*, p. 223.
[352] Hibbert, *op. cit.,* p. 348.
[353] Robinson, *op. cit.,* p. 73.

camaraderie and solidarity as the shared experiences with others gave them a foundation to get through the conflict. Fear and hardship were bearable with the fellowship women formed throughout the Indian Mutiny.

## Social Networks

It was clear that the social strata within Anglo-Indian society was enforced just as it was in the metropole, but the ability to maintain it during the crisis was rare. Although mingling with all social classes, Harris' care still privileged certain women over lower-class women, underscoring this by her description of women who continued to be cheerful despite escaping Seetapore with no material possessions; Harris marvelled that 'It is wonderful how little *that* class of people seem to feel things that would almost kill a lady'.[354] Harris' time during the Lucknow siege was spent immersing herself within the community of women and children in the Residency, eating meals together and spending the hours between lunch and dinner 'working or playing with the children as the case may be'.[355] Harris remarked that 'It is such a rare thing to find ladies interesting themselves about the poor women and children' but Inglis did, constantly checking on those in more unfortunate or lower-class circumstances than herself.[356] It was hard to concentrate on topics that did not revolve around the Indian Mutiny while they gathered together each day and religious services and discussions were often sought for comfort. At least once Case and Inglis found discussing religion for an hour gave them solace during the siege and constant threat of death.[357] Even discussions regarding death and the afterlife were a social activity, while some children would find soldiers to be playmates while they were under siege.[358]

Contrasted to this, the social aspect of the Indian Mutiny was a wholly different experience for Duberly with the 8th Hussars, as their first social opportunity was a 'vast

[354] Harris, *op. cit.*, p. 38. Added emphasis.
[355] *ibid*, p. 33.
[356] *ibid*, p. 20.
[357] Case, *op. cit.*, p. 170.
[358] Robinson, *op. cit.*, pp. 172; 197.

banquet' hosted by wealthy Indian residents.[359] Duberly wrote how it seemed unethical, if not criminal, to accept such an invitation 'from the natives of a country, [when] the soil of which is stained with the blood of English men, women, and children'.[360] Grappling with this ethical dilemma Duberly observed the etiquette in women's social sphere and wrote, 'I cannot say that I found the manners of my fellow-countrywomen in India characterized by real politeness'.[361] During the siege Coopland experienced at Agra, she acknowledged that 'when people had become more reconciled to their confinement, they had balls and musical parties in the arsenal' although she did not attend them.[362] Instead, Coopland whiled away the hours by listening to the 'long stories' her 'Irish nurse, Mrs Cameron' told her and Coopland reciprocated by reading the newspapers to her 'as she could not read'.[363] So positive was the social aspect of their siege that Coopand believed it was a good thing that she and so many others endured the Mutiny together, so that they did not 'brood over and cherish our sorrows' but rather comforted each other through their grief and fears.[364]

George Bourchier wrote that at Agra 'Ladies were riding and driving about in all directions' and generally 'the ladies represented certainly the most cheerful portion of the community' as they maintained social connections and a positive manner in their lives. [365] Furthermore, Swanston described how 'We… all left with nothing but the clothes on our backs' yet a 'Mrs. B. had brought a small supply of wine and beer, some forks and spoons, and had a regular little kit', perhaps an example of how the demands of domesticity and socialising had prepared women for meeting this crisis with a calm head.[366] Overall, women during the Indian Mutiny seemed to cherish, if not place a higher value, on their socialisation with others during the conflict. Through this they could find comfort, focusing their attention on making their confinement a place of

[359] Duberly, *op. cit.,* p. 208.
[360] *ibid*, pp. 208-209.
[361] *ibid*, p. 209.
[362] Coopland, *op. cit.,* p. 143.
[363] *ibid*, p. 146.
[364] *ibid*, p. 177.
[365] George Bourchier, 'Agra' in James Humphries (ed.), *Mutiny: 1857,* Milton Keyes: Leonaur, 2007, p. 348; Hibbert, *op. cit.,* p. 163.
[366] Swanston, *op. cit.,* p. 171.

solace and industriousness and discussing subjects together such as religion and the political reasoning behind the Indian War of Independence.

## Political Perceptions

The political aspect of the Indian Mutiny was largely misrepresented or at the very least misunderstood by the British Empire and its people. Yet, like the Eureka Stockade, political analysis was undertaken by British women throughout the conflict as they attempted to navigate their way through the widespread turmoil. Perhaps due to the ever-present threat of rape which was constantly alluded to, women insisted on discussing what had previously been a male-dominated arena. Harris pointed out 'if the native army turns against us, nothing humanly speaking can save us' and that in her eyes 'the great mistake has been not overawing the *sepoys* at first' when the threat of mutiny began.[367] By delivering a harsh punishment to the few regiments already disbanded and annihilating them 'with grape-shot', Harris firmly believed the ensuing War of Independence would have been stopped; as the conflict was too far gone, Harris hoped a significant influx of British troops would be able to 'keep the *alien* army in check'.[368] At the start of the nineteenth century British soldiers had followed the instructions of the East India Company, agreeing to respect the forms of worship Indians undertook, and upholding a conciliatory and attentive manner to the differences of culture so that the men would forge strong bonds despite these differences.[369] This was not a requisite for British women, and when this agreement was discontinued and intercultural relationships became dysfunctional it heavily contributed to the crisis of 1857, although some men argued that it was due to 'the excessive and pampered growth of the sepoy army'.[370]

[367] Harris, *op. cit.*, pp. 13-14. Original emphasis.
[368] *ibid*, pp. 14-15. Added emphasis.
[369] Ward, *op. cit.*, p. 10.
[370] Roy, *op. cit.*, p. 22; Sita Ram, 'The Wind of Madness' in James Humphries (ed.), *Mutiny: 1857*, Milton Keyes: Leonaur, 2007, p. 67; Swanston, *op. cit.*, p. 211; Ball, *Volume One*, p. 225; Montgomery Martin, *op. cit.*, p. 15; A. R. D. Mackenzie, 'The Mutiny Begins' in James Humphries (ed.), *Mutiny: 1857*, Milton Keyes: Leonaur, 2007, p. 23.

Notably, the assertion that wives 'began to question their husbands' military judgment', for 'even the most obtuse Cawnpore matron could see that they were all teetering on the brink of disaster' and were no longer reassured by their husbands' actions or words can be applied to many of the British women throughout the Bengal presidency.[371] While Harris had no love of the Indian populace which had risen against them, she admitted that it was their own 'folly of having no European troops at Cawnpore, and only one regiment in Oude [sic] – a country of which we have so lately taken unjust possession, and where a rebellion might have been expected any day'.[372] Furthermore, even Sir Hugh Wheeler of Cawnpore came under judgment from Harris' pen, as she argued that he was 'much to blame for not having removed all the guns and ammunition into the intrenched camp when there was time', disregarding the fact that many of the military men had feared tipping their hand by showing how much they distrusted their Indian troops.[373] Descriptions of massacres, grisly murders and the fate of the English within India as they tried to escape or withstand the military onslaught from the enemy was in every primary account, whether as a journal entry or an account always destined to be published for a larger audience. The decency or barbarism of Indians was discussed at length by those caught up in the crisis, with a clear line between those who had helped the British populace and those who had not.

Politically, the crisis within India provided a unifying experience for the British nation, as well as an excuse for the power of the Empire to be implemented against a foreign nation or its people. Ward argues that while 'Cawnpore [in particular] led to a terrible vengeance', such a massacre 'advanced the imperial purpose'.[374] Although there were always contradictory messages regarding how to overpower the rebels and assert British superiority once again, Cawnpore provided a cultural unification in that everyone within Anglo-India and British society agreed that the massacre of women and children was reprehensible and needed to be prevented from happening ever again. The Indian ringleader Nana Sahib had initially situated himself at the beginning of the Mutiny as a neutral figure, doing just enough to aid both sides without making a clear choice so as to succeed no matter which side won, yet when the time came Nana Sahib

[371] Ward, *op. cit.,* pp. 138-139.
[372] Harris, *op. cit.,* p. 21.
[373] *ibid,* p. 43.
[374] Ward, *op. cit.,* pp. xvii-xviii.

chose his fellow countrymen.[375] A thorn in the Company's side, and the most notorious villain in the Mutiny, Nana Sahib himself had a dispute regarding the pension his adoptive father had received that was denied to him; furthermore the titles his father had been using ended with him and were not for Nana Sahib's use.[376] Duberly discussed Nana Sahib's plight in detail and wrote how she believed he was promised a monetary sum, but that Lord Dalhousie had found a loophole in the terms, with which he could take advantage and rescind the agreement; Duberly did not write this to excuse Nana Sahib's atrocities at Cawnpore but painted a picture of a man who, in her eyes, was at least grievously tested by a dishonest Company.[377]

When Lord Dalhousie was governor-general he had created or negotiated the terms with which the East India Company could interfere with Indian politics, as well as Indian cultural practices. Dalhousie was responsible for accelerating the acquirement of land in India by utilising a 'long-established but rarely exercised policy… the Doctrine of Lapse, whereby the Company could automatically annex the principality of any Indian ruler who died without natural issue', which also negated adopted heirs and thus affected Nana Sahib, amongst others.[378] Yet the main reason for British criticism of the annexation of Oudh in particular was not for the expansion of their territory, but that this advancement 'through breaches of contract or confidence was morally unsound' and above all the moral and humane dilemma was at the heart of any question regarding British interference.[379] Rates in Oudh were raised to an amount that many could not afford to pay, Indian soldiers lost payment and benefits that had been theirs before the area had been annexed or lost their employment entirely.[380] Furthermore, the belief that the British 'were saving Indian women from the barbarities of their archaic world… became a critical tool in the legitimation… of their country's right to rule', just as it was a legitimising argument for missionaries when they first went to New Zealand.[381] While the opinions of Dalhousie's successor,

[375] *ibid*, pp. 125; 169.
[376] *ibid*, pp. 38-39; Hibbert, *op. cit.*, pp. 172-173.
[377] Duberly, *op. cit.*, pp. 349-351.
[378] Ward, *op. cit.*, pp. 58-59; Robinson, *op. cit.*, p. 5; Hibbert, *op. cit.*, p. 50.
[379] Swanston, *op. cit.*, pp. 167; 216; Chakravarty, *op. cit.*, p. 50; Herbert, *op. cit.*, pp. 30-31; 78-79; 168; Montgomery Martin, *op. cit.*, pp. 80; 88.
[380] Ward, *op. cit.*, p. 66; Swanston, *ibid*, p. 214; Hibbert, *op. cit.*, pp. 49; 150; Bayly, *op. cit.*, p. 120; Montgomery Martin, *op. cit.*, p. 103.
[381] Hall, 'Gender and Empire', p. 52.

Canning, 'were both less rigid and more humane', the damage had been done by the time Canning arrived and any measures he undertook which applied equally to both Indians and Europeans were met with scorn and anger.[382]

Much like Canning's inaction, women within the Anglo-Indian society were unable, if not unwilling, to prevent or reroute the actions of their spouses and male relatives into a more constructive relationship. However, Case believed that 'The extraordinary infatuation of officers in native corps never choosing to believe it possible that their regiments could prove faithless, is one of the most remarkable features in the whole of this mutiny'.[383] The ability not to be blinded by assumed memory of decades' worth of good relations was crucial to survival during the crisis, as predictions of who was loyal to the British were constantly challenged. Even Nana Sahib would have been a redeemable figure if his desire to allow safe passage for Cawnpore survivors away from the area, as well as his wish to keep the women and children alive for the impending British troops, had not been overturned by his followers and advisors to bring about his becoming the figurehead of all that was 'evil' within India.[384] More trusting of the Sikh soldiers in Lucknow than Harris, Case defended her lack of suspicion for these Indians by stating she believed it was only 'because they were overheard saying they wanted their pay' that their allegiance was doubted, but wanting their pay was in her eyes a fair request.[385] A piece of news Case, rather than Harris, heard concerned the Rajah of Gwalior, who was not fighting against them but was unable to 'restrain his men, who… have joined the other mutineers'.[386] Yet this news was little succour for Coopland, for perhaps the most unforgivable act in her eyes was when the ladies escaped to the Rajah's premises begging for help, and were denied. Coopland wrote her disbelief in plain terms, asking 'Why were we so heartlessly treated by him, when he had been so kind to Major Macpherson and his party… Did he shelter Major Macpherson in his political capacity, and the brigadier as a man of importance? Perhaps he thought that helpless women could never be of any use to

[382] Hibbert, *op. cit.*, p. 25; Herbert, *op. cit.*, p. 106.
[383] Case, *op. cit.*, p. 205.
[384] Ward, *op. cit.*, pp. 225; 344-345; 413-415.
[385] Case, *op. cit.*, p. 169.
[386] *ibid*, p. 192.

him'.[387] Yet 'in some way' the Maharajah of Gwalior 'prevented the women from being killed at Gwalior…[And it was] the only station where the women were not killed'.[388] The inconsistency affected Coopland greatly and left her to wonder why, if the Rajah's protection was so great, he did not help people get to Agra or warn everyone prior to the crisis.[389]

Coopland's judgment of the rebellious Indians became more outspoken and harsh from such experiences, writing 'at heart most' Indians 'are cruel and bloodthirsty, and are only kept by our superior power from burning alive, swinging on hooks… and otherwise sacrificing victims to their vile religion'.[390] In her eyes, there was very little to recommend Indian culture, in fact she believed Indian soldiers were 'well paid and handsomely rewarded', with every opportunity for promotion and 'retiring on a good pension', their religious ideologies given credence to the detriment of all, as she did not believe in the greased cartridge affair.[391] Coopland's disillusionment with the British soldiers was also clear to see, when she wrote how 'much loss of life and great misery were occasioned by the incapability and vacillation of some of the superior officers'.[392] Although an abrupt and often pessimistic perspective on the political situation within India, Coopland's account highlights how some British women were able to discuss the male domain of politics and remake their femininity during the crisis. Debating and elaborating on political issues was not to deny women's own gendered roles, but to expand upon them.

Duberly noted the masculinity of politics when she wrote 'I trust that I shall be pardoned if occasionally I am tempted to touch upon points which may seem beyond a woman's province'.[393] Her only concession to appearing conventionally feminine with this topic, Duberly quickly turned from acknowledging her supposed inadequacy to discussing what had gone wrong within the subcontinent, for in hindsight Duberly

[387] Coopland, *op. cit.*, pp. 97-98.
[388] *ibid*, pp. 110-111.
[389] *ibid*, p. 111.
[390] *ibid*, pp. 35-36.
[391] *ibid*, pp. 44; 63.
[392] *ibid*, p. 61.
[393] Duberly, *op. cit.*, p. 189.

believed 'the Company's rule has done many good things, although not as many as it might have done; *nor was their system free from grave faults*'.[394] Duberly firmly believed that 'So long as the secret intelligence department is inadequately paid, the rebels must draw great advantage and impunity from our ignorance', just as British tactics such as orders that were impossible to follow due to impassable tracks and the constant tugging on their resources for different regiments in far flung areas was questioned within her published account.[395] In fact Duberly wrote that 'were I in a subordinate command… I should either throw up the whole thing, and run away in the night, or I should carry out my own plans in the teeth of everybody'.[396] Details of dispatching Indian enemy soldiers and villagers alike were detailed in Coopland's writings, as she discussed their being hanged upon 'a row of gibbets' and took great delight in sacred places being desecrated as Indians looked on helplessly, 'green with rage'.[397] The only time Coopland seemed to have a sense of remorse for the enemy was when she wrote in detail of Indians being blown away from guns, for 'The sound was horrible, knowing as we did that a fellow creature (whatever he may have done) was being blown into fragments and his soul launched into eternity at each report of the cannon'.[398]

Coopland acknowledged that 'had they [the Indians] been better led, we should not have regained India so easily, for our training had made good soldiers of them' even if Duberly believed the British had lost their way in command.[399] Wherever British women were situated throughout the crisis, the political aspects of the Mutiny soon became apparent, whether they were informed by those within the Anglo-Indian society or the Indians themselves, such as one pregnant lady who had been told that they were all going to be massacred, which was hardly keeping politics out of the discussions with the feminine (and supposedly vulnerable) gender.[400] Occurrences such as this and those that the four chosen women's writings discuss contradicts David's assessment, that British women did not understand what had happened to

[394] *ibid*, p. 190. Added emphasis.
[395] *ibid*, pp. 275; 310-311; 329.
[396] *ibid*, p. 335.
[397] Coopland, *op. cit.*, pp. 152; 174.
[398] *ibid*, pp. 166-167.
[399] *ibid*, p. 165.
[400] Ward, *op. cit.*, p. 210.

bring the Indian Mutiny upon them and 'were figures of Britannic rule without knowing the cost to themselves'.[401] However, women like Case, Duberly, Coopland and Harris did understand what had upset the status quo. While the opportunity to discuss politics was not a new proposition, as women had shown during the Eureka Stockade in Australia, one of the far-reaching consequences of the Indian crisis was to amplify women's voices and their writings were in demand despite any concerns about political discussion within their pages.

While Tuson asserts that the British women 'never once questioned…the underlying causes of the situation in which they found themselves' and that their anger was never publicly directed 'at the white colonial rulers' and husbands this does not bear up under investigation.[402] Women questioned what was occurring and why as the fallout of the Mutiny continued, and their perception of the policies by which the East India Company had governed India was a large part of this. This is not to say some were not caught unawares, as in the weeks prior to the Mutiny one lady 'seemed to be ignorant of Indian politics or social discontent' as her time was taken up with issues on a domestic level.[403] Yet many men were just as blindsided by this crisis. To say their anger was never directed at their own British side is also untrue, for, along with previous examples of the four women discussing what had gone wrong regarding the men's actions, one lady in Cawnpore indignantly wrote that 'Even those who had little pretensions to military tactics perceived the utter insecurity of the [entrenchment] place, and pointed out that the magazine was better adapted for defence', bemoaning that the guns brought into the entrenchment only numbered six.[404] For a time Harris feared the British Empire's time in India would soon come to a brutal and bloody end, as 'the Government at home will be difficult to rouse from their usual state of indifference about this country' and at times 'there never was a more mismanaged affair' with soldiers dying from heat exhaustion even before facing the enemy.[405] Although contemporary historian Ball gave a detailed account as to reasons behind the uprising, once the details of armies clashing begins even in his text a consistent

[401] David, *op. cit.,* p. 215.
[402] Tuson, *op. cit.,* p. 300.
[403] Rappaport, *op. cit.,* p. 244.
[404] Robinson, *op. cit.,* p. 109.
[405] Harris, *op. cit.,* pp. 30; 31-32.

viewpoint is unachievable, for while he stated that it was an 'unjustifiable and unprovoked rebellion', he also argued that Indians were 'undervalued and neglected by their alien rulers, and oppressed and insulted'.[406] Sharpe writes that when women are caught in the crossfire of a crisis 'a resistance to British rule does not look like the struggle for emancipation but rather an uncivilized eruption that must be contained' and it was hard for the British to reconcile this brutality when they knew they were just as uncivilised.[407]

Even prior to the massacre of women at Cawnpore, Brigadier-General Neill was 'making his progress… like some vengeful great juggernaut. In his wake there stretched a billowing cloud of cruelty and waste'; he did not discriminate his kills based on someone's gender, for all were slaughtered if they were caught in his path.[408] Duberly's feminine refinement was muted with regards to her political and militaristic goal that she could 'only look forward with awe to the day of vengeance, when our hands shall be dipped in the blood of our enemies, and the tongues of our dogs shall be red through the same'.[409] Pushing the boundaries of feminine respectability and the ideology of sympathetic, helpless victim, women's writings highlight just how these crises gave them an opportunity to discuss political factors with a clarity and perception often discredited by men.

## New Opportunities

The new opportunities presented to women during the Indian Mutiny were manifold. Duberly, already a trailblazer from her Crimean travels, quoted a Longfellow poem in which she wished "To have my place reserved among the rest,/ Nor stand as one unsought, or uninvited".[410] Her defiance of many of the conventional gendered roles was only strengthened during the Indian conflict, to be recorded in her public account of the Mutiny. To quote Longfellow was to emphasise that just because she was a

[406] Ball, *Volume One,* p. 277; 634.
[407] Sharpe, *op. cit.,* p. 7.
[408] Robinson, *op. cit.,* p. 122.
[409] Duberly, *op. cit.,* p. 210.
[410] *ibid,* p. 186.

woman was no excuse to dismiss her experiences and her writing. Although Duberly wrote she had been unhappy that they had had to leave England so soon after their return from Crimea, it should be noted that her husband would not have forced her to embark on this journey, just as he had not demanded that she accompany him during the Crimean War; Duberly herself must have insisted through sheer force of will (and now notoriety) to continue to travel with the 8th Hussars.[411] Duberly also broke her horse in herself, the one which would accompany her throughout India.[412] Tuson notes that some contemporary men like Trevelyan wondered how the British women could honestly 'cope with the deprivations and hardships of the sieges and military conflicts', yet women like Duberly took it in stride and excelled at the new opportunities that the crisis presented.[413] Duberly exposed the joy she felt at these new roles she found herself in when she discussed an Indian Ranee being amazed that Duberly had been present at battles; in this exchange Duberly's confirmation that she had been there resulted in the Indian lady falling back in her chair with a sigh, and 'A whole lifetime of *suppressed* emotion, of crushed ambition, of helplessness, and weariness, seemed to be comprehended in that short sigh'.[414] Duberly noted her occupation was an unusual one, as when they rode through India 'the astonishment caused by the apparition of a lady in camp to a native infantry officer' caused him to check his horse and stare 'until we were nearly out of sight'.[415] But she refused to let herself be parted from her husband and felt no real fear at the sight of battles, confident in the British soldiers' ability to win. Duberly saw the destruction, the mass bloody devastation throughout India, and included herself when writing about 'fighting instincts' being roused to a high pitch in their hope to find rebels to punish.[416] The knowledge that Duberly was a unique character was confirmed by the Maharajah who was astonished at her accompanying the 8th Hussars into battle and believed that she too should get a medal for her services, if his idea for a certain design could be approved.[417] This was greatly appreciated by Duberly, who had been disappointed at the lack of official recognition of her place with the Hussars in the Crimean War.[418]

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[411] *ibid*, p. 200.
[412] *ibid*, pp. 206-207.
[413] Tuson, *op. cit.*, p. 294.
[414] Duberly, *op. cit.*, p. 223. Added emphasis.
[415] *ibid*, pp. 245-246.
[416] *ibid*, pp. 253; 270-271.
[417] *ibid*, p. 304.
[418] *ibid*, p. 305.

When a ‘gang of thieves’ roamed amongst the camp Duberly’s dog woke her to an intruder and she wrote ‘I could have cut off his hand with my Bhooj dagger’.[419] Although Duberly could be argued to be an anomaly among women during the crisis, many women found themselves in new situations and their ability to adapt and often thrive during the crisis was exceptional.

The particular difference between Duberly and other women, such as Harris and Case, was that they had been unwilling participants in the Indian Mutiny and some new opportunities of initiative and solitary adventures were harrowing. One such example was Harris’ account regarding Lady Outram, who had to ‘run several miles, fleeing for her life’ until she reached Allyghur.[420] When cornered within a hut Coopland wrote the ladies there each ‘took up one of the logs of wood that lay on the ground, as some means of defence’ although this was ultimately useless.[421] Escaping from this place, the ladies walked on, tearing their dresses up for bandages for feet and placing bits of material over their head in place of bonnets.[422] Highlighting the new order of things, Coopland wrote how if Major Macpherson could not remember the password for the barracks it was up to Mrs Innes to provide it, just as she had to write things down for her brother as ‘no native secretary could be trusted now’.[423] All of these new ventures Coopland experienced were undergone while pregnant, and in fact her first real mention of being hindered by a child was when a call was made for women to help nurse the wounded, but Coopland did not as she feared to leave her child for so long.[424] It was a novel experience to now be grateful an ideal of motherhood was unfulfilled in Harris’ case, but having heard how children were murdered she wrote ‘I do feel so glad now I have no children’.[425]

Some argued that ‘A good society was one in which the classes, the races and the sexes knew their place and stayed in it’; that the crisis threw much of this into disarray and

[419] *ibid*, p. 365.
[420] Harris, *op. cit.*, p. 23.
[421] Coopland, *op. cit.*, pp. 94-95.
[422] *ibid*, p. 105.
[423] *ibid*, pp. 109; 142.
[424] *ibid*, p. 167.
[425] Harris, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

brought about new opportunities for women to undertake was unsettling.[426] That it could be seen as a 'challenge to men's power meant a more anxious focus on forms of masculinity' and hypersensitivity to what was acceptable, even during a crisis such as the Indian Mutiny so as to separate the gendered roles from becoming as merged as they did.[427] One officer at Mhow quoted by Ball heaped praise upon the women for their cheerfulness and lack of fear, adding that 'they bring us tea or any little thing they can, and would even like to keep watch on the bastions if we would *let* them'.[428] When they could, the men refused to let new opportunities arise for the women within their vicinity. To allow it, moreover to fully embrace it, was to dismiss the standards that had been set in the British metropole and which were to be replicated throughout the colonial outposts. Although the Anglo-Indian society was experiencing a crisis it was imperative that it was not to be used as an excuse or opportunity to break the clearly demarcated spheres of masculine and feminine control. Rather than the Empire accepting that women could perform new roles, David believes women were 'required… to perform sacrificial roles' which would in turn change 'native disorder into English civilization'.[429] The acknowledgement of sacrifice was present in women's writing, but it was also tempered by the pages in which they discussed new or enhanced actions or perspectives that were brought about by the mutiny. Reducing their efforts to that of a sacrifice was to underplay British women's adaptability during times of crisis.

British women were not attempting to replace men in certain roles during the War of Independence. But with greater exposure to conflict women's bravery increased and became desensitized to the paralysing fear that had first gripped the British at the beginning of the Mutiny; as evidenced by Harris' notation that 'The enemy have been *annoying* us all day with a 9-pounder', which was a far cry from the fear of being hit by cannon fire earlier.[430] In fact it was only on the crossing to Cawnpore that Harris felt the most 'extreme sense of nearly-impending danger', but this may have also been

[426] Catherine Hall, *Civilising Subjects: Metropole and Colony in the English Imagination, 1830-1867,* Cambridge: Polity Press, 2002, p. 219.
[427] *ibid*, p. 387.
[428] Ball, *Volume One*, p. 755. Added emphasis.
[429] David, *op. cit.*, pp. 9; 114.
[430] Harris, *op. cit.*, p. 78.

associated with the horror stories of Cawnpore itself.[431] In a report regarding the troubles that had befallen Lucknow during the crisis, Colonel Inglis made particular mention of 'the patient endurance and the Christian resignation which have been evinced by the women of this garrison. They have animated us by their example'.[432] While this was undoubtedly high praise for the women within Lucknow, it lacked much of the vigour with which women had undertaken different roles or expanded on the work they would have undertaken within the domestic sphere prior to the uprising. It was Coopland who succinctly wrote about the misguided ideologies held by the British Empire and men regarding women:

> Some men may think that women are weak and only fitted to do trivial things, and endure petty troubles… [But] there are many who can endure with fortitude and patience what even soldiers shrink from. Men are fitted by education and constitution to dare and to do; yet they have been surpassed, in presence of mind and in the power of endurance, by weak women.[433]

It was important for the women to feel like their work was contributing to the British regaining their power over India, for to ever feel safe again in the subcontinent was to ensure that the East India Company and the British Empire behind it were successful. As Harris said, 'It is a great comfort to have so much to do, and to feel oneself of some little use' to helping the Anglo-Indians bear the mutiny as well as could be expected.[434] Prior to the Cawnpore massacre, it was a sergeant's wife, Bridget Widdowson, who stood guard over eleven Indian prisoners 'with a drawn sword' to prevent their escape and even tied 'them all together with ropes around their waists' to prevent escape.[435] Eventually at the same location 'even the women were enlisted for sentry duty' because not only were men dying from enemy attack but also sunstroke.[436] This particular information was not discussed within nineteenth century historians' accounts, nor that a number of 'battle-hardened ladies dusted their menfolk's stacks of guns and sat by with their ramrods and cartridges, poised to reload'.[437] At Lucknow

[431] *ibid*, p. 89.
[432] Case, *op. cit.*, p. 234.
[433] Coopland, *op. cit.*, p. 88.
[434] Harris, *op. cit.*, p. 55.
[435] Ward, *op. cit.*, p. 230; Hibbert, *op. cit.*, p. 183.
[436] Ward, *ibid*, p. 241.
[437] *ibid*, p. 277.

not only did women learn new domestic duties that had previously been their servants' duties, but others occupied their time by making more shirts for the soldiers out of any material they could while 'Mrs Brydon and Mrs Gubbins organized a roster so that the men on duty at their posts were regularly provided… with tea and brandy'.[438] Furthermore, Martin Gubbins acknowledged that the women 'became so used to the sound of shot whizzing over their heads and thudding into masonry that they were far better than men at differentiating between the weight of the missiles', just as Caroline had said in Case's account.[439] Knowing that the enemy were mining underneath them, Case wrote that they too were mining 'and I hope that we shall get in and blow them up'.[440] Such an expression of bloodlust was seemingly typical for British women during the Indian Mutiny, just as a new normal became the discussion of suicide options if the enemy overpowered their position, and the morality of 'whether it would be right to put an end to ourselves… to save ourselves from the horrors we should have to endure'.[441] For Case herself, she decided it was not the right course of action, instead 'it appears to me that all we have to do is, to endeavour, as best as we can, to be prepared for our death, and leave the rest in the hands of Him who knows what is best for us'.[442]

The manipulation and pervasive imagery of rape had, according to Woollacott, assisted in 'entrench[ing] definitions of femininity that cast women as being in need of male protection and as under the threat of sexual assault… effectively policing women's sexuality and countering moves towards their social autonomy'.[443] Yet as Christopher Hibbert shows a Lieutenant Roberts acknowledged in his writings that 'the ladies were 'the only people who had behaved properly' in the crisis', despite this pervasive threat of rape.[444] British women chose to adapt to each new situation as the conflict demanded, to be unable to negotiate gendered roles and experience new opportunities in what must be done to survive, would have ensured the death of many of them. Their femininity and fragility was often emphasised in public accounts,

[438] Hibbert, *op. cit.,* p. 239.
[439] *ibid,* p. 247; Case, *op. cit.,* p. 130.
[440] Case, *ibid,* p. 150.
[441] *ibid,* p. 152.
[442] *ibid.*
[443] Woollacott, *Gender and Empire*, p. 45.
[444] Hibbert, *op. cit.,* p. 120.

including that of the newspapers within the metropole, yet it was their ability to rise above such a stereotypical life that allowed them to not only survive the mutiny but also call attention to the superior British civilisation which enabled them to do so.

## Superiority

British superiority over the Indian populace was believed to be a simple fact, so it was imperative that this racial order which underpinned imperial ideology was never overturned. As the Mutiny drew closer Harris herself upheld the ideology of imperial dominance and remarked how 'the natives have all such a defiant, impertinent manner, as if they know their power' and asked her Mother to pray for those living in India during such unsettling times.[445] It was Harris' belief that with the fortifications in place at Lucknow the insurgents were wary of attacking their position as 'they are much too *cowardly* to make any attempt on a place so well prepared: it is only when they can… murder defenceless women and children that they dare attack Europeans'.[446] Whether by position within the British Empire or the ideology of racial evolution, it seemed that the British felt they could demand obedience and respect with little reason for it and were aggravated that the Indians' 'impudence is beyond bounds: they are losing even the semblance of respect'.[447] This superiority was viewed as that of a parent and child, evidenced by the horror that Colonel Fisher 'was savagely murdered by his own men, whom he trusted and loved like his own children'.[448] It felt like the paternal and maternal care that the British believed they had shown Indians was ungratefully rejected with this conflict and they were at a loss as to how severe the 'lesson' to reprimand them should be.[449] However, Hubel writes that the idea of racial differences had to be constantly restated so as to create a hierarchy that placed the British above the 'other', applying it to both Indians and the 'half-castes' which were a product of Englishmen and Indians intermingling.[450] Although historian Andrea Kaston Tange believes that class differences were erased under the overarching threat of rape and

[445] Harris, *op. cit.*, p. 17.
[446] *ibid*, p. 32. Added emphasis.
[447] *ibid*, p. 34.
[448] *ibid*, p. 36.
[449] Kaston Tange, *op. cit.*, p. 190; Tuson, *op. cit.*, p. 293; Sinha, *op. cit.*, p. 192; Herbert, *op. cit.*, p. 35.
[450] Teresa Hubel, 'In Search of the British Indian in British India: White Orphans, Kipling's Kim, and Class in Colonial India', *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 38, No. 1, 2004, pp. 231-232; 241.

crisis, it was undeniable that at the very least the racial difference, the whiteness of their skin, was a major factor in British protection; Eurasians rarely receiving the same consideration.[451]

Coopland acknowledged her racism when she wrote that her 'judgment of the natives of India may be deemed harsh; but I had little time to know them favourably, and have suffered too deeply from them, perhaps, to be a lenient and impartial judge'.[452] In fact the only concession Coopland was willing to make regarding Indians was that they seemed to be much more kind and understanding than English nurses towards the children, but otherwise her grief and experiences were too harsh for her to understand the Indians' grievances.[453] Coopland's sense of superiority was not just based on skin colour, but also extended to those of a lower social class, as she wrote about the 'sergeant's wives and children' and their distress over the fate of their husbands; 'Poor things, their distress was very pitiable; their feelings being less under control than ours'.[454] Ironically Eurasians were most given Coopland's sympathy, as she recognised that they 'are uncharitably said to have the vices of both different races, and the virtues of neither… and had to accommodate themselves anywhere'.[455] Upon arrival at Delhi after being stuck in Agra's fort, Coopland wrote how the Indians 'all looked impudently at us, as though they thought we had no right there. Oh how I detested them, and longed to turn them all out of Delhi'.[456] She wrote this as if the Empire was entitled to everything it wanted, regardless of whether the Indians wanted to be colonised or not. For many of the British, both within India and across the Empire, this had become a normal thought process.

Throughout the nineteenth century the markers of racial difference were becoming more established and it was only natural, in the eyes of the British racial ideology, that they would reign supreme over all of the other cultures across the globe. Some newspapers, such as the *Illustrated London News*, regarded the Indian Mutiny as a

[451] Kaston Tange, *op. cit.*, p. 196.
[452] Coopland, *op. cit.*, p. 9.
[453] *ibid*, p. 54.
[454] *ibid*, p. 97.
[455] *ibid*, p. 125.
[456] *ibid*, p. 186.

threat to the Empire's superiority and if the British Empire were to lose their hold on India their standing in the world would diminish.[457] In later accounts the British were described to have been killed 'as undeserving victims, as representatives of a superior civilization who… do the right thing'.[458] Although Caplan states that British women 'were themselves proud symbols of British power' who helped to create and maintain a hierarchy, it is inescapable that the sole reason women were allowed to go to India in the first place was to solidify British ties back to their homeland even as they reminded British men that taking Indian mistresses was no longer acceptable in this day and age.[459] While not every woman was a proud symbol of this enforced superiority, the social culture demanded this stance while they lived in India. When Cawnpore occurred it merely highlighted to those within India and in the metropole 'the absurdity of treating natives as the equal of whites'.[460] Chakravarty writes that 'not only did the fatalities reveal the precariousness of British power' within India, but 'they were also a serious interruption of the habitual hierarchy of status and authority that structured British relations with India'.[461] The opportunity within the Indian crisis was not only to shake the assumption of what connoted racial superiority, but also question the differing emphasis on gender or class roles and values during the conflict.[462]

Rappaport notes that even before the War of Independence, 'India could be imagined as a threat to… British manhood' as, among other things, Indian men had provided monetary assistance to British men in debt before the racial hierarchy fully set in.[463] Superiority and importance were also proscribed by the British between factions of Indians, according to whether they were on the British side or not. This was certainly the case in moments such as when Case hoped the Indian servants were safe and 'able to get away to some village before these *wretches* commenced their work of plunder

[457] Blunt, *op. cit.*, p. 406.
[458] Flaminia Nicora, 'An Icon of "British Character": The Indian Mutiny and the Literary Imagination', *Textus,* Vol. 20, No. 2, 2007, p. 360.
[459] Caplan, *op. cit.*, p. 863.
[460] Cole Harris, 'How Did Colonialism Dispossess? Comments from an Edge of Empire', *Annals of the Association of American Geographers,* Vol. 94, No. 1, 2004, p. 171.
[461] Chakravarty, *op. cit,* p. 4.
[462] Harris, *op. cit.*, p. 73.
[463] Rappaport, *op. cit.*, pp. 238-239.

and destruction'.[464] Mrs Inglis also 'wrote of [some of] the native soldiers with admiration and gratitude… touched by the generosity of the Sikhs' who gave her son some of their food though they had little to spare.[465] The contradictions within women's writings, just as there were contradictions in contemporary historians' writings, was an indication of the inherent instability within the racial, gendered and class divisions and hierarchy.

The assumed superiority of the British was not solely based on military power, nor did some of its subjects accept that their greatness was indestructible. Duberly argued that the positive influence of the British Empire could only be accomplished by setting an example, for 'Englishmen, being Christians, cannot… deceive, bully, or oppress. And when we throw our Christianity, and consequent superiority, in their teeth on every occasion', it was only natural it would grate against the Indians' own religion.[466] Furthermore it was not enough 'to vindicate our mastership by force of arms: we must also prove our moral superiority' else the British Empire, in Duberly's eyes, could not claim victory or superiority.[467] Robinson writes that relations between India and Britain 'had in reality been curdling for years' and the dismissive attitude of the Government had not helped matters when dealing with Indians.[468] Yet despite this, an argument was made that the British woman 'was responsible for spoiling that cohesive relationship which had been so enjoyed by the sahib and his sepoys in the past. With her petty insularity, her home-grown prejudices and petulant dependence on her countrymen' it was believed that she had broken the trust between the two cultures.[469] When Duberly first arrived she was carried 'in a *palki*', but soon requested that they find her a carriage as 'the idea of transforming my fellow-creatures into beasts of burden was repugnant to me'.[470] This was just one example of finding the demeaning aspect of the racial hierarchy too awful for Duberly to bear. While Duberly may not have appreciated every aspect of Indian culture, such as her distaste for what she called graceless dancing and disharmonious singing at an Indian wedding, she knew that the

[464] Case, *op. cit.,* p. 143. Added emphasis.
[465] Hibbert, *op. cit.,* p. 250.
[466] Duberly, *op. cit.,* p. 190.
[467] *ibid,* p. 191.
[468] Robinson, *op. cit.,* p. 9.
[469] *ibid,* p. 14.
[470] Duberly, *op. cit.,* p. 203. Original emphasis.

Indians were fellow human beings.[471] Duberly's rejection of one of the most demeaning aspects of racial hierarchy is an important contrast to much of the historiography, in which the idea of racial differences are constantly emphasised and exaggerated.

Even as Duberly praised the British soldiers she accompanied through India, she also gave credit to the enemy if their actions were of noble or heroic efforts despite all odds, such as a rebel chief who 'had seen his people losing… [But still] charged down to join the forces. He and his horse died near the parapet'.[472] However, reminded of her time in Crimea Duberly asserted 'we knew that if Europeans cannot stand against our infantry, no native Indians would entertain the notion for a moment', despite the scare that had engulfed the Anglo-Indian society at the start of the uprising.[473] As Kaul notes of renowned war correspondent Russell, the Englishman stated that the awfulness of Cawnpore, for most, lay not in the death of the women and children but that it "was done by a subject race".[474] That a lesser society could do such damage to its superior was to underscore that the British Empire was fallible. Blame was dispersed to almost everyone ever associated with the East India Company, as well as to those living in India even as the propagandised rhetoric emphasised that the Empire would never be wholly defeated. To argue that the wins the Indians had experienced during the Mutiny were based on luck, rather than their ingenuity and abilities, was to maintain the status quo of the social order as defined by the British.

## Private Writings

The largest issue cognisant with writing, for private or public consumption, was finding the time to write even when ill or on the move. Coopland also noted that with her own experience, 'No one, whom I knew, kept a journal in the fort; for the confusion and noise rendered it impossible: we found it quite insufficient to write letters

[471] *ibid*, p. 207.
[472] *ibid*, p. 250.
[473] *ibid*, p. 288.
[474] Kaul, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

home'.[475] Harris underscored in her text that her account was 'written for the perusal of friends at home' but her friends 'thought that it might interest others, beyond the family circle, to communicate additional information as a subject in which the British nation feels so deep an interest'.[476] It should also be noted that her second edition reintegrated 'One or two short passages from the manuscript journal, [which were] omitted in the First Edition'.[477] Like Harris, Case was persuaded to let the public see what she had written after her friends talked to her; interestingly, Case also stated that what was published was what her friends thought best, instead of what she might have chosen.[478] Case insisted 'I have not attempted, by subsequent additions, to produce effect, or to aim at glowing descriptions, but have given it as it was written'.[479]

It was immediately after the War of Independence that 'a host of diaries and 'Mutiny' memoirs were published' and Astrid Erll states that such remembering fashioned the crisis 'into a foundational myth of the British' which 'helped legitimate British rule in India'.[480] Women's ability to write about more than just the domestic sphere was the largest cause for imperial concern, as reviews of British women's written accounts emphasised 'the "womanly" and "feminine" perspectives of female authors' to ruin any serious consideration of their perspective on the conflict and their demonstrated abilities that did not match social expectations.[481] According to Tuson, the written experiences were 'interpreted, represented, and manipulated as a means of reinforcing patriarchal control' in the British Empire' and an attempt to defuse any further occurrences of women's independence once the Mutiny had passed.[482]

Sharpe notes that women's fictional work being published 'meant participating in the public domain of the literary marketplace', threatening 'the separation of spheres that

[475] Coopland, *op. cit.,* p. 140.
[476] Harris, *op. cit.,* p. 11.
[477] *ibid.*
[478] Case, *op. cit.,* p. 109.
[479] *ibid.*
[480] Astrid Erll, 'Re-writing as re-visioning: Modes of representing the 'Indian Mutiny' in British novels, 1857 to 2000', *European Journal of English Studies,* Vol. 10, No. 2, 2006, pp. 164; 166.
[481] Murdoch, *op. cit.,* pp. 377-378.
[482] Tuson, *op. cit.,* p. 301.

authorized their fiction'.[483] This could also be applied to women's personal, published accounts of the Mutiny as they negotiated these two spheres both by publishing their work and by the 'Mutiny' experience itself. The sheer volume of written accounts that were published so soon after the Mutiny were, in the end, 'treated as part of the whole Mutiny melodrama' and as Robinson states, 'drowned by the wave itself' of the flood of information.[484] Indeed Herbert writes that 'The very existence of this vast [written] archive is the clearest possible indication of the significance that the Mutiny took on'.[485] Herbert goes on, 'the Mutiny called forth from writers of the day a voluminous discourse of dissent that often evoked… a profound anguish of conscience', as well as 'disaffection from the war and from its sustaining ideology'.[486] The sheer volume of written accounts by women was proof that they took delight and comfort in recording their experiences and using their voice to give their perspective to those within the private and public domains.[487] Furthermore, it 'also had an important monetary value since writing was one of the very few forms of paid employment which was socially acceptable' for women to undertake, despite their words potential to disrupt the status quo of Britain's social culture.[488] The ability of women to address political and military issues within their writing, as well as draw attention to their negotiation of more responsibilities both within and outside the domestic sphere now proved problematical when their private thoughts were printed for the public's perusal.

## Public Writings

Some women, such as Duberly, had always planned to publish their experiences and adjusted their writing to suit such a public arena. Duberly had published her Crimean experience and received favourable remarks for such an account and she clearly planned to have the same impact with her Indian Mutiny experiences. In fact, it was because Duberly was critical of 'letters published in the newspapers' detailing soldiers' work during the War of Independence that she 'venture[d] to put before the

[483] Sharpe, *op. cit.,* p. 35.
[484] Robinson, *op. cit.,* p. 255.
[485] Herbert, *op. cit.,* p. 3.
[486] *ibid*, p. 16.
[487] Robinson, *op. cit.,* pp. 251-3; 255.
[488] Raza, *op. cit.,* pp. 124-125.

public a faithful record… of one portion of the army'.[489] That Duberly deliberately wrote for public consumption makes her remarks regarding wanting the blood of the enemy on her hands all the more remarkable.[490] This was not a feminine reaction, this was clearly a bloodthirsty masculine ideology she had adopted for her own and was eager to highlight this to the British Empire, to highlight that both genders could want such a thing as a bloody vengeance on any people who had done the imperial power wrong.

At the time, Duberly noted 'we know little beyond our own adventures' and that the population relied on the public descriptions within newspapers to understand what was occurring throughout India.[491] Without this public knowledge it was hard to gain a foothold on the grievances of Indians; even with it the newspapers' blaming of Indians for the Mutiny was largely based on the Indian population being ungrateful for what the Empire had given them, rather than a legitimate protest about their situation. The exception to Duberly writing her account was when she was taken ill and could not hold the pen to write, later stating 'It is sad to lie in pain and weakness amidst such stirring scenes; and to be so dependent, helpless, and exhausted… the will of God can cast us down and leave us to be helplessly carried hither and thither at the will of others'.[492] This description of her illness was a slight slip towards feminine helplessness, which she had strived to remain clear of throughout the rest of the journal. Meanwhile, Harris took exception to published newspaper reports which disseminated rumours as if they were fact, when she wrote in disgust that a 'horrible report was published… that Lucknow had fallen and we were all massacred: if this goes to England it will be dreadful'.[493]

Newspapers had attempted 'to maintain and to bolster the inviolability both of British women and of British imperial rule in India', yet to do this was to boost the masculine heroism of the British soldiers, not the ingenuity of the women.[494] As Woollacott

[489] Duberly, *op. cit.,* p. 189.
[490] *ibid*, p. 210.
[491] *ibid*, p. 276.
[492] *ibid*, p. 282.
[493] Harris, *op. cit.*, p. 70.
[494] Blunt, *op. cit.,* p. 411.

found, ‘Stories of colonial misadventure were avidly consumed… especially narratives that were driven by fears of British or ‘white’ women’s vulnerability to the violent predations of indigenous men’.[495] Even knowing the heartache false reports could make, women did sometimes slip in accounts, reporting gossip which was difficult to verify, all detailing a bleak landscape throughout the conflict. Coopland’s account was, according to her, merely a ‘plain, unexaggerated account of the sad events which came immediately under my own eye’ but one she felt others needed to read to gain a further understanding of the Indian conflict, ‘though it may be thought presumptuous to add another book to the many already written’.[496] Coopland defended her public work by adding ‘It seems to amount almost to a duty’ that those who had been in India ‘should faithfully describe what they have themselves seen’.[497] By positioning herself in such a way, Coopland was not entering the public sphere to endanger the male domain but was instead doing what women had always done, fulfilling a role the Empire and society required.

## Silence

The amount of written accounts regarding the Indian Mutiny were prolific, yet even so the accounts were often manipulated to either silence women’s role and adaptability within the conflict or dismiss the evidence of British troops reacting savagely. Duberly noted this latter issue when she wrote ‘It seems to me that all this Indian warfare is unsatisfactory work… there have been cases of ruthless slaughter, *of which perhaps the less said the better*’.[498] This acknowledgment, albeit one which requested a silence on its own, still brought home the savage reaction of the British troops to her readers. Duberly did not go into detail and glossed over the awfulness of this truth, yet that she brought it up at all was a credit to her, positioned as a female already moving past boundaries that would separate the genders and keep her within the private sphere without recourse.

[495] Woollacott, *Gender and Empire,* p. 38.
[496] Coopland, *op. cit.,* pp. 8-9.
[497] *ibid,* p. 9.
[498] Duberly, *op. cit.,* p. 356; Added emphasis.

The apologia Coopland wrote in her preface, excusing adding her account to the numerous amounts already published was in itself a subtle manipulation to overcome the threat of silence. In fact Coopland also took the general public in England to task within her writings, for the descriptions of mutilated bodies and other horrors were 'facts [which] are doubted by many people in England. A natural aversion from dwelling upon deeds of atrocity and human sufferings, renders sensitive persons reluctant to credit horrible facts', but Coopland insisted this muting of suffering was unacceptable and refused to censor her description of such acts.[499] Her femininity became a grounding tool as she wrote 'it must be obvious to all that I cannot' write of awfulness 'without great pain; but I think Englishmen ought to know what their own countrywomen have endured at the hands of the *sepoys*'.[500]

It was Coopland's duty to speak for not only herself but other women who had faced hardship and terror, that men and the Empire had wanted these women to remain the silent victim was apparent in her strong words. Coopland stated of 'the cruel massacres of English men and women… Such atrocities ought never to be buried in oblivion', just as it was clear British society was keen to solely focus on their victories and the tale of heroic vengeance against those who had caused the Cawnpore massacre.[501] Even Harris, writing to her family, stated that she felt it 'kinder… to conceal nothing'.[502] Furthermore, Harris was furious that a man had published an account saying the ladies of Lucknow came out of the siege still well dressed. Harris could not abide this false story and asked 'How could people be well dressed who had not seen the sight of clean clothes for five months, and nearly all of whom had lost or left behind almost everything'?[503] Instead only one lady had anything decent to wear, and some ladies actually burnt what they would have to leave behind, including wedding dresses, 'rather than let them become spoil to the enemy'.[504] Case attempted to detail everything she experienced, but acknowledged that 'words could never make any one

[499] Coopland, *op. cit.,* p. 60.
[500] *ibid*, p. 88. Original emphasis.
[501] *ibid*, p. 197.
[502] Harris, *op. cit.*, p. 26.
[503] *ibid*, pp. 102-103.
[504] *ibid*, p. 103.

understand all that we have undergone'.[505] Yet Case, just like the other women who wrote about their experiences, took comfort in that their deeds and perspectives were written down. Their voices may have been silenced or dismissed on certain matters, but at the very least their names would never be forgotten as long as their words survived.

An example of what occurred when women could not speak for themselves, Cawnpore became a vehicle for allegedly justified brutality, even as the women who died there were treated as a symbolic representation rather than women with families and ties across the Empire. Without women's written accounts from Cawnpore, the British women's lack of voice was able to be manipulated in whichever way the Empire and its men desired, for purposes such as promoting and accepting the brutality of vengeance which was enacted upon Indians throughout the area.[506] Yet even at Lucknow, while the survivors could speak for themselves and give their own account of what occurred, women were silenced. They were presented as the stereotypically helpless, delicately feminine ladies whose worth was tied into the unstable domesticity of the crisis, whereas men such as Brigadier Inglis had praise heaped upon him for being their noble defender and a reassuring, masculine barrier preserving everything civilised about the Empire.[507] Furthermore, Colonel Neill's brutal actions on his way to Cawnpore 'went unmentioned by the British press until after events in Cawnpore were known, at which point… [They] were cast in light of justified reprisal for Nana Sahib's betrayal'.[508] A selective 'cultural memory' was continually attempted regarding these atrocities and other aspects of the crisis which threatened the stability of the Empire.[509] It is clear that 'the British were anxious to establish their monolithic version of the past'.[510] Reaffirming the conventional in both written accounts and visual imagery allowed the British to feel some control over how the crisis had shaken their superiority on the world stage, as well as their ability to protect the defenceless.[511] Some, like Kingston, preferred their praise of 'calm courage, devotion, perseverance'

[505] Case, *op. cit.,* p. 163.
[506] Blunt, *op. cit.,* pp. 415-418; Kaston Tange, *op. cit.,* p. 199; Herbert, *op. cit.,* p. 27.
[507] Blunt, *ibid,* p. 420.
[508] Kaston Tange, *op. cit.,* p. 203.
[509] Erll, *op. cit.,* p. 164.
[510] *ibid,* p. 170.
[511] De Groot, *op. cit.,* p. 5.

to be a focus on the soldiers and male non-combatants during the Mutiny, rather than allowing it to shine a light on women's abilities.[512]

Although rumours and stories of rape throughout the Mutiny were an enduring myth of the crisis despite acknowledgements that it was a fabrication, this helped the British silence the fear and reality of their shortcomings when it came to the warfare during the Mutiny. It allowed them to maintain that 'white British people were the natural rulers… because of white men's supposed self-control compared to non-white men's ascribed uncontrolled lustful and barbaric behaviour'.[513] Interestingly, silence was also applicable to sieges such as that at Arrah, because as Civil Administrator Halls noted, it lacked 'the romantic interest which the presence of women and children has imparted to other episodes of the rebellion'.[514] Furthermore, 'The image of death by disease or bullet wound is far less noble than that of helpless women and children being cut to pieces by leering sepoys' and it is this image, rather than the former, that was continuously used to depict the horrors of the Indian Mutiny.[515] David highlights the struggle British women endured, stating that 'Victorian women may rule the Britannic empire, may "write" the empire, must suffer for the empire' but this was not without cost or restrictions.[516] The tale of some women surviving, having been taken prisoner and perhaps converted, was at best silenced, and at worst it was expounded as a symbol of racial inferiority, for inevitably there must be some foreign blood in these women's veins to allow them to be so dishonoured.[517] Women such as Amy Horne, a "half-caste" who survived the massacre at Cawnpore, had to justify their survival and repeatedly avow that they never changed their allegiance in any way.[518]

When discussing the events at Meerut, Malleson wrote that 'Many instances of the devotion and presence of mind of English women could be given *if space permitted*', yet did not attempt to give them the same consideration and attention as that which he

[512] Kingston, *op. cit.,* p. 188.
[513] Woollacott, *Gender and Empire,* p. 52.
[514] John James Halls, 'The Siege at Arrah' in James Humphries (ed.), *Mutiny: 1857*, Milton Keyes: Leonaur, 2007, p. 254.
[515] Sharpe, *op. cit.,* p. 64.
[516] David, *op. cit.,* p. 7.
[517] Paxton, *op. cit.,* p. 11.
[518] Robinson, *op. cit.,* pp. 141; 148-150; 191-192.

paid men.[519] Silencing also took place on behalf of authorities when their deeds did them no credit, such as a refusal to send assistance to rescue nuns and children at a convent, their rescue only occurring because an Englishman independently gathered volunteers to go save them.[520] Women's written accounts were the perfect place to attempt to regain some sense of self for these British women, to attest that their experiences were just as harrowing and valiant as men's. Even if they did not directly fight the enemy, women performed their domestic roles as well as other actions that pushed the normative gendered boundaries to ensure victory for the Anglo-Indians within India.

Women such as Case, Harris, Duberly and Coopland were not unique in their capabilities. That they were able to write about the Indian Mutiny, particularly when they were either under siege or constantly on the move with the British armies, is testament to their need of a voice within the conflict and the British Empire at large. Women's reaction to the violence throughout this conflict varied, although all four were certainly more pronounced in their advocacy for ruthlessness than the women on the Ballarat goldfields had been just three years earlier. Coopland in particular was intent on vengeance, to teach the Indians the folly of mutinying against the Empire and would not be satisfied until the Indigenous populace had been humiliated and their culture degraded. While Duberly acknowledged aspects of the Indian grievances and their fighting abilities, she too celebrated the supremacy of the British soldiers against a new foe, calmly writing about the outcomes of the clashes she witnessed. The British women's response to the Indian Mutiny was thus a further expansion on women's abilities and experiences that had begun during the Eureka Stockade in Australia, the War of Independence a catalyst for the changes. To move between masculine and feminine domains, negotiating the boundary as the situation demanded, was to reaffirm women's adaptability. Although their own accounts were at times criticised by contemporary critics and historians for what they divulged regarding domesticity, politics and militaristic actions during the crisis, the women felt it to be vital to record it nonetheless. Women's voices were persistent within the outpouring of texts regarding the Indian Mutiny and this highlighted the importance of their presence to

[519] Malleson, *op. cit.*, p. 70. Added emphasis.
[520] Montgomery Martin, *op. cit.*, pp. 182-183.

the outcome of the crisis. Furthermore, the British women's actions during the Indian Mutiny would provide an illustration to white women in New Zealand, as they too faced their own prolonged crises. Although they did not work to challenge the racial or class order during the Indian conflict, and in fact at times their presence and actions contributed to the worsening proscribed subservience and infantilisation of Indians, British women's participation in more fields than just the domestic one certainly built upon the experiences of the Eureka Stockade. This in turn gave white women in the latter part of the New Zealand Land Wars even more models to follow, with which to leave their own mark on the colonial and imperial landscape.

# Chapter 5.

# NEW ZEALAND: Land Wars and Parihaka Invasion 1843 – 1881

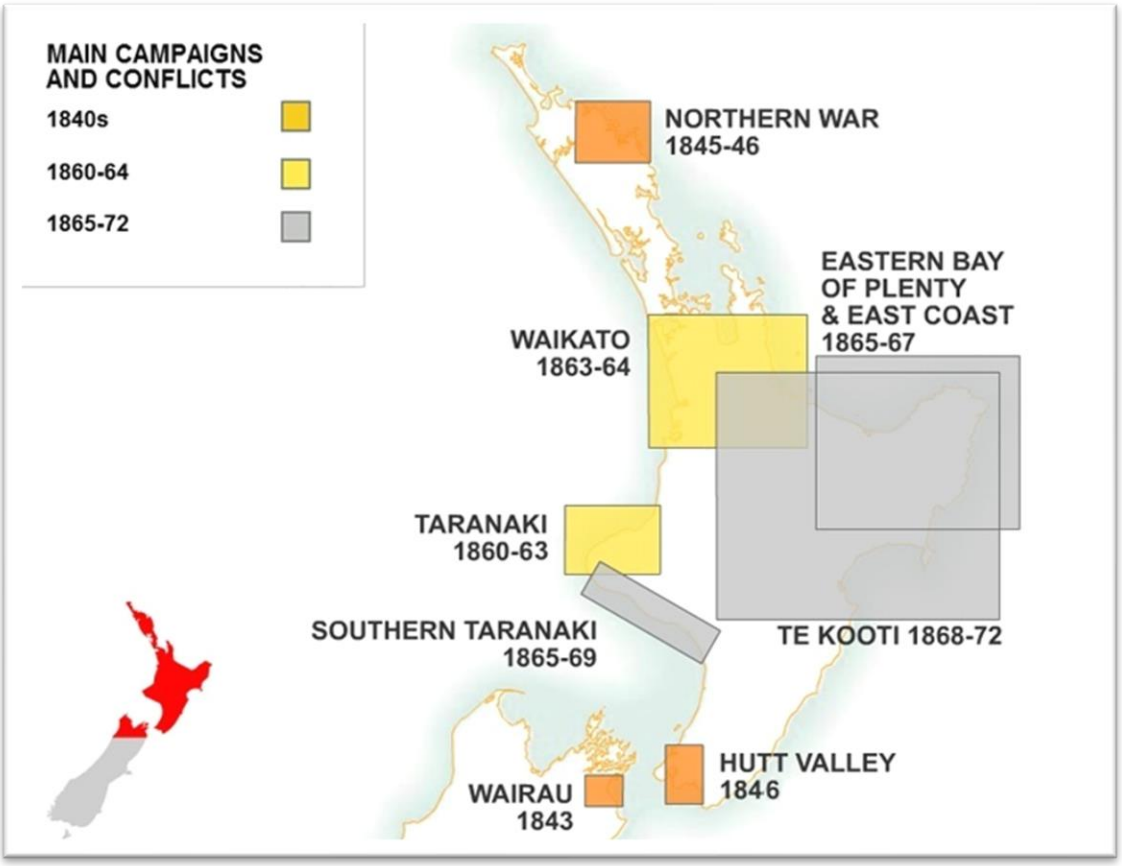


**Figure 5: New Zealand Wars map**[521]

The longevity and intricacy of the Land Wars in Aotearoa New Zealand, further shaped by the invasion of Parihaka, ensures that this colonial outpost is a unique and vital study for British women's actions and responses to what was unfolding before them. In contrast to the Eureka Stockade and India's First War of Independence, the Land Wars at times were a battle waged against both the Indigenous populace and the Government as British settlers bemoaned the lack of land and Māori determination to

[521] New Zealand Wars map. Ministry for Culture and Heritage: NZ History - Nga korero a ipurangi o Aotearoa. <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/media/photo/nz-wars-overview-map> Accessed 31 May 2021.

retain it. The effect of the Indian 'Mutiny' was clear in many aspects of the New Zealand crisis, not least the lack of consistent support from the metropole and the fear for women's safety in the outlying settlements. The varied perspectives of Jane Maria Atkinson (1824-1914), Helen Wilson (c.1793/1794-1871), Grace Hirst (1805-1901) and Jessie Mackay (1864-1938) demonstrate how these women navigated the contradictions inherent in the imperial system of domesticity, racial and gender superiority and local politics. The new opportunities that were presented to them are explored in their writings, highlighting how this crisis allowed British women to centre their evolving place in the Empire and nation as that of a vocal group of subjects, capable of not only domestic bliss but also dialogue and solutions regarding how their colony was run.

Although Atkinson was well connected in elite society thanks to the prominence of family members within local and colonial politics, she took pride in considering herself part of the middle-class strata, just as the other three women were. Atkinson, Wilson and Hirst wrote letters, generally to family members or close friends. These letters were intended to keep their loved ones informed of their experiences and perceptions of life within New Zealand, and the crises gave them yet another aspect of the colonial outpost to discuss. Mackay's published poetry is a counterpoint to these private writings, just as her political empathy for Māori was noticeably more consistent than any of the other selected women's musings. By exploring the voices of these four women, the actions and perceptions of the literate white women in New Zealand can be better understood.

The exploration of women's lives within Aotearoa during the nineteenth century is one that has been undertaken by scholars such as Lydia Wevers, Charlotte Macdonald and Barbara Brookes. These authors have to varying degrees studied British women's political stance towards colonial decisions and regarding enfranchisement, as well as the volume of writing that was accomplished in the colonial outpost during Queen Victoria's reign.[522] Another notable authority on gender history, Angela Woollacott, has examined the pervasive narrative of masculinity within the British Empire as a whole and how gender assisted in altering perspectives within the imperial network

[522] Wevers, *op. cit.*; Macdonald, *A Woman of Good Character*; Brookes, *op. cit.*

across the globe.[523] This chapter expands upon such frameworks to identify within women's writings not only how they celebrated their 'elevated' status within the Empire, but also how they challenged their representation in the circumstances of the New Zealand colony, particularly during the Land Wars and Parihaka invasion. The analysis of women's writings during the New Zealand Wars adds depth to the understanding that British women were politically inclined towards both the 'other' *and* colonial authorities; furthermore women's activism was utilised for furthering the domestication of another outpost in the name of the Empire, shrinking the unique qualities and people of New Zealand to help mould it into the image of a slice of Britain. These British women built on events from Australia and India to assist their cause, even as new opportunities continued to evolve. Both recent and older texts have been used to locate this crisis within an international and national context, particularly works by Hazel Riseborough, Dick Scott, Vincent O'Malley and Kelvin Day.[524] Of particular interest with regards to the women within this study are the previous explorations of the lives of Atkinson and Mackay, by Frances Porter and Nellie F. H. Macleod respectively.[525] Although their texts are not recent, they give insight to the support system around these two women and indicate what drove the women to explore opinions, divulge political leanings and navigate the gendered society within the colony and the Empire itself. It has been stated that a 'relatively unstructured nature of colonial society allowed fluidity in social roles'; yet the class and gendered social stratum still strongly influenced these women's lives even if it were not quite as fixed as it was in the metropole.[526] The ability to adapt or challenge these roles was left to the individual woman and her perception of what was necessary in her life. As with the exploration of the Australian and Indian crises, the focus on British women is an opportunity to understand how writing allowed these women to navigate turmoil and the position they had been placed in by the British Empire and the colony itself. With the influx of men and women from the heart of the Empire, it was obvious that the metropole could still shape events in the furthest of outposts, particularly against the Indigenous people and their fight for autonomy.

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[523] Woollacott, *Settler Society*.
[524] Riseborough, *Days of Darkness*; Scott, *op. cit.*; O'Malley, *op. cit.*; Day (ed.), *Contested Ground*.
[525] Frances Porter, *Born to New Zealand: A Biography of Jane Maria Atkinson*, Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 1995; Nellie F. H. Macleod, *A Voice on the Wind: The Story of Jessie Mackay*, Wellington: A. H. & A. W. REED, 1955.
[526] Barbara Brookes, Charlotte Macdonald and Margaret Tennant (eds.), *Women in History: Essays on European Women in New Zealand*, Wellington: Allen & Unwin New Zealand, 1986, p. vii.

When the Treaty of Waitangi was signed on 6 February 1840 by the Queen's representatives in New Zealand and a number of Māori chiefs from across the North Island, the te reo Māori version in its translation was ambiguous, with key words misrepresented.[527] This laid the foundation for the crises that culminated in the Land Wars and invasion of the peaceful Parihaka pā. Alan Lester and Fae Dussart assert that 'violent colonial conquest was foundational and intrinsic to the shared history of British humanitarianism and governmentality'.[528] With regards to New Zealand, this equated to a confused policy which demanded land for British settlers and took it by force in many cases, even as it was argued that the Government was doing everything it could to help the Māori people live a better life. Missionaries within the colonial outpost were caught up in this 'paradox', as 'individuals with humane dispositions' became 'active agents… in a globalized process of dispossession and destruction'.[529] Promises of respect and equality made decades ago, such as that by Reverend Samuel Marsden when he first arrived, were swept away and proved that the Māori had been right to fear their fate may be similar to that of the Aborigines in Australia.[530] Indeed, although the Treaty of Waitangi was adopted in part because British Resident James Busby was worried that the French were planning to overrun the Māori people, his belief that the British could help protect and guide the Māori was idealistic in the face of British settlers themselves wanting more of the land as well as to open up the country to markers of civilisation like roads throughout the islands.[531] The only new aspect of the imperial approach to this colonial outpost was that it was 'the first time the British had accorded any indigenous race a document promising their protection and granting them British citizenship'.[532] In theory, this was espoused as yet another forward step for the humanitarian ideologies the Empire had prided itself on since

[527] Alan Lester and Fae Dussart, *Colonization and the Origins of Humanitarian Governance: Protecting Aborigines across the Nineteenth-Century British Empire*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014, pp. 191-192.
[528] *ibid.*, p. 1.
[529] *ibid.*, p. 35.
[530] Keith Newman, *Bible and Treaty: Missionaries Among the Māori – A New Perspective*, Auckland: Penguin Books, 2010 pp. 42; 148.
[531] *ibid.*, pp. 82-83; 142-143; Ballantyne, *Entanglements of Empire*, pp. 232-233; 240; Brookes, *op. cit.*, pp. 45; 48-50; Ballantyne, *Webs of Empire*, pp. 150-151; Keith Newman, *Beyond Betrayal: Trouble in the Promised Land – Restoring the Mission to Māori*, Auckland: Penguin Books, 2013, p. 31.
[532] Newman, *Bible and Treaty*, p. 159; see also Ballantyne, *Entanglements of Empire*, pp. 246-247; Hall, *Civilising Subjects*, pp. 44-45; 47.

abolishing the slave trade earlier in the previous decade. However, in practice this was largely a treaty of good intentions and very little application for the Māori populace. Furthermore, the metropole began to ask questions regarding the validity of how New Zealand was being governed, particularly the insistence of retaining imperial troops to fight in the Land Wars. Although by mid-century there began a 'decline in 'humanitarian liberalism" as the 'metropolitan middle class and colonial settlers… shared [a belief in] racial superiority' over Indigenous cultures across the colonial outposts, it was still a costly exercise to pour troops into the British Empire's furthest outposts without reassurance of a definitive and permanent outcome.[533] Australian troops were willingly sent over by the neighbouring colonies, particularly during the period of high tension experienced by settlers regarding news of the Indian Mutiny; yet the need for New Zealand Governors to justify their actions to Britain produced some friction that other outposts, certainly Australia, had not experienced.[534] As noted by Catherine Hall, 'The right to colonial rule was built on the gap between metropole and colony: civilisation here, barbarism/savagery there. But that gap was… constantly being reworked'.[535] Certainly the relationship between New Zealand and the metropole fluctuated as the years progressed, the Empire desiring both a self-governing colony in which their input was rarely needed and a solution for lasting peace between settlers and Māori.

During the Land Wars settlers in New Zealand were kept abreast of the events and politics at work from the metropole by their Government, as well as the letters and newspapers that circulated across the Empire. It soon became clear that there were 'disparities of power inherent within the empire… many imperial networks, as well as economic power and imperial authority, were concentrated in Britain itself' and the

[533] James Epstein, 'Taking class notes on empire,' in Catherine Hall and Sonya O. Rose (eds.), *At Home with the Empire: Metropolitan Culture and the Imperial World,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006, p. 272; Newman, *Beyond Betrayal,* p. 131; O'Malley, *op. cit.,* pp. 11; 144-146; 164; 403; 409; 422; C. W. Richmond, [letter to H.A. Atkinson], 14 February 1858, in Guy H. Scholefield (ed.), *The Richmond-Atkinson Papers Volume One,* Wellington: R. E. Owen Government Printer, 1960, p. 351.
[534] Woollacott, *Settler Society,* pp. 11; 205; Riseborough, *Days of Darkness,* pp. 140; 169; O'Malley, *op. cit.,* pp. 66-67; 144; 176; 265; C. W. Richmond, [letter to T. Richmond], 8 December 1856, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One,* pp. 245-6; C. W. Richmond, [letter to Earl Grey], 29 September 1861, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One,* pp. 721-2; Governor Browne, [letter to C. W. Richmond], no date [circa 1860], in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One,* pp. 642-3; Colonel Gore Browne, [letter to The Duke of Newcastle], February 1864, in Guy Scholefield (ed.), *The Richmond-Atkinson Papers Volume Two,* Wellington: R. E. Owen Government Printer, 1960, pp. 85-86.
[535] Hall, *Civilising Subjects,* p. 10.

settlers had to be content with what they were given.[536] This could make for awkward rankings as to the importance of an individual outpost, as Hirst proved in her indignant declaration of New Zealand being 'very badly treated' by the metropole, in contrast to the 'Millions that England has spent on Abysinnia [sic]'.[537] Indeed, Harry Atkinson complained that within New Zealand nearly everyone took 'it for granted that we derive some great advantage from our connection to England and that England derives no good at all from her connection with us', something he could not agree upon.[538] When the Indian Mutiny occurred in 1857 it soon had a great impact on New Zealand events, for 'British officers with recent experience of the Indian mutiny suspected all dark faces of treachery' and barbaric attacks on Māori villages led by Major McDonnell were continually excused by Member of Parliament Sir John Cracroft Wilson, who had presided over a 'mass execution [in India] following the Indian Mutiny'.[539] Furthermore, Sir Edward Stafford argued more than a decade afterwards that the Māori populace had outdone the atrocities faced within the Indian crisis "and with less provocation or excuse", yet this was only two years after the 'Home authorities [had] characterize[d] McLean's victories at Napier as massacres'.[540] All four of the selected women were knowledgeable regarding international events to varying degrees and some, like Atkinson, followed them avidly throughout their lifetime, an acknowledgement of the vast British Empire and its varied interests affecting every nation.[541] It was this ability to understand how interconnected the

[536] Ballantyne, *Webs of Empire*, p. 45.
[537] Grace Hirst, [letter to 'My Dear Sister'], 4 June 1869, MS, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, 0994-1006 Hirst family: letters, 0999 Volume Six. This letter is held within the Alexander Turnbull Library archives and is part of a thirteen-folder collection.
[538] H. A. Atkinson, [letter to A. S. Atkinson], 3 December 1869, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume Two,* p. 298.
[539] Wilson had been a judge at Moradabad in India prior to the Mutiny; Wilson was granted complete freedom by the Government to do as he liked, as he and a cavalry force roamed the country to find British fugitives and mete out punishment during the crisis. In New Zealand, Wilson was a Member of the House for three different locales, as well as a 'Major in the Canterbury Volunteers from 1868'. Porter and MacDonald (eds.), *My Hand Will Write,* p. 104; Scott, *op. cit.*, p. 25; Tessa Kristiansen, 'Wilson, John Cracroft' in *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, Te Ara: the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, <https://teara.govt.nz/en/biographies/1w31/wilson-john-cracroft> Accessed 10 November 2020.
[540] This quotation referred to Donald McLean, who in 1867 was the Member for Napier in Parliament; McLean had been the Head of the Native Land Purchase Department and then Native Secretary, he would go on to be the Native and Defence Minister in 1869. Ballantyne, *Webs of Empire,* p. 167; A. J. Johnston (Acting Chief Justice), [letter to C. W. Richmond], 12 April 1867, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume Two,* p. 241; Alan Ward, 'Donald McLean', in *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography,* Te Ara: the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, <https://teara.govt.nz/en/biographies/1m38/mclean-donald> Accessed 10 November 2020.
[541] Jane Maria Richmond, [letter to Margaret Taylor], 3 July 1848, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One,* pp. 45-46; Jane Maria Richmond, [letter to Margaret Taylor], 22 October 1848, in Scholefield (ed.),

Empire was which made it easy for Atkinson to accept that 'the Home Government would not relish being drawn into any expense, or be willing to supply any troops… now its hands are full with Indian and Chinese revolts and wars'.[542] Mackay also 'studied home and overseas affairs meticulously' and was wary of bias in all that she read, her father's identity as part of the oppressed Highland Scots helping to sway her empathy with the Māori people during the Land Wars and Parihaka invasion.[543] The necessity of becoming reliant on the settlers to win against any crises that arose was soon apparent to many in New Zealand, despite Wilson's assertion in 1860 that 'as soon as the Home Government becomes acquainted with our situation and the circumstances' troops would be poured in 'to teach the New Zealand Natives that our beloved Sovereign is not to be insulted with impunity'.[544] In fact, having been lied to regarding the severity of the crisis in New Zealand the metropole had sent more imperial troops at Governor Grey's insistence in 1863, but when the truth came out that not even the militia had been needed for the crisis they were responding to, the Duke of Newcastle stated that the extra troops would not have been shipped to the colonial outpost if they had known this.[545] Only four years later, the Earl of Carnarvon warned Governor Grey not to expect assistance any more, as 'the British army could no longer be used to enforce the government's confiscations'; it was becoming even more of a chaotic period within the colonial outpost and the validity of the Land Wars continued to be a furiously debated topic in the metropole, a messy situation for the Empire to be involved in.[546] The Land Wars, compounded by the invasion of the

*Volume One,* p. 52; Jane Maria Richmond, [letter to Margaret Taylor], 26 August 1849, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One,* p. 58; Jane Maria Atkinson, [letter to Margaret Taylor], 21 January 1866, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume Two,* pp. 202-3; Jane Maria Atkinson, [letter to Margaret Taylor], 4 September 1866, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume Two,* p. 213; Jane Maria Atkinson, [letter to Margaret Taylor], 2 October 1870, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume Two,* pp. 308-9; Jane Maria Atkinson, [letter to Margaret Taylor], 4 February 1871, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume Two,* p. 316; Jane Maria Atkinson, [letter to Emily E. Richmond], 24 October 1896, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume Two,* p. 607.

[542] Jane Maria Atkinson, [letter to Margaret Taylor], 11 April 1858, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One*, p. 382.

[543] Macleod, *op. cit.*, pp. 16; 32.

[544] Helen Wilson, [letter to 'My dear Son'], 25 April 1860, 1712-2.

[545] O'Malley, *op. cit.*, p. 191; C. W. Richmond, [letter to Emily E. Richmond], 25 October 1863, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume Two,* p. 67; C. W. Richmond, [letter to Emily E. Richmond], 4 November 1863, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume Two,* p. 69; C. W. Richmond, [letter to Mrs Harriet Gore Browne], 8 November 1863, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume Two,* pp. 70-71; H. A. Atkinson, [letter to A. S. Atkinson], 3 January 1865, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume Two,* p. 142; H. A. Atkinson, [letter to A. S. Atkinson], 7 January 1865, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume Two,* p. 143.

[546] Keenan, *Te Whiti*, p. 79; O'Malley, *op. cit.*, pp. 412-417; Macleod, *op. cit.*, p. 16; J. C. Richmond, [letter to C. W. Richmond], 1 June 1865, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume Two,* p. 162; H. A. Atkinson, [letter to A. S. Atkinson], 21 May 1869, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume Two,* pp. 286-7.

Parihaka pā in 1881, were detracting from the British Empire's show of supremacy. Caught up in this crisis to varying degrees it soon became clear that once again British women were experiencing an evolving and critical situation, entangled between humanitarian ideologies and a land grab within one of the furthest colonial outposts.

## Selected Women

The British women who emigrated to New Zealand often arrived for a fresh start, away from the threat of poverty and overcrowding in the metropole. Their objectives in the colonial outpost were usually either as a helpful companion and partner for their husbands and family with whom they had travelled, or seeking a revamped identity and employment in the new land.[547] This encompassed many occupations, including the usual domestic related services. The Wakefield scheme of colonisation and recruiting drives ensured that the surplus of women within England were promised an opportunity for betterment even as they would raise the 'moral currency' of society in New Zealand.[548] Indeed, 'Every man migrating to New Zealand was advised to take a wife' to raise the standards even as the women would continue their designated role of 'wives… homemakers and housekeepers', a situation which attempted to negate any individualistic or independent aspirations women may have entertained outside of the home.[549]

[547] Cathy Ross, *Women with a Mission: Rediscovering Missionary Wives in Early New Zealand,* Auckland: Penguin Books, 2006, pp. 175-6; Andrée Lévesque, 'Prescribers and Rebels: Attitudes to European Women's Sexuality in New Zealand' in Brookes, Macdonald and Tennant (eds.), *Women in History,* p. 1; Porter and Macdonald (eds.), *My Hand Will Write*, pp. 55-56.
[548] Porter, *Born to New Zealand,* p. 11; Woollacott, *Settler Society*, pp. 41; 120; Macdonald, *A Woman of Good Character*, pp. 1-7; 17; 21-7; 68-71; Charlotte Macdonald, 'The 'Social Evil': Prostitution and the Passage of the Contagious Diseases Act (1869)' in Brookes, Macdonald and Tennant (eds.), *Women in History,* p. 19; Brookes, *op. cit.,* pp. 46-7.
[549] Raewyn Dalziel, 'The Colonial Helpmeet: Women's role and the vote in nineteenth-century New Zealand' in Brookes, Macdonald and Tennant (eds.), *Women in History*, p. 57; Porter and Macdonald (eds.), *My Hand Will Write,* pp. 256-7; 260.

**Figure 6 Jane Maria Richmond and mother Maria Richmond[550]**

Jane Maria Atkinson (née Richmond, 1824-1914) was one of the few to retain her independence, aided by the decisions of her brother Christopher (William) Richmond and husband Arthur Atkinson for her to retain her own money and be given a separate will rather than being completely subsumed into her husband's.[551] Within the family nucleus, Atkinson was constantly in touch with all of the members of the Richmond-Atkinson clan, if not through her very own presence than through her copious amount of letters. Being Arthur's senior by nine years, their marriage was a relationship of equals rather than a cultivation of dominance and her independence of thought complemented her domain within the domestic sphere, just as her belief in the superiority of women with intellect or ambition for moral causes heightened her appreciation and despair for events within New Zealand.[552] Atkinson was also highly invested in political thought, mostly in relation to securing her beloved home in

[550] Richmond, Byrne, active 1852. Jane Maria Richmond and her mother Maria Richmond. Ref: 1/2-079220-F. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington. </records/22311317> Accessed 12 November 2020.
[551] Porter, *Born to New Zealand*, p. 72; 210; C. W. Richmond, [letter to T. Richmond], 24 November 1854, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One*, p. 159.
[552] Jane Maria Richmond, [letter to Margaret Taylor], 26 January 1852, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One*, p. 110; Porter, *ibid.*, pp. 78; 98-99.

Taranaki from events during the Land Wars, but also in the effect of William's political roles on both his health and national decision making.[553]

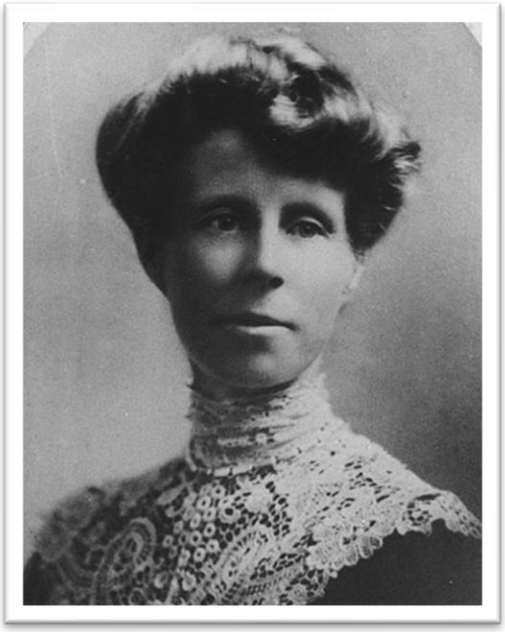

**Figure 7 Jessie Mackay[554]**

In contrast to Atkinson's focus on expanding roles within the domestic sphere, Jessie Mackay (1864-1938) was born in New Zealand and throughout her life concentrated on political causes, including the plight of minorities and Indigenous inhabitants, rather than marriage. This can be attributed to her family's political teachings within the home, regarding both their ancestral home of Scotland and the current events within New Zealand, lending to her 'support of seemingly irreconcilable causes'.[555] Although trained as a teacher, Mackay's true calling was with the written word, undertaking journalistic work over the years as well as becoming 'New Zealand's leading poet', recognised both at home and abroad.[556] Born in Canterbury, Mackay was not only from a different generation to the other selected women, but lived in an

[553] William Richmond throughout his life held various public positions, that of Colonial Treasurer, Native Affairs Minister and at one point even working as Acting Premier, before he resigned from Parliament and became a judge of the Supreme Court. Keith Sinclair, 'William Richmond', in *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, Te Ara: the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, <https://teara.govt.nz/en/biographies/1r9/richmond-christopher-william> Accessed 11 November 2020.
[554] Jessie Mackay. Courtesy of Timaru District Council <https://www.timaru.govt.nz/community/our-district/hall-of-fame/category-three/jessie-mackay> Accessed 12 November 2020.
[555] Macleod, *op. cit.*, p. 25; Macdonald, Penfold and Williams (eds.), *op. cit.*, p. 385.
[556] *ibid.*, p. 384.

area unaffected by the crises of the Land Wars. Although it could be argued that this made it easier for her to accept the perspective of Māori regarding the right for land and representation, her upbringing ensured that Mackay fought for the downtrodden, whether they were Māori or Scottish people against the Empire or even for women's rights within the world.

**Figure 8 Grace and Thomas Hirst**[557]

Grace Hirst (1805-1901), an initially unwilling immigrant to New Zealand, soon became invested in entrepreneurial ventures including selling items hard to get, such as cloth, for a profit as well as making and shifting produce from the farm she and her husband Thomas had acquired.[558] Living in New Plymouth (situated in the Taranaki region), the Hirsts were caught up in the Land Wars crises and Hirst paid particular attention to any news which could give her an idea of current events, which she would then report back to her family in England. It was no surprise that, with her ability to adapt to significant changes, when the War broke out Thomas praised his wife, writing 'Mama as usual is brave in war as she is in every thing'.[559] Hirst learned how to

[557] Beach, Charles Harold, 1904-1988. Thomas and Grace Hirst, England. Ref: PAColl-4088. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington. </records/22696869> Accessed 12 November 2020.
[558]Raewyn Dalziel. 'Hirst, Grace', in *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, Te Ara: the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, <https://teara.govt.nz/en/biographies/1h25/hirst-grace> Accessed 4 July 2020; Grace Hirst, [letter to 'My dear Sisters'], 2 July 1867, Micro-MS-Coll, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, 20-2773; Grace Hirst, [letter to 'My Dear Sisters'], 27 March 1854, 0995, Volume Two; Grace Hirst, [letter to 'My Dear Sisters'], 4 May 1858, 0995, Volume Two.
[559] Thomas Hirst, [letter to 'Dear William'], 24 February 1860, 0996, Volume Three.

maintain her family's relative success in the colonial outpost, working hard both within and outside the domestic sphere to ease any issues that arose within the family due to mismanagement or outbreaks of conflict.

Helen Wilson (c.1793/1794-1871) is notable not only for her acerbic writing but her ability to make close friends with powerful men within the colonial outpost, including Governor Grey and Donald McLean, who would become the Chief Land Purchase Commissioner and Native Minister. Wilson was aided in this with the standing of her husband Peter, who 'worked as a medical practitioner in Wanganui', although she too would end up living in New Plymouth with her husband before he passed away on 18 December 1863 after a short illness.[560] Wilson would pass away long before the final act of the Land Wars in the invasion of the Parihaka pā was enacted in 1881, but certainly was a staunch believer in the work of McLean and British superiority. To be living within New Zealand during the series of crises that made up the Land Wars was no easy feat; although not on the scale of destruction as the Indian Mutiny, this was yet another crisis brought about by the British Empire failing to listen to the Indigenous populace.

These four selected women were chosen carefully, not only for the ready availability of their writing within archives and published material, but also for their forthright expression concerning various aspects of the Land Wars and invasion of Parihaka. Without such clear indicators of how a select group of women felt, the ability to analyse how the crisis affected women's role and perceptions towards the colony, the 'other', and the Empire would be near impossible to gauge with any kind of accuracy. The amount of writing available from all four women is an opportunity to note contradictory feelings, as well as how domestic and social opportunities were further developed, to reflect women's growing voice towards how the Empire's colony was run. Concerns for safety are interspersed throughout these writings and are notably more vehement after news of the Indian Mutiny reached New Zealand shores; by analysing these women's lives, the transnational links are exposed even as national

[560]Gail Lambert. 'Wilson, Helen Ann', in *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography,* Te Ara: the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, <https://teara.govt.nz/en/biographies/1w29/wilson-helen-ann> Accessed 4 July 2020; Helen Wilson, [letter to My dear Son'], 26 December 1863, 0032-0644.

news could become unimportant in the light of crises within the immediate vicinity of these women's homes.

## Local Context

The failure of the Empire to listen to Indigenous inhabitants was not unique to New Zealand, for the belief in British superiority often negated the opportunity to learn from past mistakes when a crisis arose. However, Lester and Dussart assert that 'colonization in New Zealand was more *negotiated* than perhaps anywhere else in the expanding British settler world'.[561] Certainly without the initial assistance from the Māori chiefs, the British would not have so easily been able to establish a foothold on the islands. The crises arose due to an array of significant issues, including demand for land far exceeding that which had been sold to British settlers, further compounded by the lack of representation for Māori within the Government and decisions concerning their own livelihoods and culture.[562] When discussions regarding emigration were first broached in 1850, Atkinson's relative, Charles Hursthouse, had written with assurance that 'the land question, and its host of attendant ills [are] satisfactorily set at rest', but it was to be a contentious and often violent subject for much of the latter nineteenth-century.[563] In fact it was the influx of settlers which gave the colonial Government the resolve to enact a militaristic response to acquire land rather than negotiate for a resolution which would satisfy both parties, for soon they outnumbered the Māori populace and believed they could succeed if they found themselves caught up in a conflict.[564] The Land Wars consist of eight moments of crisis within New Zealand, beginning with the Wairau confrontation (1843) which was

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[561] Lester and Dussart, *op. cit.*, pp. 204. Original emphasis.
[562] Sir James Edward Alexander, *Bush Fighting: The Waikato War Between British/Colonial Forces and the Maoris, New Zealand, 1863-64*, Milton Keyes: Leonaur, [1873] 2011, pp. 20-22; Hall, *Civilising Subjects*, pp. 180; 194; 197; Woollacott, *Settler Society*, pp. 202-3; Scott, *op. cit.*, pp. 12-13; Newman, *Beyond Betrayal*, pp. 40-42; 71; 127; 146; 154-5; 249; 254-255; Newman, *Bible and Treaty*, pp. 128; 191; 292-3; Riseborough, *Days of Darkness*, p. 105; Keenan, *Te Whiti*, pp. 63-64; Trevor Bentley, *Captured by Maori: White Female Captives, Sex and Racism on the Nineteenth-century New Zealand Frontier*, Auckland: Penguin Books, 2004, p. 166; C. W. Richmond, [letter to H. Sewell], 16 June 1857, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume Two*, pp. 276-7; Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One*, p. 547.
[563] C. Hursthouse junior, [letter to C. W. Richmond], c. October 1850, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One*, p. 63.
[564] Hall, *Civilising Subjects*, p. 286; Lester and Dussart, *op. cit.*, pp. 242; 257; Newman, *Beyond Betrayal*, p. 50; Keenan, *Te Whiti.*, pp. 42; 59; H. R. Richmond, [letter to C. W. Richmond], 20 April 1851, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One*, p. 93.

a forceful attempt by Nelson settlers to gain more land in a disputed sale and resulted in the death of twenty-two settlers and four Māori.[565] By the time Atkinson arrived, there was an uneasy peace after the Northern War (1845-1846) and the Wellington and Whanganui Wars (1846-1848) had determined no clear victor. The remaining crises became consistently more viciously fought, as land was seized from the Māori and guerrilla warfare became the norm to uphold the advantage of the settlers and imperial army's greater numbers.[566] Whereas in 1857 Richmond had expressed the desire that questions over individual land titles would be rectified one day, at the time he emphasised it should '*not* [be] *by the strong hand*', his sister Jane Atkinson felt differently. Without understanding the irony, Atkinson had stated in 1858 that 'We (or most of us do) love the place with a sort of family affection which will make us cling on to the last', an affection that was certainly replicated by the Māori populace who were trying to maintain their land holdings.[567] Wilson was encouraged by the number of incoming troops, 'the more the better, say I' but her impression of the strength in numbers was not a universal delight, certainly not to those who saw firsthand the interaction between imperial and colonial forces.[568] Hirst was one of these; indeed she wrote that 'it is my opinion the troops are as much to be feared as the natives' because of their conduct.[569] As the years and crises progressed the tension between civilians and British troops escalated, affected by the imperial troops' lack of commitment to fight in a crisis that would not garner them the same distinction and accolades as other wars had.[570] This was compounded by the settler's determination to gain land while

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[565] David Green, 'Pre-1860 Conflicts', in *New Zealand's 19th-century Wars,* New Zealand History, <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/war/new-zealand-wars/roaring-forties> Accessed 12 July 2020; Danny Keenan, *Wairau,* New Zealand Wars <http://newzealandwars.co.nz/land-wars/campaigns/wairau/> Accessed 12 July 2020; Newman, *Beyond Betrayal*, pp. 42-43.

[566] Alexander, *Bush Fighting,* p. 89; Ensign McKenna, 'The New Zealand War 1863-1865: An example of cool courage and devotion' in W. H. G. Kingston, *Blow the Bugle, Draw the Sword: The Wars, Campaigns, Regiments and Soldiers of the British & Indian Armies During the Victorian Era, 1839-1898*, Milton Keyes: Leonaur, [1910] 2007, pp. 207-8; Woollacott, *Settler Society,* p. 205; Newman, *Beyond Betrayal*, pp. 129-30; 169; Keenan, *Te Whiti,* p. 85; Richard Taylor, 'The Strategy of War: The Taranaki Wars and the Development of Māori and British Strategy', in Kelvin Day (ed.), *Contested Ground,* pp. 63; 76-77; Richard Hill, 'War and Police: The Armed Constabulary in the Taranaki Wars', in Kelvin Day (ed.), *Contested Ground,* p. 205; Scholefield (ed.),*Volume Two,* pp. 79; 137-8; 261-2; O'Malley, *op. cit.,* pp. 230; 335.

[567] Jane Maria Atkinson, [letter to Emily E. Richmond], March 1858, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One,* p. 375.

[568] Helen Wilson, [letter to 'my dear Son'], 23 January 1861, 1712-2.

[569] Grace Hirst, [letter to 'My Dear Sisters'], 27 March 1854, 0995 Volume Two.

[570] Newman, *Beyond Betrayal,* pp. 62-63; Tim Ryan, 'The British Army in Taranaki', in Kelvin Day (ed.), *Contested Ground,* p. 146; Governor Gore Browne, [letter to C. W. Richmond], 7 July 1857, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One,* p. 283; T. B. Gillies, [letter to C. W. Richmond], 23 March 1864, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume Two,* p. 98; Jane Maria Atkinson, [letter to Mary Richmond], 18 June 1865,

they were fighting, often with flimsy excuses against certain iwi so as to retain what they had acquired. In disgust with the infighting, Atkinson exclaimed 'The utter incapacity and disastrous stupidity of almost all at the head of affairs becomes daily clearer', with setbacks and Māori tenacity applying pressure on both parties.[571] With contradictory messages from successive Governors of New Zealand, burdened by demands from the metropole as well as the subjects within the colonial outpost, it was difficult to keep track of the policies by which they were governed.

The Land Wars and Parihaka Invasion, while not as impactful to the British Empire as that of the Indian Mutiny or Crimean War, continued to present New Zealand in a precarious light on the world stage. Due to persistent attempts by Māori to hold the British accountable for their actions, Hall states that it became 'a classic settler complaint: that the appointees of the Colonial Office were always more ready to 'excuse the natives' than were the settlers who really understood their ways'.[572] The insecurity women such as Hirst felt within the crises was often masked by their determination to make the best of it, yet Wilson's fiery response to McLean highlights the diversity within British women's responses as they navigated each successive clash between Māori and settlers.[573] It was only 'after some pressure from London, [that] the Government agreed that land confiscations would cease within two years – by 3 December 1867', but even this did not prevent the New Zealand Government from finding ways to make life both uncomfortable and deadly for the Māori population.[574] Indeed when Parihaka was invaded in 1881, Governor Gordon was disturbed by the actions he had been unable to prevent due to his own Government conspiring against him and he 'advised the Secretary of State for the Colonies in London of his 'disquiet' as to the events that had occurred in Taranaki', with the reasons for invasion being flimsy and remaining unresolved even after the event.[575]

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in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume Two,* p. 164; O'Malley, *op. cit.,* pp. 11; 269; 343; 456; Eliza Grey, [letter to Maggie Watts], 2 July 1846, in Porter and MacDonald (eds.), *My Hand Will Write,* p. 111.

[571] Jane Maria Atkinson, [letter to C. W. & Emily Richmond], 6 April 1860, Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One,* p. 554.

[572] Hall, *Civilising Subjects,* p. 287.

[573]Grace Hirst, [letter to 'My Dear Tom'], 6 February 1866, 20-2773; Grace Hirst, [letter to 'My Dear Relatives'], 17 January 1870, 20-2773; Helen Wilson, [letter to 'My dear Son], 25 April 1860, 1712-2.

[574] Keenan, *Te Whiti,* p. 62; see also Scott, *op. cit.,* p. 34; Riseborough, *Days of Darkness,* p. 47.

[575] Keenan, *ibid.,* pp. 141; 153; 165- 166; Scott, *ibid.,* pp. 99-101; Newman, *Beyond Betrayal,* pp. 88-89; 191-193; Riseborough, *ibid.,* pp. 137; 152-3; 165-6; 168; 188.

As each Governor left their mark on the New Zealand landscape, it had become clear that their actions were often suspect to settlers and the public distrusted the political system to improve their lives. The crisis against Māori was mirrored in the confusion regarding Government policies and neither situation was resolved in a way that reassured the British women residing in this colonial outpost. Indeed, Atkinson echoed the sentiment of others when she exclaimed that 'Mr Parris is thoroughly mistrusted… he is believed to be playing a double game with the Maoris' and her involvement in news across New Zealand intensified.[576] Grey in particular had damaged perceptions in his second term as Governor (1861-1867), with the contradictory resolution of taking land from Māori even as he endorsed education and 'healthcare for indigenous peoples'.[577] The colonial outpost and British domination had come a long way from Lord Glenelg's statement in 1839, in which he clearly remarked that 'colonisation was not intended'.[578]Although 'Parihaka was not a centre of passive resistance to European encroachment', Riseborough writes that 'it was a centre of active resistance to social disintegration'.[579] Two years prior to the invasion of Parihaka, Sir William Fox had written to Harry Atkinson that 'you must not fight with the Maories if by any possibility it can be avoided'. Even in September Atkinson himself had stated that he did not believe the 'Natives will make any hostile move immediately *if at all*'.[580] It was clear that Te Whiti would not be involved in a bloody conflict, but would encourage a 'fighting peace with no surrender of the land, no loss of independence'; where the Māori had unwillingly capitulated under military force, Te Whiti determined that a peaceful struggle could outlast any forceful and fatal dispossession the Government may start.[581] Mackay, although firmly entrenched in her sympathetic

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[576] Robert Parris was at this time provincial treasurer for the New Plymouth Council, 'but resigned when appointed district land purchase commissioner at New Plymouth in July'. In 1859, Parris became assistant Native Secretary and would later go on to be a Civil Commissioner in Taranaki, then Judge of the Compensation Court, resulting in becoming 'a resident magistrate for New Plymouth'. Jane Maria Atkinson, [letter to Emily Richmond], 3 May 1857, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One,* p. 262; Ian Church, 'Parris, Robert Reid', in *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, Te Ara: the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, <https://teara.govt.nz/en/biographies/1p8/parris-robert-reid> Accessed 10 November 2020.

[577] Leigh Dale, 'George Grey in Ireland: narrative and network', in Lambert and Lester (eds.), *Colonial Lives,* pp. 147-151; Scott, *op. cit.,* p. 19; O'Malley, *op. cit.,* pp. 151-2; 158-160; 310-311.

[578] Newman, *Beyond Betrayal*, p. 32.

[579] Riseborough, *Days of Darkness,* pp. 178-179.

[580] Sir W. Fox, [letter to H. A. Atkinson], 19 November 1879, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume Two,* p. 469; H. A. Atkinson, [letter to John Elliot], 27 September 1881, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume Two,* p. 490. Added emphasis.

[581] Scott, *op. cit.,* pp. 36; see also *ibid.,* pp. 54-58; 74-75; Newman, *Beyond Betrayal,* pp. 179; 181; 185; Riseborough, *Days of Darkness,* p. 229; Keenan, *Te Whiti,* pp. 137-138; 210; Hazel Riseborough, 'A New Kind of Resistance: Parihaka and the Struggle for Peace', in Kelvin Day (ed.),

views for the Māori, had written an explanation prior to her poem 'The Charge of Parihaka' in which her colonial life shone through, discussing how 'Te Whiti made speeches calculated to stir up discontent among the natives'.[582] Yet in the poem itself, she emphasised '*There was no danger*' at Parihaka.[583] Hirst was not so sure, calling Te Whiti a 'fanatic' and asserting that 'all the white people are to be their slaves' in a reversal of fortunes.[584] This statement was not only a reaction to the constant barrage from news sources which had encouraged settlers' fears towards Te Whiti's power in Parihaka, it was also reminiscent of the hysteria which swept through India when the Mutiny first broke out; fears that white people could be overrun by the Indigenous populace were unfounded in New Zealand, but also the inability to understand Te Whiti's nonviolent stand provoked many into believing the worst could still happen in this colony. Furthermore, although Hirst wrote down rumours of an uprising, the only solid fact she could share with her family was that of Te Whiti's followers ploughing land for crops, hardly a bloodthirsty endeavour.[585] The prolonged crises in New Zealand throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century made it difficult for both the British women and their families or husbands to be certain of success in this colony. However, having travelled so far to reach their new home, they were determined to find a way even if it meant participating in a war with the Indigenous inhabitants.

## Men Affected

While some women such as Mackay were born in New Zealand and never married, most British women arrived in the colonial outpost with their husbands, if not a larger group of relatives. What affected men's lives influenced these women's experiences and perceptions, particularly regarding the land crises and the uncertain future they faced when caught between Government and Māori factions vying for control. This also included clergymen and their wives, who were often in favour of protecting Māori

*Contested Ground,* pp. 236-7; Peter Adds, 'Te Muru me tu Raupatu: The Aftermath', in Kelvin Day (ed.), *Contested Ground,* p. 266.
[582] Mackay, *The Spirit of the Rangatira,* p. 30.
[583] Jessie Mackay, 'The Charge of Parihaka' in Jessie Mackay, *The Spirit of the Rangatira and Other Ballads,* Melbourne: George Robertson and Company, 1889, 12. Original emphasis.
[584] Grace Hirst, [letter to 'My Dear Grace'], 20 June 1879, 20-2773.
[585] *ibid.*; Grace Hirst, [letter to 'My Dear Sister'], 16 July 1879, 20-2773.

interests and pleading for a fairer system, even as others were intent on forcing an outcome which would benefit them.[586] Wilson's husband was a doctor, yet it was her relationship with McLean which predominantly informed her opinion on the Land Wars; as well as the political nuances McLean was subject to colouring Wilson's perception, Wilson also ensured she stayed abreast of every aspect of the crises and firmly believed in her interpretation of events being the correct one. In her opinion, Bishop 'Selwyn and all his clique have much… to answer for' in the policies they pursued for the Māori populace, yet the inconsistency of the Bishop's policies over the years was overlooked by Wilson in her admonishment.[587] Similarly, her understanding of the tension between imperial troops and the volunteer militia was simplified to that of a conflict over attempts by the militia to start a rift between the soldiers and 'their officers'.[588] Hirst only referenced a similar situation with regards to her son James, when she wrote that he was under investigation for 'too great familiarity with his men…a great contrast to that of his brother officers'.[589] Although Hirst detailed how male settlers had to 'band themselves together to defend their homes… [Because] England gives us nothing but abuse and affected sympathy' in 1864, two years prior to this statement she had written how 'we seem now to be more afraid of the white men than the Maorie'.[590] The difficulty of finding her fellow citizens to be more volatile and savage than Māori was a confronting reality, one which was often silenced during the height of the British Empire in the nineteenth century. Indeed, tales of masculine heroism were pursued within New Zealand just as they had been in other outposts when faced with a dangerous 'other'.[591] Mackay's strident tone in her poetry regarding the fallacy of such heroism is particularly evident in 'The Charge of Parihaka', but when taken in conjunction with this well-known verse,

[586] Newman, *Beyond Betrayal*, pp. 54-55; 63; 82; Newman, *Bible and Treaty*, pp. 241; 243; 249; 294-295; Porter and MacDonald (eds.), *My Hand Will Write*, pp. 101-103; Mary Martin, [letter to Mary Anne Palmer], 21 May 1860, in Porter and MacDonald (eds.), *My Hand Will Write*, p. 118; Robert Carey, *The 2nd Maori War 1860-1861*, Milton Keyes: Leonaur, [1863] 2007, p. 117; Scott, *op.cit.*, pp. 98-99.
[587] Helen Wilson, [letter to 'My dear Son'], 21 December 1860, 1712-2; Newman, *Beyond Betrayal*, pp, 64; 87; 105; Newman, *Bible and Treaty*, pp. 286; 300; 304-305.
[588] Helen Wilson, [letter to 'My dear Son'], 25 April 1860, 1712-2.
[589] Grace Hirst, [fragmented letter], c. 1866, 20-2773; Grace Hirst, [fragmented letter], undated, 0994 Volume One.
[590] Grace Hirst, [fragmented letter], c. 1866, 20-2773; Grace Hirst, [letter to 'My Dear Grace'], 8 March 1864, 0997 Volume Four.
[591] Ruth Harvey, 'Eyes on History: Pictorial Representations of the Taranaki Wars', in Kelvin Day (ed.), *Contested Ground*, pp. 166-167; Andrew Moffat, 'Fighting Words: Books of the Taranaki Wars 1860-1923', in Kelvin Day (ed.), *Contested Ground*, p. 181; Scott, *op. cit.*, pp. 11-12.

‘Departure of the Timaru Volunteers for Parihaka’ also painted the white men as a false image to be ridiculed and scorned. The focus was solely on the bravery of the volunteers in this second poem, yet Mackay deliberately referenced this bravery in relation to the venture on Parihaka, a renowned peaceful settlement.[592] It was clear to her that these men did not deserve to be lauded as heroes, just as Mackay’s powerful ‘Charge of Parihaka’ delivered a stinging commentary on men facing off against children and women as they marched on the pā.[593] Furthermore, Hirst detailed how a defeat at Patea induced the men ‘to run away and leave their dead and many of the wounded’; with leaders such as Major Von Tempsky killed, this defeat was a blow to the ideology of British superiority.[594] The effect of the Land Wars on men was significant, as their worth within New Zealand and as part of the larger British Empire was judged upon the success or failure to tame the colonial outpost and its Māori inhabitants.

Attempts at diplomacy had largely proved unsuccessful, as the Māori recognised that their needs and rights fell far short of what was granted to their British counterparts. The failure to overpower Māori militarily during the crises exacerbated settlers’ tension, with both the Government’s response, and the ability of Māori to persist against the odds, sources of hostility. Hirst’s husband Thomas was one of these, divulging in 1860 how he firmly believed that the settlers were ‘strictly in the right’, with ‘Every settler capable of using arms… to be called into active service’.[595] The politically minded Richmond-Atkinson clan had men both within the national Government as well as the New Plymouth provincial council for much of the duration of the Land Wars.[596] When Henry Richmond wrote to William in 1858, his opinion was that it was better to fight Māori ‘than sacrifice every honourable and *manly* feeling for the sake of preserving our miserable lives’.[597] This was a largely gender specific

[592] Jessie Mackay, ‘Departure of the Timaru Volunteers for Parihaka’, in Jessie Mackay, *The Spirit of the Rangatira and Other Ballads,* Melbourne: George Robertson and Company, 1889, pp. 32-33.
[593] Mackay, ‘Charge of Parihaka’, 26-27; 38-41.
[594] Grace Hirst, [letter to ‘My Dear Relatives’], 2 October 1868, 20-2773.
[595] Thomas Hirst, [letter to ‘Dear William’], 24 February 1860, 0996 Volume Three; Hirst detailed how in the same year her husband became ‘store and ammunition keeper’ with the rank of ‘Corporal Thomas Hirst’ even though he was not healthy enough to go out fighting – Grace Hirst, [letter to ‘My Dear Sisters’], 9 March 1860, 0996 Volume Three. Original underscoring.
[596] Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One,* pp. 334; 442-3; 623; 738; Scholefield (ed.), *Volume Two,* pp. 200-1.
[597] H. R. Richmond, [letter to C. W. Richmond], 1 February 1858, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One*, p. 343. Added emphasis.

thought process, as colonial men had been taught that their societal role was that of protector and provider for their families. With her husband a Taranaki Rifles Volunteer at different times throughout the crises, Atkinson avidly followed militaristic events but retained a sense of preservation. According to Atkinson, there was a clear division between the settlers and professional soldiers and this friction was evident when 'Colonel Murray of the 65th… withdrew to town with the soldiers', abandoning the volunteer settlers.[598] The dangers involved in volunteering were not lost on women, and Mary Richmond and Atkinson both worked to persuade Arthur that he should give up his work with the Taranaki volunteers, to save them the anxiety of wondering how he would fare.[599] In 1864 Atkinson wrote of her despair regarding her husband's insistence on volunteering, 'I have let him bush range for months uncomplainingly… but Ar[thur] seems to deem me the most unreasonable of women if ever I endeavour to interfere with his *violent propensity for fighting*'.[600] The distress over women's inability to maintain knowledge of their husband's safety and location during crises and tumultuous events was not only felt by women with militaristic husbands; Sarah Selwyn 'dread[ed]… losing her bishop husband for months at a time' and McLean's young wife detested Taranaki for demanding her husband's attention.[601] It became a delicate subject to broach, yet even in the middle of the nineteenth century 'relationships were negotiated' and women found ways to bring their concerns to light without dismissing their husband's capabilities as the masculine hero the Empire had created.[602] By the 1870s McLean was Native Minister, Newman stating that he now had 'an open-ended budget to break the resistance, and [was] not averse to using dirty tricks'.[603] However, historians Riseborough, Keenan and O'Malley contend that by this time McLean began to truly understand how 'abhorrent' the land confiscations were to Māori and practiced a delaying tactic on both sides as he proactively attempted

[598] Jane Maria Atkinson, [letter to Margaret Taylor], 22 April 1860, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One*, p. 568.
[599] Mary Richmond, [letter to A. S. Atkinson], 14 February 1864, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume Two*, p. 89; Jane Maria Atkinson, [letter to Maria Richmond], 20 March 1864, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume Two*, p. 97; Jane Maria Atkinson, [letter to Emily E. Richmond], 10 May 1864, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume Two*, p. 110; Porter, *Born to New Zealand*, pp. 201; 211.
[600] Jane Maria Atkinson, [letter to Maria Richmond], 5 August 1864, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume Two*, pp. 117-8. Original emphasis.
[601] Porter and MacDonald (eds.), *My Hand Will Write*, p. 58; Anne Wilson, [letter to her husband], 31 August 1836, in Porter and MacDonald (eds.), *My Hand Will Write*, p. 268; Douglas (Susan) McLean, [letter to her husband], 6 July 1852, in Porter and MacDonald (eds.), *My Hand Will Write*, p. 351.
[602] Porter and Macdonald (eds.), *ibid.*, p. 257; Scott, *op. cit.*, p. 104.
[603] Newman, *Beyond Betrayal*, p. 173.

to stave off another war; when he passed the work on to Charles Brown in 1876, McLean told Brown that the Māori did not fully understand the difference between the papers stating confiscation and their continued ability to work the land at that time.[604] In 1879, when Te Whiti's followers started ploughing land that Europeans believed to be theirs, it was once again a call to arms for the settlers in New Plymouth, despite initial attempts by the Government to state truthfully it was a peaceful protest against a lack of reserves that were promised to the Māori people.[605] Amongst such tensions British women continued to preside over the domestic sphere, even as they kept abreast of how their world and men were affected by the ongoing Land Wars.

## Domesticity

It was the domestic sphere, that of the private lives of women and their families within the home, which British women presided over. In outposts such as New Zealand, far from the metropole's strict hierarchy of domesticity, the colonial life gave women 'a sense of purpose, a feeling of usefulness and a greater degree of independence' than previously experienced, all 'within the context of an accepted role'.[606] Although some women flourished in this colonial outpost, delighted to learn new activities and make their home a domestic haven for their husbands when they returned from work or soldiering, others struggled to adapt to working in the home without assistance.[607] Hirst worked hard, including churning butter and tending to nearby women who were taken ill.[608] During the ongoing crises, Hirst (and Atkinson) lamented the rising prices of food staples due to the influx of soldiers amongst them, even as she was delighted when crockery they had buried in the yard was 'well preserved' when they returned to

[604] Riseborough, *Days of Darkness,* pp. 48; 52; 56; Keenan, *Te Whiti,* pp. 98; 111; O'Malley, *op. cit.,* pp. 563-4; 571.
[605] Riseborough, *ibid.,* pp. 82-84; Keenan, *ibid.,* pp. 131; 152; Riseborough, 'A New Kind of Resistance', pp. 236-237; 243.
[606] Dalziel, 'The Colonial Helpmeet', p. 59.
[607] Grace Hirst, [letter to 'My Dear Sisters'], 1 April 1867, 20-2773; Grace Hirst, [letter to 'My Dear Grace'], 31 May 1867, 20-2773; Grace Hirst, [letter to 'My Dear Relatives'], 28 March 1870, 20-2773; Grace Hirst, [letter to 'My Dear Sisters'], 7 October 1863, 0997 Volume Four; Newman, *Bible and Treaty,* pp. 236; 264; Mary Anne Barker, *Station Life in New Zealand,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, [1870] 2011, pp. 42-43; Mary Anne Barker, *Colonial Memories,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, [1904] 2013, pp. 10-11; Ross, *op. cit.,* pp. 80-81; 113; Macdonald, *A Woman of Good Character,* pp. 110-111; Georgiana Bowen, [letter to her sister Ellen], 12 March 1851, in Porter and Macdonald (eds.), *My Hand Will Write,* p. 87; Brookes, *op. cit.,* pp. 60-61; 63.
[608] Grace Hirst, [letter to 'My Dear Sisters'], 28 April 1855, 0995 Volume Two; Grace Hirst, [letter to 'My Dear Sisters'], 9 April 1864, 0997 Volume Four.

Bell block.[609] On the trip to her son's home, Hirst wrote how two of the boys would 'lay the breakfast in the morning… and in the evening they will nurse the baby or wash the tea things'; this was an alteration of gendered roles within the domestic sphere and certainly not one that would have been pursued in the metropole.[610] The Richmond-Atkinson clan also adapted as need arose, with Arthur a nurse for his wife when she was ill while also attempting baking duties, William keenly sweeping the rooms and James finding delight 'in scouring and brightening saucepans'.[611] Atkinson found that she certainly thrived in the colonial outpost, with domestic chores demanding her attention for the first few years within New Zealand and no outside help to assist her.[612] While her mother disapproved of how dirty Atkinson got with these tasks, Atkinson herself believed she was 'a much more respectable character [now] than I was when I was a fine lady… I really feel myself less a slave now that I see I can do everything for myself'.[613] Her ability to manipulate convention and disregard the 'old order' was useful once more when soldiers were returning home after a skirmish, in want of food and water. Atkinson wrote with indignation that 'I was really the first person in town who thought of bread and brandy for them… I attacked [Officer] Black who thought something should be done but had no orders', a convention which Atkinson could disregard as a woman.[614] With widowhood often making life a difficult transition in terms of stability, Wilson wrote that her husband 'did not forget me in any way' and left her with enough money to keep her comfortable; many of her friends and family asked her to move homes to be closer to them but she was settled within the New Plymouth community and was loath to give up her domestic comfort.[615] This stability was not as easily assured for others, as Hirst demonstrated in her confession that 'We live very carefully [and] I sometimes fear I shall get mean I have got into such a habit of calculating every shilling before I spend it'.[616] Domestic duties continued even in

[609] Grace Hirst, [letter to 'My Dear Sisters'], 28 August 1855, 0995 Volume Two; Grace Hirst, [letter to 'My Dear Sisters'], 7 October 1863, 0997 Volume Four; Jane Maria Atkinson, [letter to Emily E. Richmond], 26 July 1863, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume Two,* p. 56.
[610] Grace Hirst, [letter to 'My Dear Grace'], 30 May 1868, 20-2773.
[611] Maria Richmond, [letter to Margaret Taylor], 4 September 1859, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One,* p. 489.
[612] Jane Maria Richmond, [general letter No. 2], 17 July 1853, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One,* p. 127; Jane Maria Richmond, [general letter No. 4], 24 September 1853, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One,* p. 131.
[613] *ibid*., [general letter No. 4], p. 133.
[614] Jane Maria Atkinson, [letter to C. W. & Emily Richmond], 6 April 1860, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One,* p. 556.
[615] Helen Wilson, [letter to [My dear Son'], 2 August 1864, 1712-2.
[616] Grace Hirst, [letter to 'My Dear Sister'], 3 May 1867, 20-2773.

crises, with women evacuees from Taranaki repaying 'hospitality with sewing and dressmaking', as well as domestic help about the homes in Nelson.[617] The few wives allowed to accompany their husband's garrisons also maintained domestic duties as they 'were expected to cook, clean their quarters, sew, mend and wash clothing' for everyone.[618] To persist with a calm façade of domesticity in a new environment was a feat in itself, yet to continue to do this during the Land Wars crises and concerns over women's safety was a credit to British women's adaptability in adversity.

## Safety

Although the first few years of crises occurred prior to the extreme events of India's First War of Independence, the fear for women's safety was already a concern after the early decades of missionary work when being taken captive was not unusual. As Bentley noted, capturing white women 'was a form of psychological warfare', increasing British men's anxiety of being 'in a country where white women were a scarce and therefore highly charged commodity'.[619] Even the imagery of beheaded bodies, which Hirst mentioned to her sisters in a letter circa 1854, preyed on the minds of the settlers when thinking of the safety of the women and children amongst them.[620] The decisions regarding when it was safe to be home on the outlying settlements was never an easy one, often involving a fluid arrangement of the men going back to work while the women and children remained in town; work which was needed to be done by the women was brought in, such as the cream which needed to be churned for butter, even as the men returned to their farms and protective duties.[621] Hirst wrote in 1860 of 'carts loaded with furniture and produce' constantly going into town, declaring that she herself would not have moved from her home but for the fact that 'we must take the [new] place at once or somebody else would' as housing grew scarce.[622] Burying items they could not take with them was a practical way of attempting to save

[617] Māui John Mitchell and Hilary Mitchell, 'Ripples Reach Te Tau Ihu', in Kelvin Day (ed.), *Contested Ground*, pp. 38-39.
[618] Ryan, *op. cit.*, p. 130.
[619] Bentley, *op. cit.*, p. 194.
[620] Grace Hirst, [letter to 'My Dear Sisters'], April c. 1854, 0994 Volume One.
[621] Grace Hirst, [letter to 'My Dear Sister'], August 1854, 0995 Volume Two; Grace Hirst, [fragmented letter], c. 1869, 0999 Volume Six; Brookes, *op. cit.*, pp. 83; 86-87.
[622] Grace Hirst, [letter to My Dear Sisters'], 27 February 1860, 0996 Volume Three; Grace Hirst, [letter to 'My Dear Sisters'], 9 March 1860, 0996 Volume Three.

special pieces, and certainly one Hirst and her family carried out.[623] With the women in towns 'for fear of the Maories', the men were left behind to defend and take care of their properties, even as they worked to maintain the civilised veneer they were bringing to the wilderness of the colonial bush.[624] Like the experiences faced by women during the Indian Mutiny, there were a few tales of women escaping slaughter with their children; according to Hirst, a Mrs Wilson of Poverty Bay 'was left for dead', but she managed to escape a massacre with a young son and see him rescued before she too passed away.[625] Wilson was candid in her letter to McLean when she wrote 'The constant state of anxiety we are in day and night is beginning to tell sadly upon most of us'.[626] However, only a few days later Wilson added that when the alarm bugle was sounded 'It did not alarm me much as I now begin to feel accustomed to such upsets' and she was adamant that 'I have no idea of going to a place of more safety than my husband'.[627] Women were determined to retain their status as symbols of civilisation who defined the 'boundaries of ethnic and national communities', so to completely abandon their situation during a crisis was exceptionally hard; attempts to stay beside their husbands' side as support despite the threat to their safety was one which Wilson and Atkinson in particular took pride in.[628] Indeed when the crises first started brewing in Taranaki, William wrote that it would have been time to send the ladies far away, but for the expectation that troops would be arriving soon.[629] The safety of women was paramount and Taranaki settlers prepared for War in 1859 as they 'recruited vigorously for volunteers and militia', as well as furnishing the towns with barracks for refugees and trenches as another safeguard for their protection.[630] It was an unspoken ideology of the Empire that 'the violation of their [women's] bodies… becomes one with the violation of the nation' and it was necessary to retain control over the 'other' so that another Mutiny never occurred.[631] To be bereft of the

[623] Grace Hirst, [letter to My Dear Sisters'], 27 February 1860, 0996 Volume Three.
[624] Grace Hirst, [letter to 'My Dear Relatives'], 26 March 1867, 20-2773; Grace Hirst, [letter to 'My Dear Sisters'], 2 July 1868, 20-2773; Grace Hirst, [letter to 'My Dear Relatives'], 2 March 1869, 20-2773; Mitchell and Mitchell, *op. cit.,* p. 36.
[625] Grace Hirst, [letter to 'My Dear Relatives'], 1 January 1869, 20-2773.
[626] Helen Wilson, [letter to 'My Dear Son'], 23 January 1861, 1712-2.
[627] *ibid.*
[628] Urvashi Butalia, 'Legacies of Departure: Decolonization, Nation-making, and Gender' in Phillipa Levine (ed.), *Gender and Empire,* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004, p. 204.
[629] C. W. Richmond, [letter to T. Richmond], 4 July 1855, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One,* p. 168.
[630] Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One,* p. 508.
[631] Butalia, *op. cit.,* p. 204.

men of the household was not an easy position for women, regardless of accommodation opportunities which allowed some to stay with their wider families.

Housing was in short supply as families abandoned their farms and outlying settlements, most going into Nelson or Wanganui for safety. The cramped spaces for women and children to share during times of refuge were often uncomfortable, although at least for Atkinson she was surrounded by family in their new residence; Atkinson wrote to her friend Margaret Taylor that 'you need not be more alarmed than we are and that is not at all, with the exception of Aunt Helen, who seems… to expect that we shall all be murdered'.[632] When it was suggested that they remove themselves to yet another location other than New Plymouth, Atkinson was adamant that she would stay. In fact she was glad that she did, for as Atkinson wrote to her sister-in-law Emily Richmond, 'if Eliza and I were not here everything must get into a frightful muddle' with the men concentrating on their volunteer duties and relaying of news.[633] Even as things became more dire, Atkinson wrote 'I make no preparations for leaving… Jas and Hal are rabid about sending off women and children… [but] I mean to hold on as long as we can'.[634] Her eventual evacuation came in July of 1860, when her husband insisted that she had to go, yet even so 'I am still incredulous as to the Maoris making an attack on the town'.[635] Within this same journal the Indian Mutiny was referenced, and this can be seen as a clear marker of the determination on men's behalf to get their loved ones away. William's plea for Maria Richmond to join his family, away from the problem of War echoed this, writing how 'It is not that I fancy you are to be tomahawked, but… you ought not to stop and run the risk of being a witness to such scenes as may occur in a warfare of the kind now going on'.[636] Refusals to leave were not as uncommon as assumed, with Robert Carey writing that the Major-General 'was met with nothing but difficulties, and when not openly opposed he was passively resisted' in attempts to send women and children away.[637] Others, like Lydia

[632] Jane Maria Atkinson, [letter to Margaret Taylor], 19 February 1860, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One,* pp. 521-522.
[633] Jane Maria Atkinson, [letter to Emily Richmond], 23 April 1860, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One,* p. 569.
[634] Jane Maria Atkinson, [letter to Emily Richmond], 3 June 1860, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One,* pp. 592-3.
[635] Jane Maria Atkinson, [journal], 1 July 1860, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One,* p. 606.
[636] C. W. Richmond, [letter to Maria Richmond], 20 September 1863, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume Two,* p. 62.
[637] Carey, *op. cit.*, p. 52.

Burr, were themselves a force to be reckoned with even alone as she 'successfully deterred a raider by suggesting she had encircled her storehouse with gunpowder'.[638] Ballantyne stated that the 'spectres of Nana Sahib and the 'Mutiny' were powerful tools for a colonial administrator', but it was clearly just as powerful for British men to use in relation to demanding safety for their families.[639] Even the Parihaka crisis ensured fears for women resurfaced, despite the fact that it was a peaceful protest by Māori for their rights and land.

As warmongering talk concerning Te Whiti's intentions towards settlers escalated from mid-1879, Hirst wrote that many settlers were preparing for War as she had heard Te Whiti wanted 'all the white people… [to be] slaves'.[640] As Riseborough noted, this 'was not the hysteria of new settlers' which caused this panic, but colonials who had lived in the area for quite some time; the rising tensions were based on fears regarding land than any actual fear for safety.[641] Mackay's poetry illustrated through irony how safe men and women were with regards to Parihaka; in her eyes there was no legitimate reason for the settlers to feel afraid for their lives: 'the heroes knew/*There was no danger*'.[642] However, Mackay was one of the few to look critically at the disparities between Māori and colonial settlers and realise how easily slanted the rumours were in favour of portraying the Indigenous population as volatile savages. Part of the problem which caused this was the social setting in which women dominated, with every event or occasion to mingle with others an opportunity for spreading theories and misinformation.

## Social Networks

Even during times of crisis, social circles could contract if people behaved inappropriately or in a distasteful manner. Wilson wrote of one such lady, who was 'quite capable of wearing any body's life out of them… She has been a stumbling stone to us all for years' and the reason why relations were snubbed through no fault

[638] Brookes, *op. cit.,* p. 86; Macdonald, Penfold and Williams (eds.), *op. cit.,* p. 110.
[639] Ballantyne, *Webs of Empire,* p. 38.
[640] Grace Hirst, [letter to 'My Dear Grace'], 20 June 1879, 20-2773.
[641] Riseborough, *Days of Darkness,* pp. 83; 142-143; 156.
[642] Mackay, 'Charge of Parihaka', 11-12; Mackay, 'Departure of the Timaru Volunteers', pp. 32-33.

of their own.[643] Yet Wilson was proof that a social network could reap dividends in trying times, as 'immediate friends have actually sent to London for a very handsome monument to be erected' in her husband's memory and Grey invited her to his home for an extended stay.[644] Visits from high officials such as Bishop Selwyn were also cause for great socialising, irrespective of political perspectives.[645] Within the house Hirst's family had evacuated to, Hirst wrote how comfortable she and Harriet had initially made their new home, giving visitors an opportunity to 'often come in for a quiet time' and counteract the noise of overcrowding.[646] Without the opportunity to do domestic chores around their original homes, women often banded together for causes to keep them occupied and create a sense of community in difficult times. It was clear that 'white women had a special role to play in providing welfare' for anyone struggling and this included raising money for causes that would assist the community at large.[647] One such occasion was the bazaar which would 'raise funds for an Organ for the Church' in New Plymouth; Hirst and her daughter were busy making clothing items which could be sold but she feared that 'it will now be postponed on account of the fresh outbreak'.[648] Like the bazaar, a planned cricket match at Wanganui was set to go ahead with the Atkinson men on the team until they 'postponed their departure indefinitely on account of the possibility of the militia being called out'.[649] It was clear even in Mackay's poem that the locale could serve as a unifying subject for colonial settlers, as she wrote in regards to the Parihaka march that 'Timaru watches, with tear-blinded eye,/Her heroes departing, it may be to die!'[650] Social activities enabled women and society as a whole to insist that all was well, particularly during crises such as the Land Wars. It was a given that if the Māori could see that the whirlwind of activities continued despite the bloodshed, clearly the British could handle it. Hirst detailed how many new people had arrived within New Plymouth, writing that there was 'scarcely a week that we do not hear of a dancing party' and

[643] Helen Wilson, [letter to 'My Dear Son'], 23 January 1861, 1712-2; Grace Hirst, [letter to 'My Dear Sisters'], 27 March 1854, 0995 Volume Two.
[644] Helen Wilson, [letter to 'My Dear Son'], 20 April 1864, 1712-2; Helen Wilson, [letter to 'My Dear Son'], 2 August 1864, 1712-2.
[645] Grace Hirst, [letter to 'My Dear Sisters'], 5 March 1858, 0995 Volume Two; Grace Hirst, [letter to 'My Dear Sisters'], 7 January 1865, 0997 Volume Four.
[646] Grace Hirst, [letter to 'My Dear Sisters'], 9 March 1860, 0996 Volume Three.
[647] Brookes, *op. cit.,* p. 54.
[648] Grace Hirst, [letter to 'My Dear Sisters'], 9 June 1863, 0997 Volume Four.
[649] Maria Richmond, [letter to Emily E. Richmond], 10 February 1860, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One,* p. 520.
[650] Mackay, 'Departure of the Timaru Volunteers', 11-12.

how in her opinion 'it often seems to me as if people here had nothing to do but make holiday'.[651] Although Atkinson was no fan of 'women with a large amount of *dry* intellectual energy', a term she used to describe women with ambition rather than 'affections or moral causes', she also could not stand those such as the 'Miss Murrays… [who] were as supercilious and bouncing as usual' with nothing else to recommend them.[652] In fact during the Taranaki crisis Atkinson wrote to her sister-in-law Emily that 'Eliza and I fortunately see very few ladies… the concentration of 'boshy' gossip in town is wearisome', and the young men were no better as 'they lounge and hang about town in knots and get [up to] no good' as the wait for any action went on.[653] The effect of constant activity was a wearying one, but one that even Atkinson knew had to be upheld no matter her own personal feelings in regards to it. It was only a few months later that Atkinson was thoroughly sick of the social life she had to maintain and she longed for 'my own quiet home and more domestic occupations', even as she admired the then Governor's wife Mrs Gore Browne for her capacity to mingle with everyone and put others at ease.[654] The political tone at many of these social gatherings was an inevitable discourse, and provided both men and women an opportunity to discuss the latest news as well as give their own opinion on events across the New Zealand landscape.

## Political Perceptions

It was in fact this idea of social gatherings and political communications enabled by women which had caused James Richmond to comment that 'The female element in politics is very vital even if it is not to be directly seen', in this case in regards to Mrs Browne's influence amongst society.[655] Bishop Selwyn's wife also held some political power, albeit in an understated manner. Known as one of the 'Three Graces' alongside

[651] Grace Hirst, [letter to 'My Dear Tom'], 29 July 1869, 0999 Volume Six.
[652] Jane Maria Richmond, [letter to Margaret Taylor], 26 January 1852, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One,* p. 110; J. M. Atkinson, [diary extracts], 29 March 1856, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One,* p. 208.
[653] Jane Maria Atkinson, [letter to Emily E. Richmond], 6 May 1860, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One,* p. 577.
[654] Jane Maria Atkinson, [letter to Margaret Taylor], 3 October 1860, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One,* pp. 641-2; Jane Maria Atkinson, [letter to Margaret Taylor], 7 July 1861, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One,* pp. 714-5.
[655] J. C. Richmond, [letter to Governor Gore Browne], 14 August 1865, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume Two,* p. 175.

Mary Martin and Caroline Abraham, Selwyn and her two friends sent a pamphlet concerning the Land Wars to England, firmly in favour of the Bishop and exposing the deceit of both Government and settlers regarding land purchases; while the Bishop disliked the idea of writing anything official to the home Government, Selwyn had no qualms at airing her political perceptions in public if it would assist her husband and the plight of the Māori.[656] It was inevitable that when faced with a defeat by Māori, settlers would question every action made by Government authorities in the pursuit of peace. Hirst certainly did this, writing that she did not want to believe Patea would be handed over to Māori 'but they [the Government] do such absurd things' that nothing would truly surprise her anymore.[657] Furthermore, fighting what Hirst called a group of 'fanatics' meant that 'there is neither Glory nor credit to induce Englishmen to fight against such a crew'.[658] Frustrations over soldiers and their lack of ability to fight using their own initiative was another grievance, making settlers such as Hirst feel like they were fighting on two fronts, against the authorities as well as Māori.[659] Wilson felt similarly, and wrote that she hoped at least if things came to a head that 'the Bishop [Selwyn] and Hadfield… get all they deserve at our hands', answering for their part in attempts to assist Māori retain what rights and land they had left; furthermore, Wilson's exasperation with provincial authorities was also evident when she wrote 'no greater misfortune could have happened to us than to have such a set of ignorant men as our rulers'.[660] However, inconsistencies also show in Wilson's writing concerning Māori issues, when she admitted to McLean that if War continued 'I cannot blame them, because they think that they are right'.[661] Her writing was imbued with racial superiority, for in her mind if Māori just accepted their fate and British rule Wilson believed no 'race' would be happier across the British Empire than the Māori.[662] When Lieutenant-General Duncan Cameron resigned for the second time, 'disgusted at the continued use of troops for what he saw was essentially land plunder', the replacement,

[656] Macdonald, Penfold and Williams (ed.), *op. cit.,* pp. 597-8; Porter and Macdonald (eds.), *My Hand Will Write,* p. 106.
[657] Grace Hirst, [letter to My Dear Tom'], 3 November 1868, 20-2773.
[658] *ibid.*
[659] Grace Hirst, [letter to 'My Dear Sister], undated c. 1868-1869, 20-2773; Thomas Hirst, [letter to 'My Dear Tom'], 12 March 1869, 20-277; Thomas Hirst, [letter to 'Dear Tom'], 12 April 1869, 20-2773; Porter, *Born to New Zealand,* pp. 131; 183.
[660] Helen Wilson, [letter to 'My Dear Son'], 21 December 1860, 1712-2; Helen Wilson, [letter to 'My Dear Son'], 3 June 1862, 0032-0644.
[661] Helen Wilson, [letter to 'My Dear Son'], 20 April 1864, 1712-2.
[662] *ibid.*

Major-General Trevor Chute, had no such qualms and 'implemented a 'scorched earth' policy'.[663] Inconsistencies were inevitable when it came to facing the reality of the Land Wars, with Hirst admitting that 'to me it seems very dreadful to hunt the poor wretches… [And] burn their houses and destroy their cultivations' although she personally could not come up with a better solution to 'bring them into subjection to law and order'.[664] Indeed only a few years earlier Hirst had written 'that base wretch of a Governor has now issued a proclamation that if the rebels will give up their arms… they shall be pardoned', but she was of the opinion that the Māori were 'increasing their strongholds and laughing him to scorn' instead.[665] Difficulties with meeting colonial demands arose quite often throughout the Land Wars, and Governmental authorities could rarely match the expectations of their residents. For all of Atkinson's bluster regarding William's inability to promise land and safety for Taranaki settlers, she did concede that her brothers were not 'public servants but public slaves.'[666] Elections were always a heavily discussed subject, to the point where William believed his family were fanatical about New Plymouth politics; in fact Atkinson once wrote that apart from Harry Atkinson she was the only one to focus so thoroughly on 'Native Affairs'.[667] In consequence, when 'native' affairs were once again being carried out with indifference in Atkinson's eyes, she wrote to Emily that it was still 'preferable to the mismanagement of bishop loving Maori merchants'; indeed, the land purchases which she was most concerned about could 'hardly be made worse'.[668] A year later, Atkinson was of the firm belief that 'I should not be many weeks in office before trying conclusions on the Native question', easily sorting out the problems that had arisen for years between Māori and British subjects.[669] It is clear from such writings by these British women that politics was a subject of great interest to them, and that if

[663] Newman, *Beyond Betrayal,* p. 127; Nigel Prickett, 'Pākehā and Māori Fortifications in Taranaki, 1860-1881: Form and Purpose', in Kelvin Day (ed.), *Contested Ground,* p. 95; Scott, *op. cit.,* pp. 22-23.
[664] Grace Hirst, [letter to 'My Dear Tom'], 6 February 1866, 0998 Volume Five.
[665] Grace Hirst, [letter to 'My Dear Sister'], 2 November 1864, 0997 Volume Four.
[666] Jane Maria Atkinson, [letter to Emily E. Richmond], 5 November 1864, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume Two,* p. 130.
[667] Jane Maria Atkinson, [letter to C. W. and E. Richmond], 12 January 1857, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One,* p. 254; Jane Maria Atkinson, [letter to Emily E. Richmond], 12 May 1858, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One,* p. 397; Jane Maria Atkinson, [letter to Margaret Taylor], 20 January 1861, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One,* p. 680; Jane Maria Atkinson, [letter to Margaret Taylor], 7 July 1861, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One,* p. 713.
[668] Jane Maria Atkinson, [letter to Emily Richmond], 14 June 1857, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One,* p. 274.
[669] Jane Maria Atkinson, [letter to Emily E. Richmond], 12 May 1858, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One,* p. 397.

it were not actively encouraged by society and the men around them it was at least not a prohibited topic.

Although some women coped better with the crises by being ignorant of the political undertones of each clash with Māori, Hirst, Atkinson, Wilson and Mackay preferred to remain abreast of every aspect of the Land Wars as they arose. While quick to criticise the Government on any aspect she disagreed with, Atkinson was also quick to apologise to her brother if she inadvertently overstepped with her remarks, stating it was never meant personally as a critique of him, but rather the Government he belonged to.[670] In 1857 when the Kīngitanga movement chose their first Māori King, it soon had both the Government and settlers alike on edge, with the crisis against Indian royalty a cautionary parallel tale. It was believed that this King was to oppose Queen Victoria despite Māori reassurances, that it was mostly to 'maintain control of Māori-owned land, [and] limit future sales', creating a division too big to overcome within the islands.[671] Atkinson's empathy was apparent when she wrote 'I am far from blaming them for setting up Potatau and wishing to drive out the white people. I think they justly feel the deepest contempt for the 'whole boiling' of us'.[672] Yet empathy only went so far for most of the British populace, as aside from the clergymen and their families, many of the settlers believed their way of life was in peril from the Māori seeking land and rights as citizens of New Zealand.[673] Mackay's political understanding began at an early age, as her parents discussed Māori rights and Judge Maning and Grey's writings 'were eagerly read by all the children as soon as they could read'.[674] Raised on such a powerful foundation it was no wonder that Mackay's collection of poems in *The Spirit of the Rangatira and Other Ballads* were filled with commentary on Scottish and New Zealand events and people of interest.[675] Mackay used powerful imagery to draw attention to the misplaced fear of Parihaka, writing of

[670] Jane Maria Atkinson, [letter to Emily Richmond], 17 July 1860, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One,* p. 618.
[671] Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One,* p. 250; Newman, *Bible and Treaty,* p. 294; Newman, *Beyond Betrayal,* pp. 68-69; Keenan, *Te Whiti,* pp. 35-36; Brookes, *op. cit.,* pp. 84-85; Ballantyne, *Webs of Empire,* p. 165; O'Malley, *op. cit.,* pp. 78-79; 86-87; 89.
[672] Jane Maria Atkinson, [letter to Emily Richmond], 15 May 1860, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One,* p. 582.
[673] Macdonald, Penfold and Williams (eds.), *op cit.,* pp 2; 26-27; 271; 426; Newman, *Beyond Betrayal,* pp. 74-75; Ross, *op. cit.,* pp. 129; 138-139; 158-161.
[674] Macleod, *op. cit.,* p. 17.
[675] Mackay, *The Spirit of the Rangatira.*

the colonial volunteers 'Theirs not to bleed or die,/Theirs but to trample by'.[676] Furthermore, her mockery of the allegedly valiant men was evinced in the final stanza, when she questioned: 'Whether each doughty soul/Paid for the pigs he stole'.[677] This was a marked difference from Hirst's insinuations that Te Whiti was a charlatan posing as a prophet, intent on sheltering murderers and disrupting farm work before he initiated War; Hirst also truly believed that 'Sir George is a shaky old man and if left to himself… would go in for peace at any price'.[678] How this corresponded with her belief that 'war is an unmitigated evil' is proof of the inconsistency within settlers perceptions regarding the Land Wars.[679] Te Whiti prompted many to question the disappearance of warriorlike Māori, Mary King writing to Hirst that she felt badly for being part of the system which confiscated lands from Māori and assisting in the downfall of the race.[680] Furthermore, the knowledge that Te Whiti 'could not be bought' and converted to the land grab set in motion by the Government made him a person of suspicion to many.[681] Direct conversations with the Government regarding policies and initiating changes was not a route women could normally take, but this did not mean their input was worthless, only that their opinions were to be discussed in the domestic sphere of home and at social events to retain the demarcated spheres of society. When Mary Rolleston aired her thoughts of Grey being 'hysterical' and his speeches 'frothy and over full of iteration', it was a private letter to her husband which made this possible.[682] The use of 'hysterical' as an adjective was to feminise and critique Grey's capabilities, in a period when women were allegedly incapable of political power unless they were Queen Victoria. The eventual ability to vote for British women residing in Auckland who owned property was granted in 1875 and allowed a select few women a voice in election results.[683] However, this certainly did not grant the majority of women across New Zealand the vote, nor did it grant them

[676] Mackay, 'Charge of Parihaka', 14-15.
[677] *ibid.,* 52-53.
[678] Grace Hirst, [letter to 'My Dear Grace'], 20 June 1879, 20-2773; Grace Hirst, [letter to 'My Dear Sister'], 16 July 1879, 20-2773.
[679] Grace Hirst, [letter to 'My Dear Grace'], 7 October 1881, 20-2773.
[680] Mary King, [letter to Grace Hirst], 1 January 1882, in Porter and Macdonald (eds.), *My Hand Will Write,* p. 142; Newman, *Beyond Betrayal,* p. 175; Scott, *op. cit.,* pp. 58; 106; Riseborough, *Days of Darkness,* p. 94; Adds, *op. cit.,* pp. 266-267.
[681] Riseborough, *ibid.,* p. 52.
[682] Mary Rolleston, [letter to her husband], 4 August 1875, in Porter and Macdonald (eds.), *My Hand Will Write,* p. 290.
[683] Judith Elphick Malone, 'What's Wrong with Emma? The Feminist Debate in Colonial Auckland', in Brookes, Macdonald and Tennant (eds.), *op. cit.,* p. 79.

representation on councils, and their worth continued to be judged through the lens of domesticity and femininity.[684] For many of the settler women within New Zealand, this was not an undesirable aspect of creating new opportunities within the colonial outpost.

## New Opportunities

While some British women were intent on creating new opportunities within New Zealand and leaving their socially designated role of the domestic sphere, others like Atkinson and Hirst were content to push the boundaries from within. This encompassed ideas regarding women's voices in how the colonial outpost was run, taking over pastoral duties in the absence of their husbands, taking on business opportunities as an equal to men and asserting their *independent* value as a person, rather than just their subsidiary worth beside their husbands in society.[685] It was because New Zealand was so far from the metropole that social and cultural restrictions could be reworked, the identity of settlers 'constantly adapted and negotiated' to suit life on the periphery of the vast network that was the British Empire.[686] Although women were not the only gender to be introduced to new roles and prospects within the community and at home, their efforts were more likely to be overlooked when compared to men's achievements.[687] This was in part due to the need of British society, at home and abroad, to reaffirm the idea of family and women's domesticity 'in the face of real fluidity and instability'.[688] Even missionary work, such as Elizabeth Colenso's was in danger of being dismissed or neglected when her husband had an affair with a Māori maid and expected her to raise the progeny of such a union; William Colenso had grown to resent the praise his wife received by Bishop

[684] Dalziel, 'The Colonial Helpmeet', p. 65; Malone, *ibid.,* p. 79.
[685] Grace Hirst, [letter to 'My Dear Tom'], 28 November 1867, 20-2773; Helen Wilson, [letter to 'My Dear Son'], 20 April 1864, 1712-2; Helen Wilson, [letter to 'My Dear Son'], 2 August 1864, 1712-2; Grace Hirst, [letter to 'My Dear Sisters'], 27 March 1854 0995 Volume Two; Grace Hirst, [letter to 'My Dear Sisters'], 28 April 1855, p. 0995 Volume Two; Grace Hirst, [letter to 'My Dear Sisters'], 6 December 1863, 0997 Volume Four; Emily E. Richmond, [letter to C. W. Richmond], 20 September 1857, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One,* p. 309; Jane Maria Atkinson, [letter to Emily E. Richmond], 1859, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One,* p. 450; Ross, *op. cit.,* pp. 37; 62-63; 110; Brookes, *op. cit.,* pp. 57; 66-68.
[686] Matthew Brown, 'Gregor MacGregor: clansman, conquistador, and coloniser on the fringes of the British empire', in Lambert and Lester (eds.), *Colonial Lives,* p. 37.
[687] Bentley, *op. cit.,* p. 15.
[688] Ballantyne, *Entanglements of Empire,* p. 143.

Selwyn for her activities within the community and this was perhaps an effort to reassert his masculinity and place at the head of a household of equals.[689] During the Land Wars, Hirst was often left to deal with the tenants in the houses her husband owned, but wrote that 'Papa is pleased to approve of all I have done' in his absence.[690] This did not mean everyone took to a new life so well, with one lady Hirst knew struggling to even make a fire or open windows in her house as she was so used to having had a servant to do these chores.[691] Mackay, born in New Zealand and free from the constraints inherent in the rigid system of the metropole, had an 'earnest wish to see maternal values endowed with administrative power and authority'.[692] Furthermore she actively pursued political issues of New Zealand and abroad in her powerfully concentrated prose, Mackay only mentioning the conventional inadequacy of her work within the preface while persevering with the downfall of injustice throughout.[693] Even Wilson, a woman largely content with her authority within her home and social circle of friends and acquaintances, described how she had been doing all she could 'to keep the foolish bodies of the Taranaki Volunteers and Militia from making Boricos of themselves'.[694] In fact it was her firm belief that if the Queen allowed women to be in charge of New Zealand issues, 'we should soon show you men folks what ought to be done'.[695] A way of obtaining business acumen was by selling domestic goods that would entice other women who wanted to make their home a welcoming space for both family and callers; Hirst did this in 1858, explaining how she charged certain prices for materials and items even as she lamented not having other clothing items which would have done just as well.[696] Although Hirst wrote that 'it does seem hard to see… ladies to have to toil and work' in New Zealand, her own capabilities certainly expanded and flourished in the new environment and throughout the Land Wars.[697] For Atkinson it was no hardship to witness women's curious and innovative explorations, and as education was paramount in her eyes to the

[689] Ross, *op. cit.,* pp. 107; 109-10; 114-21.
[690] Grace Hirst, [fragmented letter], undated c. 1869, 20-2773.
[691] Grace Hirst, [letter to 'My Dear Relatives'], 28 March 1870, 20-2773.
[692] Macleod, *op. cit.,* p. 41.
[693] Mackay, *The Spirit of the Rangatira,* p. v.
[694] Helen Wilson, [letter to 'My Dear Son'], 25 April 1860, 1712-2. 'Boricos' was a term for jackass.
[695] Helen Wilson, [letter to 'My Dear Son'], 21 December 1860, 1712-2.
[696] Grace Hirst, [letter to 'My Dear Sisters'], 4 May 1858, 0995 Volume Two; Grace Hirst, [letter to 'My Dear Sisters'], 27 February 1860, 0996 Volume Three.
[697] Grace Hirst, [letter to her sister], 31 July 1858, in Porter and Macdonald (eds.), *My Hand Will Write,* p. 164.

continuation of new opportunities for women Atkinson became a formidable advocate for girls to receive the same education as boys, encouraging the men in her family to also champion the cause.[698] It was her experience within New Zealand which showed her that 'the most *solidly* educated women are the most useful in every department of life' and pure femininity was an absurd and frivolous dream for the colonial outpost.[699] Certainly it was inevitable that crises would precipitate the changing and expansion of gendered roles, for when men were called away for military service or political meetings women would be left to command not only the household, but also aspects of the 'male' sphere which could not be deferred.

Changes and new opportunities for women were not met without criticism, as the social culture throughout the Empire demanded innovation on women's behalf be met with suspicion. In times of crises this was particularly so, even if it aided the overall strength of the British Empire to have women readily adapt to changing circumstances which would otherwise mystify them. In fact, at one point Atkinson had written to her mother that if there was any business that needed attention, to tell her instead as James 'is like all other males, far too much absorbed in public affairs to take the least notice of private ones'.[700] With the Land Wars demanding men's attention in terms of keeping their families safe and expanding into new, disputed territory, Atkinson ensured that her family's affairs would not suffer for lack of guidance. However, Atkinson had been born into a rather progressive family and this had been reflected in William's decision to give her complete legal say over her share of the Richmond inheritance and land investments when she was married, as 'there is no doubt about the prudence of the lady and her ability to manage her own affairs'.[701] To ensure that other women would be able to cope with the changing world about them Atkinson became a formidable advocate for girls to receive the same education as boys,

[698] Jane Maria Atkinson, [letter to Mary Richmond], 9 September 1864, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume Two*, p. 121; J. C. Richmond, [letter to Miss Ann E. Shaen], 22 August 1873, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume Two*, p. 351; Porter, *Born to New Zealand*, pp. 220; 274-276.
[699] Jane Maria Atkinson, [letter to Margaret Taylor], 23 March 1870, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume Two*, p. 301.
[700] Jane Maria Atkinson, [letter to Maria Richmond], 29 April 1860, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One*, p. 572.
[701] C. W. Richmond, [letter to T. Richmond], 24 November 1854, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One*, p. 159.

encouraging the men in her family to also champion the cause.[702] Atkinson had divulged that 'Mrs Gore Browne… really governs the country as much as the Governor, for he does nothing and writes nothing without consulting her first'; as her brother was a close confidante of both Brownes this was not merely hearsay, but a fact well known within the Richmond-Atkinson clan.[703] Thus it was clear that new opportunities did not negate the need for domestically inclined women, but certainly enhanced and added to their field of expertise. Lady Barker agreed with this sentiment and wrote how 'one's nerves and courage are in very different order out in New Zealand to the low standard which rules for ladies in England… no enterprise seemed too rash or dangerous to engage in'.[704] Despite the best intentions of the authorities when women were first persuaded to go to New Zealand, to become society's moral guardians and make pioneering men also family men, the span between the metropole and colonial outpost stretched the rigidity of rules and gave British women the opportunity to do more than they could have done 'at home'. When Mary Swainson wrote how she had 'learnt to load a gun, and fire one', it was a sign of not only crises necessitating women to adapt to new threats, but their willingness to venture out of their domestic spheres.[705] Class distinctions and racial superiority over Māori also factored into the actions women undertook, determining how they navigated the world in New Zealand.

## Superiority

Although class was not a fixed identity, with marriage being a common way to circumvent designated roles within society, it was a way for the Empire and society to judge someone's worth and assign a position for them to adhere to. Constraints could work both ways, with women stuck in their designated social strata sometimes feeling they could not aim for higher vocations within the colonial outpost, even as a desire

[702] Jane Maria Atkinson, [letter to Mary Richmond], 9 September 1864, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume Two*, p. 121; J. C. Richmond, [letter to Miss Ann E. Shaen], 22 August 1873, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume Two*, p. 351; Porter, *Born to New Zealand*, pp. 220; 274-276.
[703] Jane Maria Atkinson, [letter to Margaret Taylor], 3 October 1860, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One*, p. 641.
[704] Mary Anne Barker, *Station Amusements in New Zealand*, Montana: Kessinger Publishing, [1873] 2010, pp. 35; 37.
[705] Mary Swainson, [letter to her grandparents], 1 May 1845, in Porter and Macdonald (eds.), *My Hand Will Write*, p. 111.

to perform tasks 'underneath' their status was also unacceptable after a certain amount of time within the colony.[706] Atkinson had initially written that she would be just as 'good in the world as a washerwoman or dairymaid', certainly more comfortable in those roles 'than I am pretending to be a refined and educated female'.[707] Although Atkinson's domestic situation was to change and allow her to hire servants, reasserting her superiority over lower class women, it was her maternal ideology toward Māori which truly cemented her place within the imperial system. It was her belief in 1857 that if a crisis occurred it would be more beneficial for the Māori and advancing their civilisation than was possible 'under the lollypop system'.[708] Highlighting this belief that a firm hand by the Empire and Queen was necessary in New Zealand, Atkinson elaborated by stating 'I am strengthened by the wonders done in India… the British have only to be determined on doing a thing… to get it done'.[709] Wilson's perception of Māori concerns was also one of maternal authority, writing how 'I pity them for I really believe they have been led in the wrong path' by clergymen and others who should have taught 'the poor ignorant souls a better road to peace and happiness'.[710] In fact in August 1864 Wilson wished that Māori would meet with General Cameron's artillery, 'just to let them taste what is good for *naughty children*' because otherwise how would they learn their place.[711] Because settlers no longer had to rely on 'Māori cooperation and produce to survive', their culture was exposed to criticism and Darwinism gained traction to justify the seizure of Māori land as well as Governmental authority over the Indigenous populace.[712] Hirst's terminology in relation to the crises was indicative of the superiority many of the British felt over Māori, detailing how she felt 'indignation' upon hearing of settler blood being spilled.[713] Furthermore, she and a group of other settlers saw a number of Māori passing through their town and 'looked on with mingled curiosity and amusement at their varied costumes'.[714] Word choices like this displayed Māori as less than equals, trivialising and demeaning their

[706] Porter and Macdonald (eds.), *My Hand Will Write*, pp. 418-419.
[707] Jane Maria Richmond, [letter to Margaret Taylor], 4 September 1848, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One,* p. 51.
[708] Jane Maria Atkinson, [letter to Emily Richmond], 14 June 1857, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One,* p. 274.
[709] Jane Maria Atkinson, [letter to Emily E. Richmond], 12 May 1858, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One,* p. 397.
[710] Helen Wilson, [letter to 'My Dear Son'], 23 January 1861, 1712-2.
[711] Helen Wilson, [letter to 'My Dear Son'], 2 August 1864, 1712-2.
[712] Mitchell and Mitchell, *op. cit.*, p. 53.
[713] Grace Hirst, [letter to 'My Dear Relatives'], 2 March 1869, 20-2773.
[714] Grace Hirst, [letter to 'My Dear Sister'], 3 October 1870, 20-2773.

culture; moments of retaliation were treated as insubordination or unacceptable misbehaviour which needed to be stamped out. Historian Tony Ballantyne argues that 'ideas about cultural difference became starker because they [the British] were able to invoke other categories of difference', including religious and clothing differences to the mainstream colonial standards.[715] Although men held the public power to enforce racism in a systemic way, it was women's responses which marked the 'cultural boundaries' and determined if there was the 'future promise of polite society for savages'. [716] Mackay was one of the few voices within New Zealand which were raised in support for Māori culture and livelihoods, and this was particularly apparent in her writing as 'she was conscious of Maori, as well as of pakeha readers'.[717] While others could only see differences and judge them against the British standard, Mackay 'could think of them as people with like passions and potentialities to her own'.[718] British superiority was not without its downfalls, as exhibited by the inability to accept moments of defeat during the Land Wars, but through these women's writings it is clear that the crises were navigable even if inherent contradictions arose when the truth of a situation was examined.

Further contradictions appeared as settler women set the parameters of class differences within their community, influencing fluctuations to these demarcations as the need arose. This acknowledgement and use of social strata as a way to mark fellow British settlers implied a certain amount of 'othering'; while not to the same extent of 'racially' driven maternal superiority over Māori, the gradation within the British communities allowed superiority to flourish in society between neighbours and strangers alike. Some women, like Atkinson and Wilson, wrote in such a way as to promote their sense of the class order over others, clearly assisted in the self-assurance that came with the benefits of being upper middle class. Not only had Wilson commented on a Mother-in-Law being a stumbling block for social calls (as previously discussed), the actions of people close to Grey were also open to scrutiny in Wilson's eyes and she judged these according to class distinctions; Wilson secure in the knowledge that as a frequent correspondent and caller of the Governor she could

[715] Ballantyne, *Webs of Empire*, p. 175.
[716] Wevers, *op. cit.*, p. 82; see also Hall, *Civilising Subjects*, p. 46.
[717] Macleod, *op. cit.*, p. 107.
[718] *ibid.*, p. 34.

accurately judge friends and choice of servants alike.[719] Women across New Zealand often kept in close contact, if not through personal visits then through letters, and these also give an insight into the way society ranked women according to their domesticity and class; the news Wilson got that her husband's son Patricio had selected a good wife who kept 'her Baby, House and herself so tidy and neat… [And is] very fond and attentive to her Husband' was a sign of respectability and the 'proper' class stratum at work.[720] It was also class which could affect men as an easy camaraderie between soldiers and officers was discouraged, as Hirst discovered when her son was charged with being too familiar with those under his command; yet the superiority of rank was never solely the domain of men, British women's rankings were just determined by their upbringing as well as their familial responsibilities and decorum.[721] Transnational travel could also determine someone's place, as Hirst divulged when talking of a Mr Chilman who had gone back to England for a time and discovered that 'here he is somebody and in England he was nobody'; furthermore the extravagance of the upper classes and 'extreme poverty of the lower' within England was a stark contrast to the colonial outpost which, while encouraging clear demarcations, did not have such glaring disparities.[722] In fact during the early years of residing in New Zealand, Atkinson had written that the abundant numbers of servants in England would continue to rise until 'people learn that they are much better and happier… not having a separate class to do everything for them [that] they are too stupid… to do for themselves'.[723] Atkinson abided by the colonial culture's rules, but this did not mean she accepted women's failure to at least learn how to do certain work, even if servants would appear as the outpost gained a more settled populace.

## Private Writings

The private ruminations of women, within journals and letters meant for family members or close friends, detail the strain on their own wellbeing as the Land Wars

[719] Helen Wilson, [letter to 'My Dear Son'], 23 January 1861, 1712-2; Helen Wilson, [letter to 'My Dear Son'], 2 June 1865, 1712-2; Helen Wilson, [letter to 'My Dear Son'], 15 March 1863, 0032-0644.
[720] Helen Wilson, [letter to 'My Dear Son'], 23 January 1861, 1712-2.
[721] Grace Hirst, [fragmented letter], c. 1866, 20-2773.
[722] Grace Hirst, [letter to 'My Dear Sister'], 12 April 1872, 20-2773.
[723] Jane Maria Richmond, [general letter No. 4], 24 September 1853, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One,* p. 134.

progressed and Parihaka was invaded. Wilson, Hirst and Atkinson never deliberately published their private writings; in fact Atkinson's significant contributions to understanding New Zealand in the nineteenth century was only realised in the latter stage of her life, and this was as an adjunct to the political work and thoughts of the men in her family.[724] Before Atkinson had left England, she wrote 'I wish I were sure all the rubbish I have written was in the fire. I do detest the thought of my own letters'.[725] Her letters were a space for Atkinson to be truthful in her feelings and forthright with opinions, as evidenced by her assurance to Emily that 'you can assure the Governor that I'm his man… having spent most of my life in rummaging & putting to rights I shall be most happy to turn the Colony' around for him.[726] It was within correspondence that the truth of women's lives could be explained and their capacity to understand the current political climate shone through.[727] It was also, in Hirst's words, the women's domain to maintain connection through letters, as her husband was 'like most of you mankind not fond of letter writing'.[728] Although normally addressed to a specific correspondent, it was a common practice for letters to be shared around familial groups if not others as well, and Atkinson had written at one point that 'You must take care what letters you let anyone with Taranaki relatives hear or see, because the snobs here are often either secretly or openly military in their leanings' and disagreements were sure to occur.[729] Even correspondence which was clearly marked for another was not safe from being read and concern over who would read private letters was a well-founded one, as evidenced by Wilson's admission that a Tom Heal had given her a letter to enclose to McLean and she 'took the liberty of reading it'; in Wilson's opinion 'I think you will have a laugh over all the news he gives you' and she felt no qualms about reading letters not intended for her. [730] There was no evidence of censoring within Wilson's letters to McLean, as her opinions were forcibly expressed and the downfall of politics and expressions of anger were evinced. Particularly in times of crises 'letters were living connections' and diaries and journals

[724] Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One,* p. 8.
[725] Jane Maria Richmond, [letter to Margaret Taylor], 10 June 1849, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One,* p. 56.
[726] Jane Maria Atkinson, [letter to Emily E. Richmond], March 1858, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One,* p. 375.
[727] Grace Hirst, [letter to 'My Dear Sisters'], 1 April 1867, 20-2773.
[728] Grace Hirst, [letter to My Dear Tom'], 12 September 1866, 20-2773.
[729] Jane Maria Atkinson, [letter to Emily Richmond], 20 May 1860, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One,* p. 584.
[730] Helen Wilson, [letter to 'My Dear Son'], 20 April 1864, 1712-2.

were ‘an anchor for unfamiliar, unpredictable and isolated situations’.[731] Re-reading private writings also gave comfort when women’s husbands or male family members were away fighting or working with Māori, Atkinson admitting that her husband’s ‘journal letters… are my great solace in his long absences’.[732] It is through women’s writings that their situation within the imperial network, the colonial outposts and during crises can be understood. Intended for private use, women’s ‘innermost thoughts, feelings and fears’ were shared across the pages.[733] Maintaining discipline by writing frequently also assisted these British women in controlling a small part of a tumultuous life during the Land Wars and events at Parihaka.

## Public Writings

Newspapers were a highly prized commodity, just as they had been within India and Australia for the relay of news regarding the crises and international reactions. Furthermore, by writing for such circulars as journalists it was an opportunity for Hirst’s and Atkinson’s relations to express their thoughts on events.[734] Although their articles were often in opposition to William’s political party, it was maintained by Atkinson that this was not a slur against her brother himself and the articles continued, determined to hold successive Governments accountable to the will of the settlers.[735] However, public writing was not necessarily synonymous with truthful accounts of events. Hirst knew this and reassured her sisters that a supposed engagement between troops and Māori was a fabrication, although she struggled to personally ascertain ‘what motive the newspaper people can have in circulating such reports’.[736] However, Trevor Bentley has discussed how ‘White female vulnerability and Maori savagery

[731] Porter and Macdonald (eds.), *My Hand Will Write,* pp. 2; 13.
[732] Jane Maria Atkinson, [letter to Margaret Taylor], 31 August 1867, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume Two,* p. 256.
[733] Ross, *op. cit.,* p. 20.
[734] Grace Hirst, [letter to ‘My Dear Relatives’], 2 September 1867, 20-2773; Jane Maria Richmond, [general letter No. 2], 17 July 1853, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One,* p. 129; Porter, *Born to New Zealand,* p. 177; Mitchell and Mitchell, *op. cit.,* p. 43.
[735] J. C. Richmond, [letter to C. W. Richmond], 6 June 1858, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One,* p. 407; Jane Maria Atkinson, [letter to Emily E. Richmond], 12 May 1858, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One,* p. 397; Jane Maria Atkinson, [letter to Maria Richmond], 29 April 1860, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One,* p. 572; J. C. Richmond, [letter to Mary Richmond], 25 November 1860, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One,* p. 663; C. W. Richmond, [letter to A. S. Atkinson], 7 June 1863, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume Two,* p.49; A. S. Atkinson [journal], 26 April 1864, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume Two,* p. 109.
[736] Grace Hirst, [letter to ‘My Dear Sisters’], 1 May 1859, 0996 Volume Three.

remained [an] extraordinarily powerful image' and thus it was perpetuated to maximise insecurities and demands for protection against Māori.[737] In fact just as the newspapers within New Zealand were supportive of settler ideologies, so too were the Australian newspapers in the 1860s, even if they were inconsistent by attempting to also understand Māori perspectives which were ultimately worth less than the British perspective.[738] Although it has been asserted by Hall that 'representations of racial difference…never stood uncontested', within New Zealand these dissenting voices were far fewer and less vociferous than those of the pro-imperial and racially superior settlers who demanded action in their own favour, attacking both Māori and the Government in their effort to sway actions.[739] The newspapers which allowed dissenting voices to speak were discredited, just as the Māori newspaper, *Te Hokioi,* was mocked in a directly opposing newspaper created by the Government, named *Te Pihoihoi Mokemoke i Runanga i te Tuanui*.[740] Although the biographer Nellie Macleod believed that Mackay's first volume of verse 'is more valuable as a picture of Jessie's developing mind than for its poetry', her political poetry was a clear call for change.[741] Mackay felt isolated within the writing community, and as one of the few 'pioneer poets' not only was Mackay tackling issues that spoke to the current climate of New Zealand, she was also determined to write for both parties which made her vocation even more unique.[742] To call it propaganda is to dismiss the firm reasoning Mackay held toward seeking justice for Māori.[743] While historian Scott wrote that Mackay's 'verse was pitched in high mockery – but not high enough for irony to register in a country demented by patriotic fervour'- it was clear that Mackay refused to walk away from her ideals even if her voice was singularly raised against imperial expansionism within New Zealand.[744] Furthermore, her choice of parody was not just a witty idea, but had some grounding in the fact that Major Noake, trainer of the 'Taranaki units, had been wounded in the real charge of the Light Brigade'.[745] It was a commonly held notion that men's words and perceptions would be published, not women's, and this

[737] Bentley, *op. cit.,* p. 165.
[738] Woollacott, *Settler Society,* pp. 198-199.
[739] Hall, *Civilising Subjects,* p. 276; Lester and Dussart, *op. cit.,* pp. 220; 243; Mary Martin, [letter to Mary Anne Palmer], 31 October 1860, in Porter and Macdonald (eds.), *My Hand Will Write,* p. 122.
[740] O'Malley, *op. cit.,* pp. 180-183; 332-333.
[741] Macleod, *op. cit.,* p. 35.
[742] *ibid.,* pp. 106-107; 110.
[743] *ibid.,* p. 121.
[744] Scott, *op. cit.,* p. 105.
[745] *ibid.,* p. 118.

included the writings of Wilson's husband and Atkinson's.[746] Yet even the idea of public records could lead to women writing privately for some assistance, as Mrs Browne wrote 'it would not be bearable to go down to posterity as fools & murderers and it is worth any labor to effect this end', requiring her to ask for William's assistance to stop further slander against her husband's name.[747] Concerns such as this demand that women's silences need to be explored further, as what was written often highlights aspects of life which were denied to them and how the suppression of activities and their voices could still occur.

## Silence

Women were expected to take control of the domestic sphere, even as they were often required to meet new demands on their time and abilities to assist their husbands and wider families within New Zealand. Their actions and perceptions were not always acknowledged, let alone encouraged, during times of crisis. The Indian Mutiny had ensured that women's voices were given space in the public domain, yet women felt they had to respect conventionalities by asserting their voices as a trivial matter in prefaces before such exposition. Accounts such as those by Robert Carey and James Edward Alexander made no mention of the women who travelled with troops to nurse and care for the men's domestic needs, nor did they acknowledge the settler women maintaining a home under great strain, unless it was to remark upon the burden to shift them from the area of fighting.[748] An explanation given by historian Catherine Hall is that the 'challenge to men's power meant a more anxious focus on forms of masculinity', such anxiety including the proof that women's capabilities during crises were adaptable and continually reworked to suit what was needed to maintain stable familial and domestic connections.[749] Silence came in many forms, for Mackay it was that she was never destined to 'be a popular poet' as some of her Australian and American peers were; although she became the 'first New Zealand woman poet to achieve fame at home and abroad' it was not on the same level as others had achieved

[746] Helen Wilson, [letter to 'My Dear Son'], 20 April 1864, 1712-2; Scholefield (ed.), *Volume Two,* pp. 7-8; Porter, *Born to New Zealand*, pp. 176-177.
[747] Mrs Harriet Gore Browne, [letter to C. W. Richmond], 27 Nov 1861, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One*, p. 730.
[748] Carey, *op. cit.*; Alexander, *Bush Fighting*.
[749] Hall, *Civilising Subjects,* p. 386.

and thus her prose, including the politically driven Charge at Parihaka, influenced only a small audience.[750] Within this poem Mackay had written of the attempt to silence press coverage of the farcical invasion 'Long was the search and wise;/ Vain, for the pressman five/ Had, by a slight device,/ Foiled the Twelve Hundred'.[751] Wilson also took umbrage at the ability of newspapers and men to tweak the truth and change perceptions of reality, although for a different reason, writing of Taranaki Volunteers and Militia claiming others' victories for their own and that 'writing such false reports' that it incensed her.[752] Wilson herself did not leave anything unsaid to McLean and undoubtedly expected the same courtesy from him, for even though they were not related by blood Wilson wrote with the same freedom as Atkinson did to her relatives. Wilson also questioned the muting of answers which could paint colonial officials in a bad light, such as when it came to light that the Waitara block of land had been incorrectly sold due to an official bribing Māori to give it up and renounce any other claims his iwi had on it; the number of deaths which could have been prevented in the War for the land was, in Wilson's eyes, unforgivable.[753] Indeed in 1860 Atkinson once again criticised the Government for its failings when it tried to silence settlers, of which Atkinson averred their group were 'the tolerably moderate and temperate party'.[754] Other silences, which Atkinson was a part of, included the knowledge of a soldier's beheading by Māori when it was kept from his wife, who had requested a lock of his hair without realising there was no way they could grant such an appeal.[755] Hirst divulged how Jervice had shown Fanny 'the places where several of the murders were committed' and stated 'it was a most outrageous thing to do' to a young lady, reinforcing the idea that some silences were a kindness rather than betrayal of women's capabilities.[756] Women's ability to persevere in the face of hardship, including that of giving birth, was stated to be much more impressive than men's 'being cheerful & brave' when confronted with war and death; yet such recognition of the perils women daily faced in a domestic aspect was muted amongst the more daring

[750] Macleod, *op. cit.,* pp. 112; 124.
[751] Mackay, 'Charge of Parihaka', 22-25.
[752] Helen Wilson, [letter to 'My Dear Son'], 25 April 1860, 1712-2.
[753] Helen Wilson, [letter to 'My Dear Son'], 19 May 1863, 0032-0664.
[754] Jane Maria Atkinson, [letter to Emily Richmond], 15 May 1860, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume One,* p. 582.
[755] Jane Maria Atkinson, [letter to Maria Richmond], 6 April 1864, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume Two,* p. 104.
[756] Grace Hirst, [letter to 'My Dear Martha'], c. 1865, 0997 Volume Four.

and public threat of crises.[757] Furthermore, women's business knowledge was at the very least in danger of repudiation if not complete censure, as Hirst found when discussing her Aunt's capacity to turn business matters around and eventually 'being turned out of doors' in a despicable turnabout.[758] The navigation of the Land Wars and events at Parihaka demanded British women at times not only change their homes and activities, but also challenged their critical thinking regarding Māori and pakeha obstacles to becoming a united people in the colonial outpost. Without the writings of women such as Hirst, Atkinson, Wilson and Mackay the absence of women's voices in such historical events would be even more significant than they are.

The Land Wars and invasion of Parihaka in New Zealand encompassed decades, with each small crisis a part of the unfolding narrative between Māori, successive Governments and the settler community. With the influence of the Indian Mutiny striking a chord in how the other was depicted in writings, the perspectives of the four women studied within this chapter are invaluable in highlighting how they navigated crises in which safety for women was once again paramount. Furthermore, the attitude towards violence had once again evolved from the Indian Mutiny and Eureka Stockade before it, as the ideology of a racial hierarchy solidified and the critique of authorial decisions increased. The maternal perspective towards Māori ensured that some of the selected women treated the causal factors behind the Land Wars as insignificant, certainly not a worthy enough reason for Māori going to war against the settlers and New Zealand Government. Wilson, Atkinson and Hirst all wrote in favour of the forcible removal of dissenting Māori from land the women believed had been fairly purchased by the Government; the hysteria regarding Parihaka in particular was proof that for many (including Hirst) violence was now deemed an acceptable answer, for even though Te Whiti and the people of Parihaka were renowned for their peaceful disposition, a military force was sent to invade the pā. Mackay was the only consistently dissenting voice amongst the four selected women, her public writings conveying her distaste for the violence and condemning both settlers and Government alike for their penchant for militancy. The British women were able to position themselves not only within their immediate community, but as part of the larger

[757] Mrs Harriet Gore Browne, [letter to Emily E. Richmond], 20 March 1864, in Scholefield (ed.), *Volume Two*, p. 98.
[758] Grace Hirst, [letter to 'My Dear Tom'], 28 November 1867, 20-2773.

imperial force spanning the globe. The contradictions they faced in both domesticity and new opportunities governed their writing, encouraging political views to be shared and settler, Government and Māori actions during the crises dissected. Although their views were still discouraged in the public sphere, British women in New Zealand built on the work done by women in Australia and India in the vocalisation of their concerns and perceptions, finding ways to navigate a colonial outpost by expressing their opinions and pursuits with vigour in private and public letters, journals and prose.

# Chapter 6.

# Conclusion

Within this thesis, selected British women's writings were explored across three colonial crises. The conflicts of the Eureka Stockade in Australia, India's First War of Independence and the New Zealand Land Wars were chosen because of their immediacy to each other in time, at the height of the British Empire in the nineteenth century. This concentrated outlook allowed patterns and evolving gendered roles and perceptions to be identified, highlighting how the crises could and did influence the women caught up in them. Furthermore, as showcased by the Australian selection, it is clear that British women's voices and actions only began this change in small ways, notably by writing political perceptions in both the private and public spheres; it was the locale, rather than the crisis, which had especially encouraged the expansion of their gendered roles in the Victorian colony, the new roles required of (or desired by) women on the goldfields in particular fostering these changes rather than the short-lived crisis. However, as the years progressed, white women in India and New Zealand would open so many more avenues outside of their proscribed domestic role because of the crises they experienced. British women's new opportunities, their increasingly public discourse on politics and their navigation of the inherent contradictions of the British Empire were a direct result of both the locale *and* the crises they faced in the colonial outposts.

The overarching aim of this thesis was to explore the construct of femininity, to understand how gender relations in domesticity, politics and silences evolved because of conflict during the nineteenth century. The questions asked of the British women's writings determined that their gendered roles expanded as crises demanded, particularly when being taken to safety was not an option. Furthermore, political perceptions and the voicing of them increased as time progressed, each successive clash reducing the ability of the male-dominated Empire to silence women's various contributions to imperial historiography.

As each conflict occurred, incentive and space for women to grow into roles previously denied them became a common theme in the male-dominated British world. The boundaries which were initially placed on British women going out to these colonies by necessity fluctuated, to meet the demands the crises placed upon them. Whether it was publicly criticising a colonial Government for their actions in Eureka, loading guns or standing watch over prisoners in India, or keeping track of business matters and demanding to be heard by the local colonial Government in New Zealand, the roles of British women were negotiated and expanded throughout this period. While some of the men within these outposts and nineteenth century historians worked to deny just how significant women's actions and perceptions were to their respective crises, it nevertheless would become impossible to truly silence their proactive and adaptable agency. By positioning women within the intersectional categories of class, race and gender this thesis provides a wider purview of the barriers British women encountered during the three chosen conflicts. Furthermore, it contributes to the femininity of women in the Victorian era being recognised as the foundation on which they initiated politically independent perceptions, public voices and new opportunities, and created a space for their writings.

This thesis has refrained from imposing a current-day perspective on British women's lives, and attempted to understand their actions on their Victorian era terms. To demand that their experiences fit into modern sensibilities would discredit the lives of these select women. The contribution of this thesis to the field of postcolonial gender history lies in the use of British women's private and public writings in conjunction with these three specific conflicts in some of the Empire's farthest outposts. The complexity of colonies being tied to the metropole of the British Empire, as well as their relationship towards each other, clearly informed women's understanding of how these three crises could be overcome. Furthermore, their expansion in roles and voice was a result of not only their new home, but also the conflicts they endured with their families or spouses. In particular, without the pervasive nature of the Indian War of Independence on every aspect of women's lives, it can be argued that the actions, let alone the voices, of white women would have continued to be contradicted or denied by the predominantly masculine driven Empire.

This thesis employed a narrative methodology, using a collective biography approach to understand the experiences and perceptions of British women across the three crises. It was informed by a postcolonial perspective and analysed certain themes which were pertinent to women in the selected conflicts, including that of men affected, domesticity, safety, social networks, political perceptions, new opportunities, superiority and silence. These themes allowed gaps to be filled, assisting in locating patterns in women's experiences of conflict and identifying how their gendered roles and perceptions of the crises transformed as time progressed. For ethical reasons, this thesis has not sought to interpret Indigenous women's voices but it does consider white women's contribution to the Imperial racial order in the Indian and New Zealand crises, with a perceptible increase in women's writings asserting the racial inferiority of the Indigenous populace. Its main aim was to explore perspectives on how British women coped during the Eureka Stockade, the Indian Mutiny and the New Zealand Wars and invasion of Parihaka. It discusses and shows how a crisis pervading the lives of these women enabled them to make space for their own thoughts, desires and actions within the colonies and the Empire at large. By removing part of the social construct which attempted to keep women within the private sphere of home while retaining an idealised femininity, these crises assisted middle-class British women to expand on their capabilities and gain respect and recognition from those around them.

The intention to raise their voices politically was not only done in favour of local interests, but also against a home Government that sought to balance Indigenous and crown interests with those of the settlers. During times of crisis, British women strove for a new direction regarding some of the facets to their life that had previously been denied them, promoting their ability to think and act under even the greatest of pressures. Furthermore, it was important for the women who migrated to Australia and New Zealand with their male relatives (if not their husbands), and those who went out to India with husbands or for prospects of marriage to support the men in every endeavour they pursued. These selected women generally failed to see class as an issue during the crises, with only occasional awareness of the extent of the contributions from working class men and women for the Empire. Indigenous servants had been

employed in India, but within Australia and New Zealand middle-class women determined to take up domestic chores when they could not afford or procure working class women.

The greatest difference between the women across all three conflicts, as well as within, was the attitude towards violence. The endorsement of violence shifted dramatically from the Eureka Stockade to the Indian Mutiny, and continued to evolve as the Land Wars in New Zealand progressed. Within Australia Martha Clendinning, Jane Hotham and Margaret Brown Johnston were against an armed uprising, and even Ellen Frances Young despaired at the thought of a bloody conflict. Although Frances Isabella Duberly acknowledged the barbarity of British soldiers in India, others like Ruth Coopland championed the excessive force and even wanted further action taken. When the crisis occurred in New Zealand, bloodthirstiness was apparent in Helen Wilson's writings to Sir Donald McLean even as Jessie Mackay vehemently protested and derided the actions of settlers and soldiers against Māori. The white middle class women advocating violence were in the process of building what would become the democratic pioneering myth of Empire, demonstrated by their adaptability in rough conditions and facing the hostile Indigenous populace as bravely as their men. By being aggressively in favour of settler interests and largely unconcerned about the rights of Indigenous people or the rights of the Crown to minerals and revenue, most of the British women were assertive in their desire for advancement, both for their chosen home and their own rights as settlers. The violence meted to Indians and Māori in particular were for some a call to check these self-interested perceptions and actions, becoming instead champions for the downtrodden. Within the three chosen conflicts at the height of the British Empire's power, it is clear that British women were complex but assertive women, and their writings are integral to understanding their political perceptions, as well as the expanse of actions they undertook during turbulent events.

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Abbreviations used in Bibliography

HC House of Commons

HL House of Lords

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## Maps

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