

‘I CAN TELL YOU THIS IS A FINE COUNTRY’:
IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION
IN THE BRITISH-NEW ZEALAND IMPERIAL DIASPORA

BY

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Abstract

This thesis uses diaspora theory to analyse late-nineteenth-century texts written by women in New Zealand. The texts include a number of novels as well as non-fictional journals and memoirs. Robin Cohen's definition of diaspora provides a framework for understanding the British settler community in New Zealand as an imperial diaspora. My approach modifies Cohen's framework by also employing constructivist theories of diaspora, in particular by Stuart Hall, Paul Gilroy and James Clifford. These theorists see identity as continuously produced within representation and diaspora as furthering cultural crossover and hybrid identities. This view of the British diaspora reveals fissures within the teleological ideology of the nation-state, which underlies imperialism. Rather than focusing on a binary of imperial centre and colonial periphery, I understand the diasporic community in New Zealand as part of an international network in which mobility and a shared print culture provided manifold connections.

The main research question asks how the texts participate in the construction of identity in the diasporic community in New Zealand and how they situate themselves within a wider context of diasporic print culture. It focuses both on the identity of women within the community and on the significance of notions of women's role, femininity and women's writing for the identity production of the community as a whole. The three sections, 'Journey', 'Settling' and 'Community', trace the diaspora's narrative production of its collective identity through time and space. They consider the diaspora's textual imagining of its journey to New Zealand, its project of settling there, and its building of a distinct community. It emerges that the texts usually attempt to reconcile a number of contradictions and conflicting discourses, at the basis of which lies a fundamental tension between the diaspora's dispersal from the homeland and its need to produce a collective identity. This tension leads to an underlying instability within the texts and frequently causes them to deconstruct their own ostensible ideologies. However, at the same time the texts offer a number of powerful ideas and narratives which allow the diaspora to create a complex but meaningful collective identity.

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Introduction

‘Oh, the time that seemed to have passed since we left England; and the miles and miles of roaring sea which rolled between us and them.’

Sarah Amelia Courage, *Lights and Shadows of Colonial Life*, 1896 (114)

‘I can tell you this is a fine country.’

Charlotte Couchman, *Journal*, 14 Dec. 1879

The longing for a homeland that seems lost in time and space, and the desire to find a way to live in the ‘fine country’ of the hostland are both characteristic features of diasporas. So, also, is the wish to ‘tell’ about this experience: to the people who share life in the diaspora, to those left behind, and to those in similar situations in different parts of the diasporic world. This thesis will look at this telling. It considers the literature of the British¹ settler community in New Zealand against the background of diaspora theory, focusing on texts written by women in the late nineteenth century. My selections from this literature are comprised of both fiction and non-fiction: novels as well as journals, travel writing and autobiographies. How do these texts ‘tell’ us both about the ‘fine country’ in which they were written, and about the ‘miles and miles’ that lie between it and the homeland? How do they envision a community placed not only between these poles but also situated within a wider network of other diasporic communities? In other words, how do they participate in the production of a diasporic identity?

I aim to employ diaspora theory to ask new questions of rarely-studied texts and thus obtain new answers, which will not only build on existing research but also open up new directions. This thesis thus seeks to make a contribution to research in two respects: by its selection of primary literature and by its approach to these texts. Most of the texts have rarely been studied academically, and a large number of them have received no critical attention at all.

¹ This thesis usually uses ‘British’ to refer to people originating from what is now the United Kingdom, and the term ‘British diaspora’ to refer to the settlers associated with Britain’s imperial expansion. However, as Bridge and Fedorovich note, it is not always impossible to clearly delineate the specific ethnic groups that were part of the British diaspora: ‘the British world is a broader and more fluid concept than the British Empire or British Commonwealth. . . . Also, Charles Dilke, Winston Churchill and others included the United States in their Greater Britain (or English-speaking union of peoples)’ (8). Therefore my use of the term is in some cases broader than the definition outlined above.

The majority is either out of print or has never been published. Understanding the British imperial expansion as a diaspora offers a new and unusual perspective on this rarely-studied literature. Due to their history of dispersal and migration, diasporas are typically hybrid, creolised forms of communities, which do not conform to notions of culture as discrete or pure and whose existence denies the certainty of fixed origins. Since the 1980s, a number of theorists have broadened the term to include communities that do not fall into the traditional paradigm of traumatic dispersal. However, it is still used predominantly with reference to communities that are marginalised minorities in their hostlands. As James Belich suggests in *Paradise Reforged*, Pākehā ‘myths of settlement’

offered a bewildering array of heavens on earth: a racial paradise where Anglo-Saxon virtue flowered; an investors’ paradise, where Old Britons could safely entrust their money to New Britons; a workers’ paradise full of well-paid jobs; a brides’ paradise full of well-paid husbands; and a genteel paradise where a little money and status went a lot further than at home, and where gentility and the work ethic could be more readily reconciled. (16)

These myths of paradise are difficult to reconcile with the traditional notion of a diaspora forcefully dispersed from its homeland and oppressed in its hostland. Therefore a tension emerges when the term diaspora is applied to a community which came into being in the context of imperialism, and to settlers who tended to marginalise their host societies rather than being marginalised themselves. While diaspora theory is my main approach, it will not be used dogmatically or exclusively but complemented by other theoretical approaches such as feminist and gender theory, whiteness studies, and postcolonial theory.

This introductory chapter will begin by outlining my interpretation of the term ‘diaspora’ and indicating how I intend to employ it in my readings of the primary texts. This will be followed by an explanation of the apparently contradictory term ‘imperial diaspora’ and reflections on how the diaspora model might help us understand the nineteenth-century British settler empire. I will then explain the reasons for choosing this particular time frame, for choosing only texts written by women, and for my approach to non-fictional and fictional texts. The introduction will conclude with a literature review and an introduction to the structure of my thesis.

Diaspora Studies

Cohen's Notion of Diaspora

The term diaspora has become increasingly popular since the 1980s in a number of academic fields, for example sociology, cultural studies, history, and literary criticism. This popularity has resulted in various different definitions of the concept. Robin Cohen's *Global Diasporas: an Introduction* (1997) provides a helpful basic definition of the term diaspora and, more specifically to the British expansion, imperial diaspora. The word diaspora is of Greek origin, derived from the words speiro (to sow) and dia (over). Traditionally it was associated predominantly with the Jewish diaspora and other diasporas that have similarly experienced forceful and traumatic dispersal and a life in the diaspora characterised by hardships and the longing for a lost homeland. Cohen suggests, however, that even when applied to the history of the Jewish people the term is more ambiguous than its traditional definition suggests. The Jewish diasporic tradition is more complex and diverse than is often assumed and the Jewish diasporic experience has varied throughout history and in different geographical and cultural settings. For instance, Cohen states that even though 'Babylon' has become a synonym for oppression and suffering, it was also the site of great creativity for the Jewish diaspora and the place where many rituals and traditions came into being (4-6). *Global Diasporas* argues for a more flexible definition of diaspora than the traditional understanding of the Jewish paradigm implies.

Elaborating on a list of characteristics of diasporic groups outlined by William Safran in his essay 'Diasporas in Modern Societies: Myths of Homeland and Return', Cohen establishes a broader notion of diaspora. He sees it as the collective dispersal of a group of people from their homeland to two or more foreign regions. This dispersal is often forceful and traumatic, but not always – the diaspora might also participate in an expansion from their homeland in pursuit of work or trade, or in the context of imperialism. Each diasporic community maintains connections to the homeland, if it still exists, and to communities of the same diaspora in other places, feeling solidarity with them. It does not integrate fully into its host society, often maintaining a troubled relationship with that society, and sustains its own culture and traditions. It thus remains ethnically distinct over at least two generations and strongly conscious of this separateness. Furthermore, the members of the diasporic community share 'a collective memory and myth' of their homeland: 'an idealization of the putative ancestral home and a collective commitment to

its maintenance, restoration, safety and prosperity, even to its creation' (26). They share a wish to return to this homeland at some point in the future. Cohen stresses that the diasporic experience need not be predominantly negative: it entails 'the possibility of a distinctive creative, enriching life in host countries with a tolerance for pluralism', like Babylon (26). Cohen distinguishes five types of diaspora that fulfil these criteria: imperial diaspora, victim diaspora, trade diaspora, labour diaspora (working class or indentured labour) and cultural diaspora (reliant on hybridity and cross-migration, such as the Caribbean or Indian diasporas). The notion of victim diaspora alone conforms to the traditional diaspora paradigm. However, Cohen stresses that no diaspora fits neatly into only one of these types, and that he is aiming to typologise diasporas 'not by ignoring what they share in common, but by highlighting their most important characteristics' (29). He also emphasises that his typology 'is more unambiguous than the history and development of diasporas suggest' (x).

The notion of imperial diaspora is helpful in the context of this thesis since it provides a way of understanding the British expansion within the context of diaspora theory, even though many of its members were not the victims of traumatic dispersal, instead perceiving themselves as the agents of empire. Of course this is not true for all members of the British diaspora: many Irish or Scottish people, for example, can well be said to have been the victims of forceful dispersal. This internal diversity of the diasporic community will be explored later in this thesis.

Cohen defines an imperial diaspora as 'marked by a continuing connection with the homeland, a deference to and imitation of its social and political institutions and a sense of forming part of a grand imperial design – whereby the group concerned assumes the self-image of a "chosen race" with a global mission' (67). He chooses the British expansion as the prime example of an imperial diaspora in modern history, explaining that while a number of European nation states established diasporas in the context of imperialism and colonialism (such as Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands, Germany and France), Britain was particularly successful in this endeavour. Observing the large extent of emigration from Britain to the United States and the British settler colonies between 1814 and 1914, he concludes that while there were 'complex and mixed' motives for emigration, there was always an 'underlying thread of state involvement' (68), indicative of the fact that the members of the British diaspora indeed formed part of 'a grand imperial design'. However, he argues, imperial diasporas are necessarily transitional, as was the case with the British diaspora in the settler colonies: 'Essentially, the dominion diaspora

was to fall victim to the very success of the colonial settlements' (74). Over time, the connection between Britain and its colonies, later dominions, faded for a number of reasons, which included the decline of the British Empire, a growing national consciousness in the dominions, and changes in world economy and politics such as the emergence of the European Economic Community, which put an end to important trade connections between Britain and the dominions. While many ties still remain, importantly in cultural forms such as language and literary traditions, Cohen states that all that is left now of the British imperial diaspora are 'echoes' (81).

This thesis uses Cohen's definition of diaspora and imperial diaspora as a starting point. His concepts are helpful in order to place the phenomenon of the British expansion within a typology of diasporas and identify its central characteristics. However, I will also employ constructivist notions of diaspora and cultural identity to modify Cohen's concept, facilitating textual analyses more open to the unexpected. These notions will be explained in the following section.

Diaspora and Identity Production

My approach extends Cohen's definition using constructivist notions of diaspora, most importantly by Stuart Hall, Paul Gilroy, and James Clifford. Even though Cohen's definition is more inclusive than the traditional meaning of the term diaspora, he still sees diaspora as a concept defined by fixed and unchanging criteria, and cultural identity as stable – an entity sustained and upheld by and within the diasporic community over time. However, I argue that when considering literary texts it is more fruitful to see diaspora as an open and permeable concept that has the potential for questioning, destabilising or subverting these notions of cultural identity and origins. I will therefore also employ poststructuralist and postcolonial theories that see identity as constantly changing and as constituted through representation.

Stuart Hall's notion of identity is central to my approach. In his essay on Caribbean cinema 'Cultural Identity and Diaspora', Hall describes cultural identity as 'a "production", which is never complete, always in process, and always constituted within, not outside, representation' (222). He explains that if we consider Jacques Derrida's concept of *différance*, we recognise that meaning is only possible through an arbitrary stop in an endless sequence of linguistic deferrals. We can never arrive at an original, fixed meaning since each signifier only defers meaning to another signifier without ever directing us to an originary signified. Only an

arbitrary positioning at one point in this chain of signifiers makes meaningful enunciation possible. This means that there can never be closure: ‘meaning continues to unfold . . . beyond the arbitrary closure which makes it, at any moment, possible’ (230). Accordingly, there is no original identity accessible to us – cultural identity exists only within representation. Since within representation ‘meaning continues to unfold’, this production of identity can never be complete: identity needs to be re-produced constantly. Moreover, ‘[p]ractices of representation always implicate the positions from which we speak or write – the positions of *enunciation*’ (222; emphasis in the original).

Hall’s conception of diaspora is set within this understanding of cultural identity. In contrast to Cohen’s neat typology of diasporas, Hall states that he uses the term diaspora ‘metaphorically, not literally’, distancing himself from ‘the old, the imperialising, the hegemonising, form of “ethnicity” ’ and a ‘backward-looking conception of diaspora’ which, he claims, resulted, for instance, in the occupation of Palestine (234). Instead, he explains,

[t]he diaspora experience as I intend it here is defined, not by essence or purity, but by the recognition of a necessary heterogeneity and diversity; by a conception of ‘identity’ which lives with and through, not despite, difference; by *hybridity*. Diaspora identities are those which are constantly producing and reproducing themselves anew, through transformation and difference. (234; emphasis in the original)

Rather than classifying diasporas, Hall is interested in a metaphorical diaspora experience which accommodates hybridity and recognises the potential for a constant re-production of cultural identity. He appreciates the diasporic longing for a lost homeland, but also realises that this wish can never be fulfilled. However, this unfulfilled longing is actually ‘the beginning of the symbolic, of representation’ (236). Rather than striving to regain or establish a physical homeland, such as Israel, and thus an origin, Hall wants the myth of the homeland to remain metaphorical, part of the diasporic potential for a heterogeneous, hybrid way of identity production. Within this concept of diaspora, the longing for a lost homeland is thus not meant to be fulfilled, since only its unfulfilment enables representation and thus a specifically diasporic identity production.

Paul Gilroy envisages cultural identity, and diasporic identity in particular, in similar terms in his influential work on the black diaspora, *The Black Atlantic*. While the text explores

actual political and cultural practices of the black diaspora, Gilroy emphasises that he also sees his study of this diaspora as an example: ‘The history of the black Atlantic yields a course of lessons as to the instability and mutability of identities which are always unfinished, always being remade’ (xi). Gilroy argues against an essentialist notion of history and tradition such as the Afrocentricity movement, which, he claims, replicates Eurocentric universalist terms by inverting rather than challenging them. Instead, he seeks to engage with Du Bois’s concept of a ‘double consciousness’ and stresses the importance of not only ‘roots’ but also ‘routes’ for cultural identity, thus undermining any kind of ‘purified appeal’ (190). Gilroy’s rejection of an essentialist notion of identity extends to the textual production of *The Black Atlantic* itself. In the preface he states: ‘It is essential to emphasise that there is nothing definitive here. . . . My concerns are heuristic and my conclusions are strictly provisional’ (xi). His text, he continues, is ‘essentially an essay about the inescapable hybridity and intermixture of ideas’ (xi).

Gilroy clarifies his notion of diaspora in ‘Diaspora’, emphasising that he, like Hall, sees it as promoting difference and hybridity – ‘the untidy workings of creolized, syncretized, hybridized and impure cultural forms’ (211). His definition of diaspora as ‘a relational network, characteristically produced by forced dispersal and reluctant scattering’ (207) demonstrates that the concept of imperial diaspora would be difficult to accommodate within this theory. Rather, the experience of a loss, of trauma, is what unites diasporic communities and leads to new ways of identity production. This perspective on diaspora is grounded in Gilroy’s analysis of the black diaspora, which came into being through the traumatic experience of slavery.

James Clifford, in ‘Diasporas’, also distances himself from the traditional notion of diaspora, associated with the Jewish diaspora. This old notion understands the diasporic community as striving to uphold difference by maintaining an exclusive identity over time: the community adapts only selectively and upholds traditional memory rituals to remain distinct from its host society. The new notion of diaspora, evident in the black Atlantic, means that a loss of identity is countered by the construction of a new identity. A mix of cultures, fusion and crossover occurs, and new memory rituals are created.

Hall’s, Gilroy’s and Clifford’s approaches to cultural identity and diaspora are fundamentally different from Cohen’s typology. When diaspora is seen as a metaphorical concept emphasising hybridity and difference/différance, it becomes difficult to classify diasporas.

Clifford expands on this argument when he discusses Safran's typology of diasporas, which was later reworked by Cohen, and Safran's designation of the Jewish diaspora as an 'ideal type':

We should be wary of constructing our working definition of a term like *diaspora* by recourse to an 'ideal type,' with the consequence that groups become identified as more or less diasporic, having only two, or three, or four of the basic six features. Even the 'pure' forms . . . are ambivalent, even embattled, over basic features. Moreover at different times in their history, societies may wax and wane in diasporism . . . ('Diasporas' 306; emphasis in the original)

However, using a more rigid typology like Cohen's as a starting point has advantages. Seeing diaspora as nothing but a metaphorical term is not always helpful when reading texts which stem from a specific historical and cultural context. It also entails the risk of slipping into abstract theoretical discourse and thus unduly generalising the experiences of individual writers. Diaspora scholar Khachig Tölölyan sees the threat of such generalisations when he describes diaspora as 'in danger of becoming a promiscuously capacious category' ('Rethinking' 8) and warns of 'a reduction of diaspora, which occurs when the ideas of identity and subjectivity produced by a theory-inflected investigation of texts is projected upon the *social* text of diaspora life' (28-29; emphasis in the original). In order not to lose sight of this important 'social text', I follow Clifford in his approach when he suggests 'the routing of diaspora discourses in specific maps/histories. . . . Thus historicized, diaspora cannot become a master trope or "figure" for modern, complex, or positional identities' ('Diasporas' 319). Cohen's typology provides such a 'routing', while a constructivist view of identity production leads to more critical insight into the texts and explores the diasporic potential for hybridity and subversion.

Imperial Diaspora: a Contradiction?

Gilroy speaks for the majority of diaspora scholars when he states that diaspora is 'an outer-national term' ('Diaspora' 207). He argues that diasporic identities are not focused on territory and birthright but on 'the social dynamics of remembrance and commemoration' (207). Diaspora valorises 'supra-national kinship' and 'discomfiture with nationalism' (210), thus destabilising the nation state and harbouring subversive potential. Tölölyan sees diasporas as 'the exemplary communities of the transnational moment' ('Nation State' 5) 'because they embody the question of borders' (6), in different ways from nation states. Whereas '[t]he [nation state] always imagines and represents itself as a land, a territory, a place that functions as the site of

homogeneity, equilibrium, integration' (6), diasporas have a 'heightened awareness of both the perils and rewards of multiple belonging' ('Rethinking' 7-8). Clifford concedes that some diasporic communities may have nationalist aims, but goes on to say: 'Whatever their ideologies of purity, diasporic cultural forms can never, in practice, be exclusively nationalist' (307). This apparent incompatibility of diaspora and nation state lies at the root of the contradiction that, at first glance, seems to be inherent to the term 'imperial diaspora'. Even though nation state and empire are different entities, they rely on similar notions of space and time. Both propagate an ideology of belonging to territory, based on a belief in traceable origins – birthright – rather than the dispersal and creolisation peculiar to diasporas. This belief in origins is linked to a notion of time as linear and teleological. Benedict Anderson argues in *Imagined Communities* that this conception of time is necessary in order to imagine all members of a nation as simultaneously progressing along a homogenous time line, and thus for the idea of the nation state itself (24-26). European imperialism is based on similar conceptions of space and time: Richard Dyer suggests that in the racial ideology of whiteness, imperialism 'could be conveyed in terms of the excitement of advance, of forward movement through time, and of the conquest and control of space' (31). In *The Imperial Archive*, Thomas Richards suggests that 'the fictive thought of imperial control' relies on making 'national identity look like the template for imperial identity': symbols of national unity are used in the context of empire in an attempt to extend national solidarity to an imperial context (2). Diaspora, however, seems to epitomise the opposite: Clifford states that '[i]n diaspora experience, the copresence of "here" and "there" is articulated with an antiteleological . . . temporality' (318). How, then, can the terms imperial and diaspora be reconciled?

I argue that it is precisely the inherent contradiction of the term 'imperial diaspora' that makes it a useful concept. The contradiction actually reveals contradictions within the ideology that underlies both nation state and empire. As Hall argues in 'Culture, Community, Nation', nation states are never ethnically homogenous. While they seek to represent themselves as a unified community with a continuous and unbroken history, they are always the result of a history of migration and territorial changes. Any human society is hybrid. If this is true for nation states, it is even more the case for a settler empire, which has to rely on the diasporic expansion of its agents. An empire necessarily has to be adaptable, diverse and versatile in order to persist. As Tony Ballantyne emphasises, '[e]mpires . . . were both fragile, prone to crises where

important threads are broken, or structural nodes destroyed, yet also dynamic, being constantly remade and reconfigured through concerted thought and effort' (*Orientalism* 15). Even when we look only superficially at the British diaspora, we recognise that it was no unified community even within the ideology of the nation state. Consider Michael King's sketch of immigration to New Zealand in the 1870s, which illustrates the internal diversity of the diasporic group:

Under the Vogel scheme of whole or partially paid assistance, immigrants flooded into the country: around 100,000 between 1871 and 1880. Over half came from England, about a quarter from Ireland, and slightly fewer than that from Scotland. Just under 10 per cent were from Continental Europe, largely Germans . . . , Scandinavians and Poles. (King 229)

The members of the British diaspora may have participated in a 'grand imperial design' (Cohen 67), but to do so they had to disperse in a way that was prone to further 'the untidy workings of creolized, syncretized, hybridized and impure cultural forms' (Gilroy, 'Diaspora' 211). The empire, like the nation state, is always already diaspora-ised. Reading its literature in the light of diaspora theory reveals the fissures inherent in its ideology. Homi Bhabha's conception of culture as constituted through representation is helpful in this context. Bhabha explains this notion in *The Location of Culture*:

Meaning is constructed across the bar of difference and separation between the signifier and the signified. So it follows that no culture is full unto itself, no culture is plainly plenitudinous, not only because there are other cultures which contradict its authority, but also because its own symbol-forming activity, its own interpellation in the process of representation, language signification and meaning-making, always underscores the claim to an originary, holistic, organic identity. (210)

I will use diaspora theory as a tool to explore the British diaspora's 'symbol-forming activity', which, according to Bhabha, might corrode the empire's narratives of origins, teleology and unity.

Decentring the Settler Empire

In addition to revealing fissures in the ostensible ideologies of texts, diaspora theory also provides a helpful model for understanding the British settler empire. As Cohen argues, the 'myth of the homeland' is central to diasporic consciousness (26). Diasporas spread out from a

centre and form sub-centres in other places. The centre, the homeland, remains important in political relations and/or mythology, and the sub-centres, the various diasporic communities, maintain ties with each other and feel solidarity with one another. The importance of Britain as the homeland for the British settler community in nineteenth-century New Zealand is evident. In addition to exerting political power, Britain is literally referred to as 'home' in many texts and a return there is anticipated or hoped for. Even after New Zealand became a dominion, it maintained strong ties to Britain, consolidated by education and certification, by 'kinship, economic interdependence and preferential trade arrangements, by sport, by visits and tourism, and by the solidarity wrought by the sharing of arms' (Cohen 75). Many of these ties remain relevant to this day. However, the solidarity of the diasporic community was not directed solely towards Britain. There was also significant cultural and literary exchange with other British diasporic communities, notably in the settler colonies of Australia, South Africa and Canada, which shared many of the experiences familiar to European settlers in New Zealand. As Bridge and Fedorovich note,

[t]he cultural glue which held together this British world consisted not only of sentiment and shared institutional values but also of a plethora of networks. These ranged from the obvious family and community connections to business, religious, educational, scientific and professional associations, to trade unions, and to itinerant workers of all kinds. (6)

These networks and the mobility they implied are increasingly the object of attention in the discipline of history, as evidenced, for instance, in *Moving Subjects*, edited by Tony Ballantyne and Antoinette Burton. The exchange with other diasporic communities included a shared settler literature that circulated within the entire diaspora rather than simply being exported from Britain to its colonies. Stafford and Williams suggest that 'around the turn of the nineteenth century, empire was an internationalising force in ways not often recognised' (*Maoriland* 15) and that the 'centre-periphery model of empire needs to be modified to accommodate the complex cross-affiliations and influences of the period' (16). They draw attention to Ballantyne's metaphor of a web to describe the empire. Ballantyne argues that the web metaphor questions both an exclusive emphasis on the imperial metropole and 'the nation as the seemingly natural unit of historical analyses' (*Orientalism* 2) and instead 'foreground[s] the relational quality of the imperial past, emphasizing the complex and shifting relationships that constituted the empire' (3). The web

metaphor ‘travels between locations’ (3), mirroring the local and international forces and journeys that constitute empire and revealing ‘the crucial, but generally overlooked, horizontal linkages between colonies’ (15). Diaspora theory similarly constitutes an opportunity to modify the centre-periphery model and move away from an emphasis on the nation state. If the British expansion is understood as an imperial diaspora, Britain constitutes the centre, but this does not make the diasporic sub-centres merely peripheral – rather, as Cohen states, they benefit from the opportunity for an enriching and creative life in the diaspora. Exchange between the sub-centres of the diaspora highlights the importance of ‘decentered, lateral connections’, which, according to Clifford, may be just as important in diasporic consciousness as a lost origin or homeland (306).

Literary texts played a crucial role in creating these connections. While the homeland’s literary conventions were no doubt important, they were often reworked in the diaspora. This thesis also places emphasis on the shared identity production of diasporic communities in different places, as constructed in texts that created their own network of ideas rather than only referring back to the imperial centre. Postcolonial theory has often stressed the ‘gap which opens between the experience of place and the language available to describe it’ (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin 9) and the ‘condition of alienation . . . inevitable until the colonizing language has been replaced or appropriated’ (10). A similar notion appears to underlie Patrick Evans’s argument in *The Penguin History of New Zealand Literature* that much of nineteenth-century New Zealand literature is ‘a falsification because mediated by the literatures of the time’ (22). The idea that the influence of literary traditions and conventions simply falsifies texts seems unhelpful to me. Rather, the way conventions are followed or subverted illuminates diasporic identity production and how this production is negotiated not only between hostland and homeland but also within a network that encompasses diasporic sub-centres in other parts of the empire. In her introduction to *Victorian Settler Narratives* Tamara Wagner states that while Britain influenced the literature of its colonies, the overall picture was more complex: ‘the literary interchanges [the settler societies] produced also impacted on Victorian culture overall’ (7). She argues that scholars need to ‘get away from mere rehearsals of post-Saidian theories on complicity as well as from the reduction of any self-consciously critical rewritings to a mere ‘rebuttal’’ (15). I intend to question postcolonial centre-periphery models by focusing on two-

way influences between homeland and hostland as well as on interdiasporic relationships between the different settler colonies.

Diasporic community was created not only through writing but also through shared audiences and reading experiences.² In *Reading on the Farm*, Lydia Wevers situates the New Zealand context within Kate Flint's description of reading as creating community and a shared sense of modernity. Wevers suggests that '[f]or a colonial reader, the connection to the print culture of London, New York, Sydney, Paris and Rome . . . was a vital source of agency, a way of belonging despite the fact of distance' (216). Literary texts are thus important sites for the diasporic community's identity production, which took place within a network of relationships between homeland, hostland and other diasporic sub-centres rather than in a context of dominant centre and subordinate periphery. As Angela Woollacott emphasises, '[i]t is impossible to understand imperial culture without recognizing the ways in which it circulated, both between metropole and colonies and among diverse colonial sites' (150).

² Unfortunately, an investigation of book history would exceed the scope of this thesis, even though it is a fascinating field which merits more research. The focus here will be on the evocation of shared reading experiences and implied audiences within the texts themselves.

Selection of Texts

Time Frame: Mid-1870s to 1914

This thesis looks at texts written at the end of the long nineteenth century. The year 1914 is the end date of this time frame with the beginning of World War I, which in literary history is often seen as the starting point of modernism and the end of Victorian literature. I am going to conform to this time frame for the sake of convention and simplicity. However, naturally such divisions are never as neat as a single date suggests. With the exception of a number of shipboard diaries and Charlotte Evans's two novels *Over the Hills, and Far Away* and *A Strange Friendship*, written in the mid-1870s, the texts I consider were written in the 1880s or later. I am interested in a period when the time of early settlement was over. A diasporic community had been established and an increasing number of the settler population was New Zealand born, constituting the majority of the population by the mid-1880s (King 231). Government had been centralised in Wellington after the abolition of the provinces in 1876. The settler community considered it of increasing importance to create a collective identity distinct from that in the homeland. This involved a growing national consciousness and the endeavour to establish a New Zealand national literature. Stafford and Williams describe these years of 'Maoriland' literature as 'the period in which settler society in New Zealand consolidates itself economically and culturally' (*Maoriland* 14). King outlines the modernisation of transport and communications under the Vogel programme in the 1870s and 1880s, stressing that 'these innovations enabled the colony's widely scattered settlements to communicate better with one another, and with the world beyond New Zealand' (232). In the context of diaspora theory, this situation indicates a number of tensions that emerged between centre and sub-centres. It invites us to explore the literary and cultural relations and ruptures between Britain and the colonies and dominions, between Britain and New Zealand in particular, and between New Zealand and other settler colonies.

Gender

Women's writing illuminates the identity production within this web of relations and ruptures. Gilroy stresses the potential of hybrid diasporic identities to challenge the 'unholy forces of nationalist bio-politics', which 'intersect on the bodies of women charged with the reproduction of absolute ethnic difference. . . . The institutional setting for this managerial activity is the family routinely understood as nothing more than a natural building block in the construction and

elevation of the nation' ('Diaspora' 210). This notion of women as reproductive agents in the service of the nation is connected to an ideology that saw women as metaphorically uniting a nation and, by extension, an empire otherwise divided by class, religion and local identities. Radhika Mohanram argues that a British ideal of timeless and classless femininity, the notorious 'Angel in the House', was instrumental in the making of the empire: 'British identity under high imperialism was a disaggregated identity. The woman's role was to cohere this disaggregation and make it re-emerge as the unchanging British way, the nation itself' (*Black Body* 165). Again, this identity is not determined by Britain alone and then exported to the colonies, but rather negotiated in a network of relationships: 'Notions of masculinity, femininity, class and sexuality were all reconstructed in (while constructing) the colonies and filtered back to Britain to re-emerge as "English" ' (164). The concept of portable domesticity, as outlined by Janet Myers in *Antipodal England*, endows women with more agency. As the exporters of an ideal domesticity, women were more than merely passive Angels in the House, playing an active role in forging relationships within the settler empire. The texts considered in this thesis construct many different images of women, including as passive embodiments of a timeless femininity and as more active agents of portable domesticity. In either role, however, women are imagined as essential to the unity of an empire which is envisioned not as a centre-periphery binary but as a network of relationships between centre and sub-centres.

As briefly outlined above, women's texts also serve to illuminate what Tölölyan terms 'the social text of diaspora life' ('Rethinking' 28-29). They ground textual interpretations in individual experience, countering the risk of limiting literary analyses to theoretical generalisations about diaspora. Clifford contends that women's histories serve to historicise diaspora experience and bring into focus its specific features:

Diasporic experiences are always gendered. But there is a tendency for theoretical accounts of diasporas and diaspora cultures to hide this fact, to talk of travel and displacement in unmarked ways, thus normalizing male experiences. . . .

Retaining focus on specific histories of displacement and dwelling keeps the ambivalent politics of diaspora in view. Women's experiences are particularly revealing. (313-14)

There are a number of starting points for such a historicising of diaspora experience. As Belich makes clear, in many ways women's diasporic experience was contradictory:

As in Britain, women in colonial New Zealand suffered from massive political, legal, social and economic inequalities. They had no vote; husbands owned virtually all marital property; women had much less socially approved freedom than men; and, if they could get jobs, they were typically paid half as much. But there are some signs that women took advantage of changed circumstances. . . . Genteel and middle-class women appear to have been able to travel more, send their daughters to school more, and engage more in valued work without loss of status. (*Paradise* 20-21)

In New Zealand, as in other settler colonies, women were seen as the upholders of morals. 'Respectable' women were encouraged to immigrate to New Zealand in order to be wives and mothers as well as exert positive moral and religious influence in a society that, until the beginning of the twentieth century, was predominantly male. This image of women lingered, and Raewyn Dalziel among others has argued that it helped New Zealand women become the first in the world to win the vote in 1893 (57). Dalziel stresses that the suffragist movement in New Zealand did not argue for a change of women's role in society but rather for an extension into the public sphere of 'their role as homemakers and guardians of moral health and welfare' (57). Hence stem the political connections of the suffragist to the prohibitionist movement, as evident in the Women's Christian Temperance Union. Both feminist and prohibitionist influences emerge in many of the novels studied in this thesis. They will be the focus of Section III.

Categories other than gender should not be neglected in an analysis of nineteenth-century women's writing, even though the main focus of this thesis will be on gender. These categories include regional identities, class and race. The internal diversity of the diasporic community has already been mentioned. Conceptions of imperial femininity which were often implicitly English provided more complicated ways of identification for non-English women. Since these notions of femininity also applied only to middle-class women, working-class women were excluded from them. Unfortunately I cannot claim to have incorporated a representative amount of working-class writing, since not many texts exist or are available, but I will give consideration to the lines of class belonging drawn in many of the texts. The ways in which notions of race and femininity were intertwined will be the focus of Section II in particular.

Fiction and Non-Fiction

This thesis considers both fictional and non-fictional texts: novels, journals, travel writing and autobiographies. The three sections of my thesis are each divided into, first, a part on non-fiction and, second, a part on fiction, each analysing a varying number of individual texts. As with the time frame from which the texts were chosen, this structure conforms to convention and furthers simplicity. I am, however, going to use a similar methodology to approach both non-fictional and fictional texts. The focus is on how the texts participate in the identity production of the diasporic community: how they function, how they structure, construct and narrate diasporic experience. I argue that it is more helpful to compare similarities and differences than be preoccupied with the texts' status as fictional or non-fictional. By applying a similar approach to all texts I hope to avoid classificatory and judgemental ways of reading such as the one in which Joan Stevens engages in *The New Zealand Novel*: 'There may be said to be four stages to the development of New Zealand fiction – recording, exploiting, preaching, and interpreting. The true business of the novel, in its maturity, is surely the last – to interpret something to somebody' (10). In my selection of texts I was guided not by claims to truth or fiction, literary quality, or adherence to the 'true business' of a text but by a focus on narrative – hence the exclusion of, for example, poems and short stories, even though examples of these genres will be alluded to.

The texts' common emphasis on narrative accounts for fundamental similarities in their structures which make the distinction between fiction and non-fiction unclear and frequently blur the boundaries between genres. These similarities are often typical of nineteenth-century literature: for instance, autobiographies from that time are often indistinguishable in structural terms from novels. Genre distinctions between different non-fictional texts are not always clear, either. For instance, as Charlotte Macdonald and Frances Porter note in the editorial notes to their collection of letters by women in nineteenth-century New Zealand, *My Hand Will Write What My Heart Dictates*, many letters from the period could equally be termed journals: they were written over an extended period of time, usually concluded in time for the closing of the mail (ix). The focus of my discussions lies on narrative structure and prominent motifs rather than on the genre of the texts.

Another similarity, which is also peculiar to the time period, lies in the implied audience of the texts. Nowadays we tend to conceive of journals as private documents, but in the nineteenth century journals often had an implied audience that could consist of friends and

family but also of a larger public, like the audience of a novel. As a result, the texts frequently underwent rigorous self-censorship, as when F. Johnston delicately writes: ‘Not very well all day. . . . My 15th child/7th daughter born at 5.30 am’ (26-27 Jan. 1882). An implied audience is also the reason for the factuality evident in many of the texts which similarly blurs the boundaries between fictionality and non-fictionality: the perceived need to explain the New Zealand setting of the texts to readers who might not have visited the country. For instance, novels are often interspersed with explanations about life in New Zealand, Māori and native scenery. They sometimes include glossaries explaining, for example, Māori terms, testifying to the ambition to depict an authentic situation even though the texts are labelled as fiction. The authors frequently draw attention to this claim to veracity in notes or a preface, as Jessie Weston does in her preface to *Ko Méri* (1890): ‘All the circumstances in this simple little tale came within the experience of the writer, to whom the scenery of the Province of Auckland has been familiar since childhood’. These attempts to anchor fiction in authenticity mirror explanations in autobiographies or letters to relatives at home about living circumstances in New Zealand, such as the prices of goods and housing conditions. Moreover, nineteenth-century literature is characterised by a factuality that is not confined to New Zealand. Recognition of this factuality has recently led to a growing emphasis within Victorian studies on material culture, notably put in the context of imperialism by John Plotz in *Portable Property*. Elaine Freedgood calls for a serious interpretation of ‘Victorian thing culture’ (8) in texts: ‘the fugitive meanings of apparently nonsymbolic objects’ (4). She states, rightly: ‘The Victorian novel describes, catalogs, quantifies, and in general showers us with things: post chaises, handkerchiefs, moonstones, wills, riding crops, ships’ instruments of all kinds, dresses of muslin, merino, and silk, coffee, claret, cutlets – cavalcades of objects threaten to crowd the narrative right off the page’ (1). While my analysis is not focused on ‘thing culture’, this ‘crowding’ of things in Victorian literature is notable. The objects evoked in the texts resemble objects that existed outside the text, in the readers’ lives, and carried cultural, economic, political and affective connotations. A rich ‘thing culture’ connects novels from the time period more closely with non-fictional texts and their emphasis on factuality.

Hall’s theory of identity production implies that literature does not merely record, exploit, preach or interpret, as Stevens claims. Rather, every text participates in the production of identity, and what is said is always in context since representation implicates the position from

which the speaker speaks: the ‘position of enunciation’ (‘Cultural Identity’ 222). All texts, whether fictional or non-fictional, participate in this identity production. Richards has described *The Imperial Archive*: ‘a myth of a unified archive, an imperial archive holding together the vast and various parts of the Empire’ (6). This imperial archive is necessary because the geographical vastness of empires makes it impossible to unify them through sheer military or political force. Significantly, Richards suggests that ‘[a]n empire is partly a fiction’ (1) and that ‘ “[b]elonging” to the British Empire was . . . very often a fictive affiliation’ (2). If the empire itself is partly a fiction, the truth or fictionality claims made by the texts which constitute its archive become less important than their function of constructing links, both through the collective identity they produce and the community they create by providing shared reading experiences. Ballantyne argues: ‘Although Innis and Anderson emphasized the pivotal role of print in the constitution of the nation, print also facilitated the flow of information across national boundaries’ (*Orientalism* 12). An emphasis on this connecting function of both fictional and non-fictional texts, which transcends the imagined community of the nation, again deconstructs the centre-periphery binary, instead revealing the many relationships constructed and negotiated through texts.

Literature Review

After cultural nationalists like Allen Curnow and Denis Glover associated ‘the high proportion of women writers in Maoriland . . . with sentiment, gentility and colonial deference’ (Stafford and Williams, *Maoriland* 12), these women writers remained until recently academically neglected. In *Where Did She Come From? New Zealand Women Novelists, 1862-1987* (1989) Heather Roberts set herself the task to trace a tradition of New Zealand women writers reaching back to nineteenth-century novelists whom literary criticism had largely ignored. While this effort is commendable and Roberts’s book was no doubt important at the time it was published, her discussions of the texts are frequently limited by a narrow identarian feminist approach which leads her to overlook complexities. The last few years have seen the beginnings of more serious critical attention devoted to New Zealand texts from the late nineteenth century and to women writers from that period. *Maoriland: New Zealand Literature, 1872-1914* (2006) by Jane Stafford and Mark Williams argues against the modernist perception of ‘Maoriland’ writing as provincial, undistinguished and unimaginatively colonialist, contending that ‘the process of responding to the new world, discoverable in the literature of Maoriland, is far more complex, various, adaptive and uncertain than has been allowed by successive generations of commentators’ (15).

Maoriland provides detailed analyses of a number of texts, discussing relatively unknown women writers like Jessie Mackay and Edith Searle Grossmann with more critical depth and insight than Roberts. Alex Calder’s recent book *The Settler’s Plot: How Stories Take Place in New Zealand* (2011) similarly accords critical attention to hitherto rarely-studied writers like Blanche Baughan and Mary Anne Barker. Morag Mackay’s PhD thesis ‘“A Colonial Tale of Fact and Fiction”: Nineteenth-Century New Zealand Novels by Women’ (2003) for the most part merely repeats Roberts’s effort of providing a survey of nineteenth-century women novelists. Two other recent PhD theses prove more helpful: ‘The Sex Problem: Femininity, Class and Contradiction in Late Colonial New Zealand Novels’ (2003) by Daphne Lawless and ‘The Puritan Paradox: The Puritan Legacy in the Intellectual, Cultural and Social Life of New Zealand, Focusing Primarily on the Works of Novelists Writing between 1862 and 1940’ (1999) by Kirstine Moffat. Lawless analyses late-colonial novels employing a Marxist feminist approach, exploring different notions of femininity particularly in romance, while Moffat focuses on the notion of Puritanism as explored by a number of novelists. While neither of the two theses

focuses solely on women writers, they accord them significant critical attention. I will refer to and expand on many of the questions raised by Lawless and Moffat, but my theoretical approach is different, as is my selection of primary texts, since they will also include non-fiction. As regards non-fiction, Laura Kroetsch's MA thesis ' "Fine in the Morning": The Life Writing of Alice McKenzie' (1994) outlines a number of insightful arguments, even though it is naturally smaller in scope than a PhD thesis or book.

The definition of the British expansion as an imperial diaspora offers an unusual perspective on its literature. Since this perspective is still uncommon, there is only a small body of theoretical literature which employs it. A helpful recent text is *Imperial White: Race, Diaspora, and the British Empire* (2007) by Radhika Mohanram. It relates diaspora theory to whiteness studies, with a focus on New Zealand and Australia. Criticism grounded in theories of portable domesticity and settler studies approaches nineteenth-century texts from a different angle but it shares with my approach a particular interest in women's writing and the interconnections within the settler empire, rather than limiting textual readings to an exploration of the centre-periphery binary. *Victorian Settler Narratives: Emigrants, Cosmopolitans and Returnees in Nineteenth-Century Literature* (2011), edited by Tamara Wagner, includes many insightful contributions to this field. A number of recent journal articles are also helpful, for example Wagner's 'Returning the Returnee's Narrative: Charlotte Evans's Domestic Fiction of Victorian New Zealand' (2011). Wagner's article discusses the novel *A Strange Friendship*, which will also be the subject of a chapter in this thesis.

Crossovers between literature and history prove fruitful, as two examples will illustrate. *Reading on the Farm: Victorian Fiction and the Colonial World* (2010) by Lydia Wevers takes the historic library at Brancepeth Station as its starting point for an exploration of what colonial reading habits tell us about the colonial world. *A Woman of Good Character: Single Women as Immigrant Settlers in Nineteenth-Century New Zealand* (1990) by Charlotte Macdonald highlights the experiences of individual women who immigrated to New Zealand in the nineteenth century.

While late-nineteenth-century texts written by women in New Zealand have received some critical attention over the past few years, many texts are left unread and many open questions remain. This thesis builds on existing research while taking a new approach to the texts and discussing a number of texts that have remained neglected.

Outline

The three sections of this thesis are entitled ‘Journey’, ‘Settling’, and ‘Community’. They follow the diasporic community from its homeland to its hostland, tracing its evolution over time and through space. The diasporic community comes into being through a number of journeys, settles in the hostland, and produces a collective diasporic identity. I will focus on the texts’ participation in this identity production. How are the texts structured and what narrative strategies do they employ? How do they textually construct the homeland, the hostland, and a network encompassing other diasporic sub-centres? What role do they accord women, notions of femininity, and women’s writing? How do they interrelate with other texts shared within the diaspora? How do they create a sense of community? While the structure of the thesis follows the diaspora’s movement through the interrelated dimensions of time and space, it also acknowledges that diaspora experience complicates these dimensions. The longing for a lost homeland has the potential to destabilise ideologies of a chronological, unbroken history: ‘Linear history is broken, the present constantly shadowed by a past that is also a desired, but obstructed, future; a renewed, painful yearning’ (Clifford 318). ‘The concept of space is . . . transformed when it is seen less through outmoded notions of fixity and place and more in terms of the ex-centric communicative circuitry that has enabled dispersed populations to converse, interact and even synchronise significant elements of their social and cultural lives’ (Gilroy, ‘Diaspora’ 211). Rather than understanding journey, settling and community as discrete historical periods that follow upon another in a linear way, I will explore how these temporal and spatial stages are simultaneously imagined. The titles of the three sections constitute descriptions of recurring motifs and overarching themes rather than chronological designations. Accordingly, all three sections will focus on texts from different time periods within my overall time frame, rather than progressing chronologically. Rather than attempt to trace linearity, my analyses focus on ‘the untidy workings of creolized, syncretized, hybridized and impure cultural forms’ (Gilroy, ‘Diaspora’ 211) with their similarities and overlaps, but also contradictions and inconsistencies.

Section I, ‘Journey’, is concerned with the diasporic community’s journey from the homeland to the hostland. British women’s voyages to New Zealand bring the diasporic community into being and occupy a central position in its production of identity and remembrance. The community’s movement through space and time is central in the context of

Section I. How do the texts construct the spaces of the homeland, the hostland, and the space of transition in between, the ship and/or the ocean? How do they employ narratives or motifs of leaving, travel, and arrival? Section I, Part 1 is an analysis of shipboard diaries as a genre, seeing them as foundational documents of diasporic society and exploring the features they have in common. What do these genre conventions – and departures from them – tell us about the diaries' representations of time, space, and the process of writing which situates the writer within these dimensions? Section I, Part 2 looks at Charlotte Evans's novel *Over the Hills, and Far Away: a Story of New Zealand* (1874), in which the voyage from Britain to New Zealand plays a crucial role as a plot element, in structural terms, and as represented in a text within the text, a fictional shipboard diary.

Section II, 'Settling', focuses on the process of settling in the hostland. Again, connotations of different spaces are important. How do the texts construct homeland and hostland? How do they relate these spaces to different notions of time? How do they represent the New Zealand landscape and the settlers' interaction with it? What role does the portrayal of Māori play in the texts as a way of establishing place and identity? Section II, Part 1 begins with a discussion of the journals of Quaker evangelist Ann Fletcher Jackson (written 1878-1902) and farm girl Alice McKenzie (written 1888-90). These journals narrate individual projects of settling and domesticating the land, displaying different ways of representing and engaging with the New Zealand landscape. My study of Mary Rolleston's account of her travels through the King Country, the Far North and Rotorua (1883) focuses on the text's conception of the hostland's transformation through 'white' industry and enterprise, which is contrasted with the alleged inability or unwillingness of Māori to cultivate the land. The final chapter of Part 1 is concerned with memoirs of the so-called pioneer days. The focus is on Catherine Ralfe's autobiography *Life in New Zealand* (1896), in particular her descriptions of life in gold digging townships in the 1860s, tracing how her text constructs an unusual role for women within the pioneer project and represents an evolving diasporic identity. Section II, Part 2 looks at the project of settling in three novels: *A Rolling Stone* by Clara Cheeseman (1886), *Ko Méri, or, a Cycle of Cathay* by Jessie Weston (1890), and *The Heart of the Bush* by Edith Searle Grossmann (1910). The discussion of *A Rolling Stone* focuses on the novel's representation of homeland, hostland and ocean and asks the question whether the novel narrates a trajectory of successful settling. *Ko Méri*, similarly to Rolleston's travel writing, engages with issues of race, space and

time. Finally, *The Heart of the Bush* raises the question whether successful settling means that the diaspora ceases to be a diaspora and moves on to become a nation state. Romance, in all of these novels, can be seen as a way of metaphorically representing ‘the settler project of taming the land and making a home’ (Stafford and Williams, ‘Introduction’).

Section III, ‘Community’, explores the textual imagination and construction of a diasporic community which develops an identity which differentiates it from Britain, while maintaining economic, political, cultural and literary ties. At the same time it forms and negotiates relationships with diasporic communities in other parts of the British world. How do the texts produce a diasporic identity that moves along these lines of inclusion and exclusion? How do they negotiate the existence of fragmentations within the diasporic community itself – of various ethnic groups such as English, Scottish and Welsh, as well as different religious beliefs and political opinions? How do the circulation of physical texts and shared reading experiences within the settler empire contribute to the project of community-building? Given the perception of women as important community builders, how do the texts deal with conceptions of femininity, with deviance, woman’s emancipation and suffrage? Section III, Part 1 begins with a return to shipboard diaries, focusing on the figure of the single female emigrant, on whom centred societal hope as well as anxiety. The shipboard diaries by Elizabeth Fairbairn (1877-78) and Jane Finlayson (1876) show different sides of the transition that notions of community and femininity underwent on board ship. Following on from these representations of the journey, Agnes Susan MacGregor’s journal (1882-86), written after her arrival in New Zealand, illuminates the connection of the experience of reading and writing to conceptions of femininity, and how these conceptions may be complicated in the diaspora. Finally, Sarah Amelia Courage’s autobiography *Lights and Shadows of Colonial Life: Twenty-Six Years in Canterbury, New Zealand* (1896) highlights class demarcations within the diasporic community. Part 2 starts by analysing the reworking of gender and genre conventions in *A Strange Friendship: a Story of New Zealand* (1874) by Charlotte Evans. Edith Searle Grossmann’s novel *Hermione: a Knight of the Holy Ghost* (1908) offers a different picture of femininity and women’s role, engaging with the woman’s rights movement and the notion of an international feminist sisterhood. The last chapter discusses a number of prohibition novels, which were often connected with the feminist movement described in *Hermione*. I trace different versions of femininity, such as angelic or colonial, that emerge in these novels and ask how they relate to a specifically diasporic identity.

Charlotte Macdonald describes her book *A Woman of Good Character* as ‘not necessarily an historical account which uncovers the *typical* experience of a group of women in the past, but one which *reveals* some of that experience’ (13; emphasis in the original). Similarly, I do not claim that this thesis is comprehensive or consistently uncovers the typical. I hope, rather, to put a spotlight on texts that I found revealing. When one approaches a body of texts with a theoretical background in mind, as I have done, it is tempting to find just what one was looking for all along. My findings have indeed sometimes been predictable, but much more often I found the unexpected. Rather than confirming my preconceived notions, the texts frequently proved startling, subversive and always more complex than the ideologies which they ostensibly promote. I can only show some of my most engaging finds and hope that my readers will sometimes be as surprised as I was.

Section I

Journey

‘I think I did not know before that there was so much water in the world, as we have gone over these last 7 days.’

Margaret Fidler, *Journal*, 23 Feb. 1877

‘No place is far away nowadays.’

Clara Cheeseman, *A Rolling Stone*, 1886 (3: 117)

New Zealand experienced a massive influx of European migrants in the nineteenth century, and British and Irish people constituted the largest proportion of them. Immigration to New Zealand experienced its first major peak with the gold boom in the 1860s. In the late nineteenth century, Julius Vogel’s assisted immigration scheme made for a second large peak, with 1874 seeing the largest number of immigrants ever to arrive in New Zealand in a single year, up to the present day. The late 1880s and the 1890s saw much lower overall numbers of immigrants due to economic depression and the discontinuation of the immigration schemes in 1888. After the turn of the century, with better economic conditions and the revival of assisted migration in 1904, numbers rose again. Women were sought-after immigrants since nineteenth-century New Zealand was characterised by an imbalance of the sexes with men being in the majority. But the voyage to New Zealand also provides a metaphor for the diaspora with implications that reach beyond these statistics. The journey from homeland to hostland can be imagined as the genesis of the diasporic community. Yet this image is a contradictory one: the journey brings the community into being while generating its dispersal, and it creates a link between homeland and hostland while separating them at the same time. The shipboard voyage reveals how ‘much water’ there is in the world – how far from home one can travel. But it is also part of a network of shipping routes that link the various parts of the British Empire, the red parts of the imperial map, ensuring that even in such a vast geographical space ‘no place is far away’. This contradiction epitomises the inherent instability of the diaspora, caught between community and dispersal, and the need for texts to construct coherence by producing a collective cultural identity. Hall argues that such an identity is continuously produced within a chain of signifiers,

each of them deferring meaning to another signifier. It is possible to see this process of *différance* as a journey, and the originary signified as an elusive point of arrival. Within this metaphor, meaning can only be produced by speaking at some point during the journey: an ‘arbitrary closure’ beyond which ‘meaning continues to unfold’ (Hall, ‘Cultural Identity’ 230). Texts that construct the voyage provide such arbitrary closures beyond which meaning is still unfolding, much like the ocean underneath a ship on its way to New Zealand. In the following, I will give an introduction to the thematic fields that follow from this metaphor and will underlie this section.

The Voyage as Link and Separation

The route along which the ship travels constitutes a link between homeland and hostland, illustrated by the connecting line which represents it on the imperial map. But by travelling along it the members of the diaspora also put distance between themselves and their homeland, generating the ‘collective memory and myth’ of the homeland which Cohen defines as one of the features of a diaspora (26). According to Hall, the unfulfilled longing for this homeland is ‘the beginning of the symbolic, of representation’ (236). Thus, the further along the shipping route’s line on the map the writer moves in the world represented by the map, the more a specifically diasporic representation and identity production comes into being. Shipboard diaries are particularly intriguing in this context since they textually construct the route and were often produced while the writer was travelling along it. However, fictional texts also deal with the myth of the homeland by engaging with the voyage which simultaneously links and separates the homeland from the diaspora.

Texts that narrate the diasporic community’s journey over water are also significant in the context of a wider settler literature. If the voyage both creates and overcomes the distance between homeland and hostland, many voyages similarly create and overcome the distance between homeland, hostland, and diasporic communities in other parts of the settler empire. I argued in the introduction to this thesis that diaspora theory, similarly to Ballantyne’s metaphor of the empire as a web, focuses on the links between the colonies rather than on a centre-periphery binary. The vocabulary Ballantyne uses emphasises the figurative and actual importance of journeys for his metaphor: the web metaphor ‘travels between locations’ (*Orientalism* 3) and reveals ‘the crucial . . . horizontal linkages between colonies’ (15). Again, these connections can be seen as corresponding to the network of shipping routes on the imperial

map, which is pictured as horizontally connecting the different geographical areas of the empire. Mohanram comments on the importance of water travel for the rise of the British Empire, arguing that Britain's self-definition was that of a nation connected to water and that the rise of the empire led to a change in the perception of the oceans: 'If previously the sea was an enclosure that protected a hermetically sealed Britain, by the eighteenth century the sea shifted in cultural meaning to become a ubiquitous and fluid roadway that led to its prosperity' (*Imperial White* 112). We see here the duality of the oceans as creating distance as well as connections, with the emphasis shifting towards the latter during the rise of the empire. Whereas the empire was connected physically by its oceans, it was also connected culturally by a shared body of texts. Therefore, texts representing the journey from Britain to New Zealand are important not only because of their focus on this journey but also because they are embedded in a larger context of diasporic literature connecting the settler empire.

The Ambiguity of a 'Position of Enunciation' on Board Ship

To argue that diasporic representation comes into being the further the writer moves along the shipping route from homeland to hostland also means acknowledging the ambiguity in the way this representation is generated. If the homeland and life in the diaspora provide the two poles of diasporic identity production, then what kind of place is the ship? Hall emphasises that '[p]ractices of representation always implicate the positions from which we speak or write – the positions of enunciation' (222). What is the position of enunciation of texts that literally or figuratively move along the route between homeland and hostland because they were written on it or engage with the voyage? This question opens up further questions related to the nation's or empire's ideology of clearly defined origins and a narrative of progress that moves linearly and teleologically into the future like the ship moves towards its destination. Both the hazards of the voyage and the ambiguity of the writer's position of enunciation reveal the tenuousness of this ideology. This contradiction illustrates the inherent contradiction of the notion of imperial diaspora: the voyage enables the diasporic expansion of the agents of an empire which, at the same time, represents itself as 'pure' and non-hybrid. The journey is thus in many ways an ambivalent image: it epitomises distance as well as connection, the rise of the empire as well as its hybridisation, and representation as well as a complicated position of enunciation.

Part 1 of this section discusses women's shipboard diaries, a body of texts that was written en route to New Zealand and also textually constructs this route. I trace thematic and

structural similarities between the diaries in order to explore how they construct the diaspora's movement through space and time, how they represent the different spaces of homeland, voyage and hostland, and in what ways they form part of a wider body of shared diasporic texts. In Part 2, I analyse Charlotte Evans's sensation novel *Over the Hills, and Far Away: a Story of New Zealand* (1874). A substantial part of this novel is written in the form of a shipboard diary, and the voyage to New Zealand occupies a central space in the structure of the text. How does this fictional shipboard diary relate to the non-fictional shipboard diaries from Part 1 in terms of genre conventions and structural similarities or differences? How does the novel negotiate the distance between homeland and hostland that is implied in the 'far away' of the title, and how does it, too, claim a place within the shared literary culture of the settler empire? This selection of texts mirrors the immigration statistics outlined above: most of the shipboard diaries were written during the 1870s and early 1880s, and Charlotte Evans's novel was published in the peak immigration year of 1874. However, the texts engage with a metaphor of the journey that transcends these statistics and becomes a crucial part of the diaspora's identity production.

Part 1: Non-Fiction

1 Routes and Histories: Shipboard Diaries

1.1 Writing Space and Time

The voyage to New Zealand was a lengthy, expensive, uncomfortable and dangerous affair for most passengers in the nineteenth century. Steamships to New Zealand only started operating on a regular basis in the 1880s, unlike on transatlantic routes, where they were introduced some fifty years earlier. This means that during the immigration boom of the 1870s, and often until the 1890s, passengers made the voyage on slower and more uncomfortable sailing ships, which took around three months to reach their destination. The usual route of emigrant ships across the Atlantic and round the Cape of Good Hope meant that for most of the voyage the ship would be out of sight of land (Hassam 8). Shipboard diaries that narrate these voyages can be described as foundational documents of the British diasporic community in New Zealand: they aim to provide a record of how that community came into being. The abundance of shipboard diaries held at the Alexander Turnbull Library in Wellington confirms the significance of this type of text. It seems that many writers kept a diary only during the voyage, not before or after, and that shipboard diaries were likely to be deposited at the archives by subsequent generations. Shipboard diaries were, and still are, considered important texts: their production was encouraged and they were considered worthy of being preserved for future readers. In this chapter a focus on shipboard diaries written by women lends individuality to the abstract concept of the journey: the texts constitute a collection of voices that bring into focus the ‘social text of diaspora life’ (Tölölyan, ‘Rethinking’ 28-29), whose importance I emphasised in the introduction to this thesis. Clifford’s suggestion that scholars engage in a ‘routing of diaspora discourses in specific maps/histories’ (319) again emphasises the crucial nature of the journey – the route, the map, and the histories which trace the route on the map.

While I will take care to let those individual voices emerge, the overall focus of my discussion is the structural similarities and shared motifs of the diaries. This approach is grounded in the assumption that shipboard diaries comprise a genre with its own conventions. The writers discussed in this chapter are a heterogeneous group: some were travelling to New Zealand with their families, be it as wives and mothers or as daughters and sisters. Others went out as servants or as matrons for single women on board, or to join a family member, their

husbands or fiancés in New Zealand. They represent different levels of financial wealth, travelling cabin class or steerage. Nevertheless, the majority of their diaries adhere to stringent conventions which largely transcend class and ethnic differences. An analysis of how some texts deal with class, ethnicity and community on board ship will be provided in Section III of this thesis.

The genre conventions make demands on both the content and the structure of the texts. It seems that there was a conventional obligation to produce a diary on the voyage, as M. T. Binks implies in her introductory sentence: ‘Well, I suppose it is what everyone does the first long voyage they take, so I must follow the general example, and write a sort of diary tho’ I am afraid it will be a very dull & prosaic affair’ (3 Sep. 1887).³ This quotation confirms Wevers’s point that ‘[w]riting seems to have been an inevitable adjunct of travel – a cultural duty and a framing intellectual habit – for most nineteenth-century travellers, as if mobility required a corresponding attempt at stability, at preservation, in the form of a textual record’ (*Country* 5).

Entries are usually very regular, reflecting the day-to-day progression of the voyage. Most diarists write every day or note at least the date and that there is nothing to note. The length of individual entries varies considerably from one diarist to another, but to a large extent this simply appears to reflect the amount of time and skill the writer had at her disposal – first-class passengers had more time to write and were also more literate than steerage passengers. The incidents related in the texts are similar and often repetitive. This is no doubt due to the fact that the writers went through a similar experience but also that particular incidents were expected to be included in a shipboard diary. Nearly all writers record details about the weather, food and meal arrangements, passenger sketches, maritime rituals like Neptune’s visit on the occasion of crossing the equator, saloon entertainments for the wealthier passengers and duties like sewing and cleaning for those in the steerage, and religious services on board. Depending on the ship’s route, accounts of stopovers and sightseeing along the way might be included; maybe also incidents like a storm, a fire, illness or an accident on board, births and deaths. Many writers record the progress made by the ship since the last entry, often including detailed information on latitude and longitude.

³ I quote from the diaries or their transcripts held at the Alexander Turnbull Library without correcting spelling or grammatical idiosyncrasies.

The structure of a shipboard diary is connected with the act of travelling: the text mirrors the writer's movement through time and space. In his analysis of shipboard diaries in *Sailing to Australia*, Andrew Hassam argues that 'the construction of the diary was also an attempt to construct the voyage experience' (4), but whereas he is interested in the psychological implications the act of writing had for the emigrants, I will focus on how the voyage structured the text rather than on what this meant for the diarist's personal experience of the journey. The progression of the voyage becomes visible in the narrative as most diarists note information such as the ship's position and speed, miles covered and whether the wind is favourable. The beginning and ending of the voyage and that of the narrative usually coincide. As Hassam points out, we need to distinguish between the beginning and ending of the *text*, which is often a discursive preamble or conclusion – such as Binks's introductory sentence quoted above ('I must follow the general example, and write a sort of diary'), 'Finis', 'The End', or, as Fairbairn writes, '[t]hey [the single women under her care] have my best wishes and with these I close this writing' – and the beginning of the *narrative* (46-49). In the majority of the diaries, the narrative starts with embarkation or setting sail – Clara Hoby's opening sentence is a typical example: 'We left the pier at Gravesend about 1.15 on Thursday June 9th 1881, where we said good bye to dear Papa, Mama & Aunt Emma' (n.d.). The details about time, place and people present establish the writer's situation in both time and space – in Hoby's sentence, time and space actually blend into one as the relative pronoun 'where' seems to refer mistakenly to the date, which precedes it in the sentence. The diary usually concludes with the writer's arrival at her destination, sometimes a few days later, when the writer has settled in and started to establish a new home, thus 'completing' her arrival. Again this often comprises situating the writer in time and space. Margaret Fidler even implies that it would not be appropriate to continue the diary after arrival: 'And now I will stop for what happened after that, could not be classed, any part of a voyage from England to New Zealand' (17 Apr. 1877). Narrative and voyage thus run parallel to each other, as becomes evident when Elizabeth Brough concludes her diary with: 'We parted with good wishes on both sides, and there ends our voyage' – and so does the text (2 Sep. 1874). Hassam suggests that this generic structure of shipboard diaries is linked to a cultural assumption that journeys are 'narrative events' with 'a natural beginning and ending' (47): 'The belief . . . is that journeys are naturally shaped like a story, and the diary as the book of the voyage has to begin at the beginning of the narrative' (50). While I agree with Hassam that the narrative and the

journey are parallel to each other, again his interpretation of this convention is more focused on the psychology of the writer than my reading is. He states that the parallel structure of narrative and journey is due to a psychological 'desire to construct meaningful narratives out of the passing of time' (51). I consider it more relevant here what function the diaries fulfilled not just for the emigrants who were writing them but also for the collective identity construction of the diaspora. If an entire genre takes the journey as its structuring principle, this illustrates the centrality of the voyage as both actual event and foundational metaphor for the community.

The parallel structure of journey and narrative implies a notion of time as linear and the diary as chronologically capturing the progress of the ship towards its destination. As Hassam notes, 'the nautical entry was the basic entry in the emigrant diary; when all else failed, the emigrants recorded the wind and the weather' (99). Shipboard life after a while did not provide the diarist with many fresh impressions to write about, and then, 'in the absence of anything to be written about, all the journal can do is mark time' (Hassam 98). Elizabeth Brough's brief diary entries are an extreme example of this mere recording of time, illustrating how even dramatic events can get subsumed in the narrative by this marking of time and progress:

24th., --Funeral of child: service read by the Doctor. It was a very affecting scene. 167 miles.

. . .

26th., --Nothing of importance. 175 miles. (June 1874)

. . .

11th., --Combined high winds and heavy seas. Two children died. 258 miles.

12th., --Children buried; parents in great distress. Winds abated. 251 miles.

. . .

15th.,-- Child died. 258 miles.

16th., --Child buried. 190 miles. (July 1874)

Enclosed by the date, the weather, and the miles covered since the last entry, dramatic incidents such as children dying seem to be accorded no more significance by the text than '[n]othing of importance'. Whereas Brough notes how 'affecting' the funeral was and the 'great distress' of the parents, structurally this is overwhelmed by the conventional adherence to the marking of time. Hassam argues that journey-stories as 'exemplary chronological narratives' gave form to a 'sense of time as progress', which 'matched nineteenth-century beliefs in natural, social, and economic

evolution, a belief that movement forward through time and space produced a cumulative, positive effect' (51). As outlined above, this ideology of linear and teleological time is not only a nineteenth-century way of thinking, as Hassam describes it, but also one that is inherent to the concept of the nation, imperialism, and, as Dyer contends, the racial self-representation of white people (31). Since all of these concepts are fundamental to the collective identity of the British diaspora, I argue that their representation in the shipboard diary through the notion of chronological, progressive time illustrates more than, as Hassam claims, the emigrants' personal hopes for 'future stability both in terms of an ending to the voyage and in terms of a resolution to the factors which gave rise to the decision to emigrate' (102). Rather, the diaries in their chronicling of the ship's progress perpetuate the diaspora's underlying ideology of progress, evolution, and imperialism.

However, this ideology is undermined by the writer's position of enunciation on board ship. The journey represents a period of liminality which questions the possibility of tracing clear origins. Just as behind the 'arbitrary closure' of linguistic representation 'meaning continues to unfold' (Hall, 'Cultural Identity' 230), the texts can only ever capture one arbitrary moment within the liminal period of the journey. They describe a period of transition in which the writer moves from departure via journey to arrival. This movement takes place in both a spatial and a temporal dimension and the text interweaves the two. The narrative recounts a movement between different spaces: from the homeland through a space of transition – the ship and the ocean – to the hostland. This is simultaneously a movement from the past (the memory of the homeland) through the present (the moment of writing) to the anticipated future (a new life in the diaspora). One instance which makes this moment of transition visible in the texts is the recurring motif of looking back, to the past and the homeland, and looking forward, to the future and the hostland. This motif relates to both a physical and a figurative act of looking: at the scenery as well as at the change brought about by the voyage. Jane Finlayson writes about looking back to what the ship is leaving behind: 'we stayed on deck till we were ordered to our own place at seven o'clock, we took along look at Scotland and could not help thinking many a change may pass before we see it again' (23 Sep. 1876). As the ship is nearing its destination and the passengers sight land, Fidler looks forward to the hostland: 'To any one who has been on the sea for three months, as all the sailing vessels from home are, without sighting land, to them, their first view of the new Zealand shores must be cheering & refreshing' (17 Apr. 1877).

Fairbairn's text provides a more figurative instance of looking back and forward: 'Yet I am sure my heart will yearn over my native land and the friends I have left here. But that must be home' (3 Jan. 1878). Her confusion of local adverbs makes clear how time and space are intermingled at the moment of looking. Fairbairn has been on the ship for months, yet she refers to her 'native land' Scotland as 'here'. In the sentence which follows, the word 'that' seems to refer to her old 'home', Scotland; however, it actually refers to her new 'home', New Zealand. Linguistically, the hostland takes the place of the homeland as 'home'. The two places, past and future, merge into one at the moment of writing.

Fairbairn's (con)fusion of adverbs hints at a frequent motif in the literature of the settler empire: texts often convey the notion that there is no real difference between homeland and hostland, a notion implied in such linguistic twists as the New Zealand Company's marketing of New Zealand as a 'Britain of the South'. This motif can be seen as the diaspora's struggle to produce an identity separate from that of the host society by still identifying with the homeland, as other sub-centres of the diaspora do as well. In a shipboard diary, however, this constitutes a further ambiguity or contradiction, since travel writing usually stresses the strange and exotic. Elizabeth Herd's diary represents a struggle to establish sameness by naming and textual structure. The introduction to the diary, apparently written at a later point, begins:

I was one of Six daughters of Mr. Goulding, Farmer in the North of England, County of Cumberland; his farm lay about seven miles from Penrith, and eleven miles from Carlisle, on the main highroad.

The name of the farm was 'Aikbank'. . . . My father lived on that farm for forty years or more. (n.d.)

The final sentences of the diary mirror this opening:

At the top of the hill is a house (Aik Bank House), which William [her fiancé] informed me was my future home.

Tom was there and had dinner waiting for us. (24 June 1885)

While the narrative, untypically, does not begin with the start of the shipboard voyage, Herd still situates herself, both at the beginning and at the end of the narrative, as the narrator within space (an abundance of place names) and time ('for forty years or more', 'had dinner waiting for us'). Her old and new home seem to become identical in the text, not only because the name of her 'future home' is actually the same as that of her father's farm but also because the diary uses the

name both in its opening and in its closing sentences. Herd's text thus makes her old home in Britain and her new home in the colony metaphorically the same.

However, the writers of shipboard diaries are in a paradoxical situation related to the contradiction between the journey's creation of distance as well as connection. On the one hand, the diaries constitute important foundational documents for the diaspora precisely because they describe the journey as a period of transition and change which brings a sub-centre of the diaspora into being. Many writers emphasise the distance which their ship is covering in temporal, spatial and figurative terms. Hobby notes that 'it is five weeks today since we came on board at Gravesend – really a very short time, but it seems long to me, it has brought us so far from dear old England' (14 July 1881), and Fidler writes:

Dear me, we are only a week at sea, a week away, from home & yet 11 hundred miles away. I can only understand it sometimes, & oftener think Scotland is just below the horizon where we cant see it. I think I did not know before that there was so much water in the world, as we have gone over these last 7 days. (23 Feb. 1877; emphasis in the original)

On the other hand, the text needs to downplay the significance of the journey so as not to presume too great a difference between centre and sub-centre and to maintain the construction of sameness. Bethia Mawhinney's description of sighting the Tasmanian coast en route to New Zealand provides such an inventive example of handling this paradox that it deserves to be quoted at some length:

You cannot know what a treat it is to see land after nearly three weeks of nothing but sea and sky. We soon spread the good news and every-one came hurrying up on both the saloon deck and ours to see. It got nearer and soon we could trace a whole range of peaks from north to south, some of then very high so that we had been taking them for clouds at first. As we approached we found them to be great rocks rising perpendicular out of the water. . . . I believe it is very like the west coast of Scotland or a scene on the coast of Norway. . . . I have discovered smoke rising on a lower wooded part stretching down to the shore. We wonder if they for there is more than one – are the camp fires of some of our fellow country men – 'on the swag' looking for 'pastures new' among these interminable hills. But the Matron says it is a bush fire – how caused we know not. . . . The last things we

could see were the never ending hills showing black behind the clouds . . . with the bush fires now far in our wake glowing red, reminding us of the whims burning on an April evening on the hills at home . . . (28 Nov. 1887)

Mawhinney's first impulse on seeing the strange landscape is to make it seem home-like: 'very like the west coast of Scotland'. The text then attempts to similarly appropriate and make familiar the rising smoke by describing it as 'the camp fires of some of our fellow country men', but Mawhinney learns that the smoke is caused by a bush fire. However, by the time the ship moves on and the coast is fading out of sight, she describes the same fires as 'reminding us of the whims burning on an April evening on the hills at home', thus incorporating what seemed to be strange in the metaphor of sameness which was established earlier in her description of the coast. This strategy is embedded in a description of the ship's movement towards the coast, alongside it, and away from it – but at the same time as narrating this movement and thus the covering of distance, Mawhinney describes the strange place as familiar and home-like, figuratively diminishing this distance. She simultaneously constructs distance and sameness, negotiating the paradox of the ship bearing her away from her homeland while the shipping route also constitutes a link to that same homeland.

The importance of the homeland is also evident in the implied audience of the texts. As Hassam suggests, shipboard diarists were largely 'writing for the hearth' (42), 'a small circle of relations and friends' (34). He makes the important point that it is not relevant whether the implied audience actually received the diary or if the text was read by a larger audience, for example if the diary was published as a book or in a newspaper: 'All writing makes assumptions about who will read it. . . . Emigrant diaries were written in order to give the voyage out a communicable form. . . . In order to give the voyage out this shape, diarists had to imagine an audience, and that audience was a group of family and friends at home' (42). Hassam makes a vital point about the implied audience of the diaries: it was an audience in the homeland. Even as the diary attempted to chronicle the progression of the voyage away from the homeland, it anticipated an audience in the place the writer was leaving behind. The diasporic myth of the homeland is thus clearly visible in the diaries, together with the contradictions the voyage entails.

1.2 Journey and Empire

Shipboard diaries are embedded in the context of a wider diasporic literature circulating in the settler empire. Just as the shipping routes along which the diarists travel can be seen as

geographical links between the different parts of the empire, the texts that travel with the writers constitute textual links that produce identity and create community. The diaries are replete with intertextual references, confirming Wevers's argument that

[t]he travel experience is deeply textual – other travel books, brochures, maps, guidebooks all inform the traveller's progress, and almost all travellers notice and comment on the books, journals and wall illustrations they encounter as they travel. The traveller's eye for print reveals the high level of dissemination of information about different parts of the Empire circulating within it. (*Country* 5)

Most shipboard diarists incorporate into their diaries texts as varied as passenger lists, saloon menus, newspaper articles, miles covered (which were daily posted on the ship), letters, poems, extracts from other passengers' diaries, and songs performed on board – Agnes MacGregor relates that 'Middleton sang 'Nancy Lee' splendidly, and, when encored, sang 'Sour kraut' (a comic song) with great spirit' (27 Aug. 1881). Texts about the ship's destination also circulate on board and are mentioned in the diaries, demonstrating 'the high level of dissemination of information about different parts of the Empire' (Wevers, *Country* 5). Fairbairn, matron in the single women's cabin, relates that '[t]he Dr gave us two books about N.Z., one for upstairs and the other for downstairs. I read part of it last night to a rather numerous audience. They seemed to like it well and I will continue my reading as long as they are attentive' (13 Nov. 1877). Finlayson describes a formal teaching context in which she and other young women learn about New Zealand from a clergyman: 'Mr Bannerman describes [the native birds] nicely to us, we enjoy his teaching more and more everyday, he was saying today we will soon know as much about New Zealand as if we had been living there for years' (7 Nov. 1876). The writers comment on general information about the voyage they have learned from other texts, and how their own experience relates to this information. Mary Brooke writes after a fire on board that 'I have many times read of ships being on fire at sea, but I never anticipated that such a dreadful occurrence would become a scene in my life's history' (25 Dec. 1879). Finlayson repeatedly refers to going through experiences already familiar to her from information she has read or heard: 'We have got the first night over and quite a novelty it is we have heard of ship life often but the reality is scarcely so pleasant' (23 Sep. 1876); 'I have often heard of sea-sickness but this is it indeed' (25 Sep.); '[w]e have often heard of a storm in the Bay of Biscay but we saw it in reality last night' (30 Sep.); '[w]e have often heard of Equatorial heat but this is it in reality' (16 Oct.). This

familiarity with other texts about shipboard travel accounts for the diaries' adherence to genre conventions. As Wevers points out, nineteenth-century travel writing followed the conventions established by other travel writing and by guidebooks such as the tellingly-named *What to Observe* (1841) by Colonel Julian Jackson of the Royal Society (*Country* 3). Sara Mills notes that travel writing enters into a 'close intertextual relation with other travel accounts' to the point that it sometimes plagiarises from these accounts (73-74). What is true for travel writing in general also appears to be the case for shipboard diaries: Hassam mentions W. H. G. Kingston's *Emigrant Voyager's Manual* (1850), which gives detailed instructions for shipboard diary keeping and even includes a specimen entry where the diarist only needed to fill in the gaps (Hassam 36-37).

The diaries themselves claim a place within this network of texts related to shipboard travel in general and the voyage to New Zealand in particular. Whereas today we conceive of diaries as introspective and not intended for a larger audience, nineteenth-century shipboard diaries were written as public, not private texts. The texts anticipate an audience of friends, family, and possibly a wider public. They are often written in the form of a letter or address an implied audience. Couchman begins her diary by addressing a readership composed of her family and maybe close friends:

My Dear Brothers, and Sisters and Mother and all Dear and near to me,
I am going to try and give you a little description of our voyage to new
Zealand. (28 Aug. 1879)

Fidler states that she writes her diary for the benefit of 'all [her] friends':

I feel very loth to commence this journal of small incidents which may occur on
our voyage to Melbourne, but if I don't I'll be forgetting the events of the last
week & tho' it is sad at present to record my life apart from all my friends, yet
afterwards it may be a pleasure for them . . . to have a remembrance of it. (22 Feb.
1877)

Hassam points out that in anticipation of a varied audience shipboard diaries incorporate different forms of discourse, which range from the recounting of rumours and jokes to more factual information such as nautical details, advice on what to pack or what shipping line to use, and descriptions of life on board, scenery, the weather, birds and fish (Hassam 78-88). The diaries discussed here frequently veer between these different discourses. Fidler narrates how on

the occasion of crossing the Equator the crew plays a joke on the passengers by placing a hair across the telescope and claiming it is the 'line': 'The Captain has also assured Mr Mors that we would slip over it quite quietly as the ship's bottom would be greased' (6 Mar. 1877). Directly interacting with an oral text, Mawhinney notes: 'A girl whispered to me not to write down that we had plumpudding for dinner so for spite I may tell you we had' (3 Nov. 1887). When they focus on more factual information, the texts participate in the dissemination of information of the voyage within the empire. Ann Timpson, very dissatisfied with food and accommodation, writes 'Do not advise anyone to come out on this line' (26 May 1886) and 'Never advise anyone to come out in any ship when there is no Doctor' (1 June). Brough, after a 'frightful storm', explains that it happened 'in the most dangerous part of the seas, known as the Snares – hugh [sic] rocks on the South of Stewart's Island, a place where vessels were wrecked' (2 Sep. 1874). However, while the texts anticipate that such information will be helpful to prospective emigrants, a number of writers also state that there are limits to the what the diaries can convey, for instance Couchman: 'You have no idea what this life is like unless you come out in some emigrant ship some day' (22-23 Sep. 1879). Nevertheless, even statements like Couchman's anticipate that the text will form part of a shared settler literature which disseminates information, even if that information might be inadequate.

The problem of how to convey the diaries safely to their audience preoccupies many of the authors. When Herd writes that 'Armstrong, our friend, told me he would post my Diary in London on his return from New Zealand . . . and I think I can trust him, for he is, I believe, a genuine fellow' (24 May 1885), she emphasises the public nature of her text – it is not a private diary, but intended to be posted to her readers – and, simultaneously, its importance: she would not entrust the manuscript to anyone, only to someone who is 'our friend', 'a genuine fellow', and whom she thinks she can trust. As Hassam observes, '[g]reat care and patience was often devoted to the presentation of fair copies. They were given elaborate title pages that imitated the title page of a printed book. . . . In addition . . . , diaries would imitate printed books by having page numbers, contents pages, and indexes. Many contain illustrations' (24-25). As Hassam also points out, this emphasises the importance accorded to the diaries as literature. Arguably, this is not only the literature of 'the dominant middle-class culture', as Hassam claims (25), but a broader body of texts circulating within and connecting the entire settler empire.

This pretension of the diaries to be part of a shared settler literature paradoxically also explains the frequent claims that the authors do not accord their texts any merit. Hoby writes: ‘What with packing, changing steamers & getting settled again, there will probably be a lull in this journal, which I should think my friends will be glad of, as I am afraid it would be very tedious reading’ (n.d.) and Jane Olding urges her readers: ‘Trust to your friendship to excuse all defects and mistakes from outsiders’ (4 Oct. 1885). Herd actually includes a wish for her mistakes to be overlooked as part of a prayer: ‘And now I have done my best to describe in an uncouth manner the proceedings of today to my beloved ones at home. I shall close with “May God bless them all at home, and may they read this with as much interest as I have written it, and overlook all errors” ’ (14 May 1885). On first sight, these claims seem to confirm Sara Mills’s point that women writers often adopted a self-belittling pose to anticipate critique. Referring to Russell, Mills argues that women travel writers were facing a double bind: as women, they were not supposed to write about certain topics, such as sex or science – but if they fulfilled these expectations and adhered to the constraints placed on their writing, their texts would be regarded as inferior precisely because of their limited range of vision. A self-belittling pose anticipated such statements (Mills 81-82). However, Hassam notes that male shipboard diarists frequently made similar claims of inferiority (37), which demonstrates that the genre conventions of shipboard diaries largely transcended gender boundaries. He proposes that if, for instance, diarists modestly claimed to be writing only for their own or their readers’ amusement, this placed the diary within a cultural hierarchy of different kinds of writing, which had religious writing at the top and amusing writing at the bottom (38). This confirms my point that the diaries aspired to be part of a shared body of texts circulating within the empire, even if it was at the bottom of the literary hierarchy.

My discussion of shipboard diaries has shown that they can be described as foundational documents of diaspora experience, and that they follow genre conventions. The texts situate their narrators in space and time, negotiating the tenuous link which the voyage establishes between homeland and hostland. They aspire to form part of a shared settler literature that deals with the crucial experience and metaphor of the journey. However, no body of texts speaks with a single voice, and shipboard diaries are no exception. Agnes Cunningham Christie’s diary is a surprising text because it goes against the grain of the genre. Christie emigrated from Scotland to New Zealand with her mother and siblings in 1879. Her text follows the conventions of shipboard

diaries only loosely. For instance, she sometimes notes latitude and longitude, but more often she just leaves a blank or gives imprecise information on the location of the ship, for instance ‘[t]oday we are off the coast of Portugal today somewhere’ (2 Sep.). Whereas other diarists try to write every day and put down precise details on what happened and when, she notes carelessly ‘I really can’t remember all that has happened this longtime’ (30 Oct.), after interrupting her entries for nearly three weeks, or ‘[s]omewhere about the end of October we saw a lot of whales’ (12 Nov.). Her diary is also more emotional than most others, implying that she sees it as private notes rather than a public text. Gossip is her main interest, evidenced in entries such as:

Miss Annie Landells has completely hooked Mr Wilkie it is most amusing to watch her efforts

Miss B has succeeded equally well with the tall nice looking apprentice White, which must afford her satisfaction. (3 Sep.)

Gossip takes precedence over generic information such as the ship’s position: ‘We crossed the line today so it is unnecessary to put down the lat, at least something very interesting has happened. There has an engagement taken place in our cabin between Mr Graves & Mrs Hodge’ (29 Sep.). There seems to be little self-censorship with her future audience in mind – for instance, she writes rather unguardedly that ‘[a] very exciting event has happened within the last few days. Amy Graham is engaged to Mr Ellis! of of [sic] all people. How she can be such a goose no one can guess, for he is horrid and she can’t possibly know anything about him’ (12 Nov.), or even ‘I hate Mr C!’ (7 Sep.; emphasis in the original). She also complains about her mother in an emotional tone:

Mamma has been giving us a fearful rowing for staying on deck after prayers and going in the forecastle and says we will be talked about & that the Blundells & Landells are not respected etc. etc. It is very hard to expect us to go to bed soon in this heat, when all the married ladies except herself stay later than us & the Graham girls go about all alone while we always have Andrew etc. to look after us I don't know what she wd say if she knew of the dressing up tonight. (12 Sep.)

Not surprisingly, Christie refuses to send the diary ‘home’ upon arrival in New Zealand and wants to keep it a private text instead, thus keeping it out of the canon of shipboard diaries: ‘Mamma wants us to send our diaries home I will keep mine to myself’ (30 Dec.; emphasis in the original). Her diary shows that the voyage to New Zealand was not always interpreted as a

founding event of diasporic society, one that would give rise to a generic and public text. Instead, Christie sees the voyage as a period of transition between her old and her new life, where she enjoys comparative liberty. In the gossip-filled microcosm on board ship, societal norms can temporarily be suspended, leading to the opportunity to '[stay] on deck after prayers and [go] in the fore-castle'. Christie regrets that this time is over when she notes upon arrival that 'almost all our friends are gone & we miss them very much indeed I hope we will see them again. . . . If ever I go home I hope the voyage will be as nice & jolly as this one has been I'm afraid it can't' (30 Dec.; emphasis in the original). Her diary recognises the liminal nature of the journey. Rather than implying that the journey experience can be endlessly retold within the conventions of the genre, Christie recognises it as an event which is unrepeatable.

Part 2: Fiction

2 *Negotiating Distance: Over the Hills, and Far Away*

Charlotte Evans's *Over the Hills, and Far Away: a Story of New Zealand* (1874) is ostensibly a generic sensation novel, staying true to the formula popularised in Britain by Wilkie Collins. It incorporates typical elements of sensation novels, such as scandalous crimes in the past, bigamy and adultery, false identities and dramatic disguise, and a mystery which needs to be solved, 'with the effects of shock and surprise heightened through the use of evocative settings and a psychological-physiological rhetoric of sensation' (Jones 113). However, the title hints that despite this apparent conventionality the shipboard and New Zealand settings add more to the text than merely an exotic backdrop to a formulaic plot, as Stevens assumes when she claims that the 'characters remain nostalgically English' and the 'Canterbury scene and life are only incidental' (16). The narrative engages with the distance between the homeland and a 'far away' hostland. The crucial as well as contradictory role of the journey for the diaspora is emphasised by the centrality of the voyage for both plot and structure of the novel. In the following I will give a short introduction to the novel's plot before analysing it in more detail.

The main narrative relates how Dr Dacre falls in love with the novel's heroine Lucy but is unable to marry her because of his unwise previous marriage to a woman who has left him for another man. Meanwhile, Lucy secretly becomes engaged to the superficial Clinton Meredith, but realising his inconstancy when he prefers her friend, she ends the engagement. In a dramatic scene Dr Dacre's alleged wife Laura reveals her true identity as Laura's sister Beatrice and discloses that the real Laura is dead, leaving Dr Dacre free to marry. At the same time, it is revealed that Lucy's brother Louis has secretly married Beatrice without being aware of her history. In his rush to Lucy's home Dr Dacre falls off his horse and dies, however not before surrendering himself to God, urging Lucy to forgive Louis, and being in turn forgiven by Lucy. Lucy lives chastely and selflessly ever after. This main plot is accompanied by a number of melodramatic sub-plots set in the midst of lush scenery and 'imported drawing room splendours' (Brown, 'Over').

Lawrence Jones lists the 'documentary method' of narration – the use of letters, diaries, newspaper articles and so on – as one of the features of sensation novels (13). *Over the Hills* makes use of this method primarily by inserting parts of Lucy's shipboard diary into the

narrative. Five of the seven first chapters of the novel are from this diary, the only extended part of the novel written in the ‘documentary method’. Lucy’s shipboard diary begins in the most conventional way imaginable at the start of Chapter II:

On board the ‘Flora Macdonald,’ July 27th, 18—.Yesterday, Louis and I went on board the ‘Flora Macdonald,’ at Gravesend, and to-day we sailed; so I suppose I ought immediately to commence a diary of the voyage. Every one, I am told, begins one on first setting out, but people say it is very hard to find something to record every day at sea. (14)

These sentences replicate the genre-specific beginnings of non-fictional shipboard diaries. The text situates the writer, Lucy, in time – ‘on board the “Flora Macdonald,” at Gravesend’ – and space – ‘July 27th, 18–’, ‘[y]esterday’, ‘to-day’ – and states who was present when boarding the ship – ‘Louis and I’. It alludes to the convention of ‘immediately commenc[ing] a diary of the voyage’ because ‘[e]very one’ does it and contains a pose of self-belittlement in the announcement that it will be ‘very hard to find something to record every day at sea’. Even if the title of the chapter was not ‘Pages from Lucy’s Diary’, the reader would have no trouble recognising these sentences as the start of a shipboard diary. The diary continues in a generic way, albeit narrating events that appear more scandalous and indeed sensational than most of what befell women travellers outside sensation novels. While the text is more stylistically accomplished than most non-fictional shipboard diaries, it conforms to most of the genre conventions throughout. It records the weather, details about meals, seasickness, speaking other vessels, religious services read by the ship’s captain, passing sights such as Madeira, daytime amusements, the second-class passengers singing songs and dancing on deck, and information on the other first-class passengers. Lucy also notes the convention of writing regularly, and that she has not always adhered to it: ‘August 16th, Tuesday. – I have never touched my diary for a fortnight. So much for the good resolutions made at the commencement of the voyage’ (32). The end of Chapter VII, while not ‘quoting’ the shipboard diary to the end, makes clear that it would still have conformed to genre conventions:

With this we close the extracts from Lucy’s diary. After leaving the tropics it becomes a mere occasional record of the weather, and of the latitude and longitude, copied from the slate in the saloon, so that its interest for our readers is

over. But we learn from the conclusion of it that the 'Flora Macdonald' anchored safely at Port Chalmers on the 17th of November. (78)

Having run out of 'something to record every day at sea' (14), Lucy's diary is reduced to the marking of time, just like Elizabeth Brough's diary quoted earlier, and the arrival at the ship's destination is the typical conclusion of shipboard diaries. Mirroring the beginning of the diary, time and place are specified – 'at Port Chalmers on the 17th of November'. The diary's conforming to the genre conventions in both content and structure underlines its alleged authenticity. The readers of *Over the Hills* were expected to be familiar with these conventions, again confirming that shipboard diaries were part of a shared settler literature, read and written by a large number of people.

Lucy's shipboard diary occupies a central place in the structure of the novel, stressing the importance of the voyage to the text. *Over the Hills* begins in a similar way to the shipboard diary it encloses. This places emphasis on the diary as constituting another, repeated beginning of the narrative:

Brighton during the season, and about three o'clock on a glorious summer afternoon; the Grand Parade a stream of carriages and riders so deep and rapid that Lucy Cunningham, after waiting vainly for several minutes for a chance to cross the road, gave it up in despair. . . .

She had some letters in one hand, and was intending to drop them into the first pillar letter-box she met with. There was one on the farther side of the road just opposite to her she knew, but at present she was cut off from it by the steady ebb and flow of chariots during the season. . . . This was Monday. On Tuesday she was going with her mother on board the 'Flora Macdonald,' bound for Otago. (1-2)⁴

As with the opening sentences of a shipboard diary, the text specifies time – 'during the season, and about three o'clock on a glorious summer afternoon', 'Monday', 'Tuesday' –, place – 'Brighton', 'the Grand Parade', 'on board the "Flora Macdonald," bound for Otago' –, and people present – 'Lucy Cunningham', 'with her mother'. It also evokes the need to convey written documents safely to their audience, an issue of significance in many shipboard diaries.

⁴ The start of the novel is obviously not well proofed, since Lucy does not actually board the ship with her mother, who is dead, but with her brother Louis.

The narrative immediately establishes that Lucy is going to leave England for New Zealand, and underlines the importance of this event by employing maritime imagery – ‘ebb and flow’, ‘a stream of carriages and riders so deep and rapid’ – and setting the action in Brighton, a seaside location. The first chapter thus prepares the reader, both structurally and thematically, for the start of Chapter II and Lucy’s shipboard diary. The central status of the diary is enhanced by it being the only lengthy ‘documentary’ text in the novel, authenticating the sensationalist plot.

Shortly after, another motif prevalent in shipboard diaries appears: looking forward in both a physical and a metaphorical sense. Lucy is ‘leaning on the railings of the Esplanade, looking out, not only at the blue waves of the Channel, but also at the advancing tide of her life’ (4). Again, maritime imagery is used with ‘the advancing tide of her life’. This ‘tide’ foreshadows Lucy’s future life, but at the same time Lucy also looks physically on the water she is soon to traverse. This motif of looking back and forward can be traced throughout the novel, further stressing the centrality of the voyage in the text. The narrative device of foreshadowing, which enhances suspense by hinting at a mystery soon to be revealed, is a stock element of sensation novels. However, foreshadowing is also similar to the physical and figurative ‘looking’ of the authors of shipboard diaries into the spatial and temporal distance. *Over the Hills* is fraught with such moments of foreshadowing, often connected to acts of gazing physically into the distance as well as metaphorically into the future: ‘She looked up the wild ravine in the direction he indicated, wishing she could see through the hills which barred her view of Louis’ future home. But she never dreamt for a moment of the important part which that cluster of wooden huts, ten good miles away, was to play in her life’s story’ (84). Just as Lucy earlier gazed upon the water which she was soon to cross, she here gazes upon the huts where a future crucial scene will be set. Cvetkovich argues that ‘[s]ensationalism’s use of the visual, of the relation between the hidden and the seen, contributes to its capacity to make the abstract seem concrete’ (24). Similarly, in the shipboard diaries the narrators’ gazing back at the homeland, hostland, or water makes concrete the metaphorical implications of the voyage for the diaspora. In another scene the characters look back upon the English countryside, however not from the ship but by way of paintings:

There were several water-colour sketches on the walls in plain gilt frames. All of them were views on the South Devon Coast. The by moonlight [sic], a view from Plymouth Hoe, and a Study of the Bolt Head, were the three largest of them. . . .

[A]ll were well painted, and brought back that lovely coast scenery to Arthur in a moment. . . .

‘I see you are recognizing the old places,’ remarked Laura, as she followed the direction of his eyes. ‘How I do long myself sometimes to see that exquisite colouring again; to stand once more on the dear old Bolt, with my eyes on the glorious blue sea beneath!’ (248)

The English scenery is situated in the past: the locations depicted are ‘old places’ which need to be ‘brought back’ to memory. Laura’s nostalgic wish to see them in reality ‘once more’, while at present it is only possible to see them in paintings, emphasises the characters’ physical distance to them. They are thus placed at both a temporal and a spatial distance. Scenes such as this correspond to the motif of looking back to the scenery of the homeland, which disappears in the distance as the ship moves on, and they also bring to mind Mawhinney’s description of the Tasmanian coast as a picturesque ‘scene on the coast of Norway’. Thus motifs typical of shipboard diaries can be found throughout *Over the Hills*.

The journey to New Zealand is important in the novel not only in structural terms but also in terms of plot development. The voyage sets up the relationship constellations for the rest of the story: nearly all of the main characters make each other’s acquaintance on board. The liminal space of the ship provides an opportunity in the text to set up new relationships or hint at existing ones that later become crucial for the novel’s plot. Lucy gets engaged to Clinton Meredith but also finds herself drawn to Dr Dacre, while Dr Dacre realises that Laura/Beatrice is also on board. Later in the narrative it is revealed that Louis secretly made Laura/Beatrice’s acquaintance on board ship, leading to their clandestine marriage, and that Clinton only proposed to Lucy because he learned of his first love’s marriage from a newspaper announcement which he read on board ship: one of the many texts that might find their way into a shipboard diary. Brown claims that ‘[a] central preoccupation of Evans’ characters would . . . appear to lie in the uncovering and reconstitution of their various past relationships in England’ (‘Over’). However, all these relationships are altered or only come into being during the voyage.

Brown states that *Over the Hills* disregards the spatial and temporal distance between the characters’ lives in England and New Zealand. She claims that ‘upon disembarkation at Port Chalmers, the characters’ former ties with their home country appeared to swiftly re-established [sic] themselves – with seemingly little or no sense of intervening time, distance or physical

effort' and that their new life takes place in a 'conventionally idealised New Zealand landscape of home-like features' ('Over'). This suggests that similarly to some shipboard diaries the novel aims figuratively to diminish the differences between homeland and hostland. However, the novel faces the same paradox as the diaries: it observes the importance of the journey as creating a link, while at the same time stressing the distance between Britain and New Zealand. The text emphasises distance at the same time as representing New Zealand as a home-like place where past English relationships can be continued without rupture. The preface of the novel already places the text at a distance from the location of its anticipated audience in the homeland. It explains that '[i]n writing this story, I had in my mind the New Zealand of some years ago, with which I first made acquaintance. Since then much is altered' (v). In addition to this temporal distance of 'some years', spatial distance is evoked, in pathetic language, as an obstacle to the text's reception in the 'home-country': 'Thinking of the mighty waste of waters which separates me from the home-country, I feel tempted to exclaim, "Oh, mighty ocean which divides us, hush your roar awhile! Oh, wild winds, cease to moan! and let them hear my voice in England!"' (vi) Like the shipboard diaries, the novel implies an audience in the homeland, to which the text must be conveyed across a dangerous and 'mighty ocean'. That this distance is figurative rather than literal is evident in the fact that *Over the Hills* was published in England – what needs to be conveyed to the homeland is the author's 'voice' rather than the physical text. As Hassam points out, shipboard diaries were 'writing for the hearth' (Hassam 42) – so were sensation novels with their elements of domestic melodrama. *Over the Hills* makes clear that this hearth is in the homeland.

New Zealand as the setting of the novel is exploited as a space where things become possible that might not be possible at 'home'. Brown points out that the novel's title 'suggests a place of distance and geographic isolation from Britain where scenarios of fulfilment and romantic escapism might be envisaged – not always within the boundaries of social or moral convention' ('Over'). This transgressive setting is not confined to New Zealand but also visible in the sensational events described in Lucy's shipboard diary. As Brown notes, '[f]or the Victorian traveller, and most particularly the young unmarried woman, a ship journey was clearly symbolic of encounter beyond normal social horizons' (Brown, 'Over'). While New Zealand is represented as exotic, the text also recognises the journey as a liminal, transitional period, where rules can be suspended. In the non-fictional diaries, it is Agnes Cunningham

Christie's diary in particular that conveys this notion, but other diarists also imply it, for instance M. T. Binks, who writes: 'It is two weeks to-day (Thursday) since I came on board, and yet there is something so free & easy-going about the life on board, we already feel as if we had been here a month or two, there is so little stiffness or constraint, and everyone does exactly as they like' (8 Sep. 1887). While in *Over the Hills* superficially there appears to be no rupture in moral conventions, the characters' relationships and social life, the voyage is both central and disruptive to these conventions and relationships. The journey is envisaged as a position of enunciation that implies the possibility of transgression.

The problem of the distance created by the journey relates to the importance of written documents in the novel. Jennifer Blair, Daniel Coleman, Kate Higginson and Lorraine York argue that distance frequently establishes or upholds secrets in early Canadian texts. For instance, the plots of these texts often hinge on a return to Europe which results in the discovery of illicit circumstances. Discoveries of this kind are likely to be linked to documents (xxxix). The same can be said about nineteenth-century New Zealand novels. Two examples are *A Rolling Stone* by Clara Cheeseman and *A Strange Friendship*, also by Charlotte Evans, which will both be discussed later. In both novels the main characters are haunted by secret events that took place in Britain, in the past, and are brought to light by documents such as letters and diaries. In *Over the Hills* distance maintains the mystery of Laura/Beatrice's false identity: Dr Dacre does not receive the letter from which he would have learned the truth in time because he leaves England, and Laura/Beatrice can only uphold her pretence because Dr Dacre and she are removed from their social environment in England. While the secret is not discovered through a document, the first chapter of the novel raises the possibility that it could have been discovered thus, namely through the letter which Lucy finds on the ground and returns to Laura/Beatrice.

This focus on documents is connected to the novel's place within a wider print culture. *Over the Hills* displays a level of intertextuality as marked as that of the shipboard diaries analysed above, illustrating that it too claims a place within the shared literature of the diaspora. While Lucy's diary is the only allegedly authentic document inserted verbatim into the text, the novel refers to a number of other documents such as letters and novels. It is replete with references to written texts, from 'the coming and going of the English mail' (107) and the announcement in the *Times* informing Clinton Meredith of 'the marriage of the only girl [he] ever really loved' (180) to Arthur Wistanley's 'odd, absent fashion of scrawling over every scrap

of paper he could lay hold of, the letter L' (116). It also refers to a number of other literary works including *Macbeth* (first printed 1623), *The Mill on the Floss* (1860), and, most importantly, *Jane Eyre* (1847). Not only does the plot of *Over the Hills* bear a number of similarities to *Jane Eyre*, such as the marriage proposal of a bigamist to an inexperienced but morally sound heroine; the appearance of the book in the story also leads to a dramatic encounter between the three members of the love triangle when Dr Dacre interferes to prevent Lucy from lending her copy of *Jane Eyre* to Laura/Beatrice:

‘Don’t, Miss Cunningham!’ he said with the strangest emphasis, and with a gesture which I am sure was involuntary, but which looked like waving Mrs. Keith back from her position by my side. ‘Don’t, Miss Cunningham . . . I mean, don’t take the trouble. . . . I have a copy of ‘*Jane Eyre*’ in my cabin, and I’ll get it for you directly.’ (73; emphasis in the original)

Charlotte Brontë is mentioned in the preface and Lucy’s name echoes that of the heroine of *Villette* (1853). Arguably, these references to British literature serve to imply that the novel is part of the metropolitan high culture of the diasporic centre. The characters’ negotiation of *Jane Eyre* on board ship implies that they have a connection with the literature of the homeland even as they are moving away from Britain. However, the liminal nature of their position of enunciation on board ship and the centrality of the shipboard diary to the narrative also lend ambiguity to this apparent binary of centre and periphery. *Jane Eyre* being read on board ship by a heroine named after Lucy in *Villette* who is travelling to the colonies illustrates that the literature of the metropole is in reality that of the empire: just like the novel’s characters, the books they carry with them also travel, both literally and metaphorically. These texts, like the shipping routes, link not only homeland and hostland but the entire settler empire. A number of connections between the intertextual references in *Over the Hills* and the shipboard diaries illustrate that both fictional and non-fictional texts are part of this network of shared literature. In the novel Lucy speculates about the mysterious passenger, Laura/Beatrice: ‘I was feeling my way to an inquiry about the handsome black-haired lady, whom I am convinced Doctor Dacre knew something about. . . . I have woven a romance for her in my own mind. She is certainly quite beautiful enough for the heroine of a novel’ (61-62). In a similar fashion, Christie wonders in her shipboard diary if there is more to her fellow passengers than meets the eye, and concludes: ‘There are some people with queer histories on board especially our head stewards’ (16 Sep.

1879). Both texts establish links to a shared print culture in their references to 'romance', 'the heroine of a novel' and 'queer histories'. Like the shipboard diaries *Over the Hills* negotiates the distance between homeland and hostland and the crucial voyage between them. It, too, claims a place within a network of shared texts which connect the entire settler empire.

Conclusion to Section I

My discussion of shipboard diaries shows that they can be seen as their own genre, following stringent genre conventions. While the conventions of a sensation novel like *Over the Hills* may seem to be fundamentally different, actually both the diaries and the novel engage in similar ways with the issues outlined in the introduction to this section: the voyage as link and separation, and the ambiguity of a position of enunciation on board ship.

At the root of these issues is the image of a journey as contradictory. The voyage from homeland to hostland covers ‘so much water’, revealing the distance between the two poles of diasporic identity, but shipping routes also overcome this distance, creating links within the empire so that ‘no place is far away’. While stressing distance, the shipboard diaries also negotiate the double bind of representing homeland and hostland as similar or identical. A number of shipboard diaries employ inventive strategies of making the hostland seem home-like at the same time as producing a text which is structurally dependent upon and shaped by the voyage, thus emphasising distance and difference. *Over the Hills* negotiates a similar paradox when it implies that the homeland’s relationships and conventions can be transferred effortlessly to New Zealand, even though the structure and plot of the novel focus on the voyage and the rupture it represents for the diaspora.

Both fictional and non-fictional texts represent the voyage as a period of transition, characterised by moments of looking back and forward in both space and time. This liminal nature of the journey affects the position of enunciation of the entire text, bearing on its structural features. The texts all situate themselves as part of a shared literature of the entire imperial diaspora. Thus different parts of the empire are linked not only by the oceans traversed in the course of shipboard travel but also by a shared body of texts. However, the liminal nature of the journey, the contradictions attached to its simultaneous creation and overcoming of distance, and the texts’ ambiguous positions of enunciation illustrate that there is a tension between cohesion and dispersal. These are two fundamental elements of diasporic identity: the imperial diaspora spreads out over the globe at the same time as striving to produce community. The texts need to negotiate this precarious balance by continuously reproducing both cohesion and dispersal as part of a collective identity. In this context the journey, much like the endless chain of signifiers within which identity is produced, constitutes a powerful metaphor.

Section II

Settling

‘ “Home” . . . always means England, for nobody except a born colonist calls New Zealand “home”, not even those who, like ourselves, have been here over a quarter of a century – we always look to England as a haven of rest.’

Sarah Amelia Courage, *Lights and Shadows’ of Colonial Life*, 1896 (18)

‘Everything here is much the same as at home. I think we will like it very much.’

Sarah Stephens, *Journal*, 23 Jan. 1877

‘We have named our place “The Home Farm”.’

Ann Fletcher Jackson, *Journal*, 24 June 1879

Can the hostland become home? Calder and Turner state that ‘[s]ettlers are people who . . . can’t go back; as such, they may be distinguished from members of a diaspora for whom the return home is still a star to steer by’ (10). Does this mean that when a settler community makes its hostland ‘home’ it ceases to be a diasporic community? The shifting meanings of the word ‘home’ in diasporic texts, illustrated in the three quotations above, indicate that someone’s designation as a settler does not preclude them from also being a member of a diaspora. Rather, the process of settling is part of the definition of a diaspora. Courage insists that home ‘always means England’, while Stephens establishes the sameness of hostland and homeland, and Jackson expresses the desire to make her new farm a new home. These divergent connotations of ‘home’ illustrate that the process of settling is complex and ambivalent. This section explores how diasporic texts construct the project of settling: how do they negotiate what is or becomes ‘home’? In the following I outline the main points which will underlie my analyses.

‘Home’: Homeland and Hostland

Courage’s description of England as ‘a haven of rest’ indicates that for many diasporic writers ‘home’ meant the homeland, Britain, even as they were settling in New Zealand. Cohen defines a ‘collective memory and myth’ of the homeland and a wish to return there in the future as

characteristic of diasporas: ‘an idealization of the putative ancestral home and a collective commitment to its maintenance, restoration, safety and prosperity, even to its creation’ (26). Cohen’s definition evokes a homeland in the physical sense: a place somewhere in geographical space, ideally enclosed by political borders (even if, in the case of many of the diasporas discussed by Cohen, this physical homeland no longer exists). It is helpful to see this myth of a physical homeland in connection with Hall’s more metaphorical understanding of the homeland myth. As outlined earlier, Hall argues that the constant diasporic longing for a lost homeland can never be fulfilled, and that this unfulfilment actually enables the characteristic fluidity and heterogeneity of diasporic identity production. The unfulfilled longing for the homeland constitutes ‘the beginning of the symbolic, of representation’ (‘Cultural Identity’ 236). Courage’s longing for a ‘home’ in England thus indicates the beginning of a specifically diasporic mode of textual representation. It is therefore important to understand the myth of the homeland not only literally, but also figuratively as enabling a way of textual identity production peculiar to diasporic texts. Tölölyan suggests that the desired return to the homeland need not mean a physical return but can also be metaphorical, expressing itself for instance in a ‘re-turn’ to cultural practices associated with the homeland (‘Rethinking’ 14-15). Such a longing is expressed in Stephens’s claim that ‘[e]verything [in New Zealand] is much the same as at home’: the hostland, and place of settlement, becomes home-like by comparing it to the homeland. Mohanram argues that ‘New Zealand must function as Britain, yet Britain as a tabula rasa – a blank page – for her people in the diaspora to inscribe their lives upon’ (*Black Body* 150). If the hostland truly becomes ‘home’, the diaspora ceases to exist: as soon as the longing for a metaphorical homeland is fulfilled the original homeland is no longer needed. Arguably, this means that the process of settling has been completed and, as Cohen outlines, the ‘diaspora [falls] victim to the very success of the colonial settlements’ (74). This section traces how different texts construct and map out spaces that come to mean ‘home’ in the process of settling. Where are these spaces situated on an axis that spans the literal and figurative distance between homeland and hostland? How do the texts’ practices of representation implicate the positions from which they speak or write?

The representation of the hostland often emerges in the textual construction of both the physical and social aspects of settling. The discourses available to writers describing their hostland include New Zealand as an ideal society, as a wilderness that needs to be civilised, as

sublime scenery, as an exotic setting, as political or contested territory, and as an agricultural project. In *The Ideal Society and its Enemies*, Miles Fairburn describes the nineteenth-century ‘prominent image of New Zealand . . . as an ideal society of European settlers’ (19), an Arcadian society and ‘land of milk and honey’ (23) in which social organisation was unnecessary and natural resources abundant, and which provided a counterpole to Europe’s social problems. However, Fairburn claims, the ‘circumstances that led to what colonists thought was good about New Zealand society – the insignificance of demeaning paternalism, class divisions, pressure from conformity’ also generated social atomisation with associated problems such as loneliness and violence (195). Stafford and Williams suggest that romance provided a way of representing the taming of the wilderness: ‘The settler project of taming the land and making a home was . . . metaphorically rendered in the encounter, trials and final resolution of the romantic plot’ (‘Introduction’). Furthermore, ‘the Romantic poets, especially Wordsworth, and the Victorian theorists of the sublime such as Ruskin, were used as a means of confronting a strange and overpowering landscape, countering the bleakness of colonial existence’ (‘Introduction’).⁵ This landscape also provided the setting for the ‘heroism of the pioneer’ and ‘for the generic imperial adventure story’ (‘Introduction’). In many texts, the taming of the wilderness is expressed through garden images. William Pember Reeves’s poem ‘A Colonist in His Garden’ relates the cultivation of the land to the homeland myth when the titular colonist imagines rearing both English roses and English daughters in his idealised New Zealand garden:

And with my flowers about her spread
 (None brighter than her shining head),
 The lady of my close,
 My daughter, walks in girlhood fair.
 Friend, could I rear in England’s air
 A sweeter English rose? (115-120)

However, with the New Zealand Wars in the recent past this sublime or cultivated landscape was in the late nineteenth century also associated with contested political claims and violent conflict.

⁵ This use of the sublime to describe New Zealand scenery is not limited to nineteenth-century literature. Alex Calder argues: ‘Perhaps no other New Zealand theme has been so thoroughly mined as the idea that our natural environment – our ‘scenery’ – is not only splendid and imposing in its pristine isolation, but also that its grandeur inevitably marks how small, how shallow, how transient our footing on this place really is’ (11). His examples include Ursula Bethell’s ‘Pause’, James K. Baxter’s ‘Poem in the Matukituki Valley’, and Allen Curnow’s ‘The Unhistoric Story’ (Calder 11).

Belich emphasises that the ‘wars of the 1860s had their impact on Pakeha political, economic and cultural history’ (*Making* 242). They contributed to the political centralisation of New Zealand and the need for Vogel’s modernisations of the 1870s (242). Moreover, Belich argues, ‘Pakeha collective identity also received a boost from the wars’: the wars not only ‘reinforced the . . . sense of Us through confrontation with a Maori them’, Pākehā also subsequently differentiated themselves from Britain by insisting on the ‘alleged superiority of colonial to imperial troops’ (242). However, this does not mean that after the wars the diasporic community did not identify as British: ‘The embryonic sense of a Pakeha Us was not anti-British. It implied that self-reliant yeomen settlers manifested Britishness better than imperial regulars. This myth of martial New Zealandness, later known as the “Anzac legend”, became central in Pakeha collective identity’ (242). This notion of varying versions of Britishness reminds us that the British imperial diaspora in New Zealand situated itself not only in relation to the homeland but also to other settler colonies – other hostlands. Among the experiences these communities share and that create solidarity is the project of settling. This section explores how the texts employ the discourses outlined above and others in order to construct the hostland.

The Host Society

In the midst of expounding on his garden, Pember Reeves’s colonist also speaks about the colony’s past:

‘A land without a past?’ Nay, nay.
 I saw it, forty years this day.
 – Nor man, nor beast, nor tree:
 Wide, empty plains where shadows pass
 Blown by the wind o’er whispering grass
 Whose sigh crept after me. (79-84)

While this image of an empty land haunted by sighing winds is not surprising in colonial literature, the land was of course not empty when the first European settlers arrived – it was inhabited by Māori. Textual representations of the project of settling thus imply a positioning towards the hostland’s indigenous population. Cohen lists as one of his features of diasporic societies that they do not fully integrate into their host societies but rather sustain their own culture and traditions, remaining ethnically distinct over at least two generations. Again, this needs to be seen in connection with Hall’s conception of identity as continuously ‘constituted

within, not outside, representation’ (‘Cultural Identity’ 222). This notion of identity implies that cultural traditions cannot simply be sustained: cultural identity needs to be re-produced constantly since behind the chain of signifiers ‘meaning continues to unfold’ (230). The textual construction of Māori as the British diaspora’s host society in New Zealand is part of this identity production. Representations of Māori often function to establish place and identity on the side of the diasporic community. As Terry Goldie argues, ‘imperialist discourse valorizes the colonized according to its own needs for reflection’ (12), so ‘[t]he Other is of interest only to the extent that it comments on the self’ (11).

The textual construction of Māori is connected to the representation of different spaces since time, space and race are all connected within the imperial project. In the context of imperialism many texts use notions of time and space to justify the appropriation of colonised land. Dyer sees ‘enterprise/imperialism’ as one of the central elements of the self-representation of white people, connected to the notion of white ‘spirit’: ‘“Enterprise” is an aspect of both spirit itself – energy, will, ambition, the ability to think and see things through – and of its effect – discovery, science, business, wealth creation, the building of nations, the organisation of labour’ (31). It is associated with ‘will’ – ‘the control of self and the control of others’ – and imagined as enabling whites to be leaders of humanity (31). The ‘most important vehicle for the exercise and thus the display of this dynamism, this enterprise, is imperialism’ (31). As noted in the introduction to this thesis, the project of imperialism is connected to linear, teleological notions of time and space. Similarly, Anne McClintock argues that nineteenth-century imperial science revolved around two tropes: ‘panoptical time’ and ‘anachronistic space’. The trope of panoptical time assumes that human communities in different parts of the world illustrate various stages of development. European imperial scientists are able to observe global history ‘in a single spectacle from a point of privileged invisibility’ (37). In this act of observation, time is spatialised. Europe is placed at the top of an image of a developmental ladder. Indigenous peoples, however, are figured as living in a prehistoric or ahistoric time/space: anachronistic space. They are disavowed as ‘prehistoric, atavistic and irrational, inherently out of place in the historical time of modernity’ (40). The relegation of the indigene to anachronistic space figuratively empties the land, making it available to the colonisers: with Māori gone, all that is left are ‘empty plains’ in which Pember Reeves’s colonist can plant his garden.

At the end of the nineteenth century, the widespread dying race myth not only relegated Māori to anachronistic space but imagined them to be actually disappearing: '[b]etween the 1870s and the 1900s . . . [m]ost Pakeha believed that Maori were dying out fast' and about to be supplanted by the allegedly superior race of the European colonisers (Belich, *Making* 248). Another version of the dying race myth was more metaphorical: it claimed that Māori would eventually disappear through complete assimilation into the Pākehā population. Such fantasies envision the indigene's removal from the land not only in figurative but in physical terms. The dying race myth is not peculiar to New Zealand: Goldie notes that '[t]he inevitability of the demise of indigenous peoples . . . permeates nineteenth-century images of indigenes' in Canadian, Australian and New Zealand literatures (153). This illustrates the connections between settler colonies: members of the British diaspora throughout the settler empire used similar strategies to textually construct indigenous people and thus produce their own collective identity.

Women Settlers

'Home' not only marks a place somewhere on the continuum from homeland to hostland – home also means a place for women within the nineteenth-century ideology that relegates women to the private and men to the public sphere. The process of settling, of making a home, thus acquires another meaning in the texts of women, who were expected to fulfil a role within the domestic setting of the family home. It has often been argued that this role underwent a change in the diaspora. Dalziel suggests that

life within the bounds of home and family and respectability was not as frustrating for women in New Zealand as it had become for women of Great Britain. . . . The colonial environment opened new doors. It gave, within the context of an accepted role, a sense of purpose, a feeling of usefulness and a greater degree of independence than the women migrants had experienced before. (59)

Similarly, Myers's concept of portable domesticity sees women as important potential agents of empire as they were tasked with creating model homes in its outposts. As Wagner stresses, this portable domesticity 'was vital to [the] construction of a "Better Britain" ' ('Returning' 252). However, Macdonald also emphasises that '[c]olonies were generally not attractive places for women' and that 'the Australasian colonies were the most distant and expensive emigrant destinations' (189). This impacted on working women in particular: while wages were higher, the food of a better quality, and the social hierarchy less rigid, 'colonial life had greater potential for

women to experience isolation and loneliness' (190). In the light of diverging notions of the role of women settlers, this section reads women's texts with a focus on their gendered role within the project of settling. How do the texts construct and negotiate this role and how do they relate it to imaginings of space, time, and race?

Annette Kolodny famously argues in *The Land before Her* that texts written by women at the North American western frontier express fantasies about planting gardens in the wilderness: the women 'claimed the frontiers as a potential sanctuary for an idealized domesticity' and 'dreamed . . . of locating a home and a familial human community within a cultivated garden' (xiii). Kolodny understands such fantasies to be more benevolent towards the environment than the male fantasies of penetrating into and mastering a virgin land she traces in her earlier work *The Lay of the Land*. However, in the light of (male-authored) texts such as 'A Colonist in His Garden' this favourable image of the garden fantasy might have to be modified in the New Zealand context. Pember Reeves's colonist does locate a home and family in his New Zealand garden but he also uses it to replicate English patriarchal structures in New Zealand and act out a fantasy of taming a wild landscape imagined as empty/virgin. Whereas the garden motif appears frequently in the texts discussed in this chapter, its connotations are often more complex than those identified by Kolodny.

Class distinctions also need to be considered within the context of settling. While class barriers were less rigid in New Zealand than in Britain, they are visible in many of the texts. In her discussion of letters written by governesses who emigrated with the help of the Female Middle Class Emigration Society, Myers notes that 'most of the governesses went to great lengths to convince their friends and families at home that their class status . . . had remained unchanged by their colonial experience', which suggests that class barriers did not suddenly become irrelevant when women arrived in the diaspora ('Performing' 135-36). On the other hand, Myers also stresses that as the carriers of portable domesticity these women had 'access to a new role: that of the colonial woman, a figure who could combine gentility with a measure of practicality and independence' (136). This shows that the diasporic experience of women settlers was complex and did not always conform to the neat distinction of private and public sphere.

Like Section I, this section is divided into a Part 1 on non-fiction and a Part 2 on fiction. Part 1 begins by looking at the representation of the New Zealand landscape and its transformation through European settlement in two sets of journals: those of Quaker minister

Ann Jackson (written 1878-1902), and those written by Alice McKenzie as a young woman on her family's farm in Southland (written 1888-90). How do these two texts create 'home'? *The Diary of Elizabeth Mary Rolleston During a Journey to the King Country, the Far North and Rotorua* (1883) provides an example of the intersections of the notions of land and race in its use of both garden imagery and racial stereotypes. The last chapter of Part 1 discusses memoirs about the so-called pioneer days, exploring how these texts construct the memory of the project of settling and represent it to a younger audience. It focuses on Catherine Ralfe's account of her time in the gold-mining settlement of Okarito and traces how her text constructs a role for Ralfe both as a narrator and as a woman within the male-dominated pioneer project. Part 2 starts by discussing the project of settling in Clara Cheeseman's novel *A Rolling Stone* (1886), focusing on the text's construction of different geographical spaces on an axis between homeland and hostland. My analysis of Jessie Weston's *Ko Méri, or, a Cycle of Cathay* (1890) then revisits the textual construction of Māori, contrasting different racialised versions of femininity and asking how they relate to the justification of land ownership. The last chapter traces the connections between the romantic plot and the appropriation of land in *The Heart of the Bush* (1910) by Edith Searle Grossmann: how does romance allow the narrative to claim the hostland as 'home'?

Part 1: Non-Fiction

3 *Land and Text: The Journals of Ann Jackson and Alice McKenzie*

The construction of the hostland's landscape in the diaries of Ann Jackson and Alice McKenzie illustrates the varying extent to which the hostland has become 'home' to these women settlers. Even though Jackson records naming the family's new farm 'The Home Farm', her text narrates the struggle to settle in a sublime wilderness. McKenzie's family property needs no such demonstrative naming in her text: her diary envisions her parents' farm and the landscape surrounding it as a place that has already become home. After a brief biographical introduction to the writers, I discuss these projects of settling, transforming the hostland through agriculture, and finally making it 'home'. The texts' function as writing spaces further illuminates the textual construction of the landscape and the settlers' interaction with the land.

3.1 The Transformation of the Hostland

3.1.1 *The Beautiful and the Useful*

Ann Fletcher Jackson was a member of the Society of Friends (Quakers). She emigrated from Cheshire with her husband and children in 1878. The family initially lived near Whangarei and then moved to Auckland in 1893. From 1886 until shortly before her death in 1903, Jackson went on a number of extensive journeys through New Zealand and Southern Australia to minister to Quakers. I focus on the diaries written between her immigration to New Zealand and her death. These diaries construct landscape in two conflicting ways: as sublime and awe-inspiring; and in terms of its agriculture use and value. Both discourses appear frequently in colonial literature and Jackson's text illuminates the tensions between them. As noted above, Stafford and Williams suggest that the trope of the sublime was used by nineteenth-century New Zealand writers as 'a means of confronting a strange and overpowering landscape' ('Introduction'). Brigitte Georgi-Findlay similarly traces the 'Christianised Sublime' in landscape descriptions in women's narratives of the North American westward expansion (83-84). The writer is awed by the grandeur of the scenery, which is seen as a manifestation of God's might and inspires religious contemplation. The sublime transcends the limits of textual description. In Jackson's diaries this construction of landscape contrasts with a more practical emphasis on the land's agricultural and economic potential. Courage claims in her autobiography that this approach to land is typical of

New Zealand's diasporic community: 'scenery is *not* scenery out here, it is "country". It seems that if it is good for sheep, it is beautiful; if not, it is not worth mentioning' (31; emphasis in the original). This is perhaps not surprising when one considers that many emigrants, including the Jackson family, were forced to leave Britain in search of better economic opportunities.

However, Jackson as a Quaker minister is also likely to employ the more spiritual trope of the sublime.

The text represents Jackson's initial perception of the Whangarei landscape as sublime, connected to a desire to establish domesticity in this visually overpowering scenery. Jackson describes the last leg of her journey from Auckland to her new Whangarei home on 24 April 1879:

It was a splendid ride over the hills – but my descriptive powers cannot do justice to it. It was so wild and grand – oftentimes no human habitation in sight, but hills towering one above another, and in some places there was something stately and majestic in the grand old woods – and I could not but rejoice, as I gazed around me, and thought that my future home would be in the midst of scenery such as this.

The text employs the language of the sublime: the scenery is 'wild and grand', the hills 'towering', the 'grand old' woods 'stately and majestic'. The sublime cannot be contained in words since it transcends the limits of representation: Jackson's 'descriptive powers cannot do justice to it'. The biblical word 'rejoice' implies that the scenery is a manifestation of God's grandeur and might. These religious connotations are carried over into Jackson's thoughts about the future, which are concerned with the establishment of a home in this setting. The sublime is thus linked to a project of domestication, reminiscent of Kolodny's idealised domesticity. The text establishes a sense of religious entitlement that its narrator is meant to establish a home for her family 'in the midst' of this sublime scenery. Jackson embarks on this project of domestication with enthusiasm. On 14 September 1879 she notes optimistically: 'Although we have not got all our luggage out yet, and our house still remains in an unfinished state, yet by trying to make the best of what we have, our house is now much more home-like and comfortable than it was a few weeks ago'. However, her optimism wanes when it becomes clear that the awe-inspiring scenery also has a threatening side. Repeated heavy rainfall causes the roof of the house to leak, calves to drown and the only bridge to flood. Whenever Jackson's

husband and sons leave the family home to work in the bush, she sees them as entering a space where they are exposed to manifold dangers, such as getting lost overnight or being injured in an accident. Jackson uses her diary to plead for God's protection and to reassure herself that God will look after her family.

Over the course of the eight years that the family spends on the farm, economic concerns increasingly supersede the sublime in Jackson's text. Descriptions of the scenery are replaced by anxious calculations of the family's limited funds and worries about how Jackson can provide her husband and children with daily meals, as she realises that '[i]t takes some years of hard and persevering toil, before these Bush farms even provide a living' (18 Sep. 1886). On 21 August 1880 Jackson narrates:

This evening when F. came in from a hard days work, and I had only dry bread and weak tea to offer him, I could not keep back my tears.

Well I must try to keep cheerful for my children's sake.

After a couple of years in the bush she writes: 'We know something now of what it is to struggle with poverty' (22 Feb. 1881). It also becomes clear that to the neighbouring settlers the economic value of the land is more important than the religious awe it inspires. They are preoccupied with everyday cares about cattle and the weather, and the Jacksons have a number of arguments with their neighbours about the course of roads, trespassing cattle and similar issues. Jackson realises that most of the settlers are not interested in attending religious meetings and that instead drinking and dancing are 'very favourite pastime[s] in the colony' (14 Apr. 1881). She notes: 'I have felt discouraged on account of the settlements lately – there seems to be so much gossiping – so much foolish jesting, so little desire for mental improvement – so little spiritual life' (4 Dec. 1880). Jackson repeatedly expresses her anxiety that her own 'spiritual life' suffers in this situation: 'My mind is exercised on account of my spiritual condition, and that of our dear children. I have of late seemed so dull, cold, and lifeless, a sort of lethargy has come over me – surely I have wandered far away from the Good Shepherd' (25 Nov. 1883). As Jackson narrates that her spiritual needs are not met, the sublime as an expression of that spirituality also becomes less prominent in her text. The shift in the textual representation of the landscape is evident in the description of a bush fire, which is financially disastrous for the family. Jackson can still perceive the sublime in the landscape, even in its destruction: 'It was a grand sight – those burning trees – throwing down showers of sparks' (17 Feb. 1885). However, she notes that the bush fire was

disastrous for a number of reasons: the bush was beautiful, but also useful and valuable. When she concludes that '[i]ts beauty is spoiled now', it is clear that 'beauty' refers both to the sublime quality of the scenery and to its economic value, as Courage claims: 'if it is good for sheep, it is beautiful' (31).

This shift in Jackson's perception of the landscape can be put in the context of colonial authors' struggle to record the changes which settlers were inflicting upon the land. Romantic poetic language, interspersed with terms invoking the sublime, proved inadequate to describe a landscape increasingly reshaped by agriculture (Stafford and Williams, *Maoriland* 210). Blanche Baughan's poem 'A Bush Section' (1908) is an example of literature coming to terms with representing a landscape that is being destroyed and reformed. The language of the poem is as fragmented as the landscape it describes, prefiguring the language of modernism and thus a new approach to textual representation:

Logs, at the door, by the fence; logs, broadcast over the paddock;
 Sprawling in motionless thousands away down the green of the gully,
 Logs, grey-black. And the opposite rampart of ridges
 Bristles against the sky, all the tawny, tumultuous landscape
 Is stuck, and prickled, and spiked with the standing black and grey splinters,
 Strewn, over its hollows and hills, with the long, prone, grey black logs. (1-6)

Jackson's diary also reflects the different connotations connected to nature in the context of settlement: untouched scenery changes into an agricultural project which can no longer be described in terms of the sublime. Language itself needs to be reshaped in order to accommodate descriptions of a changing landscape. Jackson's diary, rather than doing this, remains mostly silent on the sublime during this time in her life.

From 1887, when Jackson started working and travelling as a Quaker evangelist, the sublime resurfaces in her diaries in the descriptions of the scenery through which she travels. Her account of the journey from Arthur's Pass to Otira on 11 January 1888 is a typical example. Jackson describes the landscape as 'sublime' but feels that she is incapable of adequately depicting it in her text because its grandeur is too overwhelming and cannot be represented: 'The most sublime part of the scenery was the Otira Gorge – oh! if I could only describe it! But to do so would require an abler mind and a more facile pen than mine'. Jackson's professed inability to describe the sublime landscape is evident in her repeated (over-)use of the word 'grand': 'the

scenery gradually gets wilder and grander'; 'very grand'; '[i]t was grand in the extreme, a sight never to be forgotten'. This grandeur of the landscape is said to be too overpowering for women: 'afterwards I was told that "ladies were often very much frightened, and it was better for them to have inside seats, so as not to see the dangerous places" '. Jackson, however, imagines the scenery she traverses as placed before her eyes to display the power of God. While it is 'wild and grand', it does not frighten her, even though 'ladies were often very much frightened'. God manifests himself not only in the landscape but also by inspiring her with the mission to traverse it in his name.

3.1.2 *Land as Agricultural Space*

Religion also plays an important part in Alice McKenzie's diaries. McKenzie was born in 1873 and lived her entire life on the West Coast. She wrote a number of texts throughout her life, some of which were published, including her memoir *Pioneers of Martins Bay* (1952). My focus is on the diaries she wrote as a young woman in 1888-90, when she was living with her parents and siblings at Martins Bay. Like the Jacksons in Whangarei, the McKenzies also lived in a remote part of the country and did not have access to institutionalised religion. In both families, the practice of religion was usually carried on inside the household only. However, the McKenzies were a Catholic family whose religious practice focussed not on contemplation and spiritual musings, like Jackson's, but on reading and memorising texts: the Bible, set prayers, sermons and the catechism. McKenzie's representation of the landscape is similarly physical and hands-on. The notion of the sublime seems irrelevant to her. Instead, landscape comes to mean agriculture: there is no concept of land existing prior to or unaffected by European settlers and their farms. The hostland has already been transformed and become 'home'.

Alice McKenzie's entire life, and her diary, are determined by the daily chores of dairy farming. Every diary entry starts with a description of the weather – a number of very brief entries contain nothing but a reference to the weather: 'Fine', 'Rain', and so on. The weather is connected to the daily chores which Alice and the other family members perform. A number of longer entries relate visits from friends or pastimes with Alice's family, but an example of a more typical short entry is: 'Showery in the evening. The potatoes are getting planted to day. I churned. Bessie and her calf were put round to the boatharber. Fannie was tied up at the door of the boatharber house' (20 Nov. 1890). It shows the important features of a typical day: the weather, gardening and household chores, and looking after the cows. The entire family is

involved in these communal tasks: while McKenzie records that she churned, it does not seem relevant to mention which family members were involved in planting the potatoes and taking the cows to the boat harbour, presumably because these tasks were always done by the same persons and it was thus unnecessary to name them in the text.

The fact that the weather is the most regular feature of all the entries in the diaries shows the importance that nature and the land had in the life of the McKenzies. The weather is so significant because it determines what will be done on that day: ‘looks like rain. I scrubbed the two front rooms’ (6 Sep. 1889); ‘A fine day, potatoes getting planted’ (19 Nov. 1888). Laura Kroetsch suggests that ‘when Alice writes about the natural world in the diary she understand this world to be one which acts upon the McKenzie family. Life in Martins Bay was controlled in almost every way by the natural world’ (115). This circumstance is taken for granted and the text does not contemplate or question it. Alice shows nothing more than annoyance even when the weather causes serious complications, for instance when the supply steamer cannot enter the bay because of heavy rain:

Rain Rain Rain a it has been the same for nearly every day for the last week. (1 May 1889; emphasis in the original)

. . .

. . . It feels very spitefull to think that she was within a mile of here & yet one does not know what is in a single letter & cant get their hands on one of the papers however she will be back next fine day which is very different from three months, and perhaps longer if the sea happened to be rough . . . (6 May 1889)

Whereas Jackson’s Whangarei diaries establish a contrast between a safe domestic sphere and the sublime wilderness outside, McKenzie’s ‘diary privileges both the landscape and the domestic sphere’ (Kroetsch 55). The text does not differentiate between the two but sees them as one space in which the chores of dairy farming take place. Kroetsch argues: ‘While Alice understood the landscape as a place which required respect, a place which could prevent activity and injure or kill both humans and animals, she did not understand the landscape as a “wilderness” ’ (117). When the members of the family leave the house, this merely constitutes an extension of daily tasks into a space which functions as a home in a similar way to the McKenzies’ house. Even when gruesome things happen, they simply constitute part of the ordinary. This is visible in the following story about a cow that does not seem to understand that

its calf has died and been skinned. McKenzie narrates the event in a rather unemotional tone and even employs sarcasm ('a pretty sight'):

Hugh [her brother] found Blockhead on the other side of the landing but she ran away from him so I went with him to help him, we found her standing over her calf a pretty sight Hugh has left it, all over blood and cut up in all directions so as to let Dick [the dog] eat it. I dont think Little Jocke knows her calf is dead yet when we took her away from it she kept roaring for the calf cut up as it is to follow her, when it would not come she tried to get back to it . . . (10 Nov. 1889)

The domestic sphere becomes part of the landscape and both are integrated into the family's agricultural project. There is no sense that the land has been transformed or is still changing, and no struggle in the text to describe the landscape. Instead the presence of settlers is taken for granted – as is the fact that they depend on their natural environment. These differences to Jackson's text no doubt are connected not only to Alice McKenzie's different religious background, but also to her class affiliation: unlike Ann Jackson, Alice had no memories of a more urban and affluent middle-class life back in the homeland. In her diaries the transformed landscape of the hostland has already become a physical and spiritual home.

3.2 Landscape and Textual Space

3.2.1 *Writing the Sublime: Journal of Conscience*

Jackson's and McKenzie's diaries not only describe the hostland, they also constitute writing spaces. This purpose often structurally mirrors the representation of the landscape which surrounds their authors. When Jackson is travelling as a Quaker minister, the spiritual purpose of her journeys is reflected not only in her construction of landscape as sublime but also in the spiritual purpose of the diary itself. In *Discourses of Difference*, Sara Mills argues that texts written by nineteenth-century British women travel writers had constraints placed upon them by discourses of femininity, which situated middle-class women in the private sphere and saw them as frail and dependent on men. She argues that writers had to engage with these discursive frameworks at the same time as negotiating their relation to predominantly male discourses of imperialism. Similarly, Georgi-Findlay discusses the problem of authorisation faced by North American women travellers: male writers' texts could be legitimised and validated through a number of contexts (for example, science, commerce or politics), but most of these were either

problematic or inaccessible to women, with the exception of describing their personal experience (13). She argues that ‘if the sublime in so many male American writers’ works functions as a trope of self-authentication and self-empowerment, female overland diarists essentially avoid this scenario of self-making, engendering the sublime as a trope of exaltation through prostration, worship, and sacrifice’ (84). As a Quaker minister Jackson is endowed with a religious authorisation often reserved for men. The texts she writes are connected to her mission and her travels. This connection is made explicit in her yearly ‘summaries’, which list books read, visits paid and so forth. In these summaries she always lists letters written and miles travelled together, linked by their religious purpose:

Since I left home for Australia in the 10th month of last year, I have written more than 400 letters.

Since I began to travel in gospel service, I have, in New Zealand Australia and Tasmania travelled more than 16,000 miles. (31 Dec. 1889)

Furthermore, when Jackson leaves the domestic environment she has striven to establish on the ‘Home Farm’ her evangelistic mission subverts notions of public space as exclusively male. This mission thus seems to endow her both with a ‘male’ authorisation and the authority to traverse ‘male’ spaces. However, this authorisation becomes problematic when one considers the outsider status of Quakers in nineteenth-century New Zealand society. Early settlement had included a number of Quakers and religious meetings began in Nelson in 1842, but were discontinued in the 1860s. The Jacksons were the driving force in the establishment of meetings in Auckland in 1885. However, they were part of a minority unpopular with many and repeatedly faced hostility from fellow travellers and neighbouring settlers. An important reason for this hostility towards the family’s faith was that Jackson as a woman was working as a minister. The couple encounters a lack of understanding for this ministry during their voyage to New Zealand, when Jackson notes that ‘Mr O. tells me . . . that “St Paul did not approve of women preaching” ’ (20 Nov. 1878). This outsider status of Jackson both as a Quaker and as a woman minister might lie at the root of the fact that her evocations of sublime landscape represent less a male ‘trope of self-authentication and self-empowerment’ than a female ‘trope of exaltation through prostration, worship, and sacrifice’ (Georgi-Findlay 84). Her text conforms to two points which Georgi-Findlay sees as typical of women’s evocations of the sublime: Jackson emphasises her inability to describe the scenery (‘my descriptive powers cannot do justice to it’, 24 Apr. 1879; ‘if I could

only describe it!', 11 Jan. 1888) and stresses the centrality of her personal experience by describing herself in the landscape, rather than just the landscape. For instance, in her description of the voyage from Arthur's Pass to Otira she dwells on where she was sitting. Jackson thus employs a typically feminine style of writing, indicating that her authorisation to write is in fact more unstable and contested than it seems. At least in part her text might constitute an attempt at self-justification: whereas her religious office is not feminine, her style of writing is.

Instead Jackson's diary often, albeit not exclusively, functions as a journal of conscience, a spiritual accounting book. Kroetsch explains that this kind of diary was widely used by the Puritans, Methodists and Quakers since the seventeenth century. It focused on the diarist's inner life: 'the diary was used by the writer to examine the writer's behaviour, conscience, soul, and his or her relation to God' (10). These diaries were not private documents because they 'were written to external audiences such as God, and were often shared through reading within families and/or religious groups' (11). Jackson's diary is not preoccupied solely with her inner life; it also describes everyday events and her travels. However, it resembles a journal of conscience in two respects. First, it contains many religious musings and prayers, which include the self-assessment of Jackson's behaviour in relation to her religious beliefs. Jackson addresses her own 'soul', reflecting on her spiritual development: 'I have heard my Saviour calling in tenderest accents "Come unto Me," but the remembrance of my sins rose as a barrier between my soul and God. . . . Listen! oh my soul! and why dost thou not answer? – for He still keeps calling "Come, come, come"' (3 Oct. 1879; emphasis in the original). Second, its implied audience is similar to that of a journal of conscience: it is comprised of God and of a post-mortem audience composed of family members. God is often directly addressed in the journal: 'Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, keep the door of my lips' (16 Dec. 1902). Imagining her family as an audience is at a number of times crucial to Jackson's decision to continue her journal, as in this entry from 31 December 1889:

Shall I continue to jot down – memoranda of passing events, or let them all go by unnoticed?

Will they be of use to any one when I am gone? When the hand that now writes these lines is mouldering in the grave, will they be read by my children & will they thus learn more of their poor mother than they knew in her life time.

Yes! I will try to continue a faithful record.

This entry establishes a dialogue with a reader whom Jackson imagines to be answering while she is still writing ('Yes!'), presumably God, but it also establishes her family as an anticipated post-mortem audience. The contemplation of sublime landscape is one of many ways in the diary to establish a communication with God, Jackson's audience, and her own 'soul'.

Whereas the diary's function as a journal of conscience mirrors the representation of the hostland as sublime, the text also reflects a contest between different groups of settlers over the appropriation of the landscape by discursive means. The diary describes the attempts of the Jacksons' Whangarei neighbour Clark to appropriate land and reputation by denigrating the Jackson family and literally inscribing himself upon the landscape. Relations between the families become increasingly strained over time, due mostly to Clark's disapproval of the Jacksons' religion. Clark sues the Jacksons and other neighbours for a number of offenses to do with land ownership, such as cattle trespass, and physically assaults Ann's husband and sons. Clark puts his assaults into oral and written text in three ways: by verbally assaulting and threatening members of the family and spreading rumours in the community, by writing offensive statements about the family on fences, posts and trees around their farm, and by publishing a number of insulting articles in Whangarei and Auckland newspapers about the Jacksons and their religious meetings. First Jackson, while working as a teacher in the local school, notes that Clark is

not content with spreading false and scandalous reports about us through the settlement, and thus endeavouring to injure our reputation, not content with sending insulting messages to me by his boys when they come to school, with using abusive language to my husband and more than once threatening to take his life, not content with injuring our poor little cow Amy – and with stopping me on my way to school, and speaking in a very rude and improper manner, making charges against me which are entirely false . . . (18 Feb. 1883)

She also narrates that he

has been writing on posts and rails, and on the gate that goes across the public road, the most shocking things about my dear husband, applying to him the vilest epithets, and then hoping to wound us still more deeply, he insinuates in the coarsest, lowest manner that our poor dear Bertha has been guilty of immoral conduct. . . . Time after time our boys have obliterated these writings of his, and

time after time, he has written again, and each time worse than the last. (29 Mar. 1885)

On 24 March 1885 Jackson is very upset about a ‘shameful! scandalous!’ article, published anonymously in an Auckland newspaper, which insults the Jacksons and calls their daughter Bertha ‘the Shakeress’. She is certain that Clark must be the author. Jackson initially uses her diary as a kind of counter-text to Clark’s insults, incorporating and contradicting his texts in a number of ways. She copies the first of Clark’s newspaper articles into her diary. In this article Clark gives a description of a religious meeting at the Jacksons’ place, depicting it as ridiculous and calling them the ‘Shakers’. The Jacksons send a reply to the paper, which is also copied into the diary, stating that Clark’s description is false and that he has never attended one of their meetings. Jackson’s diary also describes the constant struggle of her family to erase Clark’s public insults written on fences and gates (see the quotation from 29 Mar. 1885 above). She quotes a number of his inscriptions: ‘Clark has written on a fence erected to keep cattle from trespassing: “Quaker Jackson, a rogue, sneak and liar” ’ (15 Feb. 1885). However, Jackson soon ceases to engage with Clark’s statements. She states that his inscriptions have become too offensive for her to record: ‘To day we found something written on the Bridge about my dear husband and also about Bertha, quite unfit to repeat; so low, coarse, vile, and disgustingly abominable, that it can only be the outcome of a mind lost to all sense of shame, and utterly depraved’ (19 Sep. 1886). In the last years of her life Jackson extended this censorship to her own diaries: ‘I . . . looked over my journal of more than 40 years, and tore out many pages, and obliterated the writing on others which contained any record that would cause pain if read by any of my loved ones when I have passed away’ (31 Dec. 1901). Among the blackened and missing pages are many which seem to have contained more information about Clark and their arguments. This censorship restores the diary’s function as a journal of conscience: while it may be a private document at the time of writing, it will become public to a post-mortem audience after Jackson’s death; moreover, it is always visible to God.

Clark’s insults, which intrude into the diary, mirror the dominant settler discourse of the land’s agricultural and economic value which conflicts with Jackson’s trope of the sublime. Clark has no sympathy for a Quaker spiritual admiration of the sublime. Like the other settlers who show ‘so little desire for mental improvement – so little spiritual life’ (4 Dec. 1880), his concern is with questions of land use and ownership, evident in his attempts to ban the Jacksons from

trespassing and to alienate them from the settler community. His writing on gates and fences inscribes his presence in the landscape, transforms the landscape and appears to claim it much like the stereotypical colonial flag-planting or place-naming does. When Jackson initially uses the writing space of her diary to produce a counter-text to disprove Clark's lies and accusations, all this does is to give further space to the discourses of agricultural use and value in her diary. Her self-censorship, then, preserves the integrity of her own text and its function as a space for religious self-assessment and communication with God, in which landscape can again be envisioned as sublime scenery.

3.2.2 *Shared Texts*

Alice McKenzie's diaries, like Jackson's, are not written as private documents. However, they never function as a journal of conscience. Rather, family and sometimes friends participate in writing the diaries. This participation makes the diaries shared texts and means of communication. The diaries become part of family life, integrated with daily chores on the farm and thus the landscape which determines these chores.

Jackson's text has only one narrator, but Alice McKenzie's diaries contain a number of different voices and styles of handwriting. The physical diaries change owners and are exchanged between the siblings: 'I don't care about writing very much in this Diary as it does not belong to me but Malcolm does not want it back for a while, as he is writing in Dan's book just now' (29 June 1890). Alice's brothers, and sometimes family friends, participate in the writing of her diary. She herself is the most frequent narrator, but one entry can involve several people writing or alterations made later by someone else. A number of entries respond to something written by someone else, and the diary is used as a space for jokes about each other and arguments about who wrote the true version of events. Evidence of the brothers leaving comments can be seen in such entries as:

We were playing 'blind man's buff' till about 11 o'clock, my chin came on Helen's back and my teeth were nearly all sent down my throat someone sent her against me I was blindfolded. I did not die yet.

that is very evident . . . (5 Jan. 1889)

and: 'Showery the snow is very low on the hills D D D Dan was showing off how well he D D D D D D B could make big D's he would have kept up for a page or two if I had not snatched the book away just as he was beginning on the B's' (20 Sep. 1889). On 6 December 1890

McKenzie is angry about her brother Dan's use of her diary, claiming that he used it to tell lies about her. She writes that she censored his entries, and issues a threat (which is not heeded by Dan, who soon comments again):

Dan wrote all the above after Saturday I need scarcely say not one word of it is true. I thought of cutting out the leaf but I have cut out so many before, and there are so few blank ones left that I dont think I will cut this one out unless he writes something as bad but true, then I will cut out this page, but that which Dan wrote above was such a glaring falsehood that I will scratch it out, but if ever he writes such things about me again – woe betide his infant whiskers if I get my hands on them, which will be no trouble for me and I am very hard to shake off when I go for hair or whiskers, so if Dan takes the trouble to read this he has had a fair warning, so just let him think on past woolings and remember that his whiskers are getting longer, and practice makes perfect, so I know all the tender parts about his face.

Sometimes the comments left by Alice's brothers engage in an ironic way with the convention in many other diary entries of stating the weather and how it influences the family's daily chores:

Churned. Rain all day
 how much butter did you get from the rain . . . (6 Nov. 1889)
 . . .
 Showery I churned
 but it was quite rotten and I gave it to the pigs I don't want any one to know
 I dont know how it could be bad when it was kept only 2 days. I think it was
 right enough, I certainly did not give it to the pigs Dan wrote that slander about
 it . . . (18 Aug. 1890)

Like Ann Jackson, Alice McKenzie censors her diary by cutting out pages and crossing out statements. However, her censorship always applies to what other people wrote, not to her own writing. It stresses the interaction within the text, not the text's function as a space for spiritual self-assessment. Alice's diary constituted a shared writing space: it 'served as a public document and as a means of communication' (Kroetsch 55).

In the McKenzie household texts in general are shared in the same way as farming chores, illustrating the immersion of the family in their agricultural project. The diaries are

public texts that are frequently read by or read out to an immediate audience of family or friends, unlike Jackson's diaries which are written for God and a post-mortem audience:

Mrs Joe [her sister Helen] gave me a talking to for writing ridiculous & false thing's about Mr Joe she tried to work her fingers under my arms & said he was a good a very good fellow, of course I told her I said nothing bad about him she got convinced when I read aloud the places where I had spoken well of him for his singing she knew I had only told the truth I did not read any more. (22 Mar. 1889)

Other shared texts include the Bible, other books, letters, and newspapers, which are read and written together or passed from one family member to another. On 23 February 1889 McKenzie notes that her sister is reading Mark Twain, and two days later she quotes from the book, implying that she has read it too: 'I did not sleep last night and I felt as Mark Twain says ready to kick the bucket or throw up the sponge'. On 21 September 1889 she writes that the whole family were reading the *London Journal* together and could not stop laughing about an illustration in it. Letters are frequently written together or for each other, or copied from one another, for instance on 5 April 1889: 'I wrote a letter to Mrs J.C. and Hugh also wrote one, he got me to write a copy of it for him'. The text thus makes visible that both writing and reading become part of the many activities and chores shared by the family. Reading and writing become intertwined and create a sense of community which is linked to the McKenzies' religion as well as to the daily activities on the farm.

Ann Jackson's and Alice McKenzie's textual constructions of nature and landscape illustrate different approaches to land and settling. While Jackson's text narrates the transformation or even destruction of sublime landscape through agriculture and a worldly settler community, McKenzie's life is inseparably tied up with the landscape and her family's agricultural project. This is mirrored in the style and structure of their texts: Jackson's diary frequently functions as a Protestant journal of conscience and thus as a writing space for spiritual contemplation of the landscape, whereas McKenzie uses the text as a means of communication with her family and a record of chores performed on the farm. Ann Jackson narrates the laborious process of making sense of the hostland – in her text different discourses struggle in an attempt to make the settlers' farm the 'Home Farm'. In Alice McKenzie's diary, the hostland has already been transformed into an agricultural space and the farm has become 'home'.

4 *The Ideal Peach: Mary Rolleston's Travel Writing*

Jackson's and McKenzie's diaries make virtually no mention of the diaspora's host society: while McKenzie's text describes an agricultural space inhabited exclusively by Pākehā, Jackson's sublime scenery appears to be as devoid of humans as the empty plains in Pember Reeves's poem. *The Diary of Elizabeth Mary Rolleston During a Journey to the King Country, the Far North and Rotorua* (1883) by contrast, represents Māori as prominent inhabitants of the hostland's landscape. Where Jackson's text explores the tension between the sublime and its destruction by agriculture, and McKenzie's text takes this agricultural space for granted, Rolleston envisions agricultural development in entirely positive terms. My discussion will show that she sees as desirable the transformation of the 'wilderness' into a civilised/cultivated landscape. The perfect form of this civilised space is a garden. Whereas Jackson quickly abandons aspirations to establish an ideal domesticity in the bush, Rolleston displaces this incapability onto the Māori she encounters on her travels. She employs racist tropes to describe them and represents them as lacking the white enterprise and industry which would allow them to cultivate the land. Underlying the text is a notion of landscape as politically contested territory. This is no doubt connected to the relatively high political independence of Māori especially in the King Country. J. Kerry-Nicholls, who visited the King Country in 1882, the year before Rolleston travelled there, described it as

an imperium et imperio situated in the heart of an important British colony, a terra incognita, inhabited exclusively by a warlike race of savages, ruled over by an absolute monarch, who defied our laws, ignored our institutions, and in whose territory the rebel, the murderer, and the outcast took refuge with impunity. (Qtd. in Belich, *Making* 263)

Te Kooti, possibly the most notorious of those described by Kerry-Nicholls as rebels, murderers and outcasts, was hiding in the King Country. He was pardoned in 1883, but not until the Rollestons and their party had already started their journey. Mary Rolleston differs from most other authors discussed in this thesis in the respect that she had some level of political and societal influence. She was the wife of eminent politician William Rolleston and herself a renowned political hostess. Her diary no doubt represents her political perspective, which was more conservative than that of her husband. The couple travelled with a party that included a

number of powerful people: John Bryce (Minister of Native Affairs at the time and notorious for his harsh approach to Māori issues), and at different points in time the Rollestons' daughter, religious ministers, surveyors, other politicians, a reporter, armed guards, and Māori guides. Their journey was a political mission which reflected the political opening-up of areas hitherto only accessible to Pākehā at great personal risk. Rolleston's situation is thus not typical of women travellers at the time as described in analyses of imperialist travel writing such as Sara Mills's. Her diary is permeated by a notion of entitlement and a confidence that it will be read and relevant. It is told by an assertive narrator who does not make excuses for having left the private sphere, and who discusses political and historical issues – quite unlike Canadian writer Susanna Moodie, famous for *Roughing it in the Bush*, who relinquishes the pen to her husband for chapters on political or economic topics. This chapter explores how Rolleston's text constructs the landscape through which she travels and how this is connected to colonialist and racist tropes. Finally, I discuss the text's permeation by both Māori myth and stories of violence and conflict, illustrating that land is represented as contested territory.

4.1 Gardens: Cultivating and Civilising the Land

Rolleston is not interested in the sublime. One attempt to enjoy the view from a hill, which could have been what Pratt terms a 'monarch-of-all-I-survey-scene' (Pratt 197-204), is spoiled by the rain and becomes a long description of the party disgracefully scrambling and sliding down into the valley in the mud (5 Feb. 1883). Instead Rolleston is concerned with the settlement and cultivation of the hostland, and this appears in her preoccupation with gardens. The culmination of all efforts at cultivation appears to be the establishment of a garden that does not only yield produce but is also pleasing to the eye precisely thanks to its appearance of perfect cultivation. Much of the text is devoted to the search for this perfect garden reminiscent of that planted by Pember Reeves's colonist.

The ability or failure to cultivate the wilderness by transforming it into a garden is linked to people's race: while the most impressive gardens that Rolleston visits were established by European settlers, the Māori she encounters are usually represented as failing to show any interest in cultivating the landscape, much to Rolleston's incomprehension and disdain. The text constructs the ability of cultivation as largely reserved to whites, in accordance with Dyer's notion of 'white' enterprise/imperialism (31). Europeans are represented as possessing this quality, while Māori are not. As Robert Young argues, towards the second half of the nineteenth

century '[a]s the defining feature of whiteness, civilization merged with its quasi-synonym "cultivation" ' – and in Rolleston's text, the failure of Māori to engage in cultivation seems to be a sign of the impossibility to 'civilise' them (95). Whites, on the other hand, show their civilised nature by planting gardens.

The party's visit to Aotea provides an instance of Māori's apparent inability to cultivate the landscape in the way Rolleston sees as desirable. The absence of cultivation in Aotea is overwhelming for Rolleston, affecting her very physical wellbeing because she cannot get the food which she thinks it is her right to obtain. Her disdain shows itself in the enumeration of lack: 'We saw cows on the slopes. & asked for fresh milk. but were told the Maoris never milked their cows – for peaches – none grown this side of the water – for mullet. with which the harbor abounded – but the young men are too lazy to fish – except for occasions – for eggs. but the Maoris do not keep poultry' (2 Feb.). The landscape offers abundant opportunities for cultivation, or signs of someone having established its beginnings: cows graze, peaches seem to be grown easily on the other side of the water, and the harbour abounds with fish. However, local Māori do not show any interest in exploiting these opportunities: they never milk the cows, do not grow peaches, do not fish and do not keep poultry. Rolleston's assumption that they do not fish because they are 'too lazy' shows the underlying notion that they do not possess the enterprise reserved only for whites.

By contrast, Rolleston admires the gardens planted by a number of European settlers whose homes the party visits. She appreciates the determination of these settlers to persist in their cultivation endeavours while having to endure the hardships of life in a remote location. Yet while the text stresses these hardships, on the other hand the landscape also seems to be cultivated easily, in a way almost offering itself for cultivation – but it is only the white settlers who notice this opportunity. The most wonderful instance of this is the European trees that seem to have planted themselves at the shores of the Wairoa River without human aid, thus completing a garden that was started by a missionary – by profession an expert in cultivation/civilization:

quite at the edge, dipping their boughs in the water weeping willows fringed the river, for upwards of 50 miles – & these willows curiously enough have planted themselves –. At the mission station of 'Tangiteroria'. at the head of the river – the willow was planted extensively by Mr Buller. more than 40 years ago. . . . At every flood, branches have been broken off. & swept away – the pieces lodging in

the banks have grown there – and the river has the appearance of having been tastefully, and judiciously planted – (10 Feb.)

Not only does the wilderness wait to be cultivated, it actually participates in the settlers' cultivating/civilising mission by actively transforming itself into a garden: the wilderness is replaced by a cultivated space in which trees appear to have 'been tastefully, and judiciously planted'. Rolleston notes that 'the river scenery delighted us' (10 Feb.). The European tree in the indigenous setting is another motif explored in 'A Colonist in His Garden' ('Yonder my poplars, burning gold') and also in later New Zealand literature, famously in Ursula Bethell's collection of poetry, *From a Garden in the Antipodes* (1929). Alex Calder traces it in Blanche Baughan's description in *Studies in New Zealand Scenery* (1916) of her journey up the Whanganui River, where the mixture of native and introduced plants supposedly mirrors a similar 'blend' of Māori and Pākehā (and the willow also makes an appearance): 'the river shows something of the same racial blend; for poplars mingle with cabbage trees and karakas on its banks, and willows we shall find, fringe it all the way up' (qtd. in Calder 12). Rolleston's description of the river is a trope which, as David Spurr argues, is frequently employed in colonial discourse: the trope of 'appropriation', which 'implicitly claims the territory surveyed as the colonizer's own. . . . It effaces its own mark of appropriation by transforming it into the response to a putative appeal on the part of the colonized land and people' (28). Moreover, '[t]he colonizing imagination takes for granted that the land and its resources belong to those who are best able to exploit them according to the values of a Western commercial and industrial system' (31). Rolleston shows such an imagination in her description of Whangarei. She is not satisfied with the gardens but sees potential for better European-style cultivation in the future, implying that the land will naturally be available for such projects: 'the town has a very untidy appearance, & the gardens look unkempt – but the surrounding country is very pretty & fertile – & there seems ample space for farms & settlement' (18 Feb.).

Rolleston's claim that Māori are lazy and lack enterprise, which shows itself in their inability to cultivate the wilderness, appears to influence some of the European settlers – in Dargaville, the text's wording ('people') implies that Rolleston's disdain is not reserved to Māori only: 'The people lead an easy, contented, lazy life – money sufficient for their needs, is easily earned – & for the rest, they are content to let other people have the toil of producing – while they eat the Lotos and let all energy and ambition die' (10 Feb.). A fear of racial degeneration

underlies the text: while enterprise, ‘energy and ambition’ are allegedly intrinsic to whites, they are in danger of being diluted or destroyed through living in the hostland and contact with its indigenous inhabitants. However, near Dargaville Rolleston finds settlers who still display such enterprise. Whereas the Māori villages in Aotea failed to provide the food Rolleston had wished for and left her mentally and physically unsatisfied, Mr Webster’s garden produces this food in ‘astonishing profusion’ and, indeed, absolute perfection:

Mr Webster is a brilliant exception to all that has been said of the laziness of the inhabitants of the North – all around us were evidences of his energy & enterprise – we walked through fine plantations of pines, macrocarpa, lawsonii etc – to the orchard which claimed our immediate attention. we entered a grove of peach trees where peaches of the most delicious flavor and ripeness – grew in astonishing profusion – hitherto, our experience of peaches had not been quite satisfactory – they lacked ripeness & flavor – but here was the ideal peach – at last – that left nothing to be wished for . . . (11 Feb.)

While the description of the peach’s perfection is slightly ironic, the underlying sentiment is genuine. The text stresses several times how often the party returned to the orchard and how much pleasure they took from eating as many peaches as they could. The ‘ideal peach’ epitomises the physical and figurative fruit of the white settlers’ enterprise. It is the product of the perfect garden, the result of successful cultivation/civilization. It gives pleasure not only because of its taste, but also because it shows that the wilderness has successfully been transformed into a cultivated space. Māori, however, are represented as continuously and annoyingly sabotaging the settlers’ efforts to achieve this, thus resisting civilization.

Kolodny argues that in North America ‘[m]assive exploitation and alteration of the continent do not seem to have been part of women’s fantasies. They dreamed, more modestly, of locating a home and a familial human community within a cultivated garden’ (*Land* xiii). However, while Rolleston repeatedly imagines the landscape she traverses as a garden, or as waiting to be made into a garden, she does not want to establish a home and familial domestic setting in these gardens. Rather their function as representing white enterprise and civilisation implies that the gardens are part of a rather aggressive project of ‘exploitation and alteration’ of the hostland.

4.2 Imperialist Tropes: Describing the Host Society

There are exceptions to Rolleston's representation of Māori as lazy and unable to cultivate the land, for example in Mokoia: 'the island charmed us very much, being exceedingly pretty, & very fertile – the natives have extensive plantations of maize – tobacco & sorghum – all the flat land of the island has been under cultivation' (2 Mar.). However, the text's use of racist tropes makes clear that it indeed sees encounters like the one in Mokoia as mere exceptions. Māori in general are seen as inferior and incapable of civilization.

The stance Rolleston takes towards Māori is one of assumed superiority and almost aristocratic arrogance. As noted above, she takes it for granted that the party will receive gifts of food and thinks it preposterous if the kinds of food she wishes for are not available, as initially in Aotea. However, later at the same place the party is at last presented with gifts of food, while the travellers occupy themselves in various ways: 'The surveyors had pitched a tent – and were busy with their instruments – planning & marking out the township – the shade of the tent was very grateful, it was pitched under a large willow tree – and the ground strewn with a deep bed of ferns – on this we reclined in various attitudes' (3 Feb.). Here Rolleston again describes the landscape as readying itself for its transformation into a pleasant garden: the ground presents 'a deep bed of ferns' and a tree provides shade. The surveyors are 'busy' displaying white enterprise and planning for a more far-reaching transformation of the landscape into a township. However, at the same time the other members of the party are merely 'reclining' aristocratically, contented to be provided with food by Māori. It appears that this behaviour is not a sign of laziness when members of this group, which the text has already established as enterprising and industrious, engage in it. The description brings to mind Fairburn's stereotypes of New Zealand as Arcadia and reveals thematic connections between Rolleston's travelogue and official texts which advertised New Zealand as an emigrant destination.

The descriptions of Māori the party encounters imply their inferiority and unquestioned availability to Rolleston's gaze. Spurr identifies 'surveillance' as one of the tropes of colonial discourse in non-fictional texts. This trope appears in landscape descriptions, such as Pratt's 'monarch-of-all-I-survey-scene' (Pratt 197-204), but also in descriptions of humans:

The body of the primitive becomes as much the object of examination, commentary, and valorization as the landscape of the primitive. . . . The eye treats the body as a landscape: it proceeds systematically from part to part, quantifying

and spatializing, noting color and texture, and finally passing an aesthetic judgement which stressed the body's role as an object to be viewed. (Spurr 23)

Rolleston's description of 'Maoris' in Aotea is an instance of this trope. She writes:

Maoris kept passing along the shore – some on foot, some on horseback – the men though tall are very well built – with finely developed limbs, – one in particular – a famous chief called 'Te Ngakau' – had most prodigious calves – & the gracefully draped mat that he wore – showed them off to great advantage – all the men who dress in this way – with their shawls or mats draped round their figures, look very picturesque – but those who have adopted shabby European clothing, look very uninteresting & commonplace. . . . Some of the young girls are very nice looking with large, lustrous, gentle, eyes, but the women as a rule are not pleasing in appearance. the soft outlines of youth soon disappear – their hair is usually in the most uncombed unkempt condition – and all their attitudes are ungainly & ungraceful . . . (4 Feb.)

Rolleston's gaze wanders freely over the people who pass her at the shore, proceeding from 'finely developed limbs' and 'most prodigious calves' to 'large . . . lustrous, gentle, eyes' and 'hair . . . in the most uncombed unkempt condition'. She passes aesthetic judgement: 'very picturesque', 'very uninteresting & commonplace', 'not pleasing in appearance', 'ungainly & ungraceful'. Interestingly Rolleston objects to Māori wearing European dress – an instance of the cliché that the indigene is supposed to remain 'authentic' and unchanged/unchangeable, and of a fear that colonised peoples could become too similar to their colonisers. Furthermore, Rolleston generalises that 'all the men' and 'the women as a rule' have the same appearance – while she names Te Ngakau and describes him in particular, he serves only as an example of the general rule. These generalisations imply that she does not see the people she describes as possessing much individuality. The passage conveys that it is Rolleston's right to gaze at Māori and to judge their appearance by aesthetic standards, while her own body does not figure in the description: 'Surveillance . . . enables both visual possession of the body and an interposition of technique which safely conceals the body of the observer' (Spurr 22). Another trope noted by Spurr also emerges: 'eroticisation'. The gaze to which the people passing on the shore are subjected also makes them the object of erotic evaluation and desire. Rolleston admires Te Ngakau's 'most prodigious calves' and the women's 'lustrous' eyes and 'soft outlines of youth'. This trope

appears more predictably in the texts of male travel writers and therefore its appearance here shows again that Rolleston as a narrator is endowed with confidence and authority.

The text conflates Māori's alleged unwillingness to cultivate the landscape with other racist stereotypes such as dirtiness and untidiness, to the extent that the indigenous presence becomes an eyesore in a landscape which ought to be pleasing to European tourists: 'Wandered about the steaming holes and boiling pools that excite fresh wonder at each visit – the straggling – untidy Maori village shews no signs of improvement – & makes an ugly foreground to the grand "Rotorua" Lake' (27 Feb.). The fear of the degeneration of white settlers into indigenous laziness noted above is connected to a fear of contamination by dirtiness, apparent for example in the party's flea infestation: they 'paid the penalty of our saunter through the Maori settlement – by bringing off a sufficient number of fleas with us – to make sleep impossible –' (3 Feb.). Spurr notes that such instances of the trope of 'debasement' constitute 'both . . . a justification for European intervention and . . . the necessary iteration of a fundamental difference between colonizer and colonized' (78). This trope is linked to fears of degeneration since 'abjection consists not exactly in the condition of native life, but rather in the demoralizing crisis of *going native*, where the failure to mark the necessary bounds of exclusion is presented quite explicitly as filth and defilement' (84; emphasis in the original). Rolleston's visit to the Māori settlement constitutes a crossing of these 'necessary bounds of exclusion'. Again there are exceptions to this laziness and dirtiness, for example at the native school in Paihia, about which Rolleston writes: 'I saw them looking very clean & happy at their work, and was astonished at the facility with which they learn writing little fellows of six, writing better than most European children of eight or nine' (15 Feb.). This is marked as a mere exception since Rolleston 'was astonished' and the children's cleanliness, eagerness and intelligence was unexpected.

Mills argues that many nineteenth-century women travel writers 'concentrated on descriptions of relationships with members of the other nation, foregrounding their individuality rather than membership in another nation' (97). She also states that 'going native' is often figured in a positive sense by these writers: the women are more aware of themselves as objects of the (male) gaze, and of how they might appear to locals (98). This is not the case in Rolleston's text: Māori are de-individualised and subjected to the gaze of an observer not visible in the text. 'Going native' entails fears of degeneration and contamination. In order to explain Rolleston's stance, an analysis of the term 'British' is helpful. Mohanram explains Mackay and Thane's

argument that ‘the British woman is encoded within this term only in relation to the man. He becomes the Universal whereas she is once removed from such universality because of her femininity’ (*Black Body* 169). Colonialist and racist tropes such as those employed in Rolleston’s text allow the writer to assume agency and thus overcome her own subordination: ‘In the colonies she can accede to the position of British, with agency, not in the subordinate position to her male counterpart, but only via race. Her othering of the racial other temporarily removes her from the position of gendered other and elevates her to ideological/national power’ (169-70). Whereas Mills claims that women writers’ experience of being subordinated and the object of the male gaze makes them sympathetic to the similar experience of the colonised, the strategy described by Mohanram works the other way round: ‘othering’ allows the writer to overcome her own subordination and acquire power. This strategy seems to be employed in Rolleston’s text: by marking Māori as ‘other’ and inferior, Rolleston affirms her own superior position as a member of the ruling class.

4.3 Contested Territory

In addition to Rolleston’s accounts of sights and daily events, two other prominent narratives inform her text. One is the recounting of Māori legends, the other the retelling of violent events. Both are linked to places the party visits. These two narratives establish Māori as intrinsically linked to the hostland’s landscape. At the same time they construct this landscape as marked by a history of violent conflict and as politically contested territory. In doing so, similarly to Jackson’s and McKenzie’s diaries, Rolleston’s text serves as a writing space which mirrors the landscape it constructs.

The places Rolleston visits are constructed as permeated by Māori mythology. The text recounts a number of Māori legends connected to particular sites, such as a story about an ‘enchanted spring’ in Aotea (3 Feb.), a story about Hinemoa (2 Mar.) and a visit of the place that allegedly holds the remains of the canoes that first brought Māori to New Zealand: ‘It seems very probable that the remains of the canoe are buried here – and it would have been very interesting to dig down & satisfy our curiosity – but of course the place is “tapu” ’ (3 Feb.). The text makes clear that Rolleston does not think the notion of tapu relevant – yet she has to acknowledge that mythology is connected to landscape and that this influences the actions she can take. It is not clear whose version of the stories Rolleston narrates as she does not usually give the source; in the case of ‘a Maori tragedy connected with’ the Huka Falls, the information seems to be second

or third hand: ‘our informant was told by a Maori, whose father had been an eye witness of the event’ (6 Mar.). However, even if the accuracy of the stories is doubtful, by retelling them the text inadvertently stresses the indigenous presence in the landscape before the arrival of the settlers, and the traditional connections of Māori to the land. This is also evident in the party’s reliance on local knowledge: ‘we have to depend on the Maoris for guides – & for all information as to tracks – etc – they have undertaken to see us safely through’ (4 Feb.).

In spite of this cooperation, the landscape and the text are marked by a history of conflict. Rolleston recounts numerous historical events and anecdotes from the New Zealand Wars. She frequently stresses her admiration of the soldiers’ bravery, and retells anecdotes from the wars told by the settlers they visit, such as Mr Greenaway in Russell, ‘one of the oldest settlers in this very old place’ (16 Feb.). Rolleston also narrates an eyewitness account of a massacre at Opepe, stressing its traumatic nature: ‘they were all killed – except three, who managed to escape the bush, & after fearful sufferings & privations, reached a place of safety – one went mad – & our driver had a queer scared look in his face, when questioned about his escape’ (4 Mar.). Her text thus participates in the manufacturing of an official history in which settler heroism is central. Rolleston’s war stories are always connected to the sites where they took place, and recounted as the party visits these sites. Sometimes the traces of the events are directly visible as signs marking the landscape:

The village of Waimate lay to our left – and presently we found ourselves riding among grass grown rifle pits and trenches – the scene of the first engagement of the British troops with the chief ‘Heke’ & his followers. For 40 years the trenches & rifle pits have remained undisturbed; but now the land has been bought by a Mr Earle – who is beginning to fence & cultivate it – and all trace of the battle field will soon be obliterated – (14 Feb.)

The civilization/cultivation of the landscape here serves not only to transform the wilderness but also to obliterate these visible signs of battle and thus the signs of events which questioned the settlers’ right to appropriate territory.⁶ The appropriation of territory itself changes the landscape in a way that erases traces of this appropriation and thus makes it seem unquestionable.

⁶ Calder describes the present-day evidence of the forgetting that began with the efforts of settlers like Mr Earle: ‘A visit to [Orakau] turns out to be a quintessentially ordinary New Zealand experience: you come to a place where you might expect the past to be remembered, but what you actually encounter is the record of a kind of forgetting going on’ (98).

Rolleston claims that this history of violence is not connected exclusively to conflict between Māori and British settlers, but predates it – thus implying that Māori society is largely responsible for the violence. Her description of Tauranga again illustrates that these stories of conflict are connected to the landscape and that the telling of them is evoked by visiting the sites where they took place: ‘The great mountain of Mongonui stands like a sentenel near the entrance of the harbour & within the memory of white men has seen the scene of a horrid Maori massacre. . . . The shadow of Mongonui falls on the low promontory – where the English dead, who fell in the attack on the Gate Pah – are buried’ (26 Feb.). The mountain has been witness both to ‘a horrid Maori massacre’ and an ‘attack on the Gate Pah’, thus a history of violence and conflict that includes the New Zealand Wars but also extends back into the more distant past (‘within the memory of white men’) to illustrate that ‘horrid’ violence was already present in Māori society before it was influenced by European settlers. The text also stresses this point by evoking Māori cannibalism: ‘Very pleasant now up the river – passed a small barren island, which Mr Von Sturmer told us had been a favorite place for cannibal feasts – many hundreds of Maoris have been cooked & eaten there – the ground below the surface is thickly strewn with bones’ (14 Feb.). Assigning violence to Māori only, rather than all parties involved in armed conflict, again serves to confirm the validity of the settler project.

The text attempts to assign all history of conflict to the past: if it does not date back to the time of ‘cannibal feasts’, it takes place in stories told by ‘the oldest settlers’ and traces which ‘will soon be obliterated’. However, the very permeation of the text by these stories proves otherwise: this history is linked to the landscape itself. Moreover, an actual threat of conflict is still present at the time of writing, even though Rolleston does not take it seriously:

Before we left Wellington – Ministers had received a telegram stating that the party would not be allowed to ride through – that Te Kooti had signified his intention of molesting them – the Govt. paid no attention to this warning – treating it as one of the false alarms that are so often circulated – still the possibility of molestation lent a spice of excitement to the exhibition. (5 Feb.)

The land actually still constitutes politically contested territory at the time of writing. The landscape is still the site of conflicting claims and it is evident that the British settlement project is still being questioned. Rolleston mentions one of their guides, the ‘half caste’ Mrs Morgan: ‘her mother belonged to the Kauhia tribe & she says she has large land claims here – the half

castes are most ingenious in establishing land claims – & very troublesome in their opportunity’ (3 Feb.). While the text implies that these land claims are unfounded, its mention of them illustrates that debate over the rightful ownership of the land is ongoing.

Kolodny states that ‘given the choice, I would have had women’s fantasies take the nation west rather than the psychosexual dramas of men intent on possessing a virgin continent. In the women’s fantasies, at least, the garden implied home and community, not privatized erotic mastery’ (*Land* xiii). However, rather than implying home and community, the perfect peaches grown in Rolleston’s imagined gardens epitomise an ideal of white industry that is not extended to Māori. The representation of the host society by way of racial stereotypes is employed to create a collective diasporic identity – as Goldie states, ‘[t]he Other is of interest only to the extent that it comments on the self’ (11) – and justify the appropriation of the hostland. The text participates in an official promotional discourse rather than allowing different voices to be heard, disproving what Georgi-Findlay aptly describes as ‘simplistic assumptions about the differences between men’s and women’s writing’ (291). However, the text is also haunted by the underlying unease that both the hostland and the question of who owns it are far from settled.

5 *Constructing the Pioneer Days: Memoirs*

Since diasporic identity needs to be reproduced continuously, it changes over time. Rather than maintaining an identity imported from the homeland, the diaspora produces its own evolving version of community. In the latter part of the long nineteenth century, the so-called pioneer days of European settlement in New Zealand lay in the past. It was ‘the period in which settler society in New Zealand consolidate[d] itself economically and culturally’ (Stafford and Williams, *Maoriland* 14). Memoirs written by former ‘pioneers’ supplied textual representations of the earlier days of European settlement. By representing a version of diasporic community situated in the past, these texts produce a more recent collective identity – both by contrasting the present situation to the past and by constructing a self-defining collective memory shared within the diaspora. In Section I, I identified the generic similarities of women’s shipboard diaries. By contrast, women’s memoirs of the ‘pioneer days’ do not conform to one set of genre-specific conventions. There is, however, one significant shared feature: they display the narrator’s knowledge of earlier days and seek to impart this knowledge to a younger generation. As Blanche Baughan writes in the introduction to her collection of stories *Brown Bread from a Colonial Oven* (1912):

Young things alter very quickly; the lapse of five years, even, can render unrecognisable one of our Bush settlements; and, what with roading and bridging, telephones and motor-cars, movable wash-tubs, and acetylene gas, the rate of our up-country progress is becoming in these days so rapid that it is quite doubtful whether in another twenty years there will be so much as one Colonial oven for a batch of brown bread to come out of. And the taste of that wholesome baking is to me so sweet that even a paper memory of it seems better than nothing, and I should think myself lucky indeed if so I could convey any least hint of it to those who come after. (v)

Many memoirs are addressed to younger family members. Elizabeth Holman addresses her memoirs to her son:

My dear Willie

You say you have often wished that I would write you an account of our Early Life in New Zealand. (1)

The authors represent themselves as knowledgeable and experienced, in contrast to the homeland's inhabitants who do not share this experience. This brings to mind Wevers's argument that the colonial short story similarly emphasises 'a difference in knowledge' ('How Kathleen' 7). There are also similarities in the content of the memoirs. A striking feature is the tendency nostalgically to glorify pioneer times by stating repeatedly how happy everyone was. Elizabeth Caldwell writes that she 'greatly enjoyed the way of life then in fashion in New Zealand' (7), that it 'was far more pleasant in those days and people were just as happy' (7), 'the weather was simply delicious, the air so pure and clear, the skies so blue' (8), and that they believed 'the New Zealand climate . . . to impart almost supernatural strength' (9). Holman recounts of the missionary stations in Hokianga that 'they all seemed very happy and I spent a very happy time among them all during my stay there' (5) and Emma Kirk remembers that '[i]t was a happy time' (1). Another common characteristic is an emphasis on how much more 'savage' New Zealand used to be, thus implying that the writer's generation successfully 'civilised' the country. This is especially evident in descriptions of Māori, who are represented as being more 'primitive' or 'savage' than at the time of writing. Holman narrates that 'every thing was in a most primitive state' in Hokianga: 'everything was in a state of nature the Natives wore no clothing but a sort of tunic round their waist their heads generally full of feathers which gave them a savage appearance' (5). Even though these memoirs narrate the then very recent past, they make it seem as if the events narrated happened a long time ago. This contrasts the past with the present, emphasising that the diasporic community has evolved and established its own identity that is not the same it was in the homeland.

In this chapter I focus on Catherine Hester Ralfe's unpublished memoirs *Life in New Zealand* (1896). Ralfe immigrated to New Zealand in 1866 to join her brother Henry, his wife and children. A number of other relatives had already emigrated. The family initially lived in Christchurch and later in the gold-mining settlements of Okarito, Hokitika and Ross. After Henry's death the family eventually settled in Whanganui and Taranaki. I focus on the time they spent in the gold-mining township of Okarito since the situation there epitomises the myth of the pioneer days: the land is still 'wild', infrastructure and social structure are rudimentary, and everyone in the community has to participate in the laborious effort of settling. The town is remote and cut off from many means of communication: 'There were no roads in those days, though one has since been formed; all communication was by steamer or the seashore. The mail

arrived once a fortnight, being carried on pack-horses round the bluffs' (39-40). It is also removed from societal institutions such as the church: 'No minister of religion visited that part of the world, except at long intervals a Roman Catholic Priest, who I believe never left without receiving a considerable sum of money' (32). Ralfe's text is also notable because gold-mining communities were largely male and Ralfe's presence there and her written account constitute exceptions. Ralfe illustrates how seldom European women were encountered in some places when she recounts the visit of a gold-digger who has lived for seven years in an uninhabited area in the south, and has not seen a woman in as many years. At first he does not even want to enter the house when he sees Ralfe, but then 'I believe he survived the ordeal of sitting for a few minutes in the room with a woman!' (57; emphasis in the original) How does the text construct Ralfe's role both as a woman and as the narrator?

Constructing Ralfe's role as a woman, the text stresses that her most important concerns circle around the domestic. The reason she emigrates to New Zealand is that her 'brother John Henry wrote that his wife was not in good health and he feared being left alone with five motherless children' (1). Ralfe is always caring for children – first two children who are entrusted to her on the ship, then her brother's children – and helping with the housework. The narrative ends with a follow-up on where all these children live and whom they married, again emphasising their importance to Ralfe. Ralfe thus makes clear that she is dedicated to domestic chores, as was expected of a woman. In her account of life in Okarito, she also takes care to establish her respectability and moral irreproachability by contrasting herself and her female friends to the majority of women in Okarito, whom she represents as of loose morals: 'No woman ever came off the steamer except barmaids, showily and gaudily dressed' (46).

At the same time the text also stresses Ralfe's important role in the community outside the house: at various points in her life, she works as a seamstress, teacher and shopkeeper, often providing the income for the entire family. Ralfe narrates that in Okarito she could often be seen 'walking on the shore' with her brother (47), implying that she is associated with his performance of important tasks in the community: 'Henry, having a medicine chest, took pretty much the place of a doctor in addition to his other duties, to which were now added those of registrar of births, deaths, and marriages, as well as public vaccinator' (45). By contrast, his wife Annie, 'being always in the house, was less generally known' (48). Annie's nickname 'Mater' emphasises her role as mother and housewife. Ralfe, by contrast, is visible and respected in the

public sphere. Moreover, while Ralfe thus stresses her involvement in the domestic tasks a woman was expected to perform, she never married and thus did not fulfil what was generally considered the most important aspect of a woman's role in society. Furthermore, Ralfe is not dependent on a man. Officially Henry assumes the role of breadwinner and head of the family, but when he leaves the two women and his children behind to fare for themselves while he is looking for a new job⁷, Ralfe usually provides for the family. Her independence is striking, especially when compared to other writers of memoirs such as Holman, who relies on her husband to a much greater extent, feeling frightened and helpless when he is not with her:

I felt very lonely when my husband had to be away at night I felt nervous about people landing on the Island as there were a number of sawyers round about us and many of them a fearful drunken lot a man killed his wife with a spade in a drunken spree just opposite to us and I did not like any of my neighbours I did not trouble as long as my husband was on the place I always had a man left on the Island with me but I was young and could not get over the dreadful nervous feeling. The Dr said that my nerves had been sorely tried lately and it would take time to strengthen them . . . (20)

Ralfe also refers to the poor state of her 'nerves': she experiences frequent 'fever troubles' (78), 'attacks of headache and difficulty of breathing' (82), 'augmented I fancy, by hysteria' (48), and also agonising crises of religious faith. However, she does not look to her brother, the male head of the family, for help, but finds consolation in attending church and talking to close female friends. This independence from men becomes more pronounced after Henry's sudden death. Ralfe and the 'Mater' now manage the household independently, initially with financial support from a number of friends and relatives, but later by dividing tasks as a married couple might: first Ralfe works as a shopkeeper, until Annie is able to support the family by teaching the piano. Ralfe emphasises their gendered roles, which seem to make men redundant: 'Our positions were now reversed; I becoming the housekeeper, and she the breadwinner' (72). Ralfe seems to come to regard the children as her own, and Annie never remarries. The two women continue to live together even at the time of writing, when '[a]ll *our* children are married, and Mater and I spend our time among them, paying long visits to each' (118-19; emphasis added).

⁷ This happens frequently, illustrating 'the elasticity, and fragility, of marriage in embryonic and highly mobile local communities' emphasised by Macdonald (153).

Ralfe's roles as a woman within the family and the wider community are linked, as emerges in particular in the account of the family's time in Okarito. The narrative emphasises Ralfe's importance both within the family and the township by showing her as an upholder of morals: she is engaged both in domestic duties and community-sustaining tasks such as teaching and religious activities. For a few months Ralfe lives in the outskirts of the township at Five Mile Beach to work as a teacher in the school recently established there, setting up 'house-keeping on my own account', with only one of Annie's small sons as 'a fine little companion' (35). She stresses her independence from her family while at the same time emphasising her role as a respected member of the local community: her cousin Harry and her uncle Frank live at Five Mile Beach too, 'so that I was not without protection there, though I never needed to apply . . . for it, always finding the diggers most civil & respectful' (35). Annie's son Spencer is a token of the domestic that Ralfe takes with her into the male world of Five Mile Beach. She continues to care for a child and do 'house-keeping' (35) while at the same time being important to the community as a respected teacher. Her integration into the community – everyone is 'most civil & respectful' (35) – contrasts with Holman's fear of her neighbours (see the quotation above). Whereas Holman appears to feel confined to the family home and is afraid to leave it without a man to protect her, Ralfe is comfortable and respected both inside and outside the home. The text makes no strict separation between the public and private sphere; rather Ralfe's work within the home contributes to her respectability outside it. This brings to mind the argument of suffragists in the 1890s that women ought to be accorded a more important role in the public sphere so that they are able to extend the good influence they already exert within the home.

Ralfe as a narrator displays confidence and imparts knowledge to her readership to an even greater extent than other narrators of memoirs from the pioneer days. As I will demonstrate in the following, she shows knowledge both about practical skills essential in the pioneer community at Okarito and about its social structure. Anecdotes and gossip serve to display this knowledge and engage her readers in a process of diasporic community-building. Ralfe thus claims moral authority as a member of a predominantly male group of pioneers.

Ralfe's text displays knowledge of skills vital in the community at Okarito. She includes a long description of the method of gold-washing and explains dangers such as rivers flooding:

There is also another danger along that coast, and that is the numerous rivers.

They are not always running, the sand often banking them up into lagoons, except

in times of rain, or when the snow on the mountains partially melts; then they suddenly burst their barriers and form roaring rivers carrying all before them, and impossible to cross for some hours. (39)

She narrates numerous anecdotes, including one about a pub owner whose husband died ‘from, I am afraid, the effects of drink’ (43) and who marries again immediately, the account of a woman who was shipwrecked and stranded on a desert island, ‘having seals for food except when they could catch fish’ (41), and the sad story of a girl who arrives at Okarito to join her brother and finds that he has drowned: ‘The poor girl made her way to the cemetery one morning, and was found trying to dig away the sand and uncover the body to get a lock of his hair’ (44). These anecdotes serve variously as exciting, humorous or macabre excursions or to deliver moral warnings. At the same time they display Ralfe’s knowledge about the members of the community at Okarito and draw the readers into a process of community-building by engaging them in shared gossiping. Again this relates to Wevers’s point that the genre of the colonial short story relies on ‘the inclusion of or dependence on incidents which derive from documented or anecdotal history’ (‘How Kathleen’ 6). While Ralfe writes in a different genre, her text similarly relies on shared knowledge to create community and delineate the evolving differences between the diasporic community (in the know) and the homeland (not in the know).

The text explores Ralfe’s spatial and social position in Okarito and situates this town as part of the wider settler community. Her initial portrayal of Okarito makes this evident. She starts with a description of the family home and her own position inside it: ‘Henry had been able to get two small houses, each consisting of two rooms. . . . One of these houses faced the road; the other was about a stone’s throw behind it, in the yard of an Hotel; we slept in one and lived in the other’ (28). She then describes the township and the landscape that surrounds it:

Okarito consisted of perhaps 30 or 40 buildings, in a curve facing the small river, on the opposite side of which was a sand bank & beyond that the ocean. . . . Behind them was what in floods or high tides was a lagoon, across which were terraces covered with bush, as the forests in New Zealand are called; & behind that again a range of noble snow-clad mountains. (28-29)

The text goes on to describe in detail the animals and plants to be found in this landscape, explaining New Zealand names like manuka, more-pork, tui and kiwi. Then it moves on to Okarito’s infrastructure and social organisation:

Okarito was the only port for diggings 5, 8 & 30 miles further south, and for numerous prospects all along the coast. . . . We had a Warden as the Magistrate on a gold field is called, & a Custom house officer; the latter a single man who was glad to pass frequent evenings at Henry's cheerful fire-side. The Warden had a wife & family, which was a boon to Annie, providing her with society when she had time to enjoy it. . . . Besides these there were two brothers, the Messrs. Bird, who had land & cattle on the other side of the river . . . & who, when they came to know us better, made Henry's house their town home, returning his kindness in many ways, & proving good friends. There was also the chief surveyor & his family. . . . Also there was a police man & his wife. . . . Then we had two stores, a butcher's shop, a shoemaker's & at first a draper's, & a newspaper printing office . . . (30-31)

The text makes clear that even though Okarito is remote it displays most of the characteristics of colonial society in miniature form: it has essential shops, basic social structures ensuring administration, law and order, and social events. The town lies in the midst of a typical New Zealand landscape filled with native plants and animals. The text thus represents Okarito not as an isolated township, but as part of a wider diasporic community, while also implying that it forms a microcosm of this community. Once again, Ralfe displays the extent of her knowledge. She knows the names of plants and animals and where they can be found. She is familiar with the spatial and social organisation of Okarito. Moreover, she stresses again her integration into this community: she and her family make friends amongst the town's most influential inhabitants, and their own home becomes an important part of its social structure. Ralfe thus claims a role not only in the male world of the gold-mining township, but also within the larger settler community. She claims this role both as a woman and as a narrator, who is authorised through her knowledge to engage in the textual representation of the 'pioneer days' and thus the identity production of the diaspora.

Part 2: Fiction

6 'Securely based'? A Rolling Stone

Clara Cheeseman's novel *A Rolling Stone* (1886) shows little sympathy for the nostalgia of pioneer narratives and memoirs such as Catherine Ralfe's. It criticises these texts' glorification of the pioneer days and implies that its own representation of the process of settling is less nostalgic and more realistic:

There is something very poetic in the idea of a man choosing a place for himself in the heart of the wilderness, building his little house under the giant trees, and hewing his way farther amongst them year by year, fighting with the forest for every foot of ground. All this is very charming to an imaginative mind, and these pioneer settlers, with their bush cottages and farms, are picturesque figures in story or sketchbook. But the labours, the privations, the poverty of their lives, Heaven only knows. (1: 6)

According to Jones, *A Rolling Stone* uses 'North Island materials for the construction of standard three-decker Victorian domestic melodrama' (125). Untypically of a melodrama, however, the text also includes many passages which are highly realist and practical in tone, engaging in detailed descriptions of agricultural work and the difficulties the characters face as a result of the 1880s depression. The genre of domestic melodrama is concerned with the home, and Cheeseman's novel explores where this home is situated within a web of spaces in which the homeland and the hostland are the principal focal points. The main plot tells the story of 'rolling stone' Randall, who left England for New Zealand to escape his troubled past, a youthful mistake having ruined his reputation and left him feeling guilty toward his family, particularly his sister, who eventually dies while searching for him. Initially Randall travels aimlessly around the country, but after many trials, tribulations and encounters with helpful friends and scheming antagonists he makes his fortune as a violinist. He is rewarded by winning back his childhood love Maud, and the end of the novel sees them happily established at their friend Mr Wishart's bush cottage, with Randall's orphaned nephew Harry as their foster child.

A Rolling Stone focuses the question of how diaspora affects genre. What does it mean for the ideology of domestic melodrama when the home on which the narrative focuses is shifted to spaces that are not yet settled? Mackay claims that while the novel is aimed at an English

audience, it is nevertheless ‘securely based in New Zealand culture and does not preoccupy itself with contrasting the two countries’ (66). I argue that the novel is anything but ‘securely based’ in New Zealand: it aims to describe a successful project of settling and establishing ideal domesticity in the diaspora, but its construction of the spaces of homeland and hostland complicates imaginings of both space and time, demonstrating the difficulties of exporting melodramatic domesticity to the diaspora. In the following I will map out the various geographical spaces the text evokes and explore their relation to the project of settling, arguing that the text simultaneously propagates and complicates this project.

6.1 Homeland and Hostland

The main characters’ homeland England is an object of nostalgic longing. Randall sentimentally remembers it when he is in the grip of unemployment and economic depression: ‘Why would the picture of a long-lost home, fair and pleasant among the English lanes, rise before him? why would scenes in that old time pass before him so quickly? And what was that? – only a hot tear which fell upon his hand’ (2: 193). As explained above, Hall argues that this unfulfilled longing for a lost homeland constitutes ‘the beginning of the symbolic, of representation’ (‘Cultural Identity’ 236) – and thus of writing. Unlike a domestic melodrama ‘securely based’ in one country, *A Rolling Stone* relies on its construction of England and New Zealand, and the distance between them, for the workings of its plot. The myth of the homeland is what makes representation, and thus the narrative, possible. But it also undermines this representation, demonstrating an instability of diasporic identity that the text unsuccessfully attempts to contain.

The complex narrative of *A Rolling Stone* spans a geographical space which evokes England and New Zealand as its main poles, with the sea linking them and Australia as a halfway place in between. The plot narrated in the first two volumes is set predominantly in New Zealand. Here the geographical setting of the narrative comprises three spaces: a town in the north of New Zealand, the farmland surrounding the town, and an area of native bush nearby, where Mr Wishart is building his cottage. Randall wanders back and forth between these places. However, Chapters IV and V of the first volume are set in England, where Randall’s sister is preparing to leave her husband to go to New Zealand and search for her brother. In Volume 3 the setting branches out to follow Randall’s now more extended travels through Australia, where he plays violin concerts, to England to be reunited with his mother, and back to New Zealand via Italy and (again) Australia. Randall is shipwrecked on the voyage from Sydney to Dunedin,

swims ashore, and lies sick on Stephen Langridge's sheep station, which is similar to the North Island farmland described in the first two volumes. Eventually Randall returns to the town in the North and, from there, makes his way back into the bush and to Mr Wishart's house, settling down with Maud. Volume 3 also includes a small number of chapters set in the North Island spaces familiar from the first two volumes. These chapters mostly serve to tie up minor sub-plots.

The connotations of these different spaces determine the text's themes and narrative style. The North Island town is the setting of colonial social life, often described in a humorous or satirical manner, but it is also the space where economic depression, unemployment, and the ruthless avarice of characters such as the tellingly named lawyers Sampson & Gatherall are most visible. In the farmland space surrounding the town the practicalities of agriculture, for example machinery and weather patterns, are crucial; they are described realistically and in great detail. Here, too, there are characters whose eye is on financial gain, such as farmer Mr Langridge, but these characters are depicted more sympathetically than the lawyers. The farmland is a place of transition, made evident by the fact that this is where the New Zealand landscape is being transformed by the settlers: 'There were fields here, some well grassed, others yet disfigured with black stumps and logs' (1: 41). This description is reminiscent of Ann Jackson's concern about the disfigurement of sublime scenery for agricultural projects and of Baughan's 'A Bush Section'. *A Rolling Stone* represents the bush where Mr Wishart builds his cottage as not yet touched by this destructive transformation of the landscape. It is a native space, providing a counter-pole to the completely transformed space of the town, and constitutes a space of both romanticism and romance. The bush scenery is described as an untouched paradise, a place outside of civilisation, in a nature that resembles a garden rather than sublime wilderness. Furthermore, the bush is the place where the romantic plot is resolved: here Randall is reconciled with Maud and settles down to married life – while still keeping the Arcadian quality of the bush intact, rather than subjecting it to the destructive – but also productive – project of agriculture.

The first chapter of the novel is set in the bush, emphasising the significance of this space to the narrative. The epigraph to the chapter, from Wordsworth, establishes the romantic tone of the landscape description following it:

The spot was made by Nature for herself
The travellers know it not, and 'twill remain

Unknown by them; but it is beautiful . . . (1: 1)

The text then repeats the notion of a place ‘made by Nature for herself’, untouched by civilisation. But it also describes this place as a ‘park’ and ‘garden’, implying its availability for domestication to the observer who is describing it:

You came at last to an open, sunlit space, where the trees no longer crowded together, struggling for light and air, but stood apart in groves and avenues, all the more beautiful because they were of Nature’s own planting. Here you might think no hand but hers had ever laboured. In the midst of the woods, where none could vex her or interfere with her designs, she made this park for herself; she planned these shady alleys, these verdant lawns and bowers. In the summer-time, amongst the forest trees bedecked with flowers, with the unrivalled azure of the Austral sky above, and the rush of streams and the song of birds around, you might well believe you had strayed into her own pleasure garden, almost too lovely for human trespassers. (1: 2)

Again we encounter the trope of landscape as a garden. The description of the bush scene as a ‘park’ not designed by humans but ‘of Nature’s own planting’ brings to mind Rolleston’s amazement at the willows along the Wairoa River which ‘curiously enough have planted themselves’ (10 Feb. 1883): the hostland appears to ready itself for colonisation and cultivation. Moreover, the upper-class connotations of the word ‘park’ are reminiscent of the scene Rolleston describes when the surveying party aristocratically ‘recline[s] in various attitudes’ on a natural ‘deep bed of ferns’ (3 Feb.). However, the notion that nature’s ‘pleasure garden’ is ‘almost too lovely for human trespassers’ also evokes the humbling grandeur of the sublime so present in Jackson’s diary and illuminates the tension between the native landscape as appearing available for colonisation and at the same time too overpowering to be cultivated by humans. The notion of Nature’s own garden furthermore evokes the Garden of Eden, and indeed the text goes on to depict the bush as edenic. It is a place where ‘everything lovely and graceful’ blooms, ‘an eternal spring’ rules, and where ‘[i]f, as we cannot doubt, decay and death were present, they were unseen and unheeded in the midst of such exuberance of life and growth’ (1: 3). The ‘eternal spring’ and ‘exuberance of life and growth’ are features of Arcadia, where natural resources are available in abundance. This has connotations of pastoralism, which Patrick Evans notes in nineteenth-century New Zealand texts: these texts describe the colony as a paradise which,

unlike Britain, has not been corrupted by the industrial revolution. An imagined pastoral past thus becomes a vision of the future (19-20). *A Rolling Stone*'s description of the bush evokes both such an imagined pastoral past and the Garden of Eden. The bush is thus placed outside the modernity of civilisation: either outside time or in an idealised past. At the same time its idyllic qualities are a promise for the future: far from the consequences of the industrial revolution, it has the potential to become an ideal Arcadia and better Britain for the diasporic community.

However, while Mr Wishart's land can be seen as set in an idealised past, it is also haunted by its own past. For the spot is actually not entirely 'of Nature's own planting' but has an indigenous past. It 'had been a place most dear to the people who had given enduring names to every hill and stream around – the Maoris dead and gone' (1: 28):

It has heard the fury of battle, the song of triumph, the wail for the dead; it has been shaken by the maddening war dance; its echoes have repeated the eloquence, the rejoicings, the tumults of great feast days. It has a place of graves where you would little think to find one. Wild and wicked deeds have been done amongst its pleasant groves. That dark and silent stream which hides its face in the shades of the forest, after one shuddering glance at the light of day, has it not some guilty secret in its breast, which always mourns, sobbing to itself under the trees? But its companion, which leaps into the sunshine, and like a flash of light passes down the valley, it has heard the laughter and play of black-eyed children and the careless chatter of the Maori girls as they braided their baskets and mats by the house doors on summer mornings. But a time came when the children were no longer there. A blight fell on the place. . . . It was given up to silence and forgetfulness. In old times of superstition English people would have deemed such ground haunted; the Maori said, 'The place is *tapu*.' (1: 4; emphasis in the original)

This history is at odds with the place's Arcadian qualities evoked earlier in the text. While there have been 'rejoicings', 'laughter and play', and 'careless chatter', the history of Mr Wishart's land is characterised overwhelmingly by violence and sadness: battles, war dances, graves, 'wild and wicked deeds', guilty secrets, mourning and sobbing. The place appears to be haunted by those who used to live there and are now 'dead and gone'. What is more, the place seems to be doubly haunted: it was 'abandoned' by the Māori because already a 'blight' had fallen on it. As if

to emphasise this double haunting, the text names it twice and in two languages: 'haunted' and 'tapu'. The myth of Māori as a dying race is here connected with the common assumption that they were already in decline before colonisation, so that no blame is laid on the European settlers. Again, *A Rolling Stone* employs a strategy similar to Rolleston's travelogue when it depicts pre-contact Māori society as inherently violent, insinuating that the blame for violent conflict between Māori and European settlers lies with Māori.

The bush is thus constructed as the essence of the hostland New Zealand, as its untouched heart separate from the transformation in the farmland and the corruption in the city. However, it is constructed on contradictory terms: as pastoral past and promise for the future but also as the geographical embodiment of a dispossessed presence which seems to be haunting the land. England, the homeland, is constructed in a similar way: it also acquires connotations of both pastoral past and haunting presence.

If Mr Wishart's land is at the heart of the New Zealand setting of the novel, then the garden of Randall's sister Mrs Moresby performs the same function for the English setting. The discrepancy between wild bush and domesticated garden is not as big as it seems when we remember that the text describes the bush as a 'park' and 'garden'. Mrs Moresby's garden, too, has a long history and is seldom visited by humans. It displays an abundance of wild plants and flowers reminiscent of the 'exuberance of life and growth' in the bush.

Within the high stone wall was an ancient garden. . . . The plants of the garden were mostly old-fashioned things. . . . Daffadowndillys, jonquils, and wallflowers, 'carnations and streaked gillyflowers,' had life leases here. Such vagabond fellows as ragged Robins, batchelor's buttons, and borage had thrust themselves in; widow-wail and gardener's garters were in opposite corners, and there was some rare fine honesty. There, by the wall, what tufts of purple loosestrife and straggling leopard's bane; and upon it, what a thick growth of stonecrop, of woundwort, of feverfew, and, properly enough, pellitory of the wall. Shall we speak of herbs? Here was everything scented and aromatic, from sweet basil and lavender to southernwood and rosemary, and everything bitter and pungent from horehound and wormwood to camomile and rue. . . . In the summertime, when the damask and cabbage roses were all ablow, when the hollyhocks looked over the

wall, and the foxgloves strained after them, what a glow of colour, what a scented air in the quaint old garden!

Mr. Moresby had wished to modernise it, but his wife had begged that it might be let alone. He had altered everything on the other side of the house. . . . Here his hothouses had been built, and here were grown flowers and fruit. . . . Mrs.

Moresby spent many solitary half-hours in her flower-garden. (1: 62-64)

Unlike Mr Moresby's part of the garden, which has been transformed and put to commercial use much like the farmland in New Zealand, his wife's garden has been 'let alone' and serves as a place for solitary contemplation. It is described in romantic terms and associated with the past: 'an ancient garden', 'old-fashioned', 'the quaint old garden'. A similar place might feature in Randall's idealising, melancholy memories quoted above, when he remembers 'a long-lost home, fair and pleasant among the English lanes' (2: 193). England thus appears as idealised past and idyllic setting, and is simultaneously connected with the future when it is the object of Randall's melancholy longing.

However, England is also a haunting presence in the novel. Randall is unable to start a new life in New Zealand because he encounters people whom he knew in England and who remember his past. Godfrey Palmer does his best not to let Randall's crime be forgotten because he hopes that Randall's inheritance from Mr Moresby will eventually go to him. The lawyers Sampson & Gatherall not only play into Godfrey's hands but indirectly cause the death of Randall's sister when they shock her by confirming false rumours about Randall. Her orphaned son Harry embodies the way in which the past in the homeland interferes continuously with the present and future in the hostland. England as a haunting presence is thus again connected with the past: it disrupts the lives of the characters by bringing back the memory of past events that ought to be forgotten.

A Rolling Stone thus adds a new dimension to the conventions of Victorian melodrama by introducing a number of different geographical spaces between the two poles England and New Zealand, homeland and hostland. The connotations of these spaces complicate the notions of time and space. The notion of space is complicated since the two places seem eerily similar, even though they are at opposite ends of the geographical spectrum of the plot. However, this similarity lies in them being idealised as well as made uncanny: they are simultaneously Arcadian and haunted/haunting. The notion of time is complicated because time seems to

collapse: both England and New Zealand are associated both with the past and with the future. These complications prevent the narrative from being ‘securely based’ in one place – rather, it oscillates between two poles, unable to settle at one of them. How does the text attempt nevertheless to describe the possibility of successful settlement in the diaspora?

6.2 The Speaking Home

Moffat suggests that Cheeseman writes ‘about the Puritan work ethic from a secular perspective’, with ‘a definite didactic undertone’: work is advocated as ‘the prerequisite of success’ and ‘laziness is ridiculed’ (113). After years of wandering, Randall finds the occupation he is suited for, music, and succeeds at it through perseverance and hard work. He is rewarded by winning Maud’s love. Godfrey Palmer makes money in unlawful ways because he loathes honest work, and is punished for his way of life: ‘What does become of such men? . . . There is a road which leads to bitterness, darkness, despair, and they have chosen it’ (3: 301). I argue that it is equally possible to read Randall’s story as a trajectory of successful settling: after a period of wandering and travelling he settles down with Maud and Harry in the bush setting previously established as the heart of his chosen hostland. This ending can be put in the context of the narrative strategy described by Stafford and Williams: ‘The settler project of taming the land and making a home was . . . metaphorically rendered in the encounter, trials and final resolution of the romantic plot’ (‘Introduction’). Godfrey Palmer, however, disrupts such pictures of happy domesticity. Whereas Randall is one of Mrs Sherlock’s favourite lodgers, Godfrey upsets her by luring the other boarders into a game of cards. When Randall lies sick at the Doctor’s cottage, Godfrey intrudes with plans to have him killed. Whereas Randall at the end of the narrative can be seen as the ideal settler, Godfrey is unable to settle. He is still on the road – one ‘which leads to bitterness, darkness, despair’ (3: 301).

The text shows its preoccupation with domesticity and successful settling in its many detailed descriptions of the interiors of homes. The numerous instances of such descriptions include the Baileys’ home, Mr Palmer’s and Mr Everard Palmer’s houses, Mrs Sherlock’s boarding house and Stephen Langridge’s cottage at his sheep station. Over the course of the narrative Randall is a visitor or guest at almost all of these places, but eventually he settles at the one which seems to come closest to domestic perfection, Mr Wishart’s bush cottage:

Yes; at last! If ever house spoke, this speaks to them now. It smiles a welcome from every window. Its parterre of flowers flashes like a ring of jewels in the

sunlight. . . . All the house-folk are outside to meet them, the servants drawn up in a respectful but imposing phalanx in the background. . . . And then – but it need not be told, for we know how the lost are welcomed when they are found again, and how, after toil and travel, after wandering and waiting, one moment on the threshold of a home is worth it all. (3: 292-293)

If, according to Hall, the unfulfilled longing for a lost homeland makes diasporic representation possible, then the establishment of this new, ideal home has the potential to end textual representation – and, indeed, more ‘need not be told’: the novel ends. The text ceases to speak, letting the house itself speak and smile at its new inhabitants instead.

Mr Wishart acts as a facilitator of this successful settling in two ways. First, he is instrumental in bringing the romantic plot to its resolution by reuniting Randall, Maud and Harry in the bush: Maud is his stepsister, he invites Randall to his bush cottage to paint the scenery, and he takes orphaned Harry to live with him before the child’s true identity is discovered. Second, Mr Wishart allows the family to become indigenised by making them part of the domestic setting he has established in the bush. Mr Wishart has become the owner of the land where the now ‘dead and gone’ Māori used to live – this establishes him as their successor. Moreover, rather than just possessing this land, he transforms it in a way that does not alter its native character:

The house grew from an unsightly framework into a stately pile, and gardens began to bloom around it. Mr. Wishart would not allow any of the fine old trees to be needlessly felled, so that the beautiful park-like groves and coppices remained unharmed, and one might fancy that the house, peeping out from amongst the trees, had been a home for generations . . . (1: 163)

Unlike the settlers in the farmland, whose transformation of the landscape is destructive, Mr Wishart merely enhances the ‘park’ or ‘garden’ already established by ‘Nature’s own planting’ (1: 2). He establishes a version of domesticity that blends in with the native bush, allowing him to acquire indigeneity and connecting him to the edenic character of the landscape. His house seems to have been ‘a home for generations’, implying that he has succeeded at what Goldie terms ‘indigenization’ (13): he has assumed the characteristics of the indigenous, replacing them in the process. Mr Wishart’s cottage thus epitomises the home of a successful settler. The final scene narrated in the novel is set in the same bush spot as the first chapter, but by now this place has been prepared for a romantic ending.

With the help of Mr Wishart, Randall and Maud can also achieve indigeneity by being linked with the bush setting. While Mr Wishart brings them physically together in the bush, the text implies that they already belong to this native landscape in a deeper way. In Randall's case, it is significant that his task in the bush is to paint the landscape. Thus he replicates the native scenery while he is simultaneously able to control it through visual mastery. This brings to mind Pratt's figure of the 'seeing-man', 'he whose imperial eyes passively look out and possess', who imagines the native landscape as awaiting his domination and cultivation (9). Maud is connected to the bush through her wanderings in it. The romantic descriptions of these wanderings link them to the Arcadian depictions quoted above of Mr Wishart's land. Moreover, Maud's solitary ramblings bring to mind Mrs Moresby's half-hours spent in her pastoral English garden. Maud is represented as part of the edenic bush setting, familiar with its 'sheltered little harbours' and even able to communicate with the native birds:

High up the stream, where the kingfishers kept watch on the withered branches of tall dead trees, and the wood-pigeons, hidden in their leafy halls, dreamed away the sultry noontide, she had her sheltered little harbours, where, with her boat moored in the shade of overhanging boughs, she could read or think in a delicious quietness. . . . She could row beneath branches drooping with their weight of flowers, and pluck what she chose without stepping from the boat. Sometimes she slowly drifted down the stream, singing softly to herself. There were only birds to hear her, and often a clear sweet gush of song seemed to answer her from the bush. (2: 66)

Randall sees Maud on one of these excursions and paints her without her noticing. He thus immobilises – or settles – her within the bush scenery. Later the painting is instrumental in leading to their reconciliation and renewed engagement, pointing at the importance of the native New Zealand setting for the romantic resolution of the narrative.

After the residents of Mr Wishart's bush cottage have thus been constructed as on their way to being indigenised and as connected to the native landscape, the novel can be 'rounded off with a traditional romantic ending: all mysteries are solved, characters are paired off with their appropriate mates and Randall's name is cleared, leading to reconciliation with his fiancée and family' (Mackay 72). This happy ending concludes Randall's wanderings, seeing him finally settled in the hostland. The romantic resolution implies that the haunting indigenous presence has

been exorcised. The settlers have successfully replaced Māori in their ownership of the land and put it to its best possible use. They appear to have reconciled the discourses of sublime nature and agricultural transformation which are in conflict in Jackson's diaries: Mr Wishart's land is beautiful *and* useful. The haunting presence of England also seems to have been overcome: Randall's past crimes are forgiven or forgotten and he is reconciled with Maud, while Harry's true identity has been discovered and he receives his rightful inheritance.

However, there is a reminder that this process of settling might not have been completely successful and that the settlers are still tied up in a network of conflicting spaces. This reminder is the sea, which is always visible from Mr Wishart's 'tower of observation, which . . . had been built in order to gain a view of the sea' (1: 170). The nature of the sea is ambivalent, similarly to the contradictory connotations of homeland and hostland as both pastoral and haunting. As explained in Section I, the sea connects the diasporic centre to its sub-centres, linking the red parts of the imperial map of the British Empire, but at the same time it harbours the potential to disrupt this link: the connection it establishes between homeland and hostland is perilous and unstable. This contradiction, central to Evans's *Over the Hills*, also emerges in *A Rolling Stone*. The sea's potential for disruption becomes evident in the importance of shipwrecks in the narrative. Randall mistakenly thinks that his sister died in a shipwreck and never arrived in New Zealand. Later he himself is taken for dead because he is one of the few people who survived a shipwreck off Dunedin, and has fallen into a delirious fever. Mr Wishart acknowledges this double nature of the sea when he designs his cottage, hinting that a view of the sea is a reminder of beauty as well as terror:

'There is only one thing wanting,' he said; 'a view of the sea. Personally, I hate its cruel, cold, and crawling waters as much as I can hate anything. I never trust myself upon it except when forced by sheer necessity. . . . But in some cases I love the sea. I love it in a fine painting, and I love it on land, when it comes in as a distant and beautiful object, too far off to remind one unpleasantly of its real character.' (1: 25)

Despite these dangers, the text emphasises the sea's potential to link the homeland to its diasporic communities. The characters travel extensively between England, New Zealand, and other settler colonies. Randall tells his mother that '[n]o place is far away nowadays' emphasising the connections between Britain and its colonies (3: 118). However, a number of

plot complications suggest that while the sea links various places in the settler empire, the distance between them can still assume crucial significance. There are a number of instances of characters being unable to find each other because people are highly mobile and it is difficult to keep track of their movements through different countries. Instances of these negative results of mobility are the shipwreck stories mentioned above and the lawyers' difficulty to locate Randall when he is touring Australia under a stage name.

The sea thus connects homeland and hostland while simultaneously separating them. The distance between them is constructed as negligible and significant at the same time. This means that, again, notions of time and space are complicated in the text: the text simultaneously negates and exaggerates distance. The settlers attempt to make New Zealand into a better Britain, preserving its pastoral qualities while establishing domesticity – they attempt to negate the distance between the two places. If the sea is seen as a connection between homeland and hostland, the view of it from Mr Wishart's lookout tower confirms that the settlers' endeavour has been successful. However, the sea's potential to disrupt this same connection complicates this easy solution: the view of the sea is a reminder of the homeland that lies beyond. Even as the characters in the novel appear to complete their process of settling, they are thus reminded that such a completion might be impossible. *A Rolling Stone* creates a version of domestic melodrama which can be exported to the diaspora, exploring a trajectory of successful settling that indigenises the settlers. However, even as their new home 'smiles a welcome from every window' (3: 292), there are uneasy reminders that diasporic domesticity – making the hostland 'home' – is more complicated than they, and the novel's readers, might wish.

7 *Emptying the Land: Ko Méri*

The preface to Jessie Weston's novel *Ko Méri* (1890) makes explicit what *A Rolling Stone* only hints at – Pākehā ownership of the land hinges on the dispossession of Māori: 'Let us hope that the great qualities of the pagan owners of the soil will descend to us, the children of a race whose humanizing influence is felt all over the world'. Like Rolleston's diary, *Ko Méri* engages in the textual construction of the host society in order to delineate the collective identity of the diasporic community. Its 'half-caste' heroine Mary Balmain is part Māori but grows up as the adopted child of a Pākehā couple in polite Auckland society. When her English fiancé Captain Deering dies, Mary goes 'back to the tribe' of her mother. In *Ko Méri* Māori still inhabit the New Zealand landscape from which their ghosts have supposedly been exorcised at the end of Cheeseman's novel. However, their impending demise is seen as inevitable. Mary's return to 'the tribe' is put in the context of the dying race myth when she declares: 'it is well that I should share the darkness with my own people' (389). The preface implies that the novel presents a favourable image of Māori or even speaks for them when it claims that Mary is 'a true representative of a people whose dignity, patriotism, and rare intelligence have been the admiration of the whole world'. This appears to be a contrast to Rolleston's text, which describes Māori as lacking dignity (they are dirty and lazy) and patriotism (they make unfounded land claims). *Ko Méri* does not engage in racial stereotyping in a manner as obvious and hostile as Rolleston's diary, but this chapter will show that the novel nevertheless justifies land appropriation by relegating Māori to what McClintock terms 'anachronistic space' and associating this space with a cyclical notion of time, opposed to the teleology of whiteness and imperialism. This justificatory argument is based on the construction of the racially different femininities of Mary and her Pākehā friend Lenore. Ultimately *Ko Méri*'s message is ambiguous: it seems to make an argument in favour of the dispossession of Māori, but the way in which it constructs its romantic plot undermines this argument.

7.1 Different Femininities

Literary 'half-castes' offer a rich potential for complex diasporic literature – Robert Young argues that the figure of the 'half-caste' is frequently the object of 'threatening, apparently disgusting, but clearly fascinating, fantasies' (151). In her discussion of a number of New Zealand novels that feature 'half-caste' romantic heroines Lawless notes that 'the plot of the

novel tended to revolve around [the half-caste's] struggle to completely disavow her mixed-race heritage so as to qualify for a role in middle-class Pakeha women's society' (45). The 'half-caste' is a figure perceived as threatening to the clear categorisations of colonialism because she is characterised by her liminality, suspended on the boundary between different races and cultures (46). Lawless argues that it 'is fundamental to the ideology of the novels that "half-caste" is not a stable identity; as a category that should not exist, it is suggested, it will inevitably collapse and all half-castes will eventually settle into either a "white" or a "native" identity' (130). The only way a 'half-caste' can successfully settle into a 'white' identity and become integrated into Pākehā society is marriage to a white man, disavowing her Māori ancestry. In *Ko Méri* Mary settles into a 'native' identity when she leaves Pākehā society and 'goes back to the tribe'. As I will show, however, even before this happens Mary is consistently represented as non-white: the text implies that Mary is actually fully 'native' from the start, even though she had a Pākehā father. That her Māori 'blood' is the defining part of her heritage is confirmed when she chooses to live as a 'native'. This narrative is possibly a strategy to contain the liminality of the 'half-caste', which threatens the clear white/non-white categories.

Following Said, Terry Goldie identifies five features typical of portrayals of the indigene in Canadian, Australian and New Zealand literatures: sexuality, violence, orality, mysticism, and prehistoricity. Goldie emphasises the connections within the settler empire when he states: 'Whether the context is Canada, New Zealand, or Australia becomes a minor issue since the game . . . is all happening on one form of board, within one field of discourse, that of British imperialism' (10). Whereas Mary is part of European modernity at the start of the narrative, she acquires prehistoricity when she leaves her status as a 'beautiful, gifted, cultivated' member of Pākehā society (377). When she is still part of that society, however, the text already constructs her in terms of stereotypes identified by Goldie, notably orality and sexuality. Mary is musical, a good singer and dancer, and has memorised passages from the 'masterpieces of English literature' (17). However, she is unable to understand the theological background of the sacred music she sings in the church choir, and she fails to comprehend the deeper meaning of literary works: she can merely appreciate the sound of the music and the rhythm of the poetry. The text implies that Mary's sexuality is uninhibited, conveying the stereotypical notion that '[w]hile whiteness is "beautiful" in a non-corporeal sense, non-whiteness is *erotic*' (Lawless 120; emphasis in the original). Mary is described as stunningly beautiful and Mediterranean-looking,

illustrating that she looks sufficiently white to be accepted in Pākehā society. However, she is also described as ‘languid’ (255), ‘voluptuous’ and ‘mature’ for her age (15), hinting that her beauty relies on eroticism and decadence. Furthermore, the text compares Mary to an ‘eastern houri’, insinuating that her sexuality is as unbridled as contemporary clichés about the Orient suggest (76). Mary’s sexuality is linked to her orality when the text describes her ‘soft, rhythmical voice’ as one of her most attractive features (255). Captain Deering’s love for Mary is primarily erotic: a ‘spell’ (305). Their relationship relies on physical attraction, as Mary insinuates when she tells Deering that ‘[i]n five minutes, if I did not speak at all, I could show you more love than in a letter of twenty pages’ (302). This sentence again links Mary’s sexuality to her orality. She rejects writing as inadequate to convey meaning and relies on silence, which according to Goldie can function as ‘an extension of . . . orality’ (125): in silence ‘there is only presence, in which all is left not only unwritten but unsaid’ (124-125).

Sander Gilman’s *Difference and Pathology* provides further insight into how *Ko Méri* constructs Mary as non-white even before she chooses to identify fully with the ‘native’ side of her identity. Gilman explores the construction of what he sees as the three basic categories of the definition of the self and the other: illness, sexuality, and race. He argues that sexuality and illness, both mental and physical, can be perceived as threatening to the integrity of the individual because they are instances of the self losing control over body and/or mind. Stereotypes of non-whites as sexually uninhibited can be a strategy of displacing the necessity of control over one’s own sexuality as necessity of control over the other. In a conflation of stereotypes, the notions of illness and madness are linked to the idea of non-white sexual transgression and deviance, all of these categories converging in the concept of racial degeneration. In *Ko Méri* Mary’s Māori heritage is seen as a threat to her control over her own mind and body: ‘Was there a something, an inherited weakness in the half-caste, at present covered over by the flowers of civilization, that, when the occasion came, would burst its silken bands, and bend this girl’s form to what would be a mockery of its present splendour?’ (319) The wording ‘inherited weakness’ makes it seem that Mary’s Māoriness is a hereditary disease. The threat of its breakout is aggravated by Mary’s sexuality, which is in turn linked to mental illness. While Mary’s usual behaviour is described as passive and ‘languid’ (255), she occasionally shows extreme emotional reactions bordering on insanity, all of them related to her romantic involvement with Deering: he kisses her hand when she does not wish it; she overhears someone

doubting Deering's love for her because she is 'only a Maori' (331); she learns of Deering's death. The descriptions of Mary's emotional outbreaks conflate stereotypes of race, sexuality, and mental illness:

She paced up and down the room with a sweeping, panther-like grace, her eyes brilliant with that dangerous light never seen except in the eye of native races, whose souls know no law but their own instincts and passions – a magnificent figure in her long, trailing gown and splendid, voluptuous beauty, the veneer of civilisation fallen off, and the Maori blood surging wildly through her veins. (236)

Mary here regresses to a state in which she resembles a wild animal rather than a civilised human. She loses control like a stereotypical madwoman. Mary's madness is linked to her race ('native races', 'Maori blood') and to her sexuality ('splendid, voluptuous beauty').

Mohanram draws attention to the connection Gilman sees between representations of black women and British prostitutes. Both are imagined as embodying excessive sexuality as well as disease:

Analogical thinking that linked the black woman and the prostitute's body, locating both of them as inferior, in the end also metonymically linked *all* women's bodies to them; all women were biologically inferior. Thus, white women were *not* white unto themselves. White women were, in fact, not that separate from being *black*. (Mohanram, *Imperial White* 43-44; emphasis in the original)

Mary represents such a threat to the whiteness of white women. This threat is already inherent in her categorisation as 'half-caste' and thus half white, indicating that the boundary between her and fully white women is tenuous. A number of Mary's characteristics are stereotypical not only of non-whites but also of women: she is impulsive and emotional rather than rational; she is capable of imitating, but not of creating; and her behaviour is frequently perceived as childish by her social environment. Mary is a stereotypical indigene, but she also illustrates the 'dark side' of every woman. In order to contain this threat, the text constructs an antonym to Mary: her friend Lenore Dayton. Lenore represents an ideal of white British femininity – however, a New Woman version of this femininity, as Lenore is endowed with agency and intellect. She is devoted to the Puritan work ethic, even in the rare moments when she is not working: 'though her attitude was listless, and her hands idle, her mind was busy' (201). She possesses the intellectual skills Mary

lacks: she borrows sophisticated theological and philosophical books from Mary's adoptive father and discusses them with him. Her beauty is not sexualised but the expression of 'womanliness and tact' (101), and her voice is characterised by 'a quickness, an eager, vibrating note' rather than languid sensuality (28). Unlike the physical attraction between Mary and Captain Deering, Lenore's relationship with clergyman Mr Everard is described as the union of two like minds. Mr Everard sees a kind of Puritan helpmate in Lenore: 'the helping, sustaining spirit of his life' (378). He finds Mary attractive in an erotic sense, but Lenore's womanly personality is more marriageable: 'The voluptuousness and richness of Mary Balmain's beauty he could not but admire, but there was something about her personality that repelled him; not so the chastened, delicate type of Lenore's womanhood' (141). Their contrasting personalities are an instance of the 'binary of European beauty/Maori eroticism [extending] itself to become an identification of sexual morality, and all the other values of colonising society, with whiteness' (Lawless 121). Lenore thus serves as a foil to Mary, illustrating that it is possible to resist temptations to revert to savage, or stereotypically feminine, behaviour – that the dark side within every woman can be contained. When Mary surrenders to 'wild, passionate sorrow . . . in utter abandonment' after Deering's death and appears 'precisely like a Maori wahine . . . mourning for her dead husband' (349), her adoptive mother realises that '[t]his was not the way that Lenore Dayton would act under the circumstances' (343). With Mary and Lenore, the novel constructs two versions of female characters: a 'half-caste' primarily defined by her indigenous side, and her white, New Woman antonym. These two versions of femininity underlie the novel's justification of the diaspora's appropriation of its hostland, and the alienation of the host society.

7.2 Who Owns the Land?

The novel's full title *Ko Méri, or, a Cycle of Cathay: a Story of New Zealand Life* cites Alfred Tennyson's poem 'Locksley Hall' (1842). The quotation from the poem, 'a cycle of Cathay' (184), sets the tone for the novel's engagement with space and time. The speaker of Tennyson's poem dreams of a life in 'yonder shining Orient' (154). The poem associates this place with a tempting idleness and distance from modern technology and politics: 'There methinks would be enjoyment more than in this march of mind, / In the steamship, in the railway, in the thoughts that shake mankind' (165-166). Eventually, however, Tennyson's protagonist makes a choice in favour of Europe:

Not in vain the distance beacons. Forward, forward let us range,

Let the great world spin for ever down the ringing grooves of change.
 Thro' the shadow of the globe we sweep into the younger day;
 Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay. (181-184)

These lines establish Europe as the space of civilisation and white enterprise, at the top of the developmental ladder of McClintock's 'panoptical time'. Europe epitomises a tireless striving for progress: 'forward let us range'. Europeans are industriously racing into the future along a fast-progressing isochronous timeline 'down the ringing grooves of change'. Ahead of the rest of the world they 'sweep into the younger day'. This timeline acquires a spatial dimension: on it the community with whom the speaker has chosen to identify ranges forward into the 'distance'. Europe is thus associated with a teleological understanding of time: there is continuous progress and a movement towards a better future. As outlined in the introduction to this thesis, this ideology underlies both the concept of the nation and that of imperialism, so that these 'European' ideals become extended to the imperialist project and thus the British diaspora. The 'Orient', by contrast, is connected with a notion of time as cyclical, repeating itself infinitesimally. In the 'cycle of Cathay', progress is impossible since time itself does not progress. This 'Orient' serves as a foil to Europe rather than representing a specific geographical place: it epitomises anachronistic space. The quotation 'a cycle of Cathay' in the title of *Ko Méri* implies that Mary makes the opposite choice from the poem's speaker: she does not choose the modernity and progress of 'fifty years of Europe' but a cycle of ahistoric stagnation and repetition. In her final words to Lenore, she joins the chorus of 'Māori characters . . . made to articulate and mourn the coming doom of their race' (Jones 139):

Before long the Maori will cease to stand in the path of the white man. . . . They are not adapted for that civilization which has taken the pakeha (white man) hundreds of years to attain, and can they at one bound leap from barbarism to those refinements of civilized life that have been evolved from the minds of a people whose watchword has been 'Forward' from time immemorial? It is impossible. (389)

Mary's use of the word 'forward' echoes Tennyson's poem ('Forward, forward let us range'). She positions herself with a people supposedly unable to keep up with white European enterprise, progress and civilisation. Her adoptive father refuses to visit her because this would mean going 'back to the primitive, soulless existence of a barbarian race, to send back the hands of the clock

of his heirship over two thousand years, and make the glorious achievements of civilisation of none avail' (365). Mary has chosen to join a people doomed to be excluded from modernity and disappear into anachronistic space.

The alleged impending demise of the Māori race leaves the New Zealand landscape empty and available to be claimed by the British colonisers. As noted above, a different version of the dying race myth assumed that Māori would disappear by assimilating into the Pākehā population, which would have happened to Mary had she married Captain Deering. Her return to her mother's iwi makes the novel's representation of the dying race myth more dramatic. That Mary herself prophesises the doom of her people serves to validate further the claim of the diasporic community to the hostland; as a 'true representative' of all Māori (preface), she names their successors. Mr Everard and Lenore, as representatives of the British, express a feeling of entitlement to ownership of the land when they are enjoying the view from Rangitoto:

Mr. Everard's eyes wandered over the fair scene before him, bathed in a pale soft haze. . . .

. . . Here lay, not the home of a barbarous race, but a land made to smile by the labour of Britons, and a land the heritage of unborn Saxons. . . .

'How cruel it seems,' said the minister, moved out of his ordinary calm, 'that thousands, nay, millions, in our native lands should be pining for fresh air and sunlight, and with scarcely food to eat, when here, in every Colony of the Pacific, food, light, air, labour are only waiting to be used as the Creator intended.' (116)

This scene evokes the figure of Pratt's 'seeing-man': 'he whose imperial eyes passively look out and possess' (9). The landscape is spread out under the gaze of the 'white male subject of European landscape discourse' (Pratt 9), awaiting domination and cultivation, as in Rolleston's and Cheeseman's texts. The impression of space being at the coloniser's disposal and under his (visual) control is linked in Mr Everard's vision to the control of time – the ability to look into the future of 'unborn Saxons' and shape this future 'as the Creator intended'. This illustrates the notion of time as spatialised in the tropes of panoptical time and anachronistic space. Again we also encounter the trope of New Zealand as Arcadia, a place where the natural resources of 'food, light, air' are present in abundance, 'only waiting to be used'. Mr Everard envisions the New Zealand of the future as a better Britain. The contrast he evokes to the 'millions' in the industrialised homeland 'pining for fresh air and sunlight' echoes the pastoral fantasies of *A*

Rolling Stone as well as ‘A Colonist in His Garden’, where cultivation of the landscape leads to prosperity now and in the future:

See, I have poured o’er plain and hill
Gold open-handed, wealth that will
Win children’s children’s smiles. (103-105)

Māori have no place in the landscape at which Mr Everard gazes – it is ‘not the home of a barbarous race’. *Ko Méri* here establishes the European settlers as the rightful successors of Māori. Mary’s failed romance with Deering supports this on the level of the plot. In *A Rolling Stone* the romantic resolution metaphorically represents a successful project to appropriate and settle the land. Mary is the romantic heroine of *Ko Méri*, but her romance does not have a happy ending – as is typical of literary ‘half-castes’. Captain Deering dies in India, and Mary chooses a metaphorical death: ‘The night that has fallen upon my race has fallen upon me, and it is well that I should share the darkness with my own people’ (389). At the end of the narrative, she is physically alive but described as ‘[n]ot yet twenty-one, and dead’ (392). Lenore, however, marries Mr Everard, thus enacting the romantic resolution denied to Mary. Their marriage appears to represent their right to ownership of the land left empty by a dying race.

As noted above, Lawless states that the only form of ‘redemption’ from their native roots for ‘half-castes’ in New Zealand novels is marriage to a white man, which will allow them to become a member of Pākehā society. Mary’s failure to do so can be seen as a conventional way of saving the white hero of the narrative from miscegenation. Young argues that many nineteenth-century representations of indigenes and hybrids express a desire ‘constituted by a dialectic of attraction and repulsion’ (90). ‘Locksley Hall’ is again relevant as an intertext here because it alludes to this desire/disgust paradox. The speaker’s fantasy of the ‘Orient’ includes the ‘taking’ of an indigenous woman: ‘I will take some savage woman, she shall rear my dusky race’ (168). The ‘savage woman’ is part of the dangerous temptation of the ‘Orient’ that might lure the speaker away from the civilisation and modernity of ‘Europe’. The poem’s allusion to the speaker’s ‘dusky race’ also illustrates that interracial relationships were perceived as threatening due to their potential to lead to so-called racial degeneration, supposedly biologically undermining the racial purity of the colonising culture:

Such desire . . . soon brings with it the threat of the fecund fertility of the colonial desiring machine, whereby a culture in its colonial operation becomes hybridized,

alienated and potentially threatening to its European original through the production of polymorphously perverse people who are, in Bhabha's phrase, white, but not quite. (Young 175)

It is thus not surprising that the text does not allow for the consummation of Deering's and Mary's relationship. In this way the threat of miscegenation and degeneration can be contained and it is emphasised that 'the blood of the Maori and the pakeha will not mix. Where the one plants his foot, the other fades into nothingness' (390). However, while the failure of Mary's romance is not surprising, the way in which it fails is: Deering dies in India and Mary chooses to 'share the darkness with [her] own people' (389). Goldie notes that the usual 'escape' from a situation that could tempt the white hero into miscegenation is 'the death of the indigene': 'she must die, must become of the past, in order for the white to progress towards the future and move beyond the limitations of his sexual – or at least romantic – temptation and achieve possession of the land' (73). As noted above, Mary does die a figurative death at the end of the narrative – albeit not a literal one – but this does not allow Deering to move on and assume possession of the land: it was his death, not Mary's, that was the end of their relationship. The text thus destabilises expectations of the formulaic white hero/indigenous heroine romance. Lenore's successful romance does not provide the narrative with the resolution denied by Mary's failed one. Lenore marries Mr Everard, but this ending is neither particularly romantic nor convincing or satisfying for the reader because Lenore does not assume the role of romantic heroine occupied by Mary throughout the narrative. Whereas the text focuses on the evolving relationship between Deering and Mary, it does not even narrate Mr Everard's proposal, usually a crucial romantic scene. In the final paragraphs of the novel we merely learn: 'And Lenore? As the wife of Mr. Everard, she has found her vocation' (393). The readers are not given the opportunity of identifying with Lenore as heroine. Instead, Mary still occupies this position, now as a tragic heroine. Therefore, at the level of the narrative Lenore's romance is in fact not successful.

While Mary's death figuratively empties the land of an indigenous presence and Mr Everard and Lenore seem to claim ownership of the land in scenes such as the one set on Rangitoto, the text does not take this argument justifying British colonisation to its conclusion: the land is not actually claimed. In its construction of Deering's death, the text in fact implies that in some places whites are out of place, such as in India, and that imperialism ought not to be pursued there. India as the grave of the white man (or woman) is a common convention,

famously explored in *Jane Eyre* when Jane refuses to accompany St. John Rivers there after contemplating: ‘if I go to India, I go to premature death’ (400; chap. 34). At the same time Deering’s death confirms an imperialist project by alluding again to New Zealand’s potential to be a better Britain: if he had stayed in New Zealand, Deering’s fever presumably would not have returned. New Zealand, unlike India, is suitable for British settlers: it is ‘a country that is not surpassed for climate and soil’ (100). However, Deering cannot ‘progress towards the future . . . and achieve possession of the land’ (Goldie 73). Lenore and Mr Everard do not achieve this possession either: the couple does not stay in New Zealand but Lenore accompanies Mr Everard to England to help ‘the poverty-stricken of the East End of London’ (393). This means that Lenore, unlike Mary, dedicates her life to ‘fifty years of Europe’ (Tennyson 184), civilisation and modernity, again confirming the racial contrast between the two characters. However, it also means that she and Mr Everard will not live out the vision he had on Rangitoto. Instead of playing a part in the transformation of New Zealand into a new and better England, they return to old England and attempt to make improvements there. Unwilling to return to their New Zealand life without their daughter, Mary’s adoptive parents ‘still live in the [London] home that their beloved – living, yet dead – has left so empty, and Auckland will never see their faces again’ (393). None of the main Pākehā characters are thus left in New Zealand to claim the land figuratively signed over to them by Mary. The indigenous people have been relegated to anachronistic space – but no-one is there to replace them.

On the contrary, the reader gets the impression that the indigenous presence is still dominating the New Zealand landscape. The last image visually described in the text, before a very brief summary of the further experiences of Mary’s friends and relatives, is one of Mary:

On the summit of the hill Lenore paused and through a mist of tears took a last farewell of her half-caste friend. . . . Amongst the brilliancy and beauty of the scene, she seemed a blot upon the face of nature – the one living thing that the sun had no power to brighten.

The little, unpainted whares (houses), with their wooden chimneys, lay low, while, in the rear, the land gradually swelled, covered with large peach trees loaded with fruit, and underneath one of them sat a Maori woman working the soil by hand, the usual method of her race. A hedge of New Zealand flax, with its large, red, coarse flowers and long, thick leaves, separated the ordinary land from

that sacred to Tapu, on which grew an enormous weeping willow, that trailed its branches in the limpid waters of the creek, and appeared to Lenore's mind incongruous against the magnificent bush that covered the hills as far as the eye could see. . . .

But it was upon Mary herself that Lenore's eyes rested with unspeakable sadness at her own failure to turn again the current of that ruined life into its old channels. (392-393)

This passage stresses the tragic nature of Mary's decision to join her allegedly doomed race: she is 'a blot upon the face of nature', leading a 'ruined life' and causing Lenore 'unspeakable sadness'. However, it also leaves the reader of the novel with a vivid image of Mary placed within a typical New Zealand landscape with hills, flax, 'magnificent bush', and places 'sacred to Tapu'. The peach trees and willows so beloved by Mary Rolleston are subsumed into this landscape, rather than constituting symbols of white industry: a Māori woman working the soil in 'the usual method of her race' sits under a peach tree, and the willow, rather than transforming the wilderness into a garden, looks 'incongruous' in the native setting. The final narrated scene of the text thus represents Māori as still in possession of the hostland, rather than the land appropriated and transformed by the diasporic community. This is a crucial contrast to *A Rolling Stone*, where Mr Wishart's cottage epitomises domestic happiness in a supposedly finally settled hostland/home. The title of *Ko Méri*'s final chapter, 'The Maori Conquers', thus acquires an ambivalent meaning: the Māori within Mary conquers her soul, but the land also seems to have been conquered by Māori, while all the main Pākehā characters have died or left. This does not mean that the text represents the entire hostland as owned and inhabited by Māori: after the novel's detailed descriptions of Auckland social life the reader is well aware of the significant New Zealand spaces settled and politically controlled by Pākehā. Arguably the novel describes different spaces similar to the ones identified by Calder in William Satchell's *The Greenstone Door* (1914): 'a metropolitan zone, a semi-civilised zone, and a savage zone' (Calder 100). However, if we regard the textual space as structurally mirroring the landscape it describes, as with Jackson's and McKenzie's diaries and Rolleston's travelogue, the land represented in Lenore and Mary's farewell scene is crucial because that scene is the last one narrated in detail and provides the final images with which the reader is left.

Ko Méri's overall argument is as ambivalent as the title of its final chapter. On the one hand the novel reiterates stereotypical notions of race, time, and space. It constructs Mary as non-white and Lenore as her opposite, making a suffragist argument in the process: Mary constitutes a threat, embodying the 'dark side' of every woman, but Lenore as a New Woman counteracts this threat. The importance to the text's argument of these racialised versions of femininity illustrates the importance of notions of femininity for the diaspora: women are seen as bearing moral responsibility, charged with exerting positive moral influence within the community. This importance of different femininities will be explored in more detail in Section III. As its intertext 'Locksley Hall' implies, *Ko Méri* relegates Māori, represented by Mary, to anachronistic space and thus validates the British diaspora's claim to possession of the hostland. However, the text does not fully subscribe to the easy solutions it seems to make available. The romantic plots destabilise the text because they do not conform to genre expectations. Furthermore, the land is not claimed by the British colonisers at the end of the narrative but still appears to be owned and inhabited by Māori. The uneasiness subtextually present in *A Rolling Stone* clearly emerges in *Ko Méri*: the diaspora's project of appropriating and settling its hostland is complicated, and clear imperialist arguments and categorisations are undermined by the fluidity and complexity of space, time, and encounters.

8 *The Diaspora's New Home: The Heart of the Bush*

The Heart of the Bush (1910) by Edith Searle Grossmann has received more critical attention than the other novels discussed in this thesis. Roger Robinson and Nelson Wattie consider it 'one of the two or three best New Zealand novels of the first two decades of the twentieth century' (221). The novel's heroine Adelaide Borlase returns to her father's bush farm in Canterbury after completing her education in England. She breaks off her engagement to English gentleman Horace Brandon when she realises that she prefers her childhood love Dennis MacDiarmid, her father's overseer. After their marriage Adelaide and Dennis have to learn to understand each other and resolve their relationship difficulties before they can be happy. Stafford and Williams suggest that '[r]omance is a favourite genre of colonial writers because of the way it allows the difficulties of settlement to be examined and resolved' (*Maoriland* 172). Romance in *A Rolling Stone* and *Ko Méri* is one of the ways in which these texts explore the diasporic projects of appropriating the hostland and attempting to make it 'home'. Grossmann's novel was written later, when a nationalist movement had begun to develop in New Zealand. My analysis of *The Heart of the Bush* focuses on the text's romantic narrative and on its conceptions of homeland and hostland within the context of romance. Does the romantic resolution of Grossmann's novel succeed in making the hostland the new homeland, thus fulfilling 'the settler desire to move beyond diaspora, to create a new home and a meaningful relation to place' (Calder and Turner 10)? Moreover, does the novel create a national vision of New Zealand that replaces a specifically diasporic way of identity production?

8.1 Romance and Land

A number of critics have suggested that Adelaide's two lovers Horace and Dennis to some extent symbolise their respective countries of birth, England and New Zealand. Robinson and Wattie summarise this argument:

The qualities of Horace and Dennis are almost schematically contrasted with each other: reserved – spontaneous, civilised – barbarous, cultured – philistine, intellectual – emotional, spiritual – materialistic, artistic – natural, effeminate – masculine, aristocratic – working-class, polite – blunt, leisured – industrious, fashionable – timeless, believing in 'honour' – believing in 'honesty'. (233)

These respective character traits represent stereotypes of England and New Zealand in the context of emerging New Zealand nationalism. When Adelaide rejects Horace and decides to marry Dennis, this also means a decision in favour of New Zealand: she decides to settle in the bush instead of returning to the cultured life she led in England. Dennis's 'colonial' attributes are attractive for her because they make him a real 'man', as opposed to Horace's effeminate gentlemanliness: when her father says that Horace is a gentleman, 'Adelaide flushed, and the distinct, cultured voice rang clear and emphatic, "Dennis is a man, Father, and that is more"' (109). Lawless suggests that this conception of colonial masculinity can be put in the context of a tradition of the romantic hero as masculine yet able to adapt to the feminine world of the heroine: the 'effete upper-class male is . . . simultaneously cruel and feminine; the colonial farmer embodies the appropriate kind of masculinity for the romance heroine' (216).

Stafford and Williams also see aspects of Dennis's character as part of the romantic tradition, notably his savagery, which Adelaide perceives when she thinks that '[s]he was simply to be claimed as brides are claimed by savages' (91). However, they note that '[t]he clichéd language of romance is given an odd edge in this colonial setting where words like "barbarian" or "savage" hint at actual rather than metaphorical interpretation' (*Maoriland* 173). Dennis's savagery is not only part of the romantic tradition, but also a cliché of Māori which emerges in texts such as Elizabeth Holman's memoirs, when she recalls that 'the Natives wore no clothing but a sort of tunic round their waist their heads generally full of feathers which gave them a savage appearance' (5). At times the novel associates Dennis with Māori, for example in its description of Dennis when he is a child: 'Then plunging into the forest bath he swam about with the agility of a fish or a North Island Maori' (1). Later in the story Horace assumes that Dennis is part Māori, referring to him as 'that half-caste fellow' (62). Adelaide, however, is quick to reply 'with distinct clear enunciation, "Mr. MacDiarmid's father was a Highlander and his mother was Irish. He has no more native blood than you or I, Mr Brandon"' (62). Stafford and Williams note that the text constructs Dennis not as Māori but Celtic, an identity 'conventionally closely associated with Maori':

Both the Celt and the Maori were seen as having qualities of authenticity, courage, spirituality and oneness with the natural world. Analogy generated identity; the Maori became the 'Celt of the South Seas', with parallels drawn between the two

cultures in terms of social structure (tribe and clan), land ownership systems, and histories of oppression (by the British). (*Maoriland* 174)

Dennis is racially different from Horace by virtue of his Celtic ancestry, which also accounts for his savagery: ‘Dennis was by blood and birth a barbarian, of a race that had come from the wilds of the Highlands and the Isle of Achill, and had rooted itself here in the still more savage country amongst the Alps of Maoriland’ (99-100).⁸ His Celtic origins allow him to become ‘rooted’ in New Zealand: it is a racial otherness which is not Māori – and, importantly, not English – but nevertheless indigenous, and which allows him to ‘assume a pose of romantic identification with the colonised land’ (Lawless 216).

The text describes Dennis as intimately connected with the native landscape. Adelaide sees him as a ‘son of the soil’, connected to the land through metaphorical family ties:

He sat bare-headed on a rock a little way off. She thought he would make a good subject for an artist, and the mountains would form a natural background. Or better still than a picture, a statue of bronze would do justice to head and trunk and limb, so massive and barbaric. . . . Judged by every civilised standard, Horace Brandon was incomparably the finer man of the two, but he would have been most incongruous amongst the mountains and the clouds where Dennis was quite at home. He was a ‘son of the soil,’ but there was something pleasant about that – soil of this great, free, fragrant land. (34)

Dennis’s ‘barbaric’ personality is related to his indigenous connection with the land. The mountains become a ‘natural’ background to his appearance, whereas Horace would have looked as ‘incongruous’ before them as the willow tree in *Ko Méri*’s native setting. Dennis’s ‘romantic identification’ with the land includes opposition and rebellion to Horace as an Englishman, who is described as a member of ‘the dominant race’ (63), representing an oppressive force. However, Adelaide’s indignant clarification to Horace that Dennis has Irish and Scottish but no ‘native blood’ makes clear that the novel accords more significance to the English oppression of the Celts than that of Māori. Whereas ethnic and cultural divisions within the diaspora are visible in many texts (and will be discussed in more detail in Section III), *The Heart of the Bush* goes one step further: the English are excluded from a version of indigenisation only accessible to Celts,

⁸ Whereas in nineteenth-century England Celts were often described romantically as noble savages, in the colonial context it became necessary to differentiate them from the actual ‘savages’ – Māori: Dennis might be indigenous, but he is still white. These different categories of whiteness will be discussed further in Section III.

and thus potentially from the entire project of a New Zealand national identity. This exclusive version of nationalism supersedes shared aims of the imperial diaspora. The Englishman Horace is 'civilised', but the 'barbaric' Celt Dennis, unlike him, is 'at home' (34) in the hostland and will continue to inhabit it while Horace goes back to England.

The land, particularly the bush, is connected not only to Dennis but also to the love story between him and Adelaide. Like *A Rolling Stone*, Grossman's novel establishes a native New Zealand bush setting as the space of romance. However, it focuses on and explores this romance exclusively, rather than setting its plot in different spaces. The opposition between homeland and hostland, geographically explored in *A Rolling Stone*, is acted out within the bush setting: the two spaces are personified in the rival lovers Horace and Dennis. In *A Rolling Stone* the successful settling of the land is metaphorically acted out in the romantic plot: Mr Wishart has to make the bush habitable and build a cottage for the lovers to settle in before the romantic resolution can take place. *The Heart of the Bush*, by contrast, represents the romance as already 'rooted' in the bush, much like Dennis himself. Adelaide's and Dennis's love story already started before the time of narration, when they played at getting married in the bush as children. Their love story is thus connected to the land from its beginning. It is the sight of the land that brings the memory of this beginning back to Adelaide:

It was a little creek, a baby offspring of the river that had forced its way through the heart of the strong rock. . . . Each side of the cleft heart was living green with treasures of moss and fern, transparent, dewy, tremulous in light and shade. Adelaide reined in her horse a minute, possessed by the sheer joy of loveliness, then a confused memory began to inhabit the peace. (17)

When their romance is renewed, Adelaide and Dennis form a bond for the future, but this bond is simultaneously associated with their childhood and thus the past. The landscape of the hostland provides the link between these different points in time. The connection between romance and land is as 'natural' as Dennis's bond with the bush – it does not have to be established, only rediscovered: 'they were children once more' (101). A dimension of sexuality was not accessible to the lovers when they were children. Adelaide and Dennis explore this new dimension on their honeymoon, which takes them into the symbolically rich 'secret valley that they could not enter when they were children' (160). However, this 'secret valley' was already in existence when they were children: it too does not need to be transformed, only entered.

8.2 Landscape and Indigeneity

The ‘secret valley’ in which Adelaide and Dennis spend their honeymoon is constructed as the most typically New Zealand setting in the novel. It is replete with native plants and animals and largely untouched by humans. Much like Mr Wishart’s bush land, it used to be inhabited by Māori who have ‘vanished utterly’ (180). The repeated description of the valley as Eden also brings to mind the pastoral motifs in *A Rolling Stone*. We re-encounter the tropes of eternal spring, abundant growth and the absence of decay: ‘Here there were snow-white lilies and daisies much larger and purer than any that grow in lower regions; no worm or fly crept over them, and they bloomed as if they did not know decay’ (175). It is in this most native setting that Dennis is most connected to the landscape:

She would go away with Dennis into the mountains, into the very heart of his kingdom, where there was no Society and no Art and no Civilisation, only Nature; he was to show her all its wonders, palaces of clouds and temples of Alps, cathedrals of pine-forests and of rocky gorges and peaks. There she would find him, his own self, in his own element. (157)

In the ‘secret valley’ Dennis is not only an indigenised inhabitant ‘in his own element’ but king. His mastery of the landscape is effortless, evoking clichés of the daring pioneer settler: ‘MacDiarmid hewed with his axe through the jungle, cutting down the thorny creepers; he rolled away stones and logs, and sent them crashing down the side of the precipice. Then he leapt down in good spirits and said they could begin the ascent’ (196-197). Furthermore, the valley provides the setting for a number of sex scenes only implicitly described. They emphasise again the connection in the text between romance and land – the ‘secret valley’ is where Adelaide and Dennis add an element of sexuality to their childhood love: ‘Then even the presence of the mountains and the bush was shut out, and there was solitude and loving silence except for a murmur of water and of leaves. “Aidie, my wife, my joy, the desire of my heart,” he called her in the glad darkness of the night, and she thought he would hold off death’ (143). As Lawless notes, however, ‘for Dennis to be seen as the “barbarian king”, all Māori presence as previous holders of the land is erased’ (217). All that remains of Māori is, again, a haunting gothic presence: ‘It was through a stony gorge, and they would go over an old native battle-field strewn with bones and with stone clubs and axes. The tribes that had fought there had vanished utterly’ (180). Similarly to both Rolleston’s travelogue and *A Rolling Stone*, the text makes clear that the

indigenous past of the place was violent, and that the Māori's demise was not the fault of Europeans: they 'had been driven southwards and further south to the waters of this forest lake, where at last the northern invaders fell on them and slew every living one' (191-92). However, as with Rolleston's diary both the landscape and the textual space of the novel are permeated by an indigenous past which cannot be erased that easily. A sense of haunting still pervades the landscape: the 'White Tohunga' living in the valley gives Adelaide a tiki that he has taken from a burial ground. Māori chapter titles ('Hine-nui-te-po'), the names of land and houses (Haeremai, Te Rama Rama), and the name of Dennis' dog (Tane) bring an indigenous element into the novel from which all other indigenous traces have otherwise been erased or displaced onto Dennis's Celtic identity.

Stafford and Williams emphasise that Dennis's being 'at home' (34) in the landscape is gendered as much as it is connected with his Celtic identity. Adelaide as a woman has a different relation to the land: she 'registers its danger and is damaged by it, both in her fall into the crevasse and the death of her baby in childbirth' (*Maoriland* 177). The text configures the danger of the landscape to Adelaide as lying in its sublime nature. Like Jackson's diaries the novel describes the hostland as both beautiful and threatening: 'She had come into her husband's world, and, somehow, it did not seem quite meant for her. She was in the presence of nature, absolute and supreme. It was beautiful, but it was terrible' (204). But whereas 'the heart of the bush', the 'secret valley', is sublime, New Zealand landscape in the novel can also be characterised by agricultural dreariness – another motif reminiscent of Jackson's diaries. The third part of the novel describes the threat to Adelaide's and Dennis's marriage that needs to be overcome for them to be happy: Adelaide feels neglected by Dennis because he spends too much time away from home building up the Farmers' Refrigerating Company. Different spaces in this part of the text assume connotations similar to those evoked in *A Rolling Stone*: the bush is still associated with romance, but both the romance and the edenic qualities of the bush are threatened by the pervasiveness of agricultural labour and materialism connected with the farmland and even more so with the city, Christchurch. Dennis makes clear that profit is important to him when Adelaide is unhappy with him killing sheep: 'Well, you didn't think I sat on a hill with a crook all day, or carried lambs about in my arms, did you? It wouldn't pay to keep sheep that way in New Zealand' (267). Again, we find confirmed Courage's lament about settler materialism that 'if it is good for sheep, it is beautiful' (31). While the setting of the

narrative does not leave the bush, the realities of the farmland and the city encroach upon Adelaide's life, endangering her marital happiness. The farmers involved in the frozen meat trade intrude into her home:

Often men came to see [Dennis], and stayed to dinner, uninteresting, middle-class men, who smelt of rank tobacco, and who did not know what to say to her, but looked puzzled if she interpolated any of her light and airy nonsense. They talked of cows, of cream separators, of cargoes and of carcasses, and of other deadly things. (257)

Like the settlers in Jackson's diaries, the farmers are only interested in the everyday practicalities of farm life. Their inability to see beyond these concerns feels 'deadly' to Adelaide. This deadliness invades the romantic bush setting, changing its edenic qualities: 'She ceased to take a pleasure in the murmuring of the Bush trees, and had a fancy they were exulting over her and saying, "You hear us now, don't you? You've nothing else to hear" ' (249). The new, 'unfriendly and insistent' (260) nature of the bush trees relates to Baughan's description of agricultural destruction and dreariness in 'A Bush Section': 'long, prone, grey-black logs' (Baughan, 'Bush' 6).

It is only when Adelaide successfully banishes these agricultural realities from her home in the bush that the romantic resolution of the narrative can be brought about. As soon as she has convinced Dennis to spend more time with her, the connection between romance and land is again unproblematic. Adelaide and Dennis can be 'children and lovers together for life', living their timeless romance connected with the native landscape restored as edenic:

The belated spring came in a swift rush up the valley. The high Alps, and the great mountains, and the little hills at their feet, rejoiced in sunlight and showers; and the Bush and all its streams were glad and made merry together. The immortal childhood of Nature came back into the spirits of the two who were children and lovers together for life. (332)

Stafford and Williams describe this resolution as the return to a bush landscape invented by Adelaide for herself, 'a landscape configured in feminised and sentimental terms' (*Maoriland* 178) and 'fashioned out of the Victorian world of fairy from such sources as George Macdonald and Andrew Lang' (179). They argue that in Adelaide's self-invented landscape Māori have been completely dispossessed. Adelaide cites Māori legends, but they become conflated with Greek

legends and European fairy tales: 'While the indigenous identity of Dennis . . . involves a sense of the land's past and implies an at least historical presence of the Maori, Adelaide's Maoriland is a fantasy constructed for use in a present where Maori do not exist even as ghosts' (Stafford and Williams, *Maoriland* 180). The cruel materialism of settler society, epitomised in Dennis's preoccupation with the frozen meat trade, is banished along with the hostland's indigenous presence, paving the way for Adelaide's alternative national vision. This is a vision in which woman triumphs over man as much as the sublime triumphs over the materialism of settler society. However, in order to participate in this vision the reader has to accept as realistic the novel's contrived happy romantic ending. As Jones notes, Adelaide's and Dennis's life in a fairy-tale landscape 'would seem neither possible nor desirable in the real world of South Canterbury in which they ostensibly live, whatever its status in the world of melodramatic romance' (142). Dennis's sudden change of mind and heart seems equally unbelievable. Calder and Turner see similar 'compromise formations' as typical of settler narratives, for instance *The Greenstone Door* (12). As with the indigenous presence that still haunts both the text and the landscape it describes, the novel's contrived ending deconstructs its nationalist vision of New Zealand.

In both *A Rolling Stone* and *Ko Méri* the romantic resolution, failed or successful, metaphorically renders the process of settling. The issues that need to be resolved are related to a successful domestication of the landscape and to the question of who is entitled to ownership of the hostland. In *The Heart of the Bush*, however, the romantic resolution assumes that the land has long been settled. All that Adelaide and Dennis have to achieve is a return to the timeless love of their childhood, already connected with the land. Even for Adelaide, who is not constructed as indigenous to the same extent that Dennis is, the native landscape of the 'heart of the bush' is configured as 'home' already at the start of the narrative:

Mountains all around, mountains unrolling in scroll after scroll of gold; edge and surface illuminated with jewelled tints of amethyst and pale yellow topaz.

Mountains, shaggy and tawny with rock and tussock, but smoothed into velvet by the sunset light of a spring 'Nor' Wester. Far in the depths of them all a strange wild beautiful forest, palmy like the Asiatic East, but cool and green like an English wood – a picture graved on the heart of Adelaide's childhood. Somewhere hidden in the Bush, a primitive wooden house that was home. (9)

Similarly to Alice McKenzie's diary, Grossmann's novel constructs a hostland that has already become home – but not to everyone. Horace, who embodies a stereotypical version of Englishness, has no part in this successful project of diasporic settlement. Those characters whose identification with the landscape has allowed them to become indigenised ultimately call the hostland home, whereas Horace returns to the homeland: his diasporic project has failed. Arguably, however, the text merely replaces England as the mythic homeland with a different one, that associated with Dennis's Celtic identity. The merging of this identity with a peculiar vision of Creole indigenisation is in fact an adaptation of both diasporic identity and the homeland myth – symptomatic of 'the instability and mutability of identities which are always unfinished, always being remade' (Gilroy, *Black Atlantic* xi). *The Heart of the Bush* attempts to construct a national identity beyond diaspora: to a select group of people the hostland has become home, and unwanted elements such as English oppression, the host society, and settler materialism are dispelled from the new nation. However, the novel's reliance on a Celtic homeland identity, its gothic haunting by an indigenous presence, and its contrived ending destabilise this new national vision and illustrate that settler society has not yet moved beyond diaspora.

Conclusion to Section II

Section I, 'Journey', showed that diaspora theory illuminates contradictions within the texts: both shipboard diaries and novels engage with the image of the voyage as producing as well as overcoming distance, and with the diasporic tension between dispersal and cohesion. The text's negotiation of settling similarly gives rise to attempts to reconcile fundamental contradictions. Diasporic identity production is again shown to be complex and kaleidoscopic. Even when the texts seem to promote ostensible ideologies, they deconstruct themselves by simultaneously undermining these ideologies.

The main question this section asked was whether the hostland can become home. The shifting meanings of the word 'home' in many texts illustrate that in diasporic literature 'home' can mean a number of things on a continuum between homeland and hostland: it emerges that even as the diasporic community is settling in the hostland their position of enunciation is frequently still as liminal and ambiguous as on board ship. Ann Jackson's diaries narrate the difficult project of settling – how can the hostland farm be made into the 'Home Farm'? In Alice McKenzie's diaries, by contrast, the hostland is imagined as already settled by the diaspora. Catherine Ralfe participates in producing a collective diasporic identity that is evolving and moving away from the homeland: pioneer memoirs draw a line between the earlier and later days of settlement. Clara Cheeseman's *A Rolling Stone* situates its plot within a web of spaces between homeland, hostland, and other settler colonies in an attempt to export the genre of domestic melodrama to the diaspora. In Edith Searle Grossmann's *The Heart of the Bush*, a Celtic identity allows indigenisation in the hostland. England as the homeland is dispensed with but arguably replaced by a Celtic homeland myth.

Within this project of exploring the meaning of 'home', the texts employ various and often conflicting discourses to construct the landscape of the hostland. Jackson's diaries trace the tension between scenery as sublime and its transformation or even destruction in the context of agriculture. The sublime can also mean danger – this is explored further in *The Heart of the Bush*, where the sublime bush scenery poses a threat to Adelaide but not to her husband. McKenzie's journals take the agricultural transformation of the hostland for granted: a landscape marked by agriculture has become home to the narrator. Mary Rolleston and Clara Cheeseman envision the hostland's landscape as readying itself for cultivation by the colonisers. *A Rolling*

Stone also represents scenery as being transformed into an agricultural space but, similarly to *The Heart of the Bush*, constructs the native bush as an untouched edenic or Arcadian space. In Rolleston's diary landscape also constitutes politically or violently contested territory. The texts frequently employ the motif of the garden, but usually with more complex connotations than those traced by Annette Kolodny. Jackson's diary comes closest to Kolodny's analysis when the narrator imagines establishing a home in the midst of sublime scenery, but these aspirations are soon frustrated by the dreariness of settler materialism. For Rolleston gardens are not primarily the site of home and a familial community but epitomise white industry and enterprise, an ideal from which Māori are quite aggressively excluded. *A Rolling Stone* relates the garden image to pastoral and Arcadian connotations.

Different conceptions of landscape are frequently mirrored in the texts' purpose as writing and reading spaces. Whereas Jackson's diary serves as a journal of conscience, striving to re-construct nature as sublime, McKenzie's is a tool for interaction with her family, paralleling the shared chores on the family farm. Both Rolleston's and Grossmann's texts are haunted by an indigenous presence which they try to relegate to anachronistic space. Similarly, *Ko Méri's* textual space privileges a landscape described as indigenous, even though it has supposedly been emptied and made available to the European settlers.

The fictional texts in particular employ romance as a mode of representing the 'settler project of taming the land and making a home' (Stafford and Williams, 'Introduction'). In *A Rolling Stone* romance is a metaphor of settling in an attempt to bridge the distance between homeland and hostland and make New Zealand a better Britain. The native bush provides the setting for the romantic resolution and thus successful settling, but the novel's happy ending is undermined by its ambiguous representation of the sea. In *Ko Méri* romance mirrors land appropriation but ultimately also its failure: Mary's lover dies and Lenore's marriage is narrated unromantically. In *The Heart of the Bush* a romance linked with the hostland's landscape allows an idealised past to become the future for Adelaide and Dennis. This is possible because the novel imagines Dennis as already indigenised and able to identify romantically with the land.

The host society represents a way of creating or delineating diasporic identity. This representation is often based on 'white', imperialist notions of space and time, which figuratively empty the hostland of its indigenous presence and justify colonial appropriation. Rolleston's diary implies that Pākehā are entitled to ownership of the land thanks to their inherent industry

and enterprise; Māori, however, are represented as incapable of putting the land to good use. *Ko Méri* presents itself as more sympathetic but nevertheless relegates Māori to anachronistic space, and like Rolleston's text uses racist tropes which describe Māori as lacking 'white' will and industry/enterprise. *A Rolling Stone* and *The Heart of the Bush* attempt to 'exorcise' the indigenous presence from the hostland, insisting that all that is left of Māori is gothic haunting. Instead, it is the settlers that are becoming indigenised.

Women settlers play an important role in the diasporic project as they are expected to be carriers of portable domesticity and agents of beneficial influence. In the non-fictional texts in particular the gendered separation between the private and the public sphere is often indistinct. Even though Jackson's diary establishes a boundary between the home and a sublime, dangerous wilderness outside, she disrupts these notions when she relates her travels as a woman minister. McKenzie describes the same wilderness as merely an extension of the domestic sphere, the family home and farm chores. Ralfe's memoirs establish a voice for herself as a woman in the project of the so-called pioneer days which is usually perceived as male dominated. Her important role within the private sphere allows her to be respected and integrated in the public sphere. Rolleston does not conform to expectations of female writers: her text features a confident, even aggressive narrator who assumes that her text will be read and heeded. *Ko Méri* acknowledges the important role of women as creators of community and identity when it establishes different versions of white and non-white femininity as the basis of its wider argument. However, class is still important within the context of gender, even though class barriers in New Zealand are less pronounced: Rolleston's confidence is no doubt due at least in part to her upper-class identification. The importance of gender and class identification will be explored further in Section III.

All of the texts thus negotiate crucial contradictions. They demonstrate the fluidity and complexity of the constant re-production of meaning and cultural identity in the context of diasporic representation. Their negotiations of the diaspora's process of settling in its hostland are multifaceted and marked by conflict and tension even when they ostensibly negate such complications. Moffat states that colonial and early provincial New Zealand novelists 'fall into two opposing camps: those who equate settlement with civilisation, progress, and prosperity and those who, for a variety of political, economic, racial, and gender reasons, challenge this mythologising' ('Myths' 3). I argue that the distinctions are not that neat: contradictions,

paradoxes and an underlying unease with the project of settling pervade the majority of texts, whether non-fictional or fictional. Diaspora theory reveals these contradictions and the texts' unwitting deconstruction of their own ideologies.

Section III

Community

A woman is a foreign land,
Of which, though there he settle young,
A man will ne'er quite understand
The customs, politics, and tongue.

Coventry Patmore, *The Angel in the House*, 1854-56

My analyses so far have shown that the texts of the British imperial diaspora in New Zealand are marked by internal contradictions and deconstructions. Time, space and identity emerge as kaleidoscopic and constantly shifting. Nevertheless the British imperial project in New Zealand can be described as successful. Notwithstanding the internal diversity of the diasporic community, and all the contradictions that marked its endeavours, its members created a collective identity which proved strong enough to help it become a nation state distinct from Britain, rather than a replica or better Britain. How was this collective identity constructed? This section will tackle this question by looking at the diaspora's textual construction of community. In order to produce community, diasporic texts have to negotiate and reconcile differences within the diasporic group by establishing common values and goals and containing deviance and subversion. They also have to define the community's relationship to the homeland as well as to other diasporic sub-centres. Women play a crucial role within this project of community-building. Coventry Patmore's poem *The Angel in the House* has become a 'convenient shorthand' for a notorious Victorian ideal: woman as 'enveloped in family life and seeking no identity beyond the roles of daughter, wife and mother' (Auerbach 67). This ideal was not only questioned and negotiated in the nineteenth century itself but also more complex than the 'shorthand' of Patmore's title suggests. The above quotation from the poem, clichéd as it is, illustrates a number of implications of such feminine ideals for the identity production of the diaspora. The poem describes woman as a land settled by man, a metaphor which reverberates in such patriarchal conceptions of colonisation as those explored by Kolodny in *The Lay of the Land*. However, as the guardian of the home, woman is not only passively settled but also becomes a facilitator of the project of settling itself. She has knowledge of 'customs, politics, and

tongue’ – the elements that create community – of the ‘foreign country’ for which she simultaneously provides an allegory. In order to domesticate his own Angel and thus be part of and perpetuate society, man must understand these community-creating elements which appear to be comprehensible only to woman. This section will explore such notions of women as creators of community by focusing on the concept of femininity and the role of women in the diaspora. This focus will serve to illuminate specific diasporic histories, rather than seeing diaspora as a mere metaphor. In the following I will give a short introduction to the aspects of diasporic community construction relevant in this section.

Producing Community

In its production of a collective identity the diasporic community faced a contradiction: its existence was founded on its dispersal from the homeland. While Cohen contends that this dispersal need not be traumatic, it is nevertheless an experience that, while fundamental to the existence of the diaspora, undermines a sense of community. Diasporic texts had to reconcile this contradiction by uniting the members of the diaspora behind a shared aim. Cohen suggests that an imperial diaspora is ‘marked by a continuing connection with the homeland, a deference to and imitation of its social and political institutions and a sense of forming part of a grand imperial design – whereby the group concerned assumes the self-image of a “chosen race” with a global mission’ (67). This definition is helpful in order to look at the British diaspora within a comparative framework such as Cohen’s, where he defines different kinds of diasporas and distinguishes imperial diaspora from other types such as victim or labour diasporas. However, Cohen’s simplifying statement needs to be treated with caution, even though it provides a helpful starting point. The British diaspora comprised a number of identities divided by, among other factors, ethnicity. If any one group within this diaspora can be said to be most likely to ‘defer to’ and ‘imitate’ the homeland, support a ‘grand imperial design’ and identify as a ‘chosen race’, it is the English. Nevertheless, English people had diverse motives for emigration to New Zealand and were not necessarily supportive of a ‘grand imperial design’. Cohen concedes that there were ‘complex and mixed’ motives for emigration but claims that there was always an ‘underlying thread of state involvement’ (68). However, it can be argued that this was not the case for Irish or Scottish emigrants to the same extent that it was for the English, and that a number of people from these ethnic groups were the victims of forceful and traumatic dispersal, like members of a victim diaspora. Moreover, as Hassam notes, ‘differences within the United Kingdom were far

greater in the nineteenth century than they are today' (10-11). Due to the cultural and gender bias which dominates both published literature and the archives, it is easy to lose sight of this diversity and simplistically subsume all individuals under a state-directed 'grand imperial design'. Again it is helpful to move beyond Cohen's categorisation and explore the identity production described by Hall, a process that is 'always constituted within, not outside, representation' ('Cultural Identity' 222). The literature of the diaspora engages in this identity production since it is part of what Richards describes as the endeavour to create 'an imperial archive holding together the vast and various parts of the Empire' (6). This section explores how the texts of the diaspora produce a collective identity that strives to unite all its members despite their differences, distinguishing them from the homeland, from the hostland, and from other diasporic communities while at the same time perpetuating a shared identity within the empire.

Dyer argues that whiteness is a concept which has often proved successful 'in uniting people across national cultural differences and against their best interests' (19), which suggests that it might indeed unite them under a 'grand imperial design' (Cohen 67). He explains that two apparent instabilities of whiteness serve to strengthen this political efficiency: some people can be included under particular circumstances, but not always (for example the Irish), and 'some whites are whiter than others' (for example, Spaniards are perceived as less white than Scandinavians) (19). These instabilities are strengths because 'a border that might be crossed and a hierarchy that might be climbed has produced a dynamic that has enthralled people who have any chance of participating in it' (20). However, Bridge and Fedorovich also note that while whiteness was important to British identity, this identity was 'not exclusively white': 'People from many ethnic backgrounds (both white and non-white) eagerly adopted British identity and were accepted to varying degrees as part of the British world' (3).

For women, 'creating community' also assumes a literal meaning: since they bear children, women physically bring about the continuity of community. As the locus of reproduction, women's bodies become the site of what Gilroy calls the 'unholy forces of nationalist bio-politics', which charge women 'with the reproduction of absolute ethnic difference' ('Diaspora' 210). Dyer makes a similar argument: 'If race is always about bodies, it is also always about the reproduction of those bodies through heterosexuality' (25). Women's bodies are the site of both the realisation and the endangerment of whiteness, and thus the community that is created through the notion of whiteness.

Gilroy, Clifford and Hall all assume that a loss of identity in the process of diasporisation can be countered by the construction of a new identity, leading to a fusion of cultures, crossover and hybridity. The potential of literary texts to produce such a collective identity and create a sense of community was facilitated from the 1870s and 80s by Vogel's modernisation programme: 'rail, telegraph and steamships were beginning to shrink New Zealand to a size in which countrywide communities of interest could be imagined' (Belich, *Paradise* 19). New Zealand increasingly began to articulate a national identity. As Bridge and Fedorovich argue, this did not necessarily 'contradict or undermine imperial Britishness' since the same person 'might have a number of concurrent identities' (6). A 'grand imperial design', rather than being absolutely defining, may thus constitute one of many hybrid diasporic identities.

Relationship with the Homeland and Other Diasporic Communities

Cohen describes 'a collective memory and myth' about the homeland, as well as a wish to return there at some point in the future, as a defining feature of diasporas (26). Tölölyan argues that it makes sense to think of this longed-for return to the homeland as not necessarily physical but a 're-turn, a repeated turning to the concept and/or reality of the homeland . . . through memory, written and visual texts, travel, gifts and assistance, et cetera' ('Rethinking' 14-15). As outlined in Section II, Cohen's definition again provides a starting point that needs to be modified by the concept of identity production. Rather than sustaining its difference from its host society, the diasporic community has to constantly produce an identity that will allow it to be distinct not only from the host society but also from the homeland and from other diasporic sub-centres. While a 're-turn' towards the homeland is an important part of this, it needs to be remembered that 'the homeland' and, indeed, 'home', are themselves constructs with shifting meanings that need to be (re)produced constantly. There is no one set of traditions and rituals but rather various ways of identification constantly reworked by the diaspora.

The diaspora's perpetuation and negotiation of the homeland myth is visible in its use of literary conventions. The literature of the British diaspora in New Zealand is characterised by conventions imported from Britain, and it is written in English. Postcolonial theory has often explored the difficulties faced by writers who had to use an 'imported' language and set of literary conventions. Considering that literary conventions create community by binding together a group of readers and engaging them in dialogue and shared knowledge, it is relevant how these

conventions travel from homeland to hostland, and, moreover, how they travel back, since many New Zealand texts were published in Britain and aimed mostly at a readership based there.

Cohen states that diasporas not only maintain political solidarity with and/or mythological ties to the homeland but also to diasporic communities in other places. For the British diaspora, this meant the British Empire, but frequently also the United States as an important part of what Belich, in *Replenishing the Earth*, terms the Anglo-world. As noted in the introduction to this thesis, it is vital for an understanding of diasporic identity production to modify the postcolonial ‘centre-periphery model of empire . . . to accommodate the complex cross-affiliations and influences of the period’ (Stafford and Williams, *Maoriland* 15-16) and mobility within the settler empire. New Zealand is connected not only with Britain but also with other diasporic sub-centres by way of what Clifford describes as ‘decentered, lateral connections’ (306). These connections include a number of varied but interfused elements such as kinship ties, the exchange of commodities, and a shared settler literature. This section looks at how diasporic texts participate in the production of a collective identity that links the British diaspora in New Zealand to the centre and other sub-centres, and that enables communication between all these places. In particular, I will explore how these connections play out when we look at literature written by women. In their seminal work *The Madwoman in the Attic*, Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar claim that ‘women of letters’ in the nineteenth century ‘engaged in a complex, sometimes conspirational, sometimes convivial conversation that crossed national as well as temporal boundaries’ (xxi). They even postulate that ‘for English-speaking women, there are not a number of different, nationally defined nineteenth centuries; there is only one’, in which they are united in their literary efforts to come to terms with ‘the Victorian ideology of femininity’ (xxx). The limitations of *The Madwoman*’s argument for this text are evident: poststructuralist theories of identity production are not compatible with Gilbert and Gubar’s insistence on a stable and unchanging self whose expression can be hermeneutically uncovered in the literary text. Nevertheless, the image of a transnational community of women writers that transcends space and time is worth considering and relating to diaspora theory.

Women’s Writing and Femininity: Historicising the Diaspora Experience

As outlined in the introduction to this thesis, Clifford among others appreciates the danger that if diaspora is understood as emphasising hybridity and rejecting essentialism, this could lead to the term diaspora becoming ‘a master trope or “figure” for modern, complex, or positional identities’

(319) – as Tölölyan fears, a mere metaphor without historical context that ultimately neglects ‘the complexity of the past and present of diasporic social formations’ (‘Rethinking’ 28). In order to counter this problem, Clifford suggests ‘the routing of diaspora discourses in specific maps/histories’ (319). He argues that women’s histories in particular highlight important aspects of the diaspora experience: ‘Women’s experiences are particularly revealing’ (313-14). But what is revealed by these experiences? The ‘routing’ provided by women’s histories crystallises in discourses of femininity that emerge in the texts analysed in this section. Many feminist texts have explored Victorian notions of femininity which place the man in the public sphere and the woman in the private sphere as the Angel in the House, conforming to the ideals outlined in Patmore’s poem: domestic, passive, gentle, submissive, and self-renunciating. Sarah Ellis describes this ideal in her popular advice book *The Women of England* (1839), urging every woman to let go of selfish interests:

It is necessary for her to lay aside all her natural caprice, her love of self-indulgence, her vanity, her indolence – in short, her very self – and assuming a new nature, which nothing less than watchfulness and prayer can enable her constantly to maintain, to spend her mental and moral capabilities in devising means for promoting the happiness of others, while her own derives a remote and solitary existence from theirs. (Chap. 2)

Mohanram suggests that such ideals locate women ‘as the very ground upon which the meaning of nation itself rests’ (*Imperial White* 27). She argues that women were located outside of both history and class distinctions in Victorian discourse, becoming ‘a metaphor for the essence of Britishness’ (33):

The woman . . . was located on a passive ground whose sole function was to provide class distinctions among men. Thus, she brought about a mythical unity to the various classes of men who were united through her classlessness, her evenness, her transcending of distinctions. Further, their connection to an unchanging, pure form of Britishness cohered them into a nation, a people reinterpellated with common identities, values, aspirations, and culture, notwithstanding differences in class origin, regions, and backgrounds. (32)

Indeed, in her advice book Ellis explains that she wants to ‘show how intimate is the connexion which exists between the women of England, and the moral character maintained by their

country in the scale of nations' (chap. 2). While Mohanram's argument seems to apply primarily to Britain, its relevance to New Zealand becomes evident when we remember that the ideology of imperialism can be described as an extension of nationalism. But whereas, to use Patmore's words, women thus hold knowledge of the 'customs, politics, and tongue' of the imperialist project, the empire also reflected back on British ideals of femininity. Mohanram, among others, suggests that '[n]otions of masculinity, femininity, class and sexuality were all reconstructed in (while constructing) the colonies and filtered back to Britain to re-emerge as "English"' (*Black Body* 164). Rather than merely functioning as the periphery to an imperial centre, New Zealand engaged in a negotiation of discourses that not only went both ways between Britain and New Zealand but also included other parts of the empire.

As Nina Auerbach has argued, the figure of the Angel in the House is more complex than often assumed even when it stays in the homeland. Auerbach sees the Angel as only one of a number of 'seemingly endless mutations of personae' within the mythos of woman in the Victorian age (4). The imagery of the immobilised Angel in the House revised a theological iconographical tradition that had consistently depicted angels as male, athletic and mobile. But while the new Angel figure is bound to the domestic sphere, Auerbach argues in *Woman and the Demon*, she also acquires increased divine powers. This association with the spiritual world means that the Angel in the House can easily morph into an equally otherworldly demon. Already complex at home, the Angel ideal becomes more contradictory in the diaspora. Anne Summers describes the image of women as 'God's Police', articulated by Australian migration reformer Caroline Chisholm, which is directly related to the Angel ideal: women are messengers of God on earth and can redeem men from their sins (347). In more practical terms, in New Zealand as in other settler colonies women were expected to bring a beneficial moral influence to a society characterised by factors such as a particularly low church attendance, alcoholism, and a surplus of men, many of them itinerant labourers. Ellis's text demonstrates that imperialism can be seen as an extended nationalism based upon the Angel in the House ideal: 'as far as the noble daring of Britain has sent forth her adventurous sons, and that is to every point of danger on the habitable globe, they have borne along with them a generosity, a disinterestedness, and a moral courage, derived in no small measure from the female influence of their native country' (chap.2). However, as Summers's book also argues, the 'God's Police' stereotype went hand in hand with an opposing, demon-like image of women as 'Damned Whores': women could also represent the

intrusion of detrimental elements into the diasporic community. Moreover, ideals of femininity underwent transformations as ‘hearth and home were physically moved from the heart of the empire to its very outskirts’ (Archibald 6). As Wagner points out, ‘homemaking could be an adventure that broke through limiting ideas of confining separate spheres as well as through traditional divides of metropolitan “civilization” and undomestic peripheries’ (‘Introduction’ 11). As the bearers of what Myers has dubbed portable domesticity, women became active agents of empire rather than passive angels. They were given ‘access to a new role: that of the colonial woman, a figure who could combine gentility with a measure of practicality and independence’ (Myers, ‘Performing’ 136). Conceptions of femininity were further negotiated within the suffragist movement at the end of the nineteenth century, when New Zealand women became the first in the world to be granted the vote in 1893. Dalziel emphasises that the suffragist movement in New Zealand argued for an expansion rather than a change of women’s role in society: women’s ‘role as homemakers and guardians of moral health and welfare’, the suffragists suggested, should be extended to the public sphere (57). We can see here the perpetuation both of the Angel ideal which sees women as guardians of home and family, and notions of colonial femininity which extended angelic influence from the private to the public sphere and combined it with practicality and hands-on labour. Again, such transformed notions of femininity were negotiated within a network of connections that encompassed the entire Anglo-world.

While conceptions of gender are crucial to the diaspora’s community-building, they are intertwined with other categories of thinking, importantly class. The Angel in the House was a middle-class ideal, and her powers to unite different classes of men can be seen as mirroring the rise to power of the middle class. Ellis claims that ‘the middle class must include so vast a portion of the intelligence and moral power of the country at large, that it may not improperly be designated the pillar of our nation’s strength. . . . In no other country is society thus beautifully proportioned’ (chap. 1). In the nineteenth century middle-class values increasingly came to define society as a whole. Working-class women were excluded from conceptions such as the Angel in the House – not only ideologically but also in practical terms, since they often had no other choice but work outside the home in order to provide for their families. But again, such dividing lines were modified in the diaspora. While Belich states that ‘classlessness in colonial New Zealand was a retrospective myth, not a contemporary one’, he also notes that there was ‘equally frequent reference to the need for these classes to work together in harmony’ (*Paradise*

23). Notions of what it meant to be part of the middle class were redefined in places where servants were scarce and many middle-class women had to engage in more domestic labour than they would have in Britain. Dorice Williams Elliott notes that many Australian ‘squatter novels portrayed women expanding conventional domestic gentility because conditions in Australia often necessitated loosening its constraints’ (35). While class affiliation was still important, it was signified in different ways in the diaspora than in the homeland.

Like the previous sections, this section is divided into Part 1 on non-fiction and Part 2 on fiction. Part 1 begins with a return to shipboard diaries, looking at how notions of community and femininity travelled between homeland and hostland. The focus is on the emigration of single women, who were seen both as a promise and a threat to colonial society. I analyse two shipboard diaries that look at a similar situation from different perspectives: that of Elizabeth Fairbairn (written in 1877-78), who was matron to single women on board the *Oamaru*, and that of Jane Finlayson (written in 1876), who travelled as a single woman on the same ship one year earlier. The second chapter of Part 1 looks at diasporic femininity in the journals of Agnes Susan MacGregor, the daughter of a clergyman in Dunedin and Oamaru. MacGregor struggled with a number of societal and religious expectations of girls; her text also illuminates how diasporic texts positioned themselves within a network of a shared settler literature. Finally, I will consider Sarah Courage’s autobiography *Lights and Shadows of Colonial Life* (1896) in order to see how her text engages with community-building and class distinctions. Part 2 starts with a discussion of Charlotte Evans’s novel *A Strange Friendship* (1874), which tells an unusual love story between a young woman and a villain cross-dressing as a woman. *A Strange Friendship* provides insight into the diasporic reworking of gender roles and adapts the sensation genre to its colonial setting. Edith Searle Grossmann’s novel *Hermione: a Knight of the Holy Ghost* (1908) is an expression of the late-nineteenth-century women’s movement, exploring questions of the role of women and resistance against the societal double standard. The novel describes a network of ideas encompassing a number of countries and negotiated in various ways among them. The final chapter of Part 2 considers a number of so-called prohibition novels by Alie Kacem, Edith Howitt Searle (Edith Searle Grossmann’s maiden name), and Susie Mactier. These novels appear saccharine and melodramatic to modern readers but they had a significant readership at the time they were published, indicative that the issues they discussed were relevant to the community. The temperance movement was also linked to the suffragist movement. I revisit the role women

played in their roles as Angels in the House or agents of portable domesticity, focusing on similarities between the novels. As in the other sections, my analyses will show that the texts are often more complex than the ostensible ideologies they promote.

Part 1: Non-Fiction

9 *Community and Femininity in Transition*

How were notions of community and femininity modified in the transition from Britain to New Zealand? This chapter explores this question by focusing on the single woman emigrant, a figure at the centre of diasporic discourses of community and femininity. Single women under the age of thirty-five were a significant target group of emigration recruitment schemes in the 1870s and 1880s because New Zealand needed domestic servants, and also to make up for the surplus of men in colonial society (Macdonald 1). They were seen both as a hope and as a threat. On the one hand, it was assumed that they would exert a beneficial moral influence upon male-dominated colonial society. Moreover, they were ‘recruited as new settlers in the expectation that they would . . . become wives and produce the next generation – a generation which would be New Zealand-born’ (16). These two aspects show expectations that women in general would act as creators of community in the diaspora, both ideologically and physically. On the other hand, single women were often held responsible for the increase in prostitution in New Zealand (180). This illustrates the danger that women could embody for the diasporic community – again, both ideologically, since prostitution was seen as contaminating the moral character of society, and physically, since deviant sexual activity could undermine the biological ‘purity’ of the community. In her book *A Woman of Good Character* Charlotte Macdonald emphasises the anxiety that surrounded the ‘character’ of single women emigrants and illustrates the ambivalent status of single women as both hope and threat:

There was a sense in which single women who were prepared to travel ‘alone’ to the colony were regarded as morally suspect, almost as if they were ‘public’ women. . . . Underlying these kinds of allegations and concerns was an expectation that single women (and women in general) would act as the moral currency for the new colonial societies. It was important, therefore, to select ‘good’ women to ensure the quality of the community was upheld. (16-17)

In order to explore how such conceptions of the role of women travelled from homeland to hostland, I return to two texts that also travelled, and narrate travelling: shipboard diaries written by Elizabeth Fairbairn and Jane Finlayson. Both diaries were briefly mentioned in Section I; they will now be analysed in more detail. The two texts look at single women’s experience of

emigration from two slightly different perspectives: Fairbairn was matron to single women on board ship while Finlayson was a young woman under the care of a matron.

Both Fairbairn and Finlayson travelled from Scotland to New Zealand on the same ship, the *Oamaru*, Finlayson in 1876-77 and Fairbairn in 1877-78. This spatial coincidence provides the starting point for my analysis of their texts. For around three months the *Oamaru* became home to a group of young women on whom society's hopes as well as anxieties were concentrated. How does the space of the ship on which Fairbairn's and Finlayson's texts were written structure and enforce societal divisions and notions of femininity? Macdonald's illustrative description of the conditions on board emigrant ships makes clear that the structuring of physical space for single women on board was characterised by oppositions: protection from dangers versus confinement to an assigned, limited space; the ship's traversing of distance versus the single women's location in enforced proximity with each other. Young single women travelling without male family members were 'a relatively powerless and usually minority group' (Macdonald 74) seen as in need of protection from 'the sexual predations of crew and passengers' (73-74). Measures taken to ensure their protection focused on the segregation of steerage passengers into three sections: 'one for single women, one for single men and one for married couples and young children' (75). The sections were designed so as to keep single women as far away as possible from the crew and single male passengers. Further regulations regarding the parts of the ship which the women were allowed to use and their communication with other passengers made them 'the most regulated group on any ship' (74). There was thus a tension between the perceived need for their protection and the physical confinement that came with the measures taken to ensure that protection. The single women's quarters below deck were 'crammed and dark, and usually damp and smelly as well' and the berths were infested with rats, fleas and lice (76). Shipboard diarists in the steerage frequently describe being highly uncomfortable in the tropics, when it became hot and suffocating below deck – Sarah Stephens writes: 'Just imagine 68 in one place without a breath of air. Not a port hole open' (18 Nov. 1876). M. T. Binks, visiting from first class, narrates sarcastically: 'we went down into the steerage to see what it must be like to spend 7 weeks in those regions, & we decided we would rather be excused' (4 Oct. 1887). The young women cramped in with each other were further regulated in their physical movements about the ship by being divided each week into messes with allocated chores. This months-long enforced proximity is in tension with the vast distance

and open space traversed by the ship over a long period of time. The ambivalent experience of physical space on board coincidentally mirrors the ideological paradox outlined above between single women immigrants as potentially beneficial and simultaneously detrimental to the diasporic community.

9.1 Creating Community: Elizabeth Fairbairn

Fairbairn's role as matron is an inherently ambivalent one in this construct of regulation and physical segregation. According to an instruction sheet 'to matrons of emigrant ships' from 1874 (inserted into the shipboard diary of another matron, Margaret Baxter Salmon), it was the matron's duty 'to maintain order and propriety of conduct among the Single Women' and to instruct them in sewing, writing and other subjects. The matron held the key to the single women's compartment and acted as mediator between the young women and the ship's crew, in particular the surgeon. However, since she was also a single woman, she had to enforce rules that largely applied to herself as well. While the surgeon and the captain could 'support her authority', she also had to obey them. Holding the key did not mean that she had the power to change the rules of physical segregation that dictated how she was to use it. The contradictory nature of the matron's position emerges in a somewhat paradoxical rule on the instruction sheet: 'All communication with the Officers and the Crew is strictly prohibited. If in any instance this Rule should be infringed in any particular, the Matron shall immediately report it to the Surgeon or the Captain'. A diary entry by Sarah Stephens, who travelled on the *Cardigan Castle* from Gravesend to Lyttleton in 1876, illustrates that it was not always easy for the matron to enforce these rules: 'Some of the girls have been breaking the rules by writing notes to the sailors. The Matron came up unexpectedly and tried to take the letter from them. There was a scuffle in which the Matron's hat (a new one) fell overboard and some knitting that she had in her hand. She is very angry' (16 Oct.). Macdonald notes that the matron was 'the only woman invested with formal authority on board' (82). However, the matron was still on the inside of the highly regulated spatial experience of women on board, rather than being able to transcend the regulations. This inclusion and the greater power of the male authorities on board become clear in Fairbairn's entry from 24 December 1877 when she describes her own submission to the surgeon and her 'imprisonment' together with the young women supposedly subordinate to her ('we'):

They were threatened with the hose to wash them out of bed but it was of no avail so I was ordered to lock up the door at 4 o'clock in the afternoon. I made them go early to bed. I obliged of course. It was rather hard as it was a lovely night, however after suffering an imprisonment for about one hour and a half the Dr came and opened one door again and we were all so glad.

Fairbairn's shipboard diary is evidence of this inclusion and submission. Its production and contents are regulated by the 'Instructions to Matrons':

The Matron must keep a Diary, in which must be recorded any instances of insubordination or misbehavior, and other occurrences which she might see reason to object to or complain of, with any other observations which she may consider it right to make. . . . The Diary will be handed to the Immigration Officer at the end of the voyage.

It is not certain whether Fairbairn's diary is the official one submitted to the immigration officer but it seems likely that she at least intended it for this purpose. The text frequently reports 'instances of insubordination or misbehavior' and 'other observations' regarding Fairbairn's duties as matron, recording the names of the individual women who behaved well or badly. The diary includes a list of names, the weekly messes and their duties. An entry from 24 December 1877 implies that the text was intended to be read by officials: 'I don't know whether all this writing of mine may be thought worth reading by any of those in power but if it is it will give them some idea of what I have had to bear from some of these girls'. This entry also illustrates that Fairbairn did not think that she herself had much 'power' or authority: she was expected to write a text but did not think it likely that it would be read. The text and its structure are thus also a product of the regulatory machinery on board and Fairbairn's ambivalent role in it.

The group of young women under Fairbairn's care was comprised of various ethnic identities: Scottish (including herself), English and Irish. This entailed various religious identities, with Protestant and Roman Catholic as a significant opposition. At the start of the voyage Fairbairn implies that the group constitutes a microcosm of diasporic society; the sentence following makes clear that she draws dividing ethnic lines between the women: 'How many different natures are here portrayed, just a world in miniature. I must say the Irish as a rule are far behind my Scotch girls in many things' (5 Nov. 1877). It is Fairbairn's task to help shape a community comprising these various 'natures' and cultural identities. The word 'portrayed' in

her entry makes clear that this task takes place on two levels: the ‘different natures’ are physically present on board ship, and as matron Fairbairn is expected to act as mediator and regulatory force. At the same time her text ‘portrays’ the single women and produces a collective identity through textual representation. This function of the text is also visible in the lists of messes and their heads at the end of the diary, which mirrors the locations of the young women and the groups in which they were organised to perform daily chores. Fairbairn’s diary confirms Hassam’s argument that whereas first- and second-class passengers were anxious to delineate their class status, steerage passengers identified themselves more by way of their nationality and with the mess in which they were placed. Emigrants in steerage ‘had no social privileges to defend, and . . . had no rights to exclude others’ (124). Whereas the more affluent passengers could assert their class status by claiming access to, for example, the Captain’s table or the poop deck, for steerage passengers ‘the possibility of class definition through rivalry for space with passengers from another class was severely restricted’ (128). However, Hassam’s conclusion that steerage passengers had ‘no need to invest in a common social identity since they had no privileges to maintain’ (132) needs to be treated with caution. Fairbairn’s text does engage in community-building and attempts to unite different ethnic and religious identities in its ‘portrayal’.

The text’s production of a collective identity is linked to notions of femininity and women’s role. Differences between the women were bridged by subjecting them all to the same regimen of acquiring and perfecting skills relevant to their future life as domestic servants in New Zealand. ‘Diligence’ and ‘obedience’ are the two terms that crop up the most often in Fairbairn’s diary in this context. They relate to the concept of the submissive Angel in the House. While this ideal is a middle-class one, Fairbairn’s text thus suggests that working-class women could at least aspire to it. The opposites of diligence and obedience, namely laziness and impertinence, are represented in the texts as constituting unfeminine and subversive behaviour. On 3 November 1877 Fairbairn records initial impressions of the ‘girls’: ‘Margaret Boyle, I have always found willing and obedient’, but the impertinent behaviour of two others is reproachable: ‘It is a pity that she who was appointed to help me should be the one that I have first to record an offence against. When I considered I had good cause to reprove her, as shewing a bad example to the girls, she spoke very rudely to me. . . . One other I must mention. Bridget Dillon, twice refused to do what I asked her’. On 5 November Fairbairn criticises the girls for their laziness:

‘Everything as yet has gone on very well today with the exception of a few who are persuaded that they are unable to do anything but lie in bed and grumble and will not exert themselves even so much as to dress themselves to get out to enjoy this precious air of Heaven’. On 8 November she again praises diligence and obedience and condemns laziness: ‘Eliza Jane Fitzpatrick has finished her chemise too and got another. She is very diligent and obedient, a nice tidy girl too. Five times today I had to come and make Norah O’Corkey go upstairs. Kate Walsh finished her chemise but very rough work’. While domestic skills such as making chemises are expected of domestic servants, the text also makes clear that all women should have them, just because they are women: ‘Oh! Sad sad were so many women grown who cannot knit or sew anything like anything. I will do my best among them poor things to teach them to be of some use to themselves in this world’ (9 Nov. 1877). After all, it was expected that the single women emigrants would marry; as wives in colonial society, they would need the same domestic skills they needed as servants. The text constructs the single women’s compartment on board the *Oamaru* as a training ground for the domestic settings where the women will work in New Zealand. They are expected to be willing to ‘improve’ as the ship approaches New Zealand – both in skills such as sewing and handwriting, and in the virtues of diligence and obedience. Over the course of the voyage Fairbairn records her pleasure upon seeing that there has been improvement: ‘The girls are improving for I have very very seldom a case of disobedience’ (16 Nov. 1877); ‘I never seem to have any complaints to record now, really the girls are improving. They are so obedient as a rule well behaved’ (14 Dec.); ‘I consider the girls have improved a good deal, some of those who did really wish to better themselves have made considerable progress and I am glad of it’ (3 Jan. 1878).

Does this improvement mean that the text represents the young women as forming ‘part of a grand imperial design’ (Cohen 67)? Their status as assisted immigrants certainly indicates an ‘underlying thread of state involvement’ (Cohen 68). Their honing of domestic skills and femininity is represented as a ‘global mission’ (Cohen 67) transported from Britain to the diaspora, creating connections and community within the settler empire. The single women thus become agents of portable domesticity. These notions of femininity and community are transformed and adapted on the way to the hostland, about which the women learn from books: ‘This morning . . . I got one of the books the Dr gave us to read about N.Z. and read to them a while. They were much pleased and interested by the accounts given of the new country’ (28

Dec. 1877). This anticipation of the hostland is always present: 'I think they are a little subdued under the thought of what may be before them yet one would not think so when they are speaking of it. Everyone is in high hopes. I do hope none will be disappointed' (28 Dec.). The text suggests that the behaviour of the women on the ship foreshadows what will happen to them once they have arrived in New Zealand, for instance in Fairbairn's complaints about Mary Welsh:

She has given me more impertinence and rudeness than all the others put together. . . . I fear if she don't try to control her temper a little she won't get many mistresses to keep her in their house long especially if there were children for I don't think they would be safe . . . but Mary will no more, those who employ her will find it out soon enough for themselves. (24 Dec.)

Fairbairn's text thus engages with discourses that are redefined in the transition between homeland and hostland rather than exported unchanged from Britain to the outposts of the empire.

The diary also produces community through the concept of whiteness, which Dyer argues is powerful in 'uniting people across national cultural differences' (19). The notions of domestic femininity constructed in the diary are part of the notion of heterosexuality, which, as Dyer emphasises, is perceived as central to the reproduction of the white race (25). The new generation that the women were supposed to produce as wives in the hostland was expected to be white New Zealand-born – not Irish, Scottish, or English. However, the white Angel in the House ideal is complicated when the angels are on board ship, travelling towards a new home. Fairbairn writes: 'Yes home is the old country to our hearts yet and will be for some time at any rate' (24 Dec. 1877). But if 'the old country' is home, what is the *Oamaru*, and what is New Zealand? Even though the segregation of steerage space seeks to make the single women's compartment into a domestic space, appropriate for women within an ideology that places them in the private sphere, it actually appears more public than private, as evidenced in the anxiety described by Macdonald about single women emigrants being almost 'public women' (16-17). Moreover, the voyage of the ship means that the women are in the process of leaving the 'home' that, as Fairbairn states, signifies Britain. In another instance of ambivalence and contradiction, it is precisely their homemaking skills that enable them to leave that home. The ambiguous meaning

of the term 'home' thus further complicates the travelling of femininity from Britain to New Zealand.

Finally, if the text produces a collective identity and engages in (re)defining discourses of femininity, who participates in this production? Arguably it is a collective production. I discussed earlier the ambivalent status of Fairbairn as the author of a text that was in fact authorised and structured by official instructions and guidelines, mirroring her ambivalent position on board. Moreover, while the narrative was written by Fairbairn, it is permeated by the actions and enunciations of many of the single women emigrants on board the *Oamaru*. Fairbairn records their names, describes their actions, and often paraphrases their words in indirect speech, such as in this entry from 21 December 1877:

This day Ann McKinnon told me that I had favourites and that I was unfair to some in this ship. Well I allow that I do like some better than others but as God is my witness I have tried to the best of my ability to be fair to all. And I do really think that if it were put to all the girls if they spoke truly that they would not say otherwise, however whether or not I don't mind that because I feel that I am innocent. Truly if the roman Catholics wanted me to be favourably impressed with regard to their religion they would have needed to behave a little better They are not all the same for among those I call my favourites are those of that persuasion. It is all the same to me to what denomination they belong if they behave themselves. However I hope they will behave better in New Zealand than the most of them have done on board this vessel.

This entry brings together a number of aspects I have addressed in my discussion of Fairbairn's text: the proximity of various ethnic and religious identities and Fairbairn's (reluctant) efforts to create unity between them both in person and in her text, the anticipation of the women's future in New Zealand foreshadowed 'on board this vessel', and Fairbairn's own inclusion in the relatively powerless community of the single women on the ship – evidenced in the self-doubts occupying most of this entry and illustrating that she did not fully believe in her authority. The diary not only produces collective identity but is itself partly a collective production. The creation of the text parallels the production of community, just as the generic structure of shipboard diaries discussed in Chapter 1 parallels the journey from homeland to hostland.

9.2 Containing Subversion and Anxiety: Jane Finlayson

How did the voyage appear to a single woman who had even less authority and freedom of movement on board than the matron? Macdonald observes that '[s]ingle women travelling in the steerage were less likely to keep a diary during the voyage than any other group on board' (74). Jane Finlayson's diary from her 1876 voyage on the *Oamaru*, about a year before Fairbairn boarded the same ship, is particularly intriguing not only because Finlayson was a single woman travelling in the steerage but also because her text records several incidents that epitomise subversion and anxiety: the 'confinement' of a young single woman who was pregnant when she boarded the ship, the mental breakdown of another young woman, and the passengers' detention in quarantine for three weeks before the ship was permitted to land at Port Chalmers. Finlayson's text is a generic shipboard diary which conforms to the conventions outlined in Section I. It is a text intended for an audience at 'home', rather than as private notes, features regular entries, and describes all the typical events that accompanied the ship's itinerary, such as meals, religious services, and the weather. The voyage and the narrative run parallel to each other, marked by the beginning and end of the narrative which coincide with the departure and arrival of the ship, situating the writer in time and space: 'After parting with our friends at Greenock . . . [w]e came with the tug on board this ship' (22 Sep. 1876); 'We landed safely in Dunedin glad to get our freedom once more, we had a very good voyage of 83 days' (2 Jan. 1877). However, between these two stable points both the community of single women and the generic structure of the text encounter a number of potential destabilisations.

From its beginning the text engages with Finlayson's and the other single women's highly regulated spatial position on the ship. In her first entry she notes: 'I was much disappointed at being far away from my friend Agnes but we will try our best to exchange with someone' (22 Sep. 1876). A later entry illustrates that the physical segregation of the passengers is designed to restrict communication between the single women and the male passengers:

Agnes and I were thinking that we had often heard of young women getting acquainted with young men on board ship and afterwards getting married after landing but that sort of work is utterly impossible here, we only see them at a distance, and those who have brothers on board have to get permission from the Doctor to meet half way along the deck and have a chat, if we had male friends on board we would have thought this rather hard but as it is we don't care although

we don't see a single man. A girl or two has their beaus here and we are greatly amused at them, they have recourse to letter, the same as on lands, its capital fun to see it going on. (4 Oct.)

Finlayson's diary represents the spatial segregation as efficient. Even though the situation on board is exceptional, interactions with men are not: they have to be 'the same as on lands'.

The group of single women who share with Finlayson their allocated space on board is comprised of various ethnic identities, just like Fairbairn's 'girls'. Like Fairbairn, Finlayson also draws lines of identification along nationality and messes: 'we are all into separate messes, there are eight in our mess, four Scotch, three Irish, one English' (3 Oct.). Finlayson, who is Scottish, represents those who are of different cultural or religious identity from herself with irony, stressing that she is different from them and considers herself superior. She writes about 'some of the English girls': 'we laugh at how they are put to a stand about their meals, they grumble sadly we ourselves manage nicely but of course we don't eat like them' (25 Nov.). She makes fun of the Roman Catholic manner of worship: 'There are a lot of Roman Catholics beside us, we are amused and astonished at their mode of prayers, they are on their knees for nearly an hour saying their rosary and counting their beads they are truly like the Pharasies of old making much ado about their prayers' (8 Oct.), and comments on the Catholics not participating in the Protestant services on board: 'No one but those who have seen it can imagine what a beautiful effect the singing had, there were over three hundred present of course some of the staunch Roman Catholics will not come with in sight of it' (15 Oct.). Thus the text draws dividing lines between the various ethnic groups of single women as clearly as Fairbairn does when she writes that 'the Irish as a rule are far behind my Scotch girls in many things' and draws attention to the opposition between Protestants and Catholics (5 Nov. 1877). However, while Finlayson writes about the other groups with irony she also emphasises that there is peaceful coexistence. On 19 Oct. she narrates that she 'wrote letters for some Irish girls who could not write, poor girls. I was sorry for them and they had parents alive as well as any of them'. This entry implies that helpfulness and solidarity transcend boundaries, and that fundamental similarities (the love for their parents) create a sense of community – even though internal divisions within the group and Finlayson's sense of her own faction's superiority remain important.

Furthermore, as with Fairbairn's diary, a common ideal of femininity creates unity within the group. Finlayson takes pleasure in acquiring feminine skills and has no objection to

conforming to the behaviour expected of her. Unlike some other women, she submits willingly to the male authority and surveillance of the doctor: 'We have disinfecting powder all over our place, it is a disagreeable smell. The doctor is very strict with us and has his eyes in every corner, he is very sharp, some do not like him but we see he is doing everything for our own good' (28 Nov. 1876). While this may not mean that Finlayson consciously presents herself as forming part of a 'grand imperial design' (Cohen 67), she becomes part of it by conforming to what was required of single women emigrants. In addition to acquiring the domestic skills of sewing, cleaning and the like, the women attend 'reading, writing, arithmetic' classes with a clergyman (27 Sep.). Mr Bannerman is not only an authority on the self-improvement of young women but also on pioneer life in New Zealand: 'he is a clergyman in Dunedin and has been there for twenty three years, he was telling he slept in a tent in Invercargill before there were any houses at all' (1 Oct.). Mr Bannerman's areas of expertise illustrate the adaptation that discourses of femininity undergo as the *Oamaru* draws closer to the hostland.

However, the discourses of community and femininity established in the text are endangered by the incidents outlined above: deviant sexuality, mental illness, and physical illness. The first of these incidents is a young woman having a baby in the single women's compartment:

I am ashamed to tell you that one of our girls was confined of a daughter last night at ½ past 9, the doctor sent us all off from where he was . . . just fancy 28 girls put out of our place. . . . This has caused a lot of talk all over the ship when any of us goes out the men will pass remarks such as 'Who is likely to be laid up among the single girls'. The girl is from Ireland, a farmers daughter and had she not come away her father would have shot her, it was unfeeling of them to banish her away among strangers. (7 Dec.)

It is not surprising that an unmarried woman giving birth would cause 'a lot of talk', even though according to Macdonald it was actually 'a common occurrence on emigrant ships' as medical examinations upon embarkation were largely inefficient (93). The supposed control established by the physical segregation on board ship is destabilised by the birth Finlayson records – the other young women are 'put out of [their] place'. The unnamed young mother's 'confinement' is an instance of the ideological and physical threat that women's deviant sexual activities could mean for diasporic society. Two days later, Finlayson narrates a sad sequel to the incident: 'We

were wakened out of our first sleep by a commotion which was on an account of the young infant being found dead beside its mother it supposed she overlaid it. She is a young girl not 19 without much sense, she appeared to be in a sad state about it, poor thing, its best away' (9 Dec. 1876). In an emphasis of solidarity and compassion similar to the entry on letter-writing quoted above, Finlayson expresses sympathy for the young woman's situation and the 'unfeeling' behaviour of her family. However, she is 'ashamed' to record the incident in her text, implying that she shares the opinion that it indicates inexcusable behaviour. Furthermore, the phrase 'I am ashamed to tell you' conveys that the 'telling' of the scandal disrupts the diary no less than life on board the *Oamaru*. The event is subversive not only to the microcosmic community on board and to the machinery of segregation designed to regulate it but also to the structure of the text as a generic shipboard diary. When Finlayson writes 'its best away' this can be associated not only with the baby but also with the disruption that narrating the birth caused to her text.

A similar disruption happens when another young girl suffers a mental breakdown not long after the departure of the *Oamaru*: 'There is a young Irish girl went wrong in her mind beside us, we did not get any sleep for 4 nights she talked on, so we complained to the doctor and she has been tonight taken to hospital. We are all sorry for her brother who is waiting on her till the Doctor arranges other plans for her' (16 Oct. 1876). While the other single women can only feel sorry and complain, the surgeon as the male authority takes action by restoring the efficiency of the spatial regulations on board, relocating the sick woman to the hospital and arranging 'other plans for her'. Part of her illness seems to consist in trying to break free of the spaces to which she is confined on the ship: 'she is quite near us here and keeps pelting at the door with her hands and feet' (23 Oct.); 'Lizzie has broken up the door of the hospital twice' (7 Nov.). Moreover, her behaviour transgresses against the feminine rules of diligence and obedience emphasised by Fairbairn. She is noisy, causing the other women many a 'restless night' (23 Oct.): 'she has spoken and sung continually for nearly a week' (20 Oct.). Instead of being submissive she is aggressive and destructive: she 'tries to belt anyone who goes near her' (23 Oct.) and 'has torn up her bed cloths with her teeth and a dresser of her own she had beside her' (7 Nov.). The fact that 'she does not know any of us now her eyes are quite vacant' (20 Oct.) indicates that Lizzie no longer forms part of the group of emigrant women united by a common ideal of femininity and community. Her anorexia and her suicide attempts seem like efforts to disappear completely from that community: 'she is worn to a shadow and eats nothing scarcely' (23 Oct.); 'she does all

she can to commit suicide and many a fright she gives us' (28 Oct.). Lizzie's behaviour is frightening not only because the girls fear for her health and life but also because it is destabilising to their community.

The final disruptive element in the text and on the journey is the quarantine: for three weeks the emigrants were detained on two islands in sight of Port Chalmers because there had been cases of measles on board. This incident breaks up the voyage as much as the narrative structure of the text, which parallels the voyage. Anxiety about physical illness, while significant in itself, can also be seen as a metonymy of the larger elements of threat embodied by emigrants, which could represent the potential intrusion of detrimental elements into diasporic society. This threat is contained at a physical distance from the mainland. A further attempt at regulation and the restoration of order and stability is made by replicating on the islands the physical segregation on board ship: 'the married folks are on one end of it and we are on another and what is most laughable is the young men are put on an island opposite us with the water between' (16 Dec. 1876). Even though Finlayson finds this arrangement 'laughable', much as she thought it 'capital fun' to watch the flirtations on board (4 Oct.), she has to submit to being detained both on the island and in the even more limited space assigned there to the single women. The image of the islands also literalises Tölölyan's argument that 'quite loosely related populations possessed of many different, locally circumscribed identities in their homelands, but regarded as "one" in the hostland, can be turned into a diaspora by the gaze of that hostland' ('Rethinking' 13). Just as the concrete physical illness of measles can be described as symbolising the anxiety surrounding new arrivals in the diaspora, the emigrants in quarantine are literally under the gaze of the people at the hostland's coast, detained and regarded as a community of emigrants despite internal divisions. Even though the quarantine disrupts the process of community creation through femininity, the emigrants' shared exposure to the gaze of the established settlers thus also contains an element of community-building.

While these three incidents are all destabilising to the community and disruptive to the structure of the text, Finlayson's diary endeavours to re-establish stability. Despite her professed sympathy for the young mother, Finlayson draws a line between herself and that transgression when she writes, only two days after the child's death: 'I forgot to say there was a birth yesterday morning in the married quarters. (not here)' (11 Dec.). This sentence is reminiscent of the 'remarks' she quoted earlier made by male passengers, who are joking about the scandal.

Finlayson thus claims a place with the community of those who condemn and ridicule the transgression, rather than with the transgressor. Similarly, even though the structure of the text is disrupted by the incidents it always returns to the conventions of shipboard diaries outlined above. Eventually, Finlayson arrives safely not only at Dunedin, but also at the generic ending of her text. Moreover, Finlayson's diary situates itself within a body of texts concerned with emigration and shipboard travel: 'We have got the first night over and quite a novelty it is we have heard of ship life often but the reality is scarcely so pleasant' (23 Sep.); 'I have often heard of sea-sickness but this is indeed' (25 Sep.); 'We have often heard of a storm in the Bay of Biscay but we saw it in reality last night' (30 Sep.); 'We have often heard of Equatorial heat but this is it in reality' (16 Oct.). Her diary constructs Finlayson as travelling along an itinerary already established in her mind by 'hearing' about the voyage to New Zealand. These features situate the text within a web of shared settler literature and information circulating within the empire. The diary thus produces community not only within the British diaspora in New Zealand but also within the network of relations between the diasporic centre and the sub-centres.

Finlayson's text contains the disruption and subversion it narrates. Both Finlayson's and Fairbairn's diaries produce community and identity across internal ethnic and religious boundaries, and situate themselves within a network encompassing the diasporic centre and its sub-centres. This production of a collective identity serves to alleviate fears about the figure of the single woman and emphasises her potential to create community and exert positive moral influence. To varying degrees both the matron on the *Oamaru* and the single women under her care are confined to their allocated spaces on board not unlike Lizzie after her nervous breakdown is confined to the hospital. However, from this spatial confinement their texts participate in the production of a collective identity that was not simply imposed on them from above. Rather, it was constructed within a network of relationships comprising different ethnic and religious backgrounds and situated within the wider context of the settler empire. If the single woman emigrant was seen as embodying both a hope and a threat to colonial society, her text engaged with these notions by negotiating conceptions of femininity as well as containing subversion and potential destabilisations of a shared sense of community.

10 *Text and Femininity in the Diaspora: Agnes Susan MacGregor*

What happens to these discourses of community and femininity when the single woman leaves the ship and continues to write? Agnes Susan MacGregor's journal represents a young woman's struggle with societal and religious expectations. It relates to the notions of femininity and women's potential to create community which I discussed in regard to Fairbairn's and Finlayson's diaries. MacGregor's family was also from Scotland; her father James was a clergyman. The large family emigrated in 1881, when Agnes was fourteen years old. She kept a shipboard diary on board. Later, when the family settled initially in Dunedin and then in Oamaru, she continued to keep a journal at irregular intervals until 1886. My analysis will be concerned with these later entries. They portray MacGregor's effort to conform to what she saw as the ideal of a Christian woman engaged in domestic duties and eager to improve herself through carefully selected reading. Her diary illuminates a version of the role of women in New Zealand at the time and offers starting points for an inquiry into how this role fits into a network of diasporic centre and sub-centres. In order to show how MacGregor's expectations of herself were positioned within Victorian concepts of Christian girlhood and femininity, I will refer to Marianne Farningham's advice book *Girlhood* (1869), a religious book addressed to girls 'whom we will suppose to be in the blissful season which lies between thirteen and twenty' (19-20). Farningham, whose real name was Mary Ann Hearn, was a prolific journalist, lecturer, writer, and teacher, who lived in Northampton for most of her life. Her advice books were popular in Britain.⁹ While Farningham was of Baptist denomination and originally from a working-class family, *Girlhood* is targeted at an audience encompassing various classes and denominations. The ideal of girlhood it describes is consistent with that evoked in many literary texts and non-fiction works from the time.

10.1 **Femininity in the Diaspora**

Rather than merely consisting of the diligence and obedience praised by Fairbairn, the ideal of femininity MacGregor strove to achieve was one that combined the Protestant work ethic with religious observance and reading that was intended to improve the mind rather than entertain. She writes: 'I do wish to do God's work – to leave the world somewhat better for my having been in it' (6 June 1886). A 'happy day' devoted to this purpose includes successfully performing

⁹ She also wrote an advice book on *Boyhood*, published in 1870.

all her domestic duties and a schedule of religious and instructive reading, as on 7 August 1883: ‘This has been a busy, and therefore a happy day. . . . It being washing-day I had all the housework to do singlehanded. But I have managed to read 6 chapters of 1st Chronicles (XI-XVI), my Daily Light, and 20 p.p. of Roman History. Also to practise a little, and do a very little Sewing – mend my red apron’. However, Agnes is rarely satisfied with her religious devotion and uses her diary to record continuous self-doubts and reprimands. On 15 March 1883 she writes that ‘Nellie [her sister] and I are to be communicants next Lord’s day. I hope we are fit. I don’t quite know about it, for I at least am not living the sort of life I ought to be’, and on 20 March: ‘I don’t feel a bit like a Christian, one who has newly professed my faith openly. I was cross in the morning & then prayed & strove against it, and thought I was going to be all right, but it just came on again before dinner’. Moreover, she is plagued by doubts about her character. Her self-reprimands are numerous. She assesses her own personality relentlessly and sees herself as prosaic, bitter, unkind, not submissive enough, unwilling to learn, and vain:

My very dreams are prosaic! . . . I feel that I am often bitter and unkind to the children, and far too critical about my superiors. My thirst for all sorts of reading is not nearly as strong as it was two years ago. . . . I am really beginning to care very much how I am dressed & how I appear to people. Is it wrong? Am I vain? I’m sure I think myself prettier and nicer than others think me . . . (13 Dec. 1885)

She also agonises about being unfeeling, passive, sinful, idle, unkind, untruthful, selfish, and unchristian:

One thing that seems to me not right about my life now is that I don’t seem to feel so strongly about things as I used to feel. . . . All my life seems to have gone on as it was made to go by circumstances. I make up my mind to nothing myself & have no great plans. I believe I wd. be very, very happy now if it were not for the sins – the evil thoughts, idleness, unkindness, untruthfulness, self-pleasing, that come and take possession of me. I yield to these! How can a Christian act or think as I do. (6 June 1886; emphasis in the original)

She is seldom happy with her performance of domestic chores either, reprimanding herself for being ‘dreadfully lazy’ (8 July 1883) and wondering: ‘Why can’t I stick to anything when I begin it’ (20 July). On 20 August 1883 she writes: ‘After days of great laziness & idleness, I once more

sit down to tell the story of my own foolishness. . . . Oh dear! I seem to neglect most of my duties’.

MacGregor’s diary indeed seems to represent ‘the story of [her] own foolishness’, so replete is it with self-criticism. However, a look at Farningham’s book tells us that a young Christian woman had to fulfil so many expectations that it could be easy to despair at not being able to achieve this ideal. The ideal Christian girl should be kind and helpful: ‘Be a peacemaker in scenes of strife, be a comforter to the comfortless, be a helper and a blessing’ (18). The ‘motto of the Prince of Wales, “I serve,” ’ should be ‘written on every woman’s heart’ (22). She should strive for ‘love, and quiet, and intellectual food’ instead of ‘a life of fun’ (22). She should be hard-working: ‘a girl who works honestly and skilfully, and perseveringly, no matter at what kind of work, not only deserves, but receives the applause and esteem of all about her’ (34). But she should also ‘try to educate herself’, ‘be cultivated and well-informed’, and have a ‘strong, brave spirit, a true heart, a persevering determination to occupy a good place in the world’ (36). Most importantly, she should devote herself to the care of the home in order to prepare for the moment when ‘some one comes to take her away to another . . . home’ (13). Farningham’s portrayal of the ideal girl is similar to the ideal that MacGregor tries to emulate and fears she cannot attain. Instead of being ‘a helper and a blessing’, she thinks that she is ‘bitter and unkind’ (13 Dec. 1885); instead of ‘serving’, she feels that she does not respect her superiors; rather than being hard-working, she sees herself as lazy and neglecting her duties; rather than educating herself, she thinks that her ‘thirst for all sorts of reading’ is not sufficient; and instead of displaying ‘persevering determination’, she feels that she has ‘no great plans’ (6 June 1886). *Girlhood* appears to represent a received notion of femininity that seemed so natural and self-evident to MacGregor that she assumed she had to conform to it, even if it is not likely that she had read this particular text.

However, this ideal of femininity is also specifically presented as English in Farningham’s text. The following sentence is typical of *Girlhood*: ‘If our English girls understood that this was their mission, and if they fulfilled it lovingly and well, how much sorrow might be alleviated, how much good would be done’ (18). Elsewhere, a description of a group of ideal young ladies and a group of ideal young working-class girls is followed with the exclamation: ‘Now, if these two classes comprised the whole of our English maidens what a happy land would be ours!’ (2) The expectations of girls outlined in Farningham’s text are seen

as a ‘mission’ that is inherent to Englishness. Fulfilling them will be for the best of the ‘land’, England. If we assume that *Girlhood* represents a widely accepted contemporary notion of femininity, then ‘Englishness’ is as much part of this notion as the behavioural guidelines outlined above. In MacGregor’s case, however, this is complicated because she is not English but Scottish, and because she lives in colonial New Zealand rather than Britain. Her text thus illustrates two factors that unsettle the transferral of discourses of femininity to the hostland: divisions within the diasporic group and differences between the homeland and the hostland. MacGregor’s endeavours to adhere to the womanly ideal represented in texts such as *Girlhood* show that in the context of imperial expansion the English ‘mission’ of femininity indeed became a ‘global mission’ (Cohen 67), to which different groups within the diaspora strove to adhere. As Mohanram notes, ‘British’ was actually the term for ‘English’ imposed upon other groups in Britain (*Black Body* 162), so that an ‘English’ mission becomes a ‘British’ mission including, among others, the Scottish. Moreover, Mohanram argues that ‘British identity under high imperialism was a disaggregated identity. The woman’s role was to cohere this disaggregation and make it re-emerge as the unchanging British way, the nation itself’ (165). Women were perceived as being able to do this thanks to their supposed place outside history and class divisions as the eternal feminine. They were seen as a community that included all age groups and classes – hence the possibility of writing a book on girlhood which purports to be equally relevant to young ladies and working-class girls. But for women who were not English it was difficult, if not impossible, to adhere to the domestic ideal. Diana Archibald traces this difficulty in a number of Victorian novels: ‘the impossible ideal of the domestic “angel” becomes, in these Victorian novels, even more unattainable for the Neo-European woman, who cannot actually be English no matter how much she desires to be’ (9). MacGregor’s troubled journal entries might then signify not only the personal problems of an adolescent girl but also the complications that come with attempting to adhere to a feminine ideal represented as exclusively English and displaced from the homeland to the hostland. Rather than narrating ‘the story of [MacGregor’s] own foolishness’, her journal demonstrates that fulfilling one’s part in the ‘global mission’ of the diaspora was a complex and difficult endeavour.

10.2 Reading and Writing in the Diaspora

A schedule of religious, instructive reading was an important part of what MacGregor saw as the daily duties of a young Christian woman. Her journal’s documentation of what she read and her

text's engaging with these other texts place it within the context of a wider literary network encompassing both the diasporic centre and the other settler colonies. A shared literature and reading experience connect all these places to each other and create community. Moreover, what Agnes reads is part of her role as a woman and thus of a discourse of femininity which also creates community within the diaspora.

On 30 July 1882, MacGregor compiles a list of 'Books I want to read':

Bible; Confession of Faith; Histories of Britain & Rome; Geography of the world; (especially Europe, America, Scotland, New Zealand, and Australia.). Some books of science; English, French, Latin, German languages, also to read a book in each of the three latter. Cowper, Shakespeare, and Tennyson's poems. Also I would like to read the History of America, some general History of the World; and . . . I have a most insane hankering after learning Greek! I am afraid there is not much chance of that.

This is the reading of a young woman whose family gives her ample access to books and encourages learning. It does not include novels or other reading material that could be regarded as diverting but constitutes a list of instructive and religious works that make up a Victorian general education:¹⁰ the Bible, works by canonical authors of drama and poetry, European languages, and books on general knowledge such as history, geography, and science. Whereas MacGregor's reading list is less 'womanly' than something Marianne Farningham might have compiled, the line is drawn at Greek: Agnes sees her wish to learn this language as 'a most insane hankering' and does not expect that she will get the chance. While her reading is that of an exceptionally well-educated young woman, it conforms to a late-nineteenth-century canon of instructive reading: as Farningham puts it, 'to read in order to learn' (48).

MacGregor proceeds to make 'a kind of sketch of my weekly reading as it should be'. This is in accordance with Farningham's guidelines which claim that 'reading is so much more likely to be effective if it be carried on in a regular systematic way' (45). However, MacGregor fears that she 'will never keep to' the schedule. She continues to struggle with it – on 24 June 1883, she writes that 'as for reading, I have done almost nothing since we came home from Dunedin. I must begin & do some regularly'. Reading constitutes part of the ideal of femininity

¹⁰ Of course, it is well possible that MacGregor read other books which she did not include in this written and thus quasi-official reading list.

which she strives to achieve, and her dissatisfaction with her reading is part of her general feeling of being unable to achieve that ideal. Moreover, these difficulties illustrate the complexity of being part of a diverse and widespread diasporic community. Kate Flint argues that reading in the nineteenth century was ‘a means . . . of becoming part of a broader community’ (42). Wevers stresses the importance of this concept in nineteenth-century New Zealand, a colony spatially remote from the centres of literary activity:

Literariness . . . has a vital role to play in the negotiation of place. For a colonial reader, the connection to the print culture of London, New York, Sydney, Paris and Rome (both ancient and modern) was a vital source of agency, a way of belonging despite the fact of distance. . . . Reading and writing about reading . . . is not merely self-expression but also dialogue, with the text, the author, and other readers. It is a way of expressing a citizenship not circumscribed by proximity.
(*Reading* 216)

Wevers sees literature as forming connections within the British Empire and to places and time periods that transcend it, such as Paris and ancient Rome. However, as Flint also suggests, reading did not make the reader part of only one community, but allowed her or him to choose from a number of communities (42). Whereas MacGregor’s interest in the history of Rome and the French language testifies to her being situated within literary connections wider than the British diaspora, the composition of her reading list also shows that her understanding of the canon is placed within this imagined community’s understanding of what should be read by its members. She thus locates herself within a network of readers that spanned the empire. However, her text also records her reluctance and struggle to find her place in this network by keeping to her reading schedule.

MacGregor envisions her own journal as a text shaped by literary conventions. She frequently notes to what conventions a ‘real diary’ should conform: ‘I suppose the right way to keep a journal is to write in it every day’ (30 July 1882); ‘This diary (!) is not half practical enough. I mean to make it a useful book of reference hereafter; also to make it a real diary’ (6 Aug. 1883; emphasis in the original). On 30 January 1883 she sets down a list of rules for such a ‘real diary’:

Let me make a rule that I am never to write more than a page here, or less than two lines.

Rule 2. I am not to write about my feelings but about events.

Rule 3. To mention whatever reading I have done.

Rule 4. To mention what work/sewing [unclear]

Rule 5. To mention about [unclear]'s music, & my own practising. (Emphasis in the original)

These entries also illustrate that again she is not happy with her observance of the rules. Whereas she does make the diary a 'book of reference' by including at the end of it a number of hymns, poems, 'Moral Maxims', 'Christian Resolutions', and notes on her reading, her entries remain irregular and of varying length. Agnes is dissatisfied with this, seeing it as a sign of her bad overall discipline: 'Where is my resolution – to write here every day? Gone; to keep company with its numerous relations!' (13 Aug. 1882) She also appears to keep a number of other journals, none of which she is happy with: 'Well, I've been writing in three different little journals since I last wrote here, all equally stupid and egotistical' (30 Jan. 1883). She reprimands herself for being selfish and writing only about herself: 'I have been keeping a sort of journal lately, but it is a curious production: – all about myself. I am afraid I am very, very selfish' (30 July 1882) and combines this with self-criticism about her general laziness: 'I must fight hard against myself or I'll be so lazy that I will not know what to do. There, as usual, I have just been writing about myself' (31 July). Her perceived inability to conform to the conventions of journal writing is another of the ways in which she feels inadequate. She perceives her text as a document of this inadequacy.

Whereas feelings of inadequacy are certainly not unusual for teenagers, in MacGregor's text they also represent a more general difficulty inherent to life in the diaspora. Concepts of femininity and conventions of both reading and writing represent ways to produce community within a diverse and geographically widespread diasporic network. They can be seen as part of an imperial 'global mission' (Cohen 67) to which everyone in the diaspora was expected to adhere. But at the same time these conceptions were undermined by the shifting and kaleidoscopic identity of the diaspora which originated both from its fundamental experience of dispersal and from its internal diversity. A conflicted and irregularly structured text such as Agnes MacGregor's journal testifies to these complexities and contradictions of identity production.

11 *Community and Class: Sarah Amelia Courage*

The 1896 publication in Christchurch of Sarah Courage's autobiography *'Lights and Shadows' of Colonial Life: Twenty-Six Years in Canterbury, New Zealand* was not welcomed in her local community: nine of the eighteen original copies of the book were destroyed because neighbours and friends recognised themselves in the characters and did not like the way they were portrayed. *Lights and Shadows* narrates Courage's arrival from England with her husband and first baby, and then focuses on the family's first few years on their new farm in Canterbury, with detailed sarcastic descriptions of neighbours and social events. Courage changed surnames and place names, but it must have been easy for her acquaintances to figure out to whom and what she was referring, and most of her comments are rather unflattering. Does her text nevertheless construct community? I argue that it does, but it is a version of community that is focused on England as the homeland and excludes the working class. I will look at three ways in which Courage's autobiography constructs community: by engaging with the myth of the homeland, through gossip, and by anticipating an audience whose members share a similar reading and writing experience. I will also trace a number of contradictions that demonstrate that the text is not entirely confident in its efforts to construct this version of community.

11.1 **Englishness and the Homeland**

Unlike Fairbairn, Finlayson, and MacGregor, Courage was English. This suggests the possibility of a more uncomplicated identification with the homeland and 'a sense of forming part of a grand imperial design' (Cohen 67). Courage is at the top of the white hierarchy suggested by Dyer (20) and could see herself as part of a ' "chosen race" with a global mission' (Cohen 67). The text certainly emphasises that England will always be 'home' and that New Zealand can never be more than a hostland. This is established as soon as the family's arrival in Lyttleton is narrated:

It was the 24th of March when we arrived at Lyttleton heads, in the evening. The night was clear and bright, and we could see the Port Hills, which are high and seemed to us very imposing, and would be called mountains at home. 'Home', I will here remark, always means England, for nobody except a born colonist calls New Zealand 'home', not even those who, like ourselves, have been here over a quarter of a century – we always look to England as a haven of rest. (18)

‘Colonists’, for Courage, seem to comprise English people only: ‘home’ ‘always means England’ – that it might mean Scotland, Ireland or Wales to other members of the diaspora is not taken into consideration. These groups are represented as distinct and different in the text. The Scottish are portrayed positively: Courage narrates how a Scottish labourer gave her baking lessons, and states that ‘[f]rom that time onwards I have always liked and admired the Scotch. They are, as a rule, so sensible and practical’ (72). The Irish are represented in a more ambivalent light. Her husband returns from a trip to Christchurch, where he has been looking for new domestic servants, with ‘*such* a load of things, also a married couple, whom I could see at a glance were Irish’ (74; emphasis in the original). The text does not specify what leads Courage to this conclusion, but the couple’s grammatical inclusion under ‘*such* a load of things’ and the ease with which she identifies them as Irish suggest their stereotypical categorisation and even objectification. However, elsewhere in the text an Irish servant is described as ‘very willing and warmhearted, like all the Irish’ (26). The significant fact is that Irish and Scottish people are represented as distinct from the English. If Courage identifies with a ‘grand imperial design’ (Cohen 67), then this design is exclusively English.

While it makes clear that only England can be ‘home’, the text also states that New Zealand has turned out to be ‘much more home-like’ than Courage and her husband were expecting. Soon after their arrival they notice that Canterbury is remarkably ‘civilised’ and has many churches, just like England: ‘We felt that we were in a new world; yet a very short time sufficed to show us that people and things generally were much more home-like than we had anticipated; in fact, we were agreeably surprised to find everybody and everything so civilised’ (19); ‘We, at least I, had landed in Canterbury with a sort of vague idea that we were entering upon a “spiritual wilderness”, as it were, and here, 15,000 miles away from all old scenes and associations, I found things were entirely different in that respect, as in others, everything being much more home-like than we had anticipated’ (33). The text also incorporates the cliché of New Zealand as a better Britain. New Zealand realises a poetic ideal evoked in English literature but not found in the real England: ‘That Sabbath stillness, of which poets make so much account, is a living fact here in the country’ (87). The climate has wonderful healing powers: ‘The climate seemed to suit me better day by day, and after I had been out two years I gradually got stronger and lost the pain in my side, and the neuralgia to which I had been a martyr for years’ (165). The aspects Courage criticises about New Zealand seem less significant. They are mostly limited to a

dislike of ‘colonial manners’ – ‘the curt, off-hand manner in which some of the people spoke and acted was strange and unpleasant, they were not uncivil, but brusque and familiar to a degree’ (20) – and an ironical disdain for the tardiness with which new fashions are adopted in the colony, for example when she decides to wear a new dress that ‘was quite the latest fashion in the colonies, though I had had it three years’ (213).

In a coincidental echo of Mary Rolleston’s search for the ideal peach as the symbol of white industry and enterprise, Courage’s melodramatic homesickness is alleviated when she finds just such a peach. An old man with whom the Courages chat shortly after their arrival

came from Barnsley in Yorkshire and said, with his eyes full of tears, that he would give his ‘head off his body’ for one more glimpse of his old home. The tears were too near my own eyes from the same cause, so I walked on ahead in search of the peach garden, where my husband caught me up. The trees were laden with fruits, *such* peaches, ripe and ruddy . . . (21; emphasis in the original)

By the end of the narrative it seems as though the comforting properties of the peaches were only the beginning. Like the peach trees, Courage and her husband have ‘taken root’ and settled in New Zealand: ‘*We*, I suppose, have taken root, and shall remain. The climate suits my husband; we are fairly prosperous and as happy as most mortals’ (235; emphasis in the original). It could be supposed that New Zealand has become home, rather than just being home-like.

Nevertheless, the text insistently evokes the homeland as a significant ‘memory and myth’ (Cohen 26). England is idealised and the text emphasises Courage’s wish to return there, ‘which we said should be in less than ten years’ time’ (61). Thus the text contains the notion of a physical return to England as well as Tölölyan’s more figurative one of a ‘re-turn’ toward the concept of the homeland (‘Rethinking’ 14). As for Randall in *A Rolling Stone*, the homeland is the subject of melancholy musings for Courage and her husband:

We thought and talked of home, relations and friends, and wondered sadly if we should ever see them again. Our thoughts strayed carefully and heedfully back to the time when we left them for this strange new world. . . . Oh, the time that seemed to have passed since we left England; and the miles and miles of roaring sea which rolled between us and them. (114)

This passage permeated by the homeland myth is preceded by one which modifies the assumption that New Zealand can really be seen as ‘home-like’ or as a better Britain: ‘Our social

habits are curiously obstinate, for under the heat-distilling skies of the antipodes we wear much the same dress and we eat the same foods as in the frosty airs of the northern world' (114). The text here implies that it is misguided to see New Zealand as an extension or replica of England, even though many things may seem surprisingly similar or better. The text has to reconstruct the homeland imaginatively and elaborate on the nostalgia it evokes to gloss over the fact that New Zealand actually feels like home but must never become home in order to keep the homeland myth intact. For if the version of diasporic identity that Courage's text produces relies on this myth, the myth must be constantly reiterated so that it will not be replaced by the home-like-ness of the hostland.

While the text idealises England as the homeland, it simultaneously constructs the identity of the diasporic community as different from that of the homeland's society. This is evident in the text's representation of its narrator as a pioneer. Like Catherine Ralfe in her autobiography, Courage displays her knowledge about New Zealand in 'those days', differentiating herself from English people at 'home' and from a younger generation that does not have her knowledge. She also implies that she has the grit of a true pioneer and was never discouraged by all the difficult tasks she had to face: 'There were no trains in those days, as there are now, to whisk us through the hill to Christchurch. People who come to New Zealand in these days will find all things made smooth for them' (23); 'Fred had prepared me, before coming up country, to put up with many discomforts of all kinds; so after the first shock was over I did not give these minor miseries a second thought' (47); 'it was all such dreadfully uphill work, but daily work had to be done, and we both had our duties to perform, which we did without shirking' (52); 'After a heavy rain especially, the road had always to be completely reformed, costing pounds in labour alone. But that was only a minor misery compared to others which fell to the lot of settlers in those days' (90-91). The text frequently relates Courage's knowledge about New Zealand to England: 'The township of Lyttleton (I may say for the information of readers of this book in England or elsewhere) is the chief part of Canterbury' (19); 'The climate of Canterbury is much like that of England, and is well suited to English people' (28); 'Those who feel the heat much in England will feel it doubly out here' (29), and so on. The text implies that this knowledge about New Zealand makes Courage superior to English people, such as in the following passage, which claims that only by living in New Zealand in the pioneer days is it possible to learn 'what constitutes good driving':

English people, who are so proud of their clever driving at home, with their good, level roads and well-broken horses, should have come out here in those days, I have often thought, and driven a pair of colonial horses bred in the bush . . . and see if they could drive through ruts and holes, and rivers where the current is strong enough to overturn the coach and carry the horses off their feet; they would then get an idea of what constitutes good driving. (39-40)

Finally, the last chapter of the book is ‘an afterthought’ addressed to readers in England who are contemplating emigration to New Zealand, ‘add[ing] a few words about Canterbury, New Zealand, as it is now, as a home and place of settlement’ (237). The chapter treats a wide range of topics: ‘[w]hat classes of people are likely to do well here and what classes this country is not suitable for’ (237), drink as ‘the great curse of the colonies’ (239), the relative egalitarianism of colonial society, the ‘sameness’ of station life (240), how to prosper, what to bring, and finally the advice ‘to take the rough with the smooth and cultivate a cheerful disposition’ (241). That the text was not published in England, which means that it cannot have had a large English audience, demonstrates that the display of such knowledge has other aims than just providing advice to readers. Relating local knowledge to life in England again makes clear that there is a strong identification with the diasporic centre, and that the myth of the homeland is upheld. But at the same time it stresses that the diasporic community in New Zealand is distinct from the homeland’s society: even though Courage is still truly English, her stay in the colony has changed her. The community still identifies with the traditions and mythology of its homeland, but it has also evolved over time. However, the text’s logic here runs into one of a number of contradictions. While it represents Courage as a pioneer who is still English but has gained diasporic knowledge in addition to this English identity, it also ridicules people who brag about their pioneer experience, for instance an old lady in the coach from Christchurch:

A rather nice-looking old body seemed anxious to confide her family history to anybody who would listen, myself included. ‘I’m seventy, and I can do a day’s work yet with any woman in Canterbury,’ she said; ‘not but what my old man left a tidy bit for me. When I came ‘ere first I washed in a kerosene tin, and thankful to get *that* luxury; and baked my bread in a nail-can oven. Oh, I’ve known what it is to rough it – I have,’ and so on. (37; emphasis in the original)

This ironic description seems at odds with Courage's own insistence on her knowledge and her recurring tales from 'those days' (91). After all, *Lights and Shadows* could be regarded as Courage's own attempt to 'confide her family history to anybody who would listen'. It appears that the text is not entirely comfortable with its identity production through the display of diasporic knowledge.

11.2 Intraclass Community

Again similarly to Ralfe's memoirs, *Lights and Shadows* creates community by relating anecdotes and gossip. However, the text excludes working-class people from this community. Two groups of people feature predominantly in Courage's sarcastic descriptions of social and household life: servants and neighbours. The text puts emphasis on class distinctions, stressing that servants are socially, and usually intellectually, inferior to Courage and her family. While the text acknowledges that the neighbours belong to the same class as Courage, it conveys an attitude of superiority regarding them, and assumes that they are just as available as the object of unflattering comments in a public text as servants are.

Finding and keeping good servants is a frequent topic in Courage's autobiography, confirming Macdonald's point about the high turnover of servants in colonial New Zealand society: 'For employers the difficulty of *keeping* a servant was almost as much of a problem as finding one in the first place. Illness, marriage or family commitments sometimes intervened but usually servants simply grew tired of the family they were with and wanted a change' (122; emphasis in the original). All of these factors are reasons for servants giving notice in the text; in addition, the Courages dismiss servants for reasons of drunkenness, domestic violence, and unsuitability to the tasks demanded of them. The text subjects all servants who pass through the household to a scrutiny which sometimes includes positive aspects of their personality, manner and appearance but usually puts more emphasis on the negative ones: '[Mary] was very clean, but like most girls who do not go to service till after twenty years of age, she could not be taught *method* in her work. . . . She was very willing and warmhearted, like all the Irish, and those good qualities covered a multitude of minor sins' (26; emphasis in the original); 'If asked to help, [Jane] sighed like a steam valve, and did it with a bad grace' (48); 'Mary Ann . . . was such *very* raw material. Her hair hung down her back like untwisted rope, and of the same colour' (128; emphasis in the original); '[Mrs Todd] was . . . nice-mannered, but very slow in speech and movement; but the man seemed surly and had an atrocious squint' (157); '[Matilda] had a

peculiar sharp, perky countenance, with straight, black hair – rather an unpleasant-looking woman of about thirty; and I disliked her short, curt manner’ (188). These descriptions insinuate that Courage is superior to the servants: she is perceptive enough to detect their strengths and flaws, and has the intellectual ability to write about them in a witty way. Not only these individuals but also ‘colonial servants’ in general are described as inferior to the narrator: ‘From that day to this I have never had a colonial servant who had not seen better days, though their appearance and manners generally did not favour that supposition by any means. The pet weakness of most of them is bragging’ (110-111). This feeling of superiority is explained by the importance the text accords to class distinctions. It is evident that Courage’s own class affiliation is with the upper middle class. The family’s ability to afford several servants, unusual in colonial society, attests to their wealth and high status. Courage is indignant about working-class people assuming a place in society higher than the one she would accord them. She sees evidence of this in their style of dress:

If a garment looks well on their betters, why should it not look equally as well on themselves? Why indeed? They do not see the difference. No one nowadays is content to be second-rate; accordingly, so many are third-rate – that prevailing low-minded pretentiousness. An insane desire to be at the top of their class puts one-half of the world against the other half. . . . But everybody cannot be at the top, or near it. (106)

The underlying assumption is that Courage herself is entitled to be ‘at the top’, but that the majority of other people should be contented with being ‘second-rate’. As Macdonald notes, the complaint that colonial servants did not hold class distinctions in high regard and that this was visible in their clothing was frequently made: ‘Working people were noted for casting off any trappings of deference and for not being afraid to look their “superiors” in the eye. Among servant “girls” the most celebrated and conspicuous indicator of this new freedom was their attire’ (120). Class distinctions in New Zealand were less pronounced and the social hierarchy was looser than in Britain. Belich notes:

Class was mostly ‘loose’ rather than ‘tight’, as yet a matter of shared lifeways rather than shared identity or countrywide community. Only a ramshackle colonial gentry approached tight class in 1880. . . . But they shared a common subculture,

saw themselves as genteel, and were accepted as such, helped by a general broadening of definitions of gentility. (*Paradise* 20)

Whereas Courage's autobiography was published in 1896, it still displays a need to reiterate as self-evident class distinctions that were as yet brittle. The scarcity of domestic servants in the colony allowed them to be less submissive and more demanding. As was usual on New Zealand farms, Courage as mistress of the household had to do a significant amount of manual work herself and her servants worked alongside her 'rather than to a distant set of commands or in a physically separate domain' (Macdonald 119). This makes it necessary for her to reconstruct class distinctions to contain the threat of a loss of status. Definitions of gentility are broadened when Courage implies that even though she has to do engage in manual labour she is still superior to her servants and 'at the top' (106) of colonial society. When someone of her own class does not participate in this effort to delineate class boundaries the text expresses Courage's indignation, for example when her neighbour Mrs Iscariot's farm hand is a guest at the dinner table: 'I felt, as the other guests did that his proper place was in the kitchen, and it was beneath Mrs Iscariot, as a gentlewoman, to be so familiar with such a boor' (118).

The descriptions of Courage's neighbours are as detailed as those of her servants. While the neighbours are not represented as socially inferior, most of the descriptions of them are equally condescending, implying Courage's intellectual superiority and ability to judge others, both their good and their bad sides. They are frequently written in a tone of sarcastic gossip: '[Mrs Iscariot] was a tart, angular person of about forty years old, with a hooked nose, light hair and cold, small grey eyes – altogether she struck me as an unpleasant, sinister person' (50); 'I liked [Mrs Colton] from the first interview. She was a German, and had a quiet, gentle face and a manner which was very taking (77)'; '[Mr Jolliboy] was not a handsome man by any means. I had seldom seen one less so – though two or three handsome men might possibly have been made out of him; there was material enough in the flabby acreage of his pendulous cheeks for two or three good-looking faces, if they were made up differently' (172); '[Mrs Iscariot] was such a peculiar woman; in my own mind I had always likened her to a turkey with a querulous kind of note, never seeming to become sociable, or to make one of the human family in any sense save the numerical' (216). It seems that the text's rather condescending scrutiny of both servants and neighbours does little to create community. Not only were Courage's neighbours personally angered by their portrayal in the book, the form that the text itself took went against

what was considered appropriate for representations of the pioneer days. Gibbons argues that *Lights and Shadows* does not conform to the idealistic and nostalgic approach that was expected of such texts: 'A broad mythology of the pioneering past was well established by the later years of the nineteenth century. . . . Courage's . . . critical view of colonial life was at odds with accepted pieties set out in local and regional histories' (51). While the text's portrayal of Canterbury society does not conform to these literary conventions, its telling of gossip does create community. However, it is an intraclass version of community reserved for a certain group of people, rather than the entire diaspora: members of a wealthy, upper middle class who identify as English. Courage's emphasis on things English and the homeland England exclude other groups such as the Irish and Scottish. Her descriptions of servants as inferior, combined with her condemnation of a social hierarchy she sees as too loose, exclude working-class people. Arguably, however, her gossip about the neighbours is inclusive rather than exclusive. While her text provoked angry reactions, its very potential to do so shows that it was regarded as part of a communal literature. Precisely because Courage was a member of the community, her text was important enough to be taken so seriously that it was censored. Furthermore, gossip can also be seen as a collective textual production that engages with each person's role within the community and their relationships with other members of that group. However, the text again becomes entangled in a number of contradictions. The first is its condemnation of gossip: 'One felt also that everybody in that neighbourhood knew, twice a day, how everybody else's cough was; and that the most industrious gossip could scarcely find anything to say that she, or *he*, had not said at least twice before' (103; emphasis in the original); 'Mrs Iscariot came up to me to say . . . something uncharitable about the Jolliboyes. . . . She said, "he is amiability itself in a coat and a pair of Scotch plaid 'bifurcations'; he possesses all the social attributes; his conversation at times is perfectly dazzling. Goodnight.'" She was a bitter woman, I thought' (208-209). It seems paradoxical that Courage as a narrator should be so critical of gossip when it constitutes large parts of the text itself. Furthermore, the text's exclusion of the working class from the community it creates is undermined when it turns out that Courage is not so different from her servants. When her husband is away on a trip to Christchurch, her servant Jane tells horror stories in the evening. Courage sees this as typical of Jane's 'class of life' and even as 'a sign of a diseased mind':

How is it, I wonder, that people of her class of life have such a liking for things horrible and supernatural, and are persistently harping on the minor? They seem to think nothing is worth telling unless it is highly spiced. . . . I told her she ought not to talk or think of such subjects, that it was a sign of a diseased mind to think of such things. (63)

But later Courage is unable to sleep because she is too frightened: 'How slowly the night hours seemed to creep by, and how I longed for daylight, for our little house was as lonely in the moonlight as a cloud upon the mountain top' (65). Her description of this horrifying night takes up several pages and can well be seen as 'harping on the minor'. When it turns out in the morning that Jane was just as frightened, they decide to sleep in the same room the next night. This anecdote sheds an ironic light on Courage's feeling of superiority over Jane's 'class of life'.

11.3 A Community of Readers and Writers

Lights and Shadows situates itself within a literary community of readers and writers. Courage's text, much more than Fairbairn's, Finlayson's, or MacGregor's, puts emphasis on England as the centre of the diasporic world. The 'decentered, lateral connections' (Clifford 306) between the diasporic sub-centres are less significant. The text could be placed comfortably within the context of a postcolonial centre-periphery model. While it situates itself within a literary tradition, this tradition is a national English one rather than one of a shared settler literature.

Each chapter in Courage's autobiography starts with an epigraph in the form of a short poem or quotation. For a number of the poems no author is indicated; presumably they were written by Courage herself. The majority of the other epigraphs are from eminent writers of the British literary tradition – mostly English ones, with Shakespeare and Cowper as favourites, but also, for instance, Walter Scott. Further quotations are inserted into the text:

I had not been married a great while, and was very young when I came out to New Zealand, and was *very* 'green'.

How green you are, and fresh, in this old world.

– *King John*'. (56; emphasis in the original)

The text also quotes from the Bible:

While the bread was in process of making, Jane, who had baby, was spending her time much as Satan spends his – according to the Book of Job – in 'passing to and fro on the face of the earth, and walking up and down on it'; however, it is only

right to say that her life only resembled Satan's in a perambulatory point of view.
(59)

These epigraphs and in-text quotations serve to appeal to a community of readers familiar with an established literary canon that is British, but mostly English. Both Courage and her readers are figured as part of this community: they are familiar with the quotations and able to interpret and relate them to the chapter that follows or the part of the narrative they serve to illustrate. The readers of the text are also expected to have sufficient education to understand the sarcasm of passages such as the reference to the Book of Job. Wevers notes in her discussion of the Brancepeth station library that 'Brancepeth literary subscribers . . . would have been aware that literature in some sense defined what it meant to be British and "civilised"' (*Reading* 217). She cites Tim Dolin's argument that reading was a 'contact zone', allowing settlers 'to stay in touch with the centre, to imagine themselves in some merely outlying province, where news took a little longer to reach' (qtd. in Wevers, *Reading* 163). *Lights and Shadows* participates in this effort to uphold contact with a homeland imagined as the 'civilised' centre. Working-class people are excluded from the text's anticipated audience. Its characterisation of the servant Rose represents her reading canon as utterly different from a sophisticated British canon:

When she came in she had a book in her hand. . . . I looked at it: and *Ben Barlow's Bad Bargain or Death on the Scaffold* was its title. Then I ceased to wonder at her peculiar manner, after seeing the sort of pernicious literature she indulged in. That evening, as I gave her back her book, I told her it was a waste of time reading such rubbish and offered to lend her some cheerful instructive books if she was fond of reading; but she sighed again and said she had brought plenty of nice reading in her box . . . (152)

In keeping with prevailing nineteenth-century thought, Rose's 'pernicious' reading material is seen as the cause of her melodramatic 'peculiar manner': 'she was so sentimental, and sighed with an effort sufficient to blow out a candle' (151-152). Rose is not part of the educated community of readers evoked by the text, who read 'instructive books'. Moreover, she does not want to be part of it, proving unsusceptible to Courage's literary sophistication: 'I . . . advised Rose to burn her cheap novels; she burnt two or three but that was all' (167).

In addition to the literary canon to which the text alludes in epigraphs and quotations, it refers to the English mail and the texts it brings as another form of staying in touch with the

diasporic centre: as readers of papers, magazines and letters. The text names the publications, implying that its readers are familiar with them: ‘After our tea we surrounded ourselves with papers and magazines, namely, *Illustrated*, *Queens*, *The Field*, *Bailey’s Sporting Magazine*, *Punch* etc., for the good people at home have never, to this day, forgotten to send the papers regularly’ (95). The English mail provides a body of texts that makes possible a web of communication between the diasporic communities and the homeland. Courage as the narrator of the text is part of this web, reading the texts she receives from ‘the good people at home’. Her own text becomes part of the same web. *Lights and Shadows* assumes that its readers are familiar with this body of texts, its content and conventions: ‘A sea voyage has been so often and well described that the subject has become somewhat hackneyed, else I would tell of the many petty squabbles and more discomforts which must be the inevitable accompaniments of a long (three months) voyage in a small sailing ship’ (17). Moreover, the text self-reflectively lets its readers have an insight into the writing process and its discussion by members of Courage’s family: ‘One of the members of my family, after reading a few chapters of this scribble, has remarked that I have written too many uninteresting details, and that my book . . . will be too long and too dry. . . . I will remember the warning and get over the ground with longer strides’ (219-220). The text thus not only evokes a community of readers, these readers are also seen as writers to some degree since they are able to follow the writing process and relate it to literary conventions. The reading and writing communities become one: ‘it has been a pleasure for me to write, and it is, perhaps, possible it may give someone an equal pleasure to read it’ (236). Working-class people, however, are no more part of the community of writers than they are part of the community of readers. When Rose gives notice because ‘the country was not the place for a girl with a face like hers to bury herself in’ (184), she leaves behind two of her ‘pernicious’ books, in one of them ‘part of a badly written love letter beginning “Dear Angle” (meant for “Angel”, I suppose) and finishing with a verse of something intended for poetry’ (185). Apparently Rose’s writing is as unsophisticated as her reading. This excludes her, and by implication all others of her class, from forming part of the reading and writing community implied in *Lights and Shadows*.

Courage’s identification with a wealthy, English upper middle class appears to enable a more self-confident construction of community in her text than is accessible to the other non-fictional texts considered in this section. This version of community is oriented toward England as the diasporic centre and excludes the working class as well as other ethnic groups present in

the diaspora. It is constructed through the myth of the homeland, gossip and anecdotes, and an implied community of like-minded readers and writers. However, a number of underlying contradictions suggest that this self-confidence has limits and that even Courage's assertive version of diasporic identity is not entirely uncomplicated.

Part 2: Fiction

How do fictional texts construct diasporic community? In this part I will discuss Charlotte Evans's *A Strange Friendship* (1874), Edith Searle Grossmann's *Hermione: a Knight of the Holy Ghost* (1908) and a number of prohibition novels by Alie Kacem, Edith Howitt Searle, and Susie Mactier. My analyses focus both on the novels' representation of conceptions of femininity and women's role, and on how they situate such more universal conceptions within their specific diasporic context.

12 *Gender and Genre: A Strange Friendship*

A Strange Friendship: a Story of New Zealand (1874) is similar in genre and style to Charlotte Evans's other published novel, *Over the Hills, and Far Away*, which was discussed in Section I. *A Strange Friendship* is also a sensation novel but could equally be designated a popular romance since it is less didactic and has a happy ending. The novel narrates the story of orphan sisters Dolly and Violet, who emigrate from England with their older brother Harry, his wife Kate and their baby. In New Zealand the family make the acquaintance of their secretive neighbours, Alan Ainsleigh and his sister Madelaine. Dolly refuses Alan's marriage proposal when he admits that he is haunted by a family secret. After Violet disappears mysteriously, Dolly discovers that Madelaine is actually Alan's brother Richard, whose disguise serves to conceal his criminal past, and that her sister has eloped with Richard. Dolly eventually returns to her family, having escaped from her neglectful husband, but dies soon after. In a dramatic scene the family's house is swept away in a flood, but not before Richard has reappeared, regretted his sins, and drowned. The end of the novel sees Dolly and Alan rich and happily married in England and the rest of the family prospering on their new farm in New Zealand.

As with *Over the Hills*, critical responses to *A Strange Friendship* have been overwhelmingly negative, focusing on its Puritan moralising, melodramatic style, unrealistic plot, upper-class pretensions and nostalgia for England. Until recently criticism of this kind was often aimed at the facts that the novel was written by a woman and geared toward a mostly female readership. Stevens writes condescendingly that '[i]t is obviously a woman's book, with its talk of baby lore, of maids at £30 a year, and its strong (and very silent) men' (15). McCormick psychoanalyses Evans by calling her writing the 'wish-fulfilments of an exiled gentlewoman' (44). This attitude is not surprising: Stafford and Williams note that one reason for

the bad reputation of ‘Maoriland’ literature as unsophisticated and embarrassingly ‘colonial’ was the high proportion of women writers in late-nineteenth-century New Zealand. Cultural Nationalists like Allen Curnow and Denis Glover associated the writing of these authors ‘with sentiment, gentility and colonial deference’ (*Maoriland* 12). Disdain for women’s popular writing is not confined to New Zealand; condescending criticism like that quoted above was and is typically applied to women’s popular writing. Evans is thus doubly stigmatised, both as a woman writer of popular romance and as a colonial, ‘Maoriland’ writer. Against this background it is insightful to trace how the novel constructs notions of writing, community-building and femininity in the diasporic context.

12.1 Gender Roles and the Homeland Myth

Similarly to Courage’s autobiography, *A Strange Friendship* emphasises class distinctions and mythologises England as the homeland. The novel was published in London and geared toward the British market – Evans was one of the many late-nineteenth-century New Zealand novelists who ‘published in Britain, their work either destined solely for “Home” consumption, or re-exported back to New Zealand’ (Stafford and Williams, ‘Introduction’). Stevens rightly notes that Evans’s ‘characters remain nostalgically English, stubbornly elegant and cultivated’ (16). As in Courage’s text, this identification with signifiers of Englishness is asserted by placing the novel within an English literary tradition. As Mackay notes, Dolly ‘quotes from Elizabeth Barrett Browning, reads Tennyson’s *Idylls of the King* and the *Holy Grail* and gratefully accepts the offer of a loan of the first volume of *Middlemarch* and “The Cornhill Magazine” ’ (61). At the happy end of the narrative, Dolly has returned to England and is living the life of the gentry. The settlers in *A Strange Friendship* are exclusively English: there is little diasporic fusion of cultures, crossover and hybridity but the homeland myth is immensely important.

This nostalgia is, however, undermined by a number of destabilising points which illustrate the fragility of the notion of a ‘pure’ English culture that could be exported to and upheld in the diaspora. One such point regards the expectation of women to reproduce community by being wives and mothers. This expectation is also one of the basic elements of popular romance, whose plots centre on courtship and end with marriage, and the sensation novel, which often narrates incidents of female subversion that threaten to destabilise this gender ideology but are ultimately contained. Violet and Dolly illustrate two approaches to finding an appropriate marriage partner: Violet makes the wrong choice and both her marriage and her life

come to a tragic end, whereas Dolly chooses more wisely and is rewarded with marital happiness and wealth. However, the text also draws attention to the tenuousness of the ideology by representing family relationships as unusual or suspect. Brown notes that ‘Dolly and Violet are seen as paradoxically estranged from normal family relations, having had a somewhat mysterious upbringing’ with a mother long since dead (‘Strange’); Harry and Kate have assumed the role of parents instead. Alan and Madelaine/Richard have a rather confusing family background best summed up by the fact that they, too, are orphans, albeit heirs to a large estate. They are, of course, not normal siblings because Madelaine/Richard is a man in disguise. This clandestine situation is brought about by Alan’s loyalty to his stepmother Eleanor, who asks him on her dying bed to help Richard. The fact that Alan and Eleanor are not related hints that his strong attachment to her might have sexual connotations, and indeed Alan writes in an explanatory letter to Dolly: ‘My beautiful stepmother was the idol of my boyish heart. I am quite sure I loved her far more than her own son did’ (172). He makes his promise to her ‘with her arms around [his] neck’ (176) and ‘kissed her hand as [he made his] vow’ (177). Similarly to Violet’s and Dolly’s family constellation, Alan’s relationship to Eleanor confuses different kinds of relational and emotional attachment: ‘She was mother, sister, and friend all in one to me’ (177). In addition to problematising the heterosexual romance plot, these complex and confusing family relations and loyalties question an unbroken continuity between homeland and hostland that was often represented in terms of family metaphor, with Britain as the mother and the colonies as her children. In *A Strange Friendship*, the biological mothers are dead and the family constellations of the children doubtful.

This break in the continuity between homeland and hostland is illustrated in the novel’s reworking of the sensation genre. Jones explains that the formulaic sensation novel places ‘emphasis on the unravelling of a mystery (often turning on substitution and false identity) involving detective work, with a “documentary” method of telling the story through the partial perspectives of letters, journals, court evidence, newspaper reports, and so on’ (125). In a ‘documentary’ style, *A Strange Friendship* is told alternately from the points of view of Dolly, who is remembering her time in New Zealand at a later point in her life, and Alan, both in his journals at the time and a letter he writes to Dolly after Violet’s elopement. Dolly uncovers Madelaine’s true identity through detective work: by listening to witness reports and examining clues such as letters, a photograph of Richard, lockets and ribbons. Until Dolly finally discovers

the secret when she sees a photo of ‘Madelaine Ainsleigh in the dress of a man’ (162), the Ainsleighs are able to keep their secret by not revealing such tell-tale photos: ‘The other people we meet out here talk freely of their friends, and show us photographs of the places they have lived at at home, but the Ainsleighs are as silent as the grave about all such matters’ (73-74). Another clue found by Dolly is a segment of a letter from Violet to Richard. Alan’s letter finally clears up the mystery completely. However, while letters are thus important in the text both as clues to the central mystery and by enhancing the sense of authenticity of the narrative, they are not depicted as facilitating communication between homeland and hostland. Alan writes melodramatically that he is too depressed to write ‘letters home’:

In the utter dead weariness which lies upon me to-night – blank darkness within and without – weariness of mind so great, that whether it is only of the mind or of the body, too, I scarcely know – I have taken up my pen to try to write some almost necessary letters home. It is of no use; I cannot carry out the intention at all. (43)

Dolly is unable to send letters home for a different reason, namely because the family does not have enough money for stamps: ‘I had two stamps still left in my purse. After those were used I gave up writing English letters’ (187). This breakdown in homeland-hostland communication indicates that the connection created by writing, elaborated on with so much emphasis by Sarah Courage, is sometimes brittle. This tenuousness impacts on the significance of genre conventions exported from Britain to the diaspora. Wagner suggests that *A Strange Friendship* engages in a ‘rewriting of familiar plotlines’ (‘Returning’ 248), thus modifying instead of merely copying literary conventions. She argues that the novel reworks the genre of the sensation novel while still following its basic formula: ‘expectations of the sensational are redirected rather than simply dismissed’ (247). This redirecting of expectations includes red herrings such as Dolly’s initial suspicion which suggests ‘an all too expected, clichéd, bigamy plot’ and Madelaine/Richard’s character, who as the ‘newly arrived emigrant importing doubtful credentials stands in for the familiar figure of the indeterminately foreign impostor infiltrating the imperial centre’ (247). As with Cheeseman’s *A Rolling Stone*, it emerges that a literary genre cannot be exported unchanged to the diaspora. Rather, its conventions are reworked and adapted, illustrating the diaspora’s need for a constant reproduction of a shifting identity.

The gender ideology of popular romance and generic sensation novels, already destabilised by the characters' doubtful family constellations, is further destabilised in the text by allusions to homosexuality: Violet falls in love with Richard while he is cross-dressing as a woman. While disguise as a cover-up of a dark past is a typical feature of sensation novels, there is thus also an ambiguous undercurrent of homosexuality in the tellingly named 'strange friendship' between Violet and Madelaine/Richard. The possibility of homosexuality is represented as subversive and destabilising. The text repeatedly comments ambiguously on Violet's improper behaviour, which separates her from her sister: 'And so Violet crossed the little brook, which was to swell to a great river between herself and Dolly' (19); 'Violet had stepped over the little brook, and day by day it was becoming harder for us to walk "hand in hand" ' (66); '[t]he little brook had swelled at last into the great river which Violet could never recross again, and Dolly stood looking after her mournfully from the further side' (163). Violet's obvious missteps are that she flirts with men, makes an unwise choice of marriage partner, and elopes with a criminal. Nevertheless, the allusions to a dividing 'river' between the sisters also hint at a more fundamental difference between the two women's sexualities. Richard's cross-dressing can similarly be interpreted as an indicator of homosexuality. This might explain the revulsion that Dolly feels towards him:

I shrank from Madelaine Ainsleigh with a stronger repulsion than ever. My antipathy to her which had existed from the first was always to myself something inexplicable . . .

Once, as she was taking leave of us, the girl stooped – she was taller than I – and kissed me on the cheek. I think the sensation it caused me, was more like that of involuntarily touching a snake, or some loathsome insect, than anything else I can compare it to. I turned faint for a few moments, and had to go out into the open air. (77-78)

Dolly perceives Madelaine/Richard as physically sickening, and it seems to her that she/he is not human but a different, repellent species. This is reminiscent of Dolly's more benevolent description of Violet as having crossed a river: both Madelaine/Richard and Violet are represented as different from Dolly, on the wrong side of a dividing line. A number of behaviours could be perceived as sickening by Dolly: homosexuality, transvestism, or more generally the blurring and transgression of gender roles. In all cases, Violet and especially Madelaine/Richard

threaten the ideology of heterosexual romance. It is only after their death that Dolly and Alan, the ideal heterosexual couple, can marry and return to England.

12.2 Sensational and Colonial Identity and Femininity

In addition to destabilising the melodramatic romance plot, *A Strange Friendship* also reworks concepts of femininity. Dolly and Violet initially appear to embody two stereotypical versions of femininity: Dolly is plain, responsible, hard-working, modest, and honest, whereas Violet is beautiful, flirtatious, impetuous, and superficial. Brown notes that Violet conforms to a gender stereotype ‘wherein the prettier woman is more likely to be seen as dissolute, or fickle, in nature’ (‘Strange’). While Dolly is rewarded with marriage to Alan, Violet is punished for her errors by an early death. The novel thus constructs Dolly’s femininity as appropriate and Violet’s as subversive and punishable. This ostensible ideology is again undermined. The text represents Dolly as more honest and modest than her superficial sister, but the parts of the text that are narrated from Dolly’s perspective show a fascination with her sister’s beauty, clothes and accessories that betray envy of Violet’s shallow beauty. Dolly focuses obsessively on Violet’s appearance, even though inner personality is ostensibly represented as being more important to ideal femininity: ‘She was sitting before her looking-glass, studying her pretty face in the glass, as I entered the room. She had on a dress of soft mauve stuff, which seemed to set off the lovely pink and white of her complexion and the shining gold of her hair unusually well’ (8-9); ‘She had lovely yellow hair, thick and glossy as satin, eyes of bright turquoise blue, and beautiful pouting lips as innocent-looking as a baby’s’ (28); ‘Violet had a brilliant colour, and her eyes shone and sparkled. She wore a pretty black and white camlet dress, which suited her, and round her neck the pearl locket fastened to the long green ribbon’ (105). Preoccupation with Violet’s physical beauty is also part of the detective work in which Dolly engages after her sister’s disappearance. Dolly searches Violet’s room and goes through her clothes, which are objects representative of Violet’s attractiveness in her physical absence: ‘The room was empty. Her hat and her long grey waterproof cloak were gone from the place where they usually hung; her work – the white muslin Garibaldi – lay just where she had thrown it down on her bed; her little blue slippers were on a chair’ (107). Dolly’s search re-enacts her fascination with Violet’s beauty elsewhere in the text:

I took out in the first place all Violet’s dresses, shook them carefully, and searched in every pocket. There were the lavender and the Japanese silks, in which she had

looked so beautiful on days I remembered; the white piqué, the green and white muslin, delicate prints too, which she had worn in a morning, and little aprons with pockets, lying folded safely in the drawers. (159)

It is significant that Dolly's fascination with her sister's beauty is part of her detective work. The search for clues and evidence is an important element of generic sensation novels. Similarly, Violet's attractiveness is also an integral part of the sensational plot and thus vital to the text's strategy. As Cvetkovich argues,

[t]he sensation novel's sensational representations are very often literally bodies, particularly women's bodies, whose erotic appeal is part of their sensational appeal. The apparent naturalness of sensational responses is closely tied to the apparently natural capacity of women's bodies to produce sensations. It also emerges from the apparently natural capacity of women's bodies to *experience* sensation. (25; emphasis in the original)

Whereas Violet's erotic appeal is ostensibly represented as part of a version of femininity of which the text disapproves, it is actually a necessary part of the sensational plot. Violet's attractive body and the subversion it epitomises need to be represented in the text in order for the narrative strategy to work. This strategy is based on the scientific assumption that female bodies both 'produce sensations' and 'experience sensation'. These two points also illuminate an aspect of the disdain literary criticism often has in store for women's popular writing, where women writers produce sensations then experienced by women readers. As Gilbert suggests, 'the female body as the contested site of representation and consumption is ostentatiously foregrounded, as the status of a primarily woman-representing, woman-produced, and women-consumed popular culture is in the process of determination' (6). Significantly, Violet is able to escape from her husband by selling her 'fine dresses and trinkets' (217) and thus relinquishing her superficial attractiveness: 'I got together all the dresses and pretty things he had given me, and sold them one by one and hid the money. Then, one day when he was out, I left a little note for him and ran away' (219). While this enables Violet to return to her family and thus be reinserted into female respectability, it also means that she will die soon after. Violet's erotic appeal is such an integral part of her character that she cannot be represented in the text without it.

These complications of the clear-cut opposition between the stereotypical versions of femininity represented by Violet and Dolly hint at the fact that the actual ideal femininity the

novel constructs is more complex. Wagner argues that it is colonial femininity, which redefines the meaning of domesticity so as to allow women in the colonies to maintain their class status, even if they typically had to perform more housework than in Britain. Wagner suggests that '[i]n the New Zealand context . . . the cultivation of domestic virtues constituted an indispensable part of female settler identity' ('Returning' 253). These virtues included hands-on work that middle- and upper-class women would be able to delegate to servants in Britain but had to do themselves in New Zealand. This is described in *A Strange Friendship* as hard, albeit empowering and happy work:

We were so happy during those first months in New Zealand. Happy, in spite of hard work, to which we were all utterly unaccustomed, and very often hard fare to match it.

We all tried our hands at cooking, and at teaching our inexperienced Lizzie to cook, one after the other. (20)

Wagner argues that the novel 'posit[s] a superior combination of practical housekeeping skills with retained gentility as an essential part' of a more empowering and less constrictive role for women in the diaspora (259). Dolly engages in hard work proudly and 'without forfeiting her original class status. On the contrary, she marries a landed English gentleman' (Wagner, 'Returning' 261). This is emphasised when Alan goes to see Dolly in the kitchen and rather improperly helps her with her work. It is significant that the scene takes place in the kitchen: whereas a certain amount of domestic work could be part of the middle-class English woman's role, as emphasised in advice books such as those written by Sarah Ellis, in England the middle-class kitchen was a space which was managed by the housewife but in which the actual work was done by working-class cooks and maids. Nevertheless, Alan admires the sight of Dolly doing kitchen work: 'Her pale cheeks had a pink flush on them to-day, and her eyes were the softest, and her arms the whitest and prettiest in the world. I thought I had never yet seen her look so fascinating' (55-56). Kitchen work does not diminish Dolly's gentility – on the contrary, her arms are still 'the whitest . . . in the world', illustrating that she has not assumed the tanned colour associated with the coarseness of the working class. Dolly not only maintains her class status despite having to engage in hard work, she actually improves her status through this work since it is part of her attractiveness to Alan, which leads to their marriage and her subsequent climb in social status. Violet, however, does not attain this ideal colonial femininity: 'Dolly was

busy in the kitchen. I think she is always busy, doing Violet's work as well as her own. Violet was amusing herself in the sitting-room' (51). Violet's association with the sitting-room is contrasted with Dolly's location in the kitchen: while Violet is also located in the domestic sphere, she does not perform the work necessary to maintain it in the rough colonial context. This opposition between the two sisters is arguably more significant than that of the different melodramatic stereotypes of femininity (plain/beautiful, honest/fickle) outlined above.

As Wagner notes, the novel also plays with negative clichés of colonial femininity, exposing them as false ('Returning' 258). The main reason no-one suspects that Madelaine is a man is that her odd behaviour conforms to the cliché of colonial women as unfeminine. Madelaine professes ignorance of fashionable female dress:

'What a very pretty dress you have on,' said Madelaine Ainsleigh. 'The colour is "Eau de Nil," is it not? Is it pique?'

'Muslin,' returned Violet, rather shocked at this specimen of female ignorance.

(16)

She shows no interest in creating a nice home: the Ainsleighs' living-room is 'shabby' and '[i]f Miss Ainsleigh often honoured the apartment with her presence she left no traces of her sojourn there' (33). She is outspoken, informal and active: 'She talked so much, and once or twice I thought so strangely; asked us to call her "Madelaine" before she had been in the room with us for five minutes, and told us not to let Kate keep us boxed up, but to be sure and ride about and have as many larks as we liked' (13); 'When I shook hands with Madelaine she crushed my fingers as before with a rather too cordial squeeze' (40). The Ainsleighs' housekeeper sums it up when she tells Dolly that Madelaine does 'nothing that most young ladies do, and everything that most young ladies don't' (152). Madelaine's behaviour leads many of her neighbours to think that she is insane, but the personality traits she exhibits are also clichés of colonial women. The novel thus 'evokes the unfeminine, colonial woman as a false clue that doubles as the key to the central mystery' (Wagner 259). The ideal colonial femininity represented by Dolly illustrates that colonial women do not actually conform to this cliché. However, I argue that Madelaine's conforming to colonial clichés does arouse suspicion: Dolly's entire family as well as the Ainsleighs' other neighbours wonder repeatedly why her behaviour is so odd. Madelaine/Richard's performance of stereotypical colonial femininity is so perfect that it becomes unbelievable. The suspicion this causes indicates a certain level of awareness amongst

the settlers that negative stereotypes about colonial women are not necessarily true – if someone fulfils all the stereotypes there must be more wrong with them than merely being from the colonies. Wevers's arguments about romance in the colonial short story assume additional connotations when applied to the cross-dressing drama in *A Strange Friendship*. Wevers suggests that

colonial romances . . . typically express an uneasiness about cultural separation in the subject, indicated either through the eruption of violence into the story, or by the frequent discovery that the colonial lover's self-representation is duplicitous, that he is not the man he claims to be. . . . The visible distinctiveness of the colonial may misrepresent the social and cultural identity left behind in England, and so the external clues by which identity announces itself become liable to misrepresentation. ('How Kathleen' 11)

Both lovers in the story, Alan and Richard, are not the men they claim to be, but whereas eventually Alan is able to regain his good family name and fortune by reclaiming his 'social and cultural identity left behind in England', Richard's case is more complicated: he is actually not the *woman* he claims to be. The 'distinctiveness of the colonial', more specifically the stereotype of the colonial woman, misrepresents the criminal identity he left behind. The 'external clues' in Richard's case not only signify 'colonial' but also, falsely, 'female'. Evans's text thus exaggerates the conventions of colonial romance, again illustrating the enhanced complexity of the sensation novel when it is transported to a diasporic setting.

Furthermore, an anxiety about identity fraud underlies the narrative. Dolly's family wonders repeatedly about the Ainsleighs' past. Kate says 'I wonder who the Ainsleighs are, and what part of England they come from' (30), and later 'Harry, too, added, as Kate had done, "I wonder who the Ainsleighs are, and what part of England they come from!" ' (42) Wevers suggests that such anxiety was understandable in colonial New Zealand, where geographical remoteness and high levels of transience created opportunities to assume false identities: 'Anxiety about identity theft was widespread, enhanced by the grand scandal of the Tichborne claimant. . . . Identity fraud in the nineteenth century was a paradoxical side-effect of colonialism and its social atomisation: you could reinvent yourself in the colonies, and many people did' (*Reading* 144). On the one hand Madelaine/Richard's dramatic disguise, used to cover up a criminal past, is a stereotypical feature in the world of sensation novels, where the notorious

green spectacles in Mrs Henry Wood's *East Lynne* (1861) could miraculously render a person unrecognisable even to her own children. However, in diasporic communities like New Zealand it was actually easier for people to reinvent themselves than it was 'at home'. This sensation novel stereotype gains in plausibility when it is transferred from England to New Zealand. The text thus again modifies genre conventions by putting them in the context of life in the diaspora rather than in the homeland. Just as the diasporic community cannot maintain a homeland identity but needs to re-produce its identity continuously, literary conventions cannot be exported unchanged. Rather than unquestioningly perpetuating genre and gender conventions, *A Strange Friendship* re-evaluates romance, femininity, and the sensation formula itself. If the diasporic setting offers ways for individuals to reinvent themselves, it also offers opportunities to literary texts to engage with homeland conventions. While the mutable identities of colonial subjects could give rise to anxiety, a re-evaluation of familiar genres opened up new possibilities of meaning.

13 *The Feminist Sisterhood: Hermione: a Knight of the Holy Ghost*

While *A Strange Friendship* engages primarily with the relationship between homeland and hostland and its significance for gender and genre conventions, Edith Searle Grossmann's novel *Hermione: a Knight of the Holy Ghost* (1907) situates itself within a web of Puritan and early feminist ideas that connect various diasporic communities with each other and other parts of the Anglo-world. While the novel is set primarily in Australia, this international outlook thus connects it with New Zealand, where Grossmann lived for most of her life. *Hermione* is the sequel to Grossmann's earlier novel *In Revolt* (1893), which narrates the story of Hermione Howard's marriage to abusive Bradley Carlisle. When their son Ernest dies from Bradley's mistreatment, Hermione escapes into the Australian wilderness. In *Hermione* she is nursed back to life by Dr Earle, with whom she then lives and travels through Europe in a platonic relationship. An interval of working as an actress eventually leads her to assume a leading role in the woman's rights movement in New York and then to found a feminist commune near Melbourne. When Hermione's appeal for a divorce is refused in court and the property she inherited from Dr Earle is appropriated by Bradley, Hermione kills herself.

The purpose of the novel is to promote the woman's rights movement, with which Grossmann was associated, while also, since the novel is set in the then recent past, acknowledging the achievements already won by the movement. This includes the Married Women's Property Act, passed both in Australia and New Zealand in 1884, which would not have allowed Bradley to seize Hermione's Melbourne estate. The plot is set in Australia, Europe, and the United States, and the political issues raised by the text are important in an international context. Hermione realises over the course of her European travels that her personal experience is politically relevant. She joins the movement in the United States and then participates in disseminating the new ideas in Australia. The ideas of first-wave feminists in New Zealand were similar to those promoted by Hermione in her lectures and conversations, illuminating international connections within the late-nineteenth-century suffragist and woman's rights movements.

13.1 Women's Role and the Feminist Sisterhood

This section has explored two ways in which women were expected to participate in the production of community in the British diaspora: morally (by exerting beneficial influence) and

physically (as reproductive agents, giving birth to new members of the community). The latter notion is explored in *Hermione* through its condemnation of society's double standard which took for granted that men would be unchaste and unfaithful while such behaviour was not tolerated in women. The text criticises the marriage legislation of the time, which it sees as an expression of the double standard. Hermione thinks that marriage should be founded upon equality and mutual respect, and campaigns for reforms of marriage and divorce legislation in order to grant women more rights. She observes that society's restrictive interpretation of the role of women allows men to treat women like possessions whose primary purpose is breeding. Bradley sees Hermione and their children as chattels, comparable in status to the land he owns: 'He got up and went to the window; then looked out across the garden and the paddocks. As far as his eye could reach and far beyond, it was all his. And his wife was his own again, and so were his children' (399). The feminists in Hermione's commune want to reform the institution of marriage because in its current form it legitimises Bradley's attitude. The novel is rigorous in its critique of the double standard: Bradley, whom the text portrays as little more than a stereotypical brute and villain, is let off lightly and his debauchery is accepted as 'a natural consequence of his undutiful wife's leaving him, and it only excited sympathy for him' (333). Hermione, on the other hand, is stigmatised as a cold-blooded adulteress who has abandoned her family: the public 'called her an unnatural and vindictive wife, and said she had deserted her children, and that . . . she ought to go home and nurse him' (339). Hermione appears to the public to be dangerously subversive because of her association with the Melbourne commune and the publication of her feminist book: the judge understands his sentence as restoring a marriage endangered by 'wild advanced theories for the subversion of the proper relation between the sexes' (356). This comment illustrates that Hermione's sentencing is predominantly intended as a punishment for her political activism, which brands her as 'unnatural' (339). To Hermione, however, it is her marriage that is unnatural: 'her marriage always seemed to her a legalised prostitution' (250). This comparison emphasises the disenfranchisement of women by marriage legislation which reduces them to sexual objects.

The novel represents the feminist 'sisterhood' (184) as an alternative to society's restrictive view of marriage and family. Even though the text notes that there are different opinions within the movement, it emphasises the strong sense of community created through shared ideals and visions. This sense of community is even described as a path to spiritual

transcendence: 'The members of such a regiment cease to be individual. Transported out of their lesser selves, and out of the petty jealousies, frivolous fancies and desires, and animal instincts of a society based on pleasure, their life anticipates a higher state of existence' (173). The members of the movement are defined by being part of the community more than by their individual personalities. By becoming part of the movement, they are able to transcend the superficiality and sensual decadence of mainstream society. Hermione emphasises this strong sense of community when she instigates a 'feeling of family love' in the Melbourne commune: 'We are all to be sisters. I am "Sister Hermione," and you are "Sister Anna"' (197). This form of family bonding provides an alternative to the oppressive version of family created by marriage legislation. Within the community friendships between women are crucial. Maynard suggests that 'women's friendship . . . the formation of women's organizations and activities, and the significance of having other women's support' were important to early feminists (243). She argues that 'Victorian feminists viewed women not simply as individuals but as individuals differentiated from men in terms of the power men held. They therefore had some sense of women's collective existence' (243). The importance of women's friendship within the context of collective struggle is evident in *Hermione*. This disproves Roberts's claim that in pre-1930 New Zealand literature written by women there is no possibility for friendships between women because they see each other only as rivals (*Where* 5-6). Her close friendships with other women support Hermione as the leader of the Melbourne commune and throughout the divorce trial. Physical affection is central to these friendships:

Taking her into her chamber, fresh and clean with white draperies and sweet with scents of dried rose-leaves and lavender, [Clara] removed [Hermione's] cloak and insisted on helping her change her dress, and while doing so fell to hugging her, kissing her bare arms, and admiring her. . . . 'Oh, Ione, what pretty arms! I can't help kissing them . . . ' (123-24)

. . .

These confidences were made at night, when Prudence had got into the habit of coming into Hermione's bedroom to brush her hair. It was the hour of all the day that Prudence loved best, and she lingered, caressing as she touched them the waves that rippled into golden light and brown shadows. . . . No maid ever waited

on her mistress as Prudence waited on her goddess. . . . Once even, grovelling to unlace her boots, she kissed her feet. (223)

This emphasis on physical fascination and caresses, bestowed on Hermione in her friends' bedrooms, makes it seem that the friendships are based on sexual attraction. The text refers to Prudence and Hermione as 'lovers' (227), and Prudence explains on a number of occasions that she is attracted to women rather than men and would rather live with Hermione than be a wife and mother:

I always did love women best. Nature . . . gave me a passion for everything lovely – landscapes, flowers, pictures, but far the strongest for beautiful girls and women. I don't believe any man ever felt that fascination more strongly than I do. Oh, Hermione, before we ever met I waited for you all my life. I did not want a stupid, mindless baby, or an exacting husband, but you, just you! (227)

However, the text makes clear that love and friendship between women are not related to what Hermione sees as the 'monstrous, unregulated, unnatural passion' of sexuality (261) but are an expression of the spiritually transcending sense of community within the movement. They are unlike Hermione's sensual and physically violent relationship with Bradley and more like her platonic relationship with Dr Earle. This is most evident in the somewhat esoteric description of Hermione's first meeting with Prudence:

Then they sat together for some time in a delighted consciousness of love; a love that was new and strange, and yet so familiar it seemed as if they must have met far away and long ago in ante-natal consciousness. It was as near a foretaste as earth permits of what transformed spirits must feel when they meet for the first time on some new sphere of existence. . . . Then, after one long look, she leant forward and kissed Prudence on the lips, and so made a slave for life, and, if personality endures after bodily dissolution, beyond death too. (168-169)

Like 'spirits', Hermione and Prudence do not need to talk to understand each other. They immediately know that they are meant to be spiritually connected to each other 'beyond death'. Their friendship is thus part of the 'higher state of existence' attained by the members of the sisterhood (173), who lose their individuality to become part of the community.

It would be difficult to accommodate the vision of this transcendent sisterhood within a centre-periphery model of the British Empire. The 'decentered, lateral connections' (Clifford

306) between the diasporic sub-centres are more important in the text than the connection to the homeland. In fact, the women's movement and its ideas are spread not only through the British Empire, but the diasporic sub-centres the text evokes include the United States, where Hermione first joins the movement. Even though the United States is no longer a British colony, the text stresses that the connection between Australia and the United States is more significant than that between Australia and England:

That country, more than England, has been the foster-mother of the characteristic life of Australia. Judged by mere mass, the English elements of the colony are larger; but the active, the original, and the growing element has much closer kinship with the United States. This is not the result of conscious imitation, but of the fact that the conditions in both offshoots from the parent stock are so much alike that ideas pass easily from the one country to the other. (209; emphasis in the original)

The sub-centres can easily communicate and share ideas with each other because they are 'so much alike', having experienced a similar history. The text thus places emphasis on the network between the diasporic sub-centres rather than on a constant referral back to the imperial centre. It distances itself from a 'grand imperial design' (Cohen 67) by implying that the United States, rather than Britain, 'has been the foster mother' of Australian life. This also makes Hermione relevant to New Zealand even though its plot is not set there. Within this diasporic network strong emphasis is put on communication through print material such as pamphlets, newspaper articles, and books. Print material makes it possible to disseminate the movement's ideas internationally. Summers notes that in accordance with their representation in Hermione early Australian feminists were 'extremely prolific in their production of journal articles, speeches, propaganda leaflets and contributions for their own publications', that 'some contact with overseas activities was maintained' and the activists read internationally influential woman's rights authors such as John Stuart Mill, Mary Wollstonecraft, Henrik Ibsen, and Olive Schreiner (405).

It is intriguing to relate this image of connectedness to Gilbert's and Gubar's argument that 'for English-speaking women, there are not a number of different, nationally defined centuries; there is only one': they argue that women writers in the Anglo-world communicated through literature in order to come 'to terms in prose and poetry with the discrepancy between

the Victorian ideology of femininity and the reality of Victorian women's lives' (xxx). I explained the limitations of *The Madwomen in the Attic* for this thesis in the introduction to this section. However, Gilbert's and Gubar's notion of an international 'sisterhood' (xxx) illuminates the connections between first- and second-wave feminism. *Hermione* describes an international sisterhood that communicates through print material – but more than that, the novel itself is part of this print culture. The text has this in common with *The Madwoman in the Attic*. There are striking similarities in the rhetorical strategies employed in the two texts. The preface to *Hermione* encourages feminist readers to see the novel as part of the print culture of the women's movement, even if they might not approve of some aspects of it: 'Those who are taking part in that battle for emancipation ought to fight as one army, and I appeal to them, however severely they may criticise this or that detail, to do justice at least to the purpose of the book, and to acknowledge it as the work of a comrade' (vii). Similarly, in the second edition of their book Gilbert and Gubar appeal to younger feminists to acknowledge the significance of their text and work with them rather than criticise *The Madwoman* for employing outdated literary theory: 'Neither our progeny nor our replicants but very much our confederates, younger feminists face daunting professional tasks, which those of us who made our mark in the 1970s can undertake along with them' (xlv). Thus both texts emphasise the connections between feminists in different parts of the Anglo-world, the necessity to work together within that international community, and the importance that print culture assumes in this endeavour.

13.2 Femininity: Creating Community through Influence

Despite its critique of marriage legislation and its emphasis on collective activism, Grossmann's novel does not distance itself from a concept of femininity that saw women as Angels in the House, who work upon society not through activism but through passive influence. The arguments brought forward by the woman's rights movement often included the central idea of women exerting good influence upon men and in society as a whole. Roberts notes that Grossmann's 'understanding of the women's movement was consistent with that of other nineteenth century feminists, who argued that women's superior moral fibre and their place within the family gave them a special role in public and political life' ('Grossmann'). As explained earlier, many first-wave feminists argued for a more important place for women in society not because they disapproved of women's role as wives and mothers but because they were convinced that an extension of this role beyond the home would benefit society since

women would then be able to exert their influence more efficiently. Hermione's understanding of women's rights conforms to this idea of women's beneficial influence upon society: 'The aim of the noblest Women's Rightists was to create a purer social system; and women like Hermione were . . . animated by a passionate desire for a loftier ideal of love and of home and of the destinies of the race' (175). Therefore Hermione's achievements are due in part to her conforming to the ideal of the Angel in the House. Having escaped from her oppressive marriage, in many ways Hermione does not conform to the behaviour expected from a middle-class Angel: she lives with Dr Earle without being married to him, she works as an actress, and she leads a commune of feminists. However, the text emphasises that the reason Hermione is not able to fulfil her role as wife and mother is Bradley's abusive treatment of her and society's failure to make ideal marriages possible. Nevertheless, Hermione still believes that this role should lie at the root of women's rights. Again this ties in with Summers's description of Australian first-wave feminism. Summers explains:

The insistence that the domestic and social spheres be more closely intertwined did not entail women abrogating their maternal functions. Although the feminists attacked the idea that women should be defined solely in terms of these functions . . . the import of their demands was to enhance the maternal role for those who chose to adopt it. (409)

In Hermione Prudence, who chooses female friendship and political ideals over marriage, illustrates that women can fulfil an important social role and find a sense of purpose without becoming mothers. At the same time Hermione's love for her children and her efforts to be with them emphasise an ideal of loving motherhood.

One of the characteristics of the Angel in the House is sexual innocence and purity. This notion is connected to the Christian belief that women, or more accurately middle-class women, are chaste and pure, while men as a rule have to struggle against their own inherent sensuality and impurity (Eldred-Grigg 128). In Hermione women are the innocent victims of men's violence and sexual aggression. The physical affection in their friendships is an expression of a spiritual connection, not of sexual desire, at least consciously. Bradley is an extreme example of a man who has deteriorated through 'indulging in . . . strong passions' (312) but even the more positively portrayed male characters – for example Dr Earle, his son Leonard, and the son of Hermione's friend Anna – have to '[tread] down the fiery dragon underfoot' and overcome their

dangerous sensual inclinations (247). By virtue of her purity Hermione is able to transform Dr Earle's sexual desire into spiritual love:

Hermione met that avowal of earthly passion and turned it back, refusing to recognise it in him; and even with her dear, innocent heart beating so close to his, and her sweet warmth on his breast, she drew him to a purer height of love by the strong compulsion of her own spirit. . . . She was for ever sacred from desire. . . . What had begun as a confession of human weakness was transformed into a spiritual sacrament. (107-108)

Such notions of purity are explained by the ties of the woman's rights movement to the social purity movement. As Moffat emphasises, Grossmann's attitude towards the ideology of social purity was ambivalent and evolved over the course of her career as a writer ('Puritan' 218). Nevertheless, Hermione propagates a number of Puritan values, such as sexual restraint, marital fidelity, temperance, and nonconformist Christianity. Hermione repeatedly lectures that both men and women should live in celibacy before and after marriage and practise '[a]bsolute faithfulness' within marriage (260). Even between married partners, sex should be limited to the purpose of reproduction – anything else is an expression of 'monstrous, unregulated, unnatural passion' (261). The highest form of love is chaste and spiritual, like the love between Hermione and Dr Earle. While such views are likely to appear restrictive to modern readers, Moffat correctly states that 'the Puritanism of the early feminists is radical and liberating' for its time ('Puritan' 32): sex is seen as giving men wrongful power over women, and a liberation from sexual obligations to men will empower women. Moreover, Hermione's lectures are subversive in themselves: even though her ideals of purity are conservative, the mere fact that she as a woman is talking about sex means that she is flaunting social conventions.

Hermione's association with the colour white illustrates her purity. She likes to sit 'under a white gum-tree' (259), decorates the Mission Hall in Melbourne 'with white flowers' (295), and dons white outfits for her public lectures, for instance 'the new white gown with the silver braid and girdle . . . adorned . . . with sprays of white lilac, and starry white Victorian Heath, in the girdle and in her hair' (295). This imagery assumes an additional connotation within Dyer's analysis of gender roles in the racial ideology of whiteness. He sees these roles as related to the Christian ideals, Jesus and Mary. Men have within them 'dark' urges but also the ability to overcome them. Women are more 'white' than men because they are not supposed to have any

dark urges. Yet their sexuality is integral to their function as reproductive agents of the white race. This contradiction ‘makes of sexuality a disturbance of their racial purity’ (29). While Hermione’s lifestyle in many ways breaks with societal norms, the text’s representation of her as a pure, white woman dressed in white and surrounded by white accessories resituates her within the norms of white heterosexuality. The feminist argument about female purity is thus revealed to be circular – it seeks to free women from sexual oppression but ultimately stresses their gendered, sexualised role.

Her inherent purity lies at the root of the Angel’s ability to exert good moral influence over others. Auerbach cites Agnes in Charles Dickens’s *David Copperfield* as an example of this passive influence: while Agnes is imagined as firmly bound to the domestic sphere, she influences the men in her life for the better, acting as an ‘unmoved mover, pointing others upward though static herself’ (Auerbach 85). Patmore’s *The Angel in the House* similarly sees the narrator’s fiancée Honoria as an embodiment of divinity that brings out the best side of him:

I loved her in the name of God,
And for the ray she was of Him
.....
... When I loved her most then I
Most yearn’d for more divine content.

As noted earlier, this notion of feminine influence played a part in the importance accorded to women within colonial society, even though it was modified by conceptions of colonial femininity which often accorded women a more active role than that played by characters such as Agnes. Moffat argues that ‘[t]he way in which female purity can help men to lead a “higher life” is seen in Hermione’s relationship with Dr Earle’ (‘Puritan’ 228). The quotation above describes how she turns his sexual desire ‘into a spiritual sacrament’ (108). Furthermore, ‘developing her powers’ gives him ‘endless satisfaction’ and ‘[t]he care of her brought out the kind fatherhood within him’ (88). However, I do not fully agree with Moffat’s point, since the novel also complicates the notion of influence. While Dr Earle stops his advances towards Hermione, he sexually exploits other women. The opera singer Camilla is only one of his ‘rather numerous love affairs’ (156). He sees her as nothing more than a pretty replacement for Hermione: ‘She had an angelic voice; she was gay, and she was docile. And he could not have his own love’ (157). When he ends the affair, his attitude is condescending and disrespectful:

‘She was ready to faint in his arms, or to go on trying and coaxing all day. . . . When he had said good-bye and wished her all happiness he gave a sigh of mingled relief and regret: that embarrassment was over’ (159). Dr Earle’s treatment of Camilla shows that Hermione’s influence does not have a very deep impact on his personality. Moreover, Dr Earle also has significant influence over Hermione – he actually seems to exert some kind of magical influence which allows him to win her back from the clutches of death and insanity ‘by purely mental power’ (19): ‘Rising, he laid his hand upon her with the utmost gentleness, and yet with power, and in the other held her own wasted hand. As he stood looking down on her, still full of thought, some healing force, born of his will to save, did pass from him to her without any other treatment at all’ (15). Dr Earle seems to have the healing powers of a saint: Hermione’s ‘spirit fell down worshipping’ him (23) and after his death she hangs his picture in her room and kneels before it. Bradley also exerts influence over Hermione, but his influence is detrimental: ‘Bradley Carlisle is the bad spirit of my life. When I am with him, he wakes all the evil that is in me’ (339). Ironically, the Judge reverses Hermione’s statement in his sentence, again demonstrating society’s double standard: ‘The only hope he could see for her lay in the influence of her husband’ (360; emphasis added). Not only does Hermione’s influence over men seem to be rather ineffective, she is also susceptible to influence from others – and not always for the best. Furthermore, Lawless raises the point that the influence which angelic characters exert upon men can actually be seen as their ‘sexual potential’ (68). This contradicts the assumption that the Angel’s influence is based solely on sexual innocence and purity. Arguably it is only Dr Earle’s sexual attraction to Hermione that makes him conform to her idea of their relationship. This subtextual undermining of the Angel’s ideal influence in turn weakens the novel’s feminist argument that female influence is certain to improve society.

As with Evans’s *A Strange Friendship* Grossman is adapting a genre for the diasporic context. Hermione displays a number of the characteristics Gail Cunningham identifies as typical of British ‘New Woman’ novels. This includes the ‘central part played by education and reading’ (46), ‘[s]trictures against marriage’ (48), and a ‘heavy emphasis placed upon nervous disorder, disease and death’, which emphasises that the New Woman is ultimately doomed because her ‘ideals were far too advanced for her environment’ (49). Hermione can be situated within the ‘purity school’ of New Woman fiction, whose authors embraced ‘the notion that there was such a thing as a feminine ideal, that women did occupy a different, though equally important, sphere,

and that “purity” was the highest principle’, but these novels’ conception of purity often meant that in order to uphold her ideals the heroine clashed with society’s norms (Cunningham 50). There is, however, a significant difference since Hermione is part of the community of a feminist sisterhood. Cunningham notes that none of the British ‘writers allow their heroines to feel themselves part of a wider movement; the New Woman fiction as a whole gives the impression that large numbers of women are struggling in determined solitude to achieve an end which, because they are alone against society, is pre-ordained to be unattainable’ (77). While Hermione ultimately fails in her feminist endeavours and her life comes to a tragic end, the novel emphasises the sense of community and a fight for shared goals which unites women in different parts of the Anglo-world, making use of the ‘decentered, lateral connections’ emphasised by Clifford (306). Rather than constituting a remote and isolated outpost of the empire, Australia is one of many centres in a network in which a shared print culture is used to disseminate and debate social and political ideas. The novel self-reflectively locates itself as part of this print culture in the preface:

We are to-day in the midst of a great struggle which aims at overthrowing the power of a small privileged class over a large dependent class, and the power of one privileged sex over a more dependent sex. Those who are taking part in that battle for emancipation ought to fight as one army and I appeal to them, however severely they may criticise this or that detail, to do justice at least to the purpose of the book, and to acknowledge it as the work of a comrade. (vii)

Within this international web of ideas shared by way of print there is space to negotiate notions of femininity, and to work together to fight for change.

14 *Women as Creators of Unity: Prohibition Novels*

As noted above, one of the underlying discourses of Hermione is what Belich describes as a ‘crusade for moral harmony’ (Paradise 157): the social purity movement. The prohibition movement was also associated with these ideals of social purity. Prohibition gained a wide following in New Zealand around the turn from the nineteenth to the twentieth century. The movement produced a large body of print material, among it a number of so-called prohibition or temperance novels, which usually aimed to represent drink as the source of social evil and win readers over to the cause. These novels were ‘part of a well-organised propaganda campaign’ and many of them were written by women (Moffat, ‘Puritan’ 127). This chapter considers four novels that can be described as prohibitionist texts: *Angela: A Messenger* by Edith Howitt Searle (Edith Searle Grossmann’s maiden name), *‘For Father’s Sake,’* or *A Tale of New Zealand Life* by Alie Kacem, and *The Hills of Hauraki* or *The Unequal Yoke: a Story of New Zealand Life* and *Miranda Stanhope*, both by Susie Mactier. The genre distinctions are not clear-cut: while Kacem’s novel is a self-professed prohibition propaganda tract, alcohol is only a side issue in *Angela* and the novel could equally be classed under what Moffat terms ‘salvation novels’ (‘Puritan’ 34), illustrating ‘the three Puritan stages of conversion: consciousness of sin, redemption through Christ’s sacrifice, and sanctification’ (36). However, it is not helpful to draw strict genre boundaries, which might then exclude some texts, or to reduce the texts to their prohibitionist message and neglect other issues.

Moffat states that ‘[t]he nature and attitudes of the prohibition movement were unmistakably Puritan’ since they conformed to the belief that all societal problems were caused by moral evil and that individual redemption could improve society as a whole (‘Puritan’ 133). The prohibition novels see alcohol as one such moral evil. Since the feminist movement also had ties to the social purity movement, it is not surprising that ‘the New Zealand prohibition campaign and the early feminist movement were inextricably linked’ (Moffat, ‘Demon Drink’ 153). The most significant instance of this is the Women’s Christian Temperance Union, which was instrumental in campaigning for the women’s vote in New Zealand. Alcohol abuse was often identified as ‘being largely a male problem, the effects of which adversely affected women’ (154). However, the feminists’ and prohibitionists’ interpretations of social purity were not necessarily the same. I explained above why the feminists’ insistence on abolishing the

double standard, even though it is grounded in conservative ideals of purity, can be seen as progressive. The prohibitionists, on the other hand, took a more conservative approach to social issues. As Moffat explains, ‘the prohibition novels have severe artistic and aesthetic limitations. They are overtly polemical, driven by a crusading zeal to convert the reader. The novels rely heavily on stock characters. . . . Likewise, the plots abound in melodrama and clichés’ (‘Demon Drink’ 140). Most prohibition novels draw a black-and-white picture of alcohol as evil and prohibition as good. As with all the texts considered in this thesis, the selection of novels studied in this section is not intended to constitute a comprehensive representation of prohibition novels, but these texts do illustrate similar ways of identity production. The following paragraphs will give a short introduction to each of the four novels.

Angela: A Messenger by Edith Howitt Searle was published in 1890 but is set ‘[s]ome forty years ago’ in the Wairarapa (1). The titular heroine is aptly named: she is angelic, innocent, selfless, and beautiful. Angela’s idyllic country life with her family comes under threat when Angela is sexually harassed by the school principal, Levi Marks. Marks hangs himself, but not before instigating the rumour that Angela drove him to despair. Angela finds personal redemption when she joins the Salvation Army and devotes her life to helping others, first in Wellington and then in Sydney, but she is soon strangled and thrown into the sea by a drunken murderer who cannot bear the repentance she stirs up in him. If critics usually see a progression towards more complex and stylistically more accomplished narratives in Edith Searle Grossmann’s work (for example, Jones and Moffat), culminating in *The Heart of the Bush*, then this thesis has followed this progression backwards: as Moffat notes, Angela can be described as ‘a slight, sanctimonious Salvation Army tract’ (‘Demon Drink’ 157). Alcohol is only one of many evils which Angela has to combat, but the novel shows a ‘clichéd engagement with alcohol’, as do the prohibition novels that focus primarily on alcohol abuse (Moffat, ‘Demon Drink’ 157).

While Angela is ‘an oversimplified tragic melodrama’ (Jones 142), it at least tells a coherent story and is reasonably well written, which cannot be said of Alie Kacem’s *For Father’s Sake*, or *A Tale of New Zealand Life* (1897). The novel narrates a confusing and lengthy tale in a style that ‘is atrocious, a blend of Shelley with *The Song of Solomon*’ (Stevens 30). It is impossible to summarise what happens in the narrative since it is difficult for the reader to discern a consistent plotline amongst disjointed and inconclusive strands of narrative, virtually

nonsensical moral lectures, ‘extended allegory [and] impenetrable metaphysical rhapsody’ (Lawless 76). The two threads that make for some degree of continuity in the text are the figure of the pious and chaste heroine Nelly and the text’s zealous endeavour to demonstrate the evils of drink in numerous sub-plots. The angelic figure of the heroine resembles Angela in Howitt Searle’s novel.

In Susie Mactier’s novels *The Hills of Hauraki* or *The Unequal Yoke: A Story of New Zealand Life* (1908) and *Miranda Stanhope* (1911) alcohol abuse is an important issue, but the texts can also be seen as Christian didactic novels about choosing a marriage partner wisely. The consequences of not doing so, however, inevitably involve the ruin of the domestic idyll through alcohol. In *The Hills of Hauraki*, set in the 1860s, young Christina Beaminster marries Ned Bailey against the advice of her mother. She follows him first to the gold diggings and then to Taranaki, where the couple become the managers of a hotel owned by Ned’s parents. It quickly turns out that Ned, unlike the tellingly named Christina, is not a good Christian: he starts drinking and neglects his wife and children. Christina also starts drinking and eventually poisons herself when she accidentally grabs a bottle of ammonia instead of brandy. *Miranda Stanhope*, which is also set in the then recent past, has a slightly more hopeful outlook. Miranda and her two sisters emigrate from England to Auckland and set up a school. Miranda marries Charles Stanhope even though her motherly sister Melinda has reservations about him. Sure enough, Charles too is not a good Christian: when he starts selling liquor at the couple’s East Coast store, moral deterioration is guaranteed. Miranda and her children narrowly escape being massacred by Te Kooti when Charles carelessly leaves them home alone. Believing his family dead, Charles moves to Tonga and marries a woman there, keeping his bigamous marriage secret even when he learns that Miranda is alive. Miranda, whose eldest son has meanwhile died in an accident, forgives Charles when she finds out. He comes back to her but makes his next mistake when he gets involved in a fraudulent business venture. After the resulting financial near ruin of the family, Charles and Miranda move to Tauranga, where an evangelist couple finally convinces Charles to mend his ways. But the newly-found marital happiness is short-lived: Charles dies in the 1886 destruction of the Pink and White Terraces three days after his conversion. Miranda is consoled in her grief by her remaining son and her trust in God. While both *The Hills of Hauraki* and *Miranda Stanhope* are one sided and have a clear didactic purpose, they are action packed and competently written, which makes for more entertaining reading than *Angela and For*

Father's Sake. As I will show in this chapter, the novels all have similar underlying themes centred around the values of social purity and the notion of women as 'God's Police', which Summers describes in *Damned Whores and God's Police*. While the texts situate themselves within the international print culture of the social purity movement, they also strive to create a sense of diasporic community specific to New Zealand. However, this strategy of community-building is not entirely convincing since the novels simultaneously produce internal divisions along the lines of religion, class, and race.

14.1 Women's Influence and the Prohibitionist Message

The texts' female heroines are crucial to the ideology that underlies the novels: they illustrate the propagandist message of the texts. Whether prohibition is a central part of this message or a side-issue, all the novels share a didactic impetus and religious zeal in which the idea of female morality and influence is central. Once again women are at the centre of society's hopes and anxieties and seen as instrumental in creating community. Lawless emphasises the connection, in G.W. Reed's prohibition novel *The Angel Isafrel* and similar novels, between this feminine ideal and the political aims of the prohibition and feminist movements in New Zealand. She states that the texts 'combine a narrative of feminine purity with the political determination of the Suffrage movement' (75). While the angelic characters are politicised and thus placed within a specific historical context, they simultaneously embody the ideal of the Angel in the House, located outside history and class. As explained earlier, this concept allows the notion of women 'as the very ground upon which the meaning of nation itself rests' (Mohanram, *Imperial White* 27): women could '[bring] about a mythical unity to the various classes of men who were united through her classlessness, her evenness, her transcending of distinctions' (32). An ideal of femininity is thus instrumental in producing a collective diasporic identity in these texts.

As noted above, in the four novels considered here Angela in *Angela* and Nellie in *For Father's Sake* are the most stereotypically angelic characters. These heroines, especially Angela, are associated with the colour white, similarly to Hermione, epitomising their purity. Angela is described as 'white and sweet and fresh' (10), 'white and fair' (27), and as wearing a 'white night-dress, with bare white feet and face like an angel's, sorrowful and pale, but sweet' (131). At her parents' place she lives in a 'clean white room . . . virginal in its simplicity' (27). Her 'white sinless face' (174) and body enable her to overcome impurity and sin: 'And she, whose tender limbs had been kept so white and pure since she lay within her mother's breast, touched

diseased creatures and washed away their impurity with her own clean hands' (168). Angela's whiteness symbolises her capability of selfless forgiveness when she compassionately places a 'wreath of white clematis, white as snow' on Levi Marks's grave (133). In an instance of rather crude symbolism, Angela's pure whiteness is swallowed up by the black sea when she is murdered: 'The waves were black, they leaped upon the rock where she sat. . . . She had one white rose upon her breast, and it glimmered beneath her shield. . . . The black waves parted and received her' (180-181). Nellie in *For Father's Sake* is associated with the colour white when she inspires her family to join in a song of praise. The music here is also linked to the colour white as it is described as 'silvery sounds': 'The white figure rose, glided across the room; and the silent air became flooded with silvery sounds' (417). In addition to emphasising their purity, the association of Angela and Nellie with the colour white also inserts them within the racial ideology of white heterosexuality outlined by Dyer, as was explained above with regard to Hermione. Angelic heroines like Angela and Nellie create (white) community through the classless and timeless ideal of purity which they embody, but due to their societal position which 'makes them at once privileged and subordinated in relation to the operation of white power in the world' (Dyer 29) they can only do so by simultaneously placing themselves in a subordinate, passive position.

As Lawless points out, Nellie in *For Father's Sake* is also linked to nature, which 'is throughout the novel identified with divinity to the point where the theology can be said to be pantheist, even pagan' (Lawless 77). Nellie is associated with nature in passages such as this one:

Often the young student would spring to her feet, would pace the floor, would feel her heart bursting within her, and like a stricken exile would cry for release from the fetters that bound her intellect to the few feet of earth along which she journeyed; then, feeling cramped and oppressed by the walls, she would go forth to seek freedom and freshness under the open sky; there to find satisfaction in the Infinite, the Eternal, and the Unchangeable. (88)

This passage associates the domestic interior with mortal life, and nature with eternal life. Angela similarly connects its heroine to nature when it associates her with moonlight and mist: a Salvation Army preacher sees Angela 'watching her with . . . a face that that seemed to come out of the mist with pure moonlit eyes' (95). Her brother Charles, 'looking up from the shadow of

the garden trees, saw her sitting on a box by the window, her white hands clasped on the window, her dress white in the moonlight. . . . The mist clung to the ground and house-wall and made her seem sitting far-up in the moonlight' (124). Her roommate Elisabeth has a similar vision of Nellie: 'Once waking in the night, she saw her kneeling in the moonlight, and as she fell asleep again . . . the white-robed figure chilled her blood with a sense of unearthly saintliness' (171). Not only are moonlight and mist themselves white, they are also connected to Angela's whiteness: her 'white hands', white dress and robe. Moreover, they are linked to the ideal of feminine purity: 'pure moonlit eyes' and an 'unearthly saintliness' which illustrates Auerbach's point that the Angel in the House is invested with divinity. The text thus draws a connection between a pagan association of women with the moon and lunar cycles, similar to the connection in *For Father's Sake* between the Angel and nature, and white saintliness. Lawless argues that the link between the angelic heroines and pagan nature 'conforms to Auerbach's idea of the Angel existing outside traditional (patriarchal) religious authority' (78) – this is evident when Nellie escapes from the confines of the home to experience the freedom of nature. However, the association of nature with the colour white, symbolising purity and saintliness, also reinserts the Angel into the ideology of white heterosexuality. This is an ambivalent process: whereas on the one hand angelic white denotes asexuality, the colour white itself, as explained above, relates to an ideology of white women as reproductive agents of the race, a concept involving normative heterosexuality. Nature then becomes another symbol for the timeless and classless realm in which the Angel exists and which actually allows her to create unity and community within patriarchal society, without questioning its values.

As with Hermione, Angela's and Nellie's white purity gives them the power to repel the 'dark desires' of men (Dyer 29), sometimes even to transform them into the kind of spiritual love that binds Dr Earle to Hermione. In the prohibition novels, these desires may also be related to alcohol abuse. Marks is unable to harass Angela physically because 'she had a look within her eyes to kill all base desire' (61) and 'he could not move her; the breath of chastity went against him like a cold mountain wind; her heart was a star that he could never drag to ruin, it shone so far above him' (66). 'Her purity was like a sword and he could not so much as lay his hand upon her. He could only blaspheme' (67). In *For Father's Sake* Nellie's friend Marion melodramatically advises her fiancé to be purified by kissing Nellie:

Although the power of my outraged indignation would paralyze your arm upraised to embrace another woman [sic]. Still, I would entreat you to stoop and kiss Elmy Main. The contact of your lips, with her spotless soul, would purify them for your wife. I speak as one inspired. Taught by a higher power. Taught by love. (183; emphasis in the original)

Nellie's role model Eva Evans through her influence convinces Nellie's grandfather-in-law Mr Alen to stop drinking. When his wife becomes jealous of Eva, he tells her: 'Do you think it's possible to flirt with Miss Evans? . . . No, Polly; I could not flirt with her. Her very simplicity is her shield' (125). The memory of Eva's 'holy kiss' keeps Mr Alen temperate ever after (131). While this saintly purity is part of the conservative stereotype of the Angel in the House, as Hermione and the British New Woman novels of the 'purity school' show it can also be put to the service of feminist ideals. In the latter case women's inherent purity allows them to fight the double standard and help men combat their unchaste desires, thus liberating women from the oppression of men's sexual demands and alcohol abuse. Women's purity is thus a link that ties the prohibitionist to the feminist movement.

However, the saintly unearthliness of the angelic heroines also makes their hold on mortal life brittle. Both Angela and Nellie die young. Angela is murdered and Nellie dies apparently just because she is too saintly to live; a convoluted metaphysical vision describes her being personally welcomed into Heaven by angels. Both Angela and Nellie prefer death to life: 'now the land of Death became beautiful to [Angela]; it was not longer cold and distant but serenely high, lit with all Scriptural imagery; the land where she should see her father and brother once again, and fall down at the feet of the Lord' (163). Nellie rejects a marriage proposal from her cousin Walter because she is looking forward to her death as a wedding to God: 'My betrothed is in Heaven. . . . I am only waiting until the last stitch is put in my wedding garments, and then I shall go to meet my dear, dear bridegroom. . . . Already I see [the angels] preparing the marriage feast. Oh, it will be so nice to go Home, dear' (433-434). Even while they are still alive, Angela and Nellie are described as more akin to embodied spirits than living human beings. Angela's sister-in-law says her prayers to a photo of Angela, as if Angela was a long-dead saint. Nellie feels that she is 'a stranger on earth' (333), merely in transition 'while her brow was, on its journey to the Eternal Calm, passing through the Ether' (336). This unearthliness is also evident in their power to repel the base desires of men. After hearing

Nellie's celestial wedding plans, Walter is purified of his sexual desire for her because he sees Nellie as already in the realm of disembodied, spiritual saints: 'He could kiss her now, but it was as if he kissed a saint; perhaps as his arms encircled the slender figure, he expected to feel it suddenly vanish into space' (434). The more Nellie approaches death, the more saintly she becomes: ' "Lyly," said Marion, placing a detaining hand upon the girl's white arm. "Lyly, what is the matter with you? . . . You look perfectly – divine" ' (435). Nellie's 'white arm' also again links her saintliness and unearthliness to whiteness; this is reinforced by the moonlight and snow imagery in her death scene: 'And out in the moonlight Nellie stood, and watched the angels descend, bearing her completed wedding garment, and her snowy bridal wreath and veil' (436). Gilbert and Gubar describe how this spiritual Angel in the House can become an Angel of Death: 'At times . . . in the severity of her selflessness, as well as in the extremity of her alienation from ordinary fleshly life, this nineteenth-century angel-woman becomes not just a memento of otherness but actually a memento mori or, as Alexander Welsh has noted, an "Angel of Death" ' (24; emphasis in the original). Another aspect of the Angel of Death theme in *For Father's Sake* is Nellie's frequent presence at deathbeds, where she indeed represents a memento mori. This motif is enhanced through the necrophilia she exhibits as soon as the deathbed occupants have died:

She caressed those hands, she murmured loving words to them, she whispered thoughts and expressions of endearment. . . .

One last long look. One fervent kiss; kiss that would linger about that father, even in Heaven. . . . (155)

. . .

. . . She drew down the sheet, and pressed a long lingering kiss on the still warm lips; then covering the rigid lifeless form, she raised her dark eyes to heaven – hot lights burning in their dry depths . . . (322-323)

Nellie's passionate embracing and kissing of corpses is a literal expression of her love of death and her brittle connection with the world of the living.

The saintly purity of the Angel is what allows her to exert virtuous influence over other people, especially men. In her advice book Ellis describes how a husband can be improved by his wife's influence:

So potent may have become this secret influence, that he may have borne it about with him like a kind of second conscience, for mental reference, and spiritual counsel, in moments of trial; and when the snares of the world were around him, and temptations from within and without have bribed over the witness in his own bosom, he has thought of the humble monitress who sat alone, guarding the fireside comforts of his distant home; and the remembrance of her character, clothed in moral beauty, has scattered the clouds before his mental vision, and sent him back to that beloved home, a wiser and a better man. (Chap. 2)

This influence is exerted passively, while the Angel is 'guarding the fireside comforts' at home. The narrator of *The Angel in the House* describes in similar terms the influence that Honoria exerts over him:

She was all mildness, yet 'twas writ
In all her grace, most legibly,
'He that's for heaven itself unfit,
Let him not hope to merit me.'
And such a challenge, quite apart
From thoughts of love, humbled, and thus
To sweet repentance moved my heart,
And made me more magnanimous,
And led me to review my life,
Inquiring where in aught the least,
If question were of her for wife,
Ill might be mended, hope increas'd.

As Lawless stresses, the Angel's 'power is made to depend totally on her "femininity", that is, selflessness, meekness, passivity and immobility' (35). However, as Auerbach suggests, such immobility can enhance the spiritual powers of the Angel: in *David Copperfield* it is precisely Agnes's 'stasis' that makes 'her power of transformation . . . more immediately magical' (84). This selfless influence of the Angel is the idealised form of the positive moral influence supposedly exerted by women in general. For the prohibitionists, female influence is an important concept since for them '[t]he idea is that with the corruption of liquor removed, men will submit themselves to female and divine influence; the two are not clearly separated'

(Lawless 73). Both '[t]emperance and the vote were seen as the means of safeguarding the morality of the colony and the sanctity of the family' (Dalziel 64). As noted above, Summers's book *Damned Whores and God's Police* outlines that a similar process took place in Australia. In *For Father's Sake* Eva Evans nurses Mrs Alen back to life for no other reason than pious selflessness and then saves the family from poverty when she persuades Mr Alen to stop drinking, even though previously he was 'a slave to the drink, and all his promises and resolutions were as sandhills before the terrific force of those mighty waves' (119-120). Eva is able to work this change merely by setting a good example and extracting a promise from Mr Alen: 'I have tried by my example to let you feel that there is only one way to obtain true happiness: the way of right acting. You have promised to keep away from drink and drink's partners, and to spend more time with your wife and children. I charge you, keep your promise' (127; emphasis in the original). As Lawless puts it, '[t]he Angel's power depends on selflessness, and through sheer moral force she exerts influence without having to express her will' (67). Lawless also notes that 'the narrative voice discounts the possibility of any female action to cast this demon [alcohol] out except for moral suasion of men' (81), as explained in *For Father's Sake*:

I know there are many women who themselves try to banish this drink; who seek by their own arbitrary power to wrestle from your hands the keys of the wine cellar, and to hurl the wine bottles into the moat of destruction. But there are still some few remaining who are true to their womanhood, and who keep faith in your manhood. There are still some who would put, and who do put their hands into that of their husbands, and looking up into his face, ask that for their sakes, that loved one would destroy those wine bottles himself. By the very power of that mutual love we know the request will be granted. (66; emphasis in the original)

Inspired by Eva's example, Nellie also successfully exerts a selfless influence over others and improves men, for example her cousin Walter: 'Some strange instinct seemed to soften his voice, and make tender his actions, when looking at that saintly face' (425). *For Father's Sake* emphasises the importance of selflessness and passivity for the ability to exert angelic influence: women influence men, but men are the ones that act. This is made clear when Nellie writes a sermon which is then read in church by her friend Mr Remay (referred to as her 'uncle' in the

text to emphasise their emotional connection). Nellie is content with being a good influence in Mr Remy's household and does not want to take credit for her work:

Unfelt by herself and her friends, she had become the pivot on which the thoughts and actions of that Godly household revolved. Is that not a nobler and a higher sphere of labour and power, than is the foremost seat in political government. . . . In our illustration, was not Nellie's vocation infinitely above that of her uncle? She could afford to sit in her pew, and smile at his success, while her uncle stood up in the pulpit, and spoke her thoughts; and then her strength being not overtaxed by exertion, she could minister to his despondency when the re-action of his earnest excitement threatened to break down the kindly spirit. Of course, there would have been a certain kind of pleasure in her occupying the pulpit, and in addressing a listening throng. Yet that is not the sweetest of cups, for it is one foreign to her womanly heritage. (260)

The text criticises an understanding of women's rights that would grant active power to women, instead asserting that women's influence must be passive and selfless: it foregoes the 'pleasure' of receiving public acknowledgement and appreciation. Nellie's way to becoming 'the pivot' of the domestic circle is unintentional: 'unfelt' by herself. True influence comes naturally from the Angel's inherent purity, not from a purposeful desire to be good. On a more practical level, For *Father's Sake* here also explicitly asserts that, as advice books such as Ellis's propound, women's rightful sphere is the 'Godly household', where she 'ministers' to the 'kindly spirit' of men – anything outside the home would be 'foreign to her womanly heritage'. Nellie is here made to illustrate an anti-suffragist political argument through embodying the quasi-divinity which is, as Auerbach states, accorded to the Angel in the House. It is her direct connection to God, not her rational understanding of theology, which allows her to write an impressive sermon – as Patmore's poem explains, the 'natures' of ideal women make 'no divorce of heart from brain'. The ideological mutability of the Angel in the House ideal is illustrated by its ready availability to underscore both suffragist and anti-suffragist arguments.

Christina in *The Hills of Hauraki* enters into her marriage with a similar idea of being able to morally and religiously improve her husband. When her mother voices concerns that Ned is not a true Christian, Christina explains that her own influence is already winning him over to religion. She soon sees 'more clearly how slight a thing was the religion Ned had professed'

when he starts drinking and grows neglectful and abusive, but her futile hope to influence her husband still connects her to him: ‘she clung more closely to him, feeling herself the link to bind him to better things’ (81). The text makes clear that a man who is not a true Christian will be immune to his wife’s good influence and that by assuming otherwise Christina has brought ruin upon herself. The narrative thus constitutes ‘a cautionary tale designed to deter young Christian girls from marrying inappropriate (i.e. irreligious) men in the hopes of leading them onto a better path’ (Lawless 84):

She had never realised her first wrong step which lay in her acceptance of and marriage to a man who she *knew* in her inmost heart . . . was not a child of God at all. That was the root sin which bore such bitter fruit to Christina; and many and many a Christian girl does the same thing to-day, and suffers for it more or less according to the ordinance of God . . . (141; emphasis in the original)

Instead of setting a good example for her husband, Christina also starts drinking. Travelling evangelists try to help, but Christina is emotionally incapable of heeding their advice. Lawless emphasises that Christina’s failure to reform her husband is connected to her lack of selflessness, both in marrying against the advice of her mother and in her presumption that she will be able to change Ned: ‘It is made clear that young women wishing to reform men can only do so by setting aside their own personal desires, either for matrimony or for the ego-gratification of “doing good” ’ (87). However, Christina is partially redeemed and reconnected with the Angel ideal when she dies: the ‘white night-dress’ she wears in her death scene connects her with the moonlight and whiteness imagery that marks the more successful Angels Nellie and Angela. Moreover, the doctor displays a reverence for Christina’s corpse that lifts her up into the realm of saints:

Stretched on the floor in her white night-dress, her long hair streaming away from her face, lay all that was left of Christina Bailey – once bright, happy Christina Beaminster! . . .

‘This is what you and your cursed house have brought your wife to,’ foamed the doctor. . . . No, you shall not touch her,’ as Ned would have flung himself upon the corpse; and lifting her reverently the good doctor laid her upon the bed. (200-203)

Even though Christina is not as perfectly angelic as Nellie in *For Father's Sake*, she thus becomes fully angelic by dying.

The titular heroine of *Miranda Stanhope* makes the same mistake as Christina: she marries Charles even though her elder sister Melinda, a mother figure, is suspicious of him. But while Miranda has to suffer in numerous ways for her mistake – she is nearly murdered, loses first an unborn child and later her eldest son, is temporarily abandoned for another woman and financially ruined – she never gives in to temptation herself and, with the help of evangelists, finally manages to reform Charles – even if he dies three days later. Miranda does this by virtue of her strength of character ('she was strong both mentally and physically', 128), her unwavering faith in God and her selflessness, which is most evident when she helps young Laura and her mother even after finding out that Laura is Charles's second, illicit wife. Thus Miranda is able to exert influence over Charles, which he feels even while he is living the life of a bigamist:

He . . . he could not divest himself of the idea that Miranda knew and disapproved of the step he had taken. He would sometimes shrink from the caresses of his child-wife, fancying Miranda's accusing eye was upon him, or wake in the night with a cold sweat upon his brow, thinking an unseen presence was in the room.
(112-113)

Moffat suggests that *Miranda Stanhope* illustrates the prohibitionist 'connection between godliness and sobriety' ('Puritan' 139) as well as 'foreground[ing] the capacity of women to bring about reformation through example' ('Demon Drink' 155). This ability to reform men through example connects Miranda with the Angels Eva and Nellie.

The heroine of *Angela*, like Hermione, is herself susceptible to influence, as Moffat argues: 'While Angela's purity repels evil, her character is contaminated by contact with Marks' vileness. His "hideous revelations" shame her and she is unable to forget what she has heard' ('Puritan' 222). The idea of influence is complicated not only in *Angela* but also in the other novels, albeit in a more subliminal manner. This happens in two ways. The first is the discrepancy between the Angels' ostensibly passive selflessness and the self-righteous gratification they actually obtain from their service to God and men. Lawless explains that 'the large amount of philanthropic (and thus ostensibly selfless) work done by the various Angelic characters . . . stems from desire, desire forbidden to the Angel except when figured as a compulsion, by God, or by the "higher nature" of her womanhood' (37). Angelic characters do

exert active power as they manipulate the people around them and induce them to act, but this power needs to be constructed as passive selflessness in order not to undermine the angelic ideology. Lawless's argument that in *The Angel Isafrel* the heroine's 'modesty and self-abnegation are not only undercut but actually belied by the steadily increasing tone of hero-worship and saintliness that surrounds her through the novel' can equally be applied to the heroines of the novels considered here, in particular Angela and Nellie (67). *Angela* emphasises that its heroine's good works are done for God rather than to gratify her own desire: 'She had no thoughts for herself – only the thoughts of God to whom she had surrendered herself' (125); 'Morning and noon and night she gave to Christ and them. . . . But none of her comrades knew; for all her deeds were silent' (159). This apparent selflessness is made unbelievable by the saint-worship of Angela outlined above, which causes others to look up to her 'in rapt adoration' (152) and pray to her photograph. The text registers a sense of self-gratification when it narrates Angela's departure from her hometown: 'They all knew her worth now she was going' (132). Lawless notes that *For Father's Sake* 'strongly follows the Angelic ideology that the only moral endeavour for a woman is one in which action is literally *forced* by God' (80; emphasis in the original). Nellie's ostensible selflessness is undermined by the text's construction of her as a perfect, saintly heroine. The same happens on the level of authorship: the claim in the preface that the text is 'carrying out the command of that Spiritual Guide' (5) justifies a novel written by a woman replete with religious and political lectures. The text thus contradicts its own argument that it is more womanly to stay at home, or at least sit silently in a church pew, and let men take all the credit, as Nellie does when Mr Remay reads out her sermon. In truth *For Father's Sake* itself can be regarded as one long sermon, evidenced in preaching rhetoric such as: 'Awake! awake! O man and woman! Awake and put forth every effort to stem this awful current. Do you not see the poor prisoners stretching out their arms for aid?' (348). This brings to mind Elaine Showalter's argument that '[t]he religious novel was the essential instrument of female participation in the male monopoly on theological debate' and that many nineteenth-century women writers who could not be clergymen instead 'channeled their immense energies into the portrayal of imaginary clerics through whom they could preach' (144).

Another way in which the idea of angelic influence is undermined is that influence often seems to stem from women's sexual attractiveness rather than their saintly purity. Again this is similar to the construction of Hermione's character. Clear examples of this are the 'holy kiss[es]'

in *For Father's Sake* (131): the kiss that reminds Mr Alen of his promise to Eva and the pure kisses that Nellie bestows upon her male friends. As noted above, Nellie's friend Marion asks her fiancé to kiss Nellie because 'the contact of your lips with her spotless soul would purify them for your wife' (183). As Lawless argues,

[i]t is of course impossible to kiss a soul; Nellie's purity is depicted as *erasing* her problematic adult female body altogether, leaving her a purely spiritual being. So simultaneously sexuality between men and women is erased by the Angelic ideology, and yet it is one of the most important underpinnings of how it works in practice. (82; emphasis in the original)

Both *Angela* and *For Father's Sake* constantly revel in the beauty of their heroines which impresses men: 'the Angel's physical charms aid her in persuading men to righteousness, yet the sexual nature of their willingness to please her is never explicitly mentioned' (Lawless 35). Whereas the novels create community through the shared ideal of the Angel in the House and the associated notions of purity, saintliness, and white heterosexuality, this ideal is complicated by the sense of self-gratification that underlies the ostensible selflessness of the angelic heroines and by their own instrumentalisation of their sexual attractiveness.

14.2 Creating Diasporic Community

Do the novels represent the community constructed by the Angel in the House ideal as specific to the British diaspora in New Zealand? As has been argued throughout this section, conceptions of femininity were not simply exported from the homeland but negotiated between homeland and diaspora. While the spiritual influence of the Angel in the House underlay the idea of women as upholders of morals in the colonies, homeland conceptions of women's role were also transformed in the diaspora and modified by notions such as colonial femininity. Within this context, how successfully can the angelic influence of prohibitionist heroines be in uniting the diverse subgroups that make up the diasporic community, and rallying them behind shared values and common goals? The following section considers who the prohibitionists speak for and how successfully they create a textual community that is specifically diasporic. It also examines how the prohibition novels situate themselves within a web of print connecting the diasporic centre and sub-centres.

While the prohibition movement was international, the novels discussed here also construct a version of prohibitionist ideas specific to a New Zealand identity. In addition to the

angelic femininity described above, the texts also allude to a type of colonial femininity that can be compared to that in *A Strange Friendship*: a femininity that is more practical than the saintliness of the Angels and which, it is hinted, might sometimes be more adequate in the colonial context than the homeland's model of the Angel in the House. The women who embody this kind of femininity in the texts are often motherly figures, for example Angela's mother and Christina's mother-in-law, Mrs Bailey. Angela's mother has 'worked from early morning till night' all her life and protected her children on a remote farm while her husband was fighting in the Land Wars (18): 'But she was made of that tough fibre that becomes stronger and hardier in the presence of danger. She had the grand old colonial spirit that no hardship nor peril can move' (19). These women do not exert angelic influence. Angela's mother does not understand Angela's saintliness at first and instead condemns her weakness: 'She knew her daughter had done no actual evil, but she had been, she said to herself, weak and vain and flighty; she had listened to evil and she had not repelled it' (81). Mrs Bailey in *The Hills of Hauraki* regards alcohol as medicine and helps her husband manage a pub. However, these women characters are not represented as evil since their practical approach to life enables them to resist temptation and help others. When Christina dies the text makes clear that while managing a pub is never morally acceptable Mrs Bailey used to keep the evil of alcohol at bay by virtue of her practical approach:

It was a terrible shock to her, for she really loved Christina, and had often reproached herself and her husband for putting the young people into a way of life which was so uncongenial to Christina and so harmful to Ned. When the house was in her hands she had ruled both it and her husband with a rod of iron and kept everything respectable, as she would have expressed it; but under Ned it had not been so well ordered, and Christina, poor thing, had 'no more management in her than a baby,' as her mother-in-law had frequently declared. (206)

Rather than passively influencing her husband Mrs Bailey rules him 'with a rod of iron'. Women like her and Angela's mother, the texts imply, might be needed in the rough colonial context to support the frail Angels, like the two women employed by Ned to relieve the exhausted Christina in the pub: 'two sisters, fine strapping Scotch girls, who took hold of the work as if it was play' (112).

For Father's Sake combines angelic and colonial femininity in the character of Nellie. Even though she is mostly passive Nellie can also be active and practical when necessary:

‘Nellie reached the gate, jumped off her horse, threw the reins over the post, sprang over the fence (don’t be shocked), and walked quietly up the avenue’ (28). This kind of behaviour is represented as typically colonial when Nelly’s sister Grace says: ‘I would not be the least surprised at anything Homelanders did. I met a girl the other day, one new from Home, I mean, and because she had to get through the fence she actually cried’ (401-402) and Walter replies: ‘Why, if a girl in Scotland were seen doing half what I have seen girls do here, they would be looked upon as indecent, vulgar’ (402). The text is quick to state that colonial femininity is not indecent or vulgar when it launches into a tirade on women that behave in a masculine way:

I heard a whisper the other day that Colonial girls have no girlhood. They step out of their cradles into long dresses, or worse, into long trousers. . . . Those girls, or figures of girls, which have come within the range of the slanderer’s observation, are not genuine New Zealanders. . . . Seeing the spirit of liberty in our land, and stamped in the hearts of our people, and mistaking the moulded wrappings for the true form of the wrapped, they succeed in making themselves a corruption of the reality. (194)

According to the text those women have misinterpreted the practical, fence-climbing ways of colonial women to mean that they are masculine, whereas they are actually feminine in a colonial way.

Furthermore, Lawless argues that Mactier’s novels explore the threat to angelic femininity in rural colonial settings. The metropolitan ideal of the Angel in the House, developed within an urbanised culture, is threatened by colonial life. Lawless relates this to theories of imperial femininity: ‘As explored by McClintock and Sharpe, the boundaries between male and female must be strictly observed to embody the female with imperial morality’ (79). Both Christina and Miranda quickly notice their husbands’ sinfulness when they move to the gold diggings and the East Coast, respectively. They experience ‘the specific difficulty of maintaining the home as an oasis of morality, civilisation and feminine influence in an isolated, rural colonial environment’ (Lawless 88). According to the angelic ideology it is the responsibility of the husband to protect his home and family from the surrounding dangers. Charles Stanhope fails to do this when, ‘succumbing to the roughness of colonial life’, he obtains a liquor license for his East Coast store and then leaves Miranda and her children on their own, vulnerable to Te Kooti’s attack (Lawless 89-90). What Lawless fails to notice, however, is that (like the novels discussed

in Section II) the prohibition novels display a number of contradictions in the way they represent place and landscape. While Mactier's texts explore the threats of the colonial frontier to the angelic ideology, they also convey a sense of New Zealand as a lush, exotic and even edenic place, as in the opening sentences of *The Hills of Hauraki*:

A lovely landscape lying calm and still beneath the burning December sun of New Zealand's semi-tropical climate; a pleasant homestead, a roomy comfortable house, standing in a large old-fashioned garden, filled with those dear old-fashioned peach trees which are, alas, becoming rare; golden peaches, lemon-shaped, hanging from one; great luscious 'King Georges' slowly ripening on another, while from a third dropped at intervals the fully ripe summer peaches which melt in the mouth. (1)

Here we see another reappearance of Mary Rolleston's ideal peach. *For Father's Sake* constructs New Zealand as an Arcadia or Eden threatened by the serpent alcohol: 'In the colonies (New Zealand) age has no retarding influence. Time only lessens darkness and increases light' (13); 'There is no need to go to Longfellow for a description of Arcadian innocence and purity. The innocence and happiness of New Zealand picnickers, if not superior to it in purity, is equal' (13); 'the land . . . where rich and poor live on a level; where humanity and nature dwell in unity; where, by reason of its liberty and freshness, mortality and immortality walk hand in hand, and converse on such subjects as has the power to raise the terrestrial to that eminent standard occupied by the celestial' (413). Rather than seeing the reality of colonial life as a danger to angelic influence, the text even claims that all New Zealanders are inherently angelic – they are like Eva Evans: 'Of course, all New Zealanders are not Eva's, still in all, one can trace her lineaments' (131). This edenic place is threatened by alcohol, which is represented as 'the root of all socio-economic problems' (Moffat, 'Demon Drink' 145): the story of the Alens' marriage and numerous other sub-plots illustrate that drink causes domestic violence, poverty, disease, and moral corruption. *Miranda Stanhope* evokes a similar notion of New Zealand as an Eden spoilt by drink when Charles's neighbour Frank Williams advises him to apply for a liquor license:

The two men started as if they had been plotting treason, as indeed they were – had they but known it – treason against the peace and purity of the place.

. . . Before Frank Williams and his wife left Charles Stanhope had written the letter which was to bring the serpent into their Eden. (61)

This is in accordance with the prohibitionists' convictions that 'all social problems could ultimately be traced to drink' (Moffat, 'Puritan' 131) and 'that an alcohol-free New Zealand would be a place of prosperity and happiness' (132). According to Stevan Eldred-Grigg these notions were not unfounded in reality: early colonial New Zealand was a highly alcohol-dependent society (242). Fairburn sees high levels of alcohol consumption as connected to social atomisation and interrelated with other social problems such as a high level of violence (203). Alcohol consumption in New Zealand had declined significantly by the turn of the century but it 'continued to play a central role in society' (Eldred-Grigg 210).

While being part of an international movement the prohibition novels considered here thus adapt notions of femininity to the diasporic context in order to make their prohibitionist message more specific to New Zealand. Given that these novels at least in part constituted propaganda material, do they successfully produce a collective diasporic identity which could help the prohibitionists attain their political goals? As I will outline in the following, the crucial role women characters and notions of femininity play in the texts as creators of community is partially deconstructed by the simultaneous (re)production of internal divisions within the diasporic community: divisions of religion, race, and class. As Eldred-Grigg emphasises, '[p]rohibition was a sectional movement that arose from certain provinces, particular classes and a few religious bodies, and always appealed more to people in some walks of life than others' (217). Whereas this did not prevent the movement from being relatively successful in New Zealand, its internal divisions are equally evident in the texts it created.

The novels represent religious divisions by associating prohibition with the pietist, non-conformist churches. Moffat notes that '[t]he New Zealand prohibitionists were almost all fervent, middle class Protestants, particularly from the Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist and Salvation Army denominations' ('Demon Drink' 141). Eldred-Grigg states that while the prohibitionists claimed that all Christian denominations supported their cause, they actually 'made a clear distinction between the pietist churches which supported them and the Episcopal churches which were indifferent or hostile' (185). Angela illustrates the strong connection of the Salvation Army with the social purity movement. Angela's conversion causes her to be an object of hostility to her fellow townspeople in Fielding: 'It was not then the fashion to patronise the Salvation Army as it is rapidly becoming; and in little country townships it is almost incredible the ignorant fury they raised' (104). The text also emphasises the Salvation Army's difference

from other Christian denominations, in particular the Anglican Church, and these dominations' ignorance and hostility: the Anglican priest in Fielding casts Angela out of his congregation after her conversion. Mactier's novels demonstrate their connection to the pietist churches both in their emphasis on individual redemption and the importance attributed to travelling or visiting evangelists who successfully convert and 'save' people. *For Father's Sake* shows an association with pietist religion in Nellie's highly personal religious visions and further distances itself from orthodox religion through its virtually pagan emphasis on the transcendental qualities of nature.

Whereas a distancing from the Episcopal churches is thus clearly noticeable in the texts, Angela and Miranda Stanhope expend significantly more religious fervour on the incrimination of Jewish characters. Levi Marks, who harasses and slanders Angela, and Joseph and Sarah Cohen, who trick Charles Stanhope into joining their fraudulent business venture, threaten to bring moral or financial ruin upon the Protestant characters. A stereotypical and denigrating portrayal of their Jewishness is the most defining feature of their characters. Joseph Cohen in *Miranda Stanhope* is 'a stout, middle-aged man of Jewish appearance' (155), whose 'Jewish accent was slight but unmistakeable, and can be as well imagined as described' (156). Marks in *Angela* is introduced in the text as

a remarkable man, Charlie called him 'The Wandering Jew,' because he had such wonderful stories of his travels. Also because he had at times a restless hunted look which suggested the haunting of an immortal crime. His name was Levi Marks. . . . And he could talk brilliantly on anything except crops and the weather. (55-56)

While 'The Wandering Jew' here seems to be used ironically by Angela's brother Charlie, the subsequent behaviour of the school principal suggests that he is indeed haunted by an immortal crime: after his death nothing about his past can be found out, and Angela envisions 'the horror of his eternal damnation' when she visits his grave (133) – whether for past crimes, for his treatment of her, for his suicide, or his Jewish heritage, is not clarified. The comment that 'he could talk brilliantly on anything except crops and the weather', furthermore, implies that Marks is not a full member of the Pākehā community in Fielding, since in that rural town 'crops and the weather' are important topics of conversation. In the case of Angela's closest friend Anna, who also has 'Jewish blood', the text makes clear that she is not defined by her Jewishness to the same extent as Marks. Unlike him, she is truly 'colonial' and a pietist Christian: her family 'were

Wesleyans; old residents of Sydney, but on her father's side she had Jewish blood, that showed in the richer tints of her face and the dark bright eyes. But Anna was far more colonial than Jewish, and more Christian than either' (169). The Cohens in *Miranda Stanhope* are similarly differentiated from Puritan *Miranda* when her son Harry leaves the room 'with alacrity, not at all caring for the look of his father's visitors, whom he mentally compared with his mother, much to their disadvantage' (162). These two novels in particular thus emphatically draw a line between pietist Christians and Jews. As the reference to 'Jewish blood' shows, this is figured as a racial as well as a religious and cultural division.

Racial divisions become even more significant in the novels with regard to Māori. *Miranda Stanhope* draws a connection between Māori and Jews by seeing them both as not 'pure English-born'. Of the first students at the sisters' school in Auckland, three are 'half-caste' and two more

slightly tinged with colour; and the remaining three . . . were Jewesses, daughters of a leading mercantile firm.

'Not a pure English-born girl amongst them,' grumbled Selina. 'All I ask is that you never ask me to walk out with them.' (36)

In *Angela* Māori are described as noble savages, entirely different from the Salvation Army members who visit them, living in squalor and clinging to their belief in 'demoniac' 'idols'. The chief

wore a cloak of feathers, his face was tattooed with blue lines and his head was bare, but he moved and spoke like a king. . . . They took them into their whares which were dark and full of smoke and foul-smelling and made them eat unclean food over which the soldiers jested much among themselves. And at the darkest end were idols like weird and demoniac scrolls glaring at them with pawa eyes. (129)

Miranda Stanhope represents Māori initially as similarly distinct from the diasporic community, albeit in an even more condescending way:

Oh, the crazy wooden steps up which [Miranda and her sisters] had to scramble up to reach the wharf, and the dilapidated sheds, 'neath which sat the dreaded 'savages' peacefully smoking their pipe and offering fish or kumara for sale. . . .

‘Oh, te pakeha wahine! Kapai te pakeha wahine!’ called an old wahine in a high, shrill voice . . .

. . . Our young friends were reassured as they saw that the natives were perfectly friendly . . . (27)

A footnote translates the old woman’s exclamation as ‘Oh, the English woman. Very good the English woman’ (27), implying that the ‘natives’ are unable to use correct grammar even in their first language. When Miranda and her children are nearly killed by Māori attackers, the novel ‘not only connects drunkenness with godlessness and male violence but also with Maori savagery’ (Moffat, ‘Demon Drink’ 150). The attackers are described as ‘half-clad natives’ with ‘fiendish faces’ and ‘savage with bloodshed’ who set the Stanhopes’ store and home on fire and then in engage in ‘orgies as they feasted on their spoils and drank of the spirits till they sank one by one into a drunken slumber’ (79). The text clarifies that not all Māori are savages when Frank Williams seeks the help of a tribe nearby: ‘Old Hangi is absolutely faithful to the pakeha, and would not see any of Wiremu’s . . . belongings injured’ (86; emphasis in the original). But whether the choice is bloodthirsty savagery or unquestioning loyalty to all Pākehā, Māori are consistently represented as fundamentally different from the pietist characters and unable to join them in their evangelical or prohibitionist efforts. Moffat notes that in reality ‘Maori were involved in the campaign [for prohibition] to some extent’ but that ‘the prohibition novelists scarcely touch on drink as a problem among Maori and make no mention of Maori involvement in the prohibition movement’ (‘Puritan’ 130). Rather than constituting an internal division of the diasporic community, this can be seen as the attempt of the diaspora to distinguish itself from the indigenous society of its hostland, a strategy discussed in more detail in Section II. However, in political terms such an alienation of Māori deprives the prohibitionists of potential allies who could help them promote their cause in New Zealand.

In addition to religious and racial divisions the texts construct class divisions. Unlike Courage’s and Evans’s texts, where the class identity constructed is an upper-class one, in the novels considered here it is middle class. Eldred-Grigg notes that prohibition ‘was based almost entirely on the lower middle class and the “respectable” skilled working class’ and the social purity movement as a whole was largely middle-class based (185). Angela delineates a middle-class identity by drawing boundaries in both directions. Angela pities and tries to save both the ‘diseased creatures’ of the lower working class, who haunt the streets of night-time Sydney

(168), and the superficial ladies of upper-class society: 'She pitied them from the depth of her heart; it seemed so terrible to fritter away life into eternity; visiting, chatting, gossiping, drinking, quarrelling, mimicking charity with doles grudged out of their superfluity, aping religion with sleepy chants and lifeless prayers' (166). In *Miranda Stanhope* Miranda's sister Melinda accepts that the sisters will have to adapt to the more 'democratic' ways of the colony, but not without a sense of reluctance faced with this enforced familiarity with the lower working class:

I can see quite well, girls, that this is a democratic country, and that Jack is quite as good as his master, if not better. It will be impossible, I fancy, to keep up class distinctions here, and we shall be compelled, while not allowing undue familiarity, to tolerate a more free and easy style in our servants than we have been accustomed to. (35)

Charles is first introduced to a life of sin not only by alcohol but also by his contact with the working men in the bush: 'He was becoming coarsened by his familiar intercourses and drinking habits with the bushmen around' (70). As Lawless suggests, this emphasis on the middle class relates to

the analysis by McClintock and others that it was . . . middle-class settler women . . . who were considered to embody Imperial morality. The foundation of this morality is that very exclusion, actually maintenance of impermeable boundaries, between white and 'native', ruling and working classes, and male and female. (226)

This argument connects the texts' identification with the middle class to the ideal of the Angel in the House which they perpetuate: this ideal is itself a fundamentally middle-class one. As Ellis's statement, already quoted earlier, makes clear, it is the influence which middle-class women exert from the domestic setting that makes British men such efficient agents of imperialism: 'as far as the noble daring of Britain has sent forth her adventurous sons, and that is to every point of danger on the habitable globe, they have borne along with them a generosity, a disinterestedness, and a moral courage, derived in no small measure from the female influence of their native country' (chap. 2). Charles's degradation then means that 'white degeneration on the colonial frontier . . . is . . . a degeneration in class rather than racial status, although caused by the same fundamental blurring of boundaries on which imperial civilisation depends' (Lawless 90).

Moreover, middle-class women constituted the anticipated audience of the novels grounded in

the ideologies of social purity and prohibition: in accordance with their notion of virtuous female influence the prohibitionists relied on middle-class women to disseminate their ideas and improve society. Not surprisingly, the authors of these novels were themselves members of the middle class.

If the novels are not entirely successful in producing a collective identity within the diasporic community in New Zealand, do they produce more stable connections to other diasporic sub-centres? Certainly, *Hermione* emphasises the strong interdiasporic community created through shared ideas and the notion of a feminist sisterhood. Social purity, and with it prohibition, was a similarly international movement: 'Social purity was one of the great moral offensives of the late nineteenth century, beginning in Europe and North America and spreading quickly to the colonial societies of Australia and New Zealand' (Eldred-Grigg 127). Do *Angela*, *For Father's Sake*, *The Hills of Hauraki* and *Miranda Stanhope* textually (re)construct these international connections?

The novels refer to the international community created by Puritan values. As noted above, travelling evangelists play crucial roles in *The Hills of Hauraki* and *Miranda Stanhope*, illustrating that New Zealand's social purity movement is connected to an international context. *Angela* describes how participation in the movement changes and broadens Angela's outlook on the world. At the beginning of the narrative Angela 'had known no other home than this valley. The farthest extent to which her geographical knowledge reached was Wellington, beyond that all the world melted into one blankness – Sydney, London, Rome, or Jerusalem, it was all very much the same to her' (4). After her conversion Angela travels to Wellington and Sydney, where she works and lives in an international community of Salvation Army workers. The novels themselves are part of the construction of this international community since they serve as propaganda material for the social purity and prohibitionist movements. The prohibitionist movement in particular 'realised that the mass literacy of modern society provided novel opportunities for propaganda' in books, pamphlets, tracts, newspapers and journals (Eldred-Grigg 182). This use of printed propaganda material again links the prohibitionist movement to the feminist movement, which also relied strongly on print to convey its ideas to a large number of people in various locations. The novels adapt their use of print propaganda to the specific situation of the diasporic community in New Zealand. Moffat notes that 'the prohibition novels are . . . unique in that almost half of them were published in New Zealand, a rarity in the colonial

era' ('Demon Drink' 139). *For Father's Sake* and *The Hills of Hauraki* both claim in their titles to be *A Tale or Story of New Zealand Life*. The preface of *For Father's Sake* situates the novel within a context of prohibitionist propaganda unique to New Zealand, as it emphasises that the novel's sense of mission is motivated not only by religious faith but also by a desire to improve New Zealand: 'From the mysterious depth of my beloved New Zealand island there ascends an insuppressible voice that bids me arise and speak' (3); '[a]nd know that, though the voice may be keen and sharp at times, the heart is thrilling with deep, earnest love and quiet hope for the welfare of thy people and for the advancement of thy power' (5). The text thus stylises itself as the voice of both God and New Zealand and expresses a hope that it will improve society. This underlying belief in the power of print to bring about change is also evident in its adverse side, the fear that print material will influence its readers in harmful ways. When Nellie is on board a ship, she overhears two men discussing favourably a blasphemous book and immediately walks up to them and throws the book into the sea. This occasion is also utilised in the text to again defend colonial femininity, when Walter is impressed by Nellie's interference and tells her: 'Few would have had the "pluck," nor the "savee," . . . I have heard of colonial girls, but never had the pleasure of meeting one before' (215) and 'I have changed my opinion of New Zealand girls' (222). Nellie's self-righteous enjoyment of her allegedly selfless, pious action is evident when '[a] faint rose-leaf colour touched the pallid cheeks, and a half pitying, half mocking, wholly contemptuous smile rested upon the compressed lips' (211).

Eldred-Grigg argues that the Puritans' proficient and prolific use of print propaganda masks the fact that the movement was actually 'relatively weak in New Zealand': 'why have so many essayists, literary critics and historians been inclined to emphasise [Puritanism's] importance? The main reason, perhaps, is simply that the puritans were very good at publicity' (247). However, while the prohibition movement in New Zealand was not as successful as that in the United States it was significant and achieved a number of its legislative aims, if only temporarily. The mass of propaganda material may convey an exaggerated image of the movement's popularity but it no doubt also drew people to the cause and created unity. The novels discussed here are part of this propaganda material. While I do not claim that they comprehensively represent the social purity or prohibition movements, they do represent a similar underlying ideology. The ideal of the white Angel in the House, who unites men through her timelessness and classlessness and improves society through her selfless influence, offers a

powerful narrative of community-building. The novels adapt this ideal to a specifically New Zealand context by exploring the notion of colonial femininity or the transformation of angelic femininity in colonial life, and by representing New Zealand as an Eden or Arcadia endangered by alcohol. They do, however, also weaken their own community-building strategies by creating internal divisions along the lines of religion, race, and class, and by failing to enlist textually the help of Māori as potential allies.

Conclusion to Section III

Section II showed that the diaspora's textual representation of the project of settling is multifaceted, and that the literary texts negotiate a number of different discourses, frequently deconstructing themselves. This section's analysis of the diaspora's construction of community has again shown that the literature of the diasporic community attempts to reconcile fundamental contradictions even as it establishes them. Nevertheless, the texts in various ways create convincing narratives of community. This shows that the 'meaning-making' of the diaspora can be effective, even if it is fraught with contradictions and destabilisations which, as Bhabha argues, emerge from the community's 'symbol-forming activity' itself (210). The introduction to this section outlined its focus on different aspects of diasporic community production: the construction of intradiasporic community, the diaspora's relationship with the homeland and other diasporic communities, and discourses of femininity and women's writing which also serve to historicise the diaspora experience by grounding it in the historical experience of women. The non-fictional and fictional texts analysed in this section engage with these different aspects of community-building by constructing, interrogating, undermining and restabilising them.

The textual production of community within the diaspora is an important aspect of all the texts analysed in this section. They represent expectations that women will produce unity and community both through their positive moral influence and as reproductive agents. The single women's shipboard diaries illustrate how these expectations place women at the centre of societal hopes but also anxieties. Both Elizabeth Fairbairn's and Jane Finlayson's diaries construct community by textually producing but also transcending internal divisions along the lines of ethnicity and religion. Agnes MacGregor's diary, however, also demonstrates the difficulties of conforming to a supposedly universal ideal of femininity for a young woman who is neither English nor in England. *Hermione* focuses on the inclusive community within the woman's rights movement brought about by shared political ideals and the importance of friendships between women. The prohibition novels emphasise women's role in producing community through the ideal of angelic femininity, placing this ideal within a specifically New Zealand context. However, these novels' emphasis on internal divisions within the community partially undermines their strategies of community-building. While the prohibition novels represent a middle-class identity that excludes the upper and working classes, Sarah Courage's

and Charlotte Evans's texts are upper-classed based, equally illustrating dividing lines between the various classes present in the diasporic community.

While the homeland myth is important in the texts they also engage critically with this myth. Fairbairn's and Finlayson's diaries demonstrate that discourses of femininity undergo a transition in the process of the voyage from homeland to hostland. Yet the texts also place single emigrant women within a 'grand imperial design' (Cohen 67), and Finlayson's text in particular endeavours to contain subversion within this design and re-establish narrative stability.

MacGregor and Courage focus on the connection that identification with a group of readers and/or writers establishes between homeland and hostland. In *A Strange Friendship* this orientation towards the homeland is complicated by the text's destabilisation of gender and genre conventions. However, the diaspora's relationship with other diasporic communities is arguably more important in the texts than its relationship with the homeland. Again, MacGregor's and Courage's texts in particular illustrate how these connections are enacted within a community created by a shared reading and writing experience. *Hermione* and the prohibition novels put interdiasporic connections in the context of shared political and moral goals, which spin a web between many diasporic sub-centres rather than only between homeland and hostland. Print material is crucial in establishing these connections and disseminating political ideas.

Notions of femininity are important to the texts' strategies of community-building. These notions are negotiated and transformed in the context of the diaspora. Evans's novel illustrates how the romantic ideology of heterosexual romance as well as stereotypes of femininity can be destabilised in the diasporic context. Instead the text engages with a notion of colonial femininity, which reappears in the prohibition novels. These novels focus to a greater extent on the feminine ideal of the Angel in the House, who embodies a narrative of white heterosexual purity. Like the other novels associated with the social purity movement, *Hermione* simultaneously complicates the Angel ideal by questioning the concepts of female influence and sexual purity. Furthermore, the position of women as authors is important in the texts in a number of ways, for example in Fairbairn's regulated writing experience as a matron on board ship, MacGregor's interaction with expectations brought to women readers and writers, *Hermione* as feminist literature about a feminist writer, and Evans's reworking of stereotypical expectations of women writers.

The texts thus demonstrate a number of ways of envisaging diasporic community. While some of these ways can be seen as more convincing or successful than others, all of them can be termed meaningful. The strategies of community-building in these texts point towards a national narrative. The texts move away from the homeland myth, focussing instead on the transformation of community-creating concepts such as various versions of femininity, and establishing more significant connections with other diasporic sub-centres. Even when the texts emphasise a nostalgic link with the homeland, as *Lights and Shadows* and *A Strange Friendship* do, this link is often problematised or destabilised. But while it is possible to see the texts' production of community as a national rather than a diasporic narrative, it always needs to be remembered that the nation state's imagining of unity and teleology implies an inherent contradiction. Moreover, as Bridge and Fedorovich suggest, national consciousness within the empire needed not 'contradict or undermine imperial Britishness' since different modes of identification could exist alongside one another (6). The texts' various ways of community-building illustrate that rather than uniting everyone in the diaspora behind a 'grand imperial design' (Cohen 67) there were a number of possible identifications open to its members. These identifications, while often contradictory, offered manifold ways of imagining community.

General Conclusion

Encompassing a wide range of genres and spanning a time period of over thirty years, the texts analysed in this thesis offer a diverse picture of the identity production of the British imperial diaspora in New Zealand in the late nineteenth century. I have traced this identity production through the diaspora's narrative imagining of journey, settling, and community. While the selection of texts can claim to be neither exhaustive nor representative, similarities in the texts' construction of a collective identity emerge, bridging generic and temporal differences as well as the boundary between fiction and non-fiction. The basis of these similarities is a tension between the diaspora's dispersal from the homeland and its need to produce a collective identity. This tension leads to an underlying instability within the texts, causing them to attempt to reconcile a number of contradictions and conflicting discourses. The texts are often revealed to be more complex than they initially appear, frequently deconstructing the ideologies they ostensibly promote. However, at the same time they offer a number of powerful ideas and narratives which allow the diaspora to create a complex but meaningful collective identity. This identity is not limited to a binary of imperial centre and colonial periphery but constructed within an international network in which mobility and a shared print culture provide manifold connections. Robin Cohen's definition of diaspora, enhanced by theories by Stuart Hall, Paul Gilroy and James Clifford, illuminates these connections and shows the potential of diaspora to promote cultural crossover and hybrid identities. Diaspora theory also reveals fissures within the teleological ideology of the nation state, which underlies imperialism and thus partially accounts for the inconsistencies within the texts' ideologies. While women writers of the diaspora have not yet been the subject of academic study to the same extent as male authors, it emerges that both femininity and women's writing are crucial for the identity production of the community as a whole.

Section I, 'Journey', argued that the contradictory metaphor of a journey underlies both the genre of shipboard diaries and Charlotte Evans's sensation novel *Over the Hills*. While oceans are imagined as creating distance between homeland and hostland, the empire is also linked by its shipping routes so that, as Randall in Clara Cheeseman's *A Rolling Stone* says, 'no place is far away' (3: 117). Exploring this contradiction, the texts stress distance while also, often simultaneously, representing homeland and hostland as similar or identical and emphasising the continuity between the two spaces. The liminal nature of the journey itself complicates the

position of enunciation of both non-fictional and fictional shipboard diaries, adding to their inherent instability. But the texts also provide connections and continuity, like the voyages they describe: as part of a shared print culture they mirror the mobility of people within the empire, linking the imperial diaspora in New Zealand both to the homeland and to other diasporic sub-centres.

Section II, 'Settling', demonstrated that the texts represent the project of settling in similarly contradictory ways. The shifting and complex meanings of the central word 'home' in many diasporic texts illustrate the instability of the diasporic co-ordinates homeland and hostland within an identity that needs to be reproduced continuously. The texts negotiate a number of conflicting discourses in order to construct various spaces, in particular concerning the hostland to be settled. These discourses are mirrored not only in narrative strategies such as romance but also in the texts' function as writing and reading spaces. Women settlers as the carriers of portable domesticity and agents of beneficial influence are accorded an important role in the project of settling, revealing the tenuousness of the separation between private and public sphere as well as the diversity of 'feminine' modes of writing. The delineation of the diasporic identity from the homeland, from the host society, and from other diasporic sub-centres provides further and frequently contradictory ways of identity production. This delineation exposes not only inherent contradictions within imperialist ideology but also complexities within the texts that transcend binaries of self and other. Even when the texts appear to promote clear ideologies, they are actually more complex, frequently deconstructing themselves.

Section III, 'Community', showed that even though the literature of the diaspora is fraught with inherent contradictions and instabilities it nevertheless creates convincing strategies of community-building. Shared values and political ideas serve to unite various ethnic, religious, and class identities behind common goals, but often the divisive delineation of these different identities is still clearly evident. Women are crucial for many of these strategies as they are seen as creators of unity and community, expected both to exert positive moral influence and to be agents of reproduction. However, women can also be seen as a destabilising locus of societal anxiety. The ideal of the timeless and classless Angel in the House serves to create unity within society but is modified in the diasporic context, enhanced by conflicting notions such as a more practically-oriented colonial femininity. Similarly, literary genres such as the sensation novel and the New Woman novel are adapted in the diaspora, illustrating the constant evolution of

diasporic identity. Again literary texts are shown as creating community not only in New Zealand but within the entire Anglo-world. However, different communities of readers and writers can also be used to delineate boundaries of class and ethnicity. While there is a trend towards a national narrative increasingly distanced from the homeland myth, national consciousness within the empire needed not immediately undermine other ways of belonging. Rather the 'grand imperial design' (Cohen 67) of the diaspora can be imagined as only one of the ways of identification open to its members. Importantly, however, these manifold ways of identification converge in order to create a convincing collective identity.

While, as this summary of the main points shows, diaspora theory reveals contradictions within the texts, more importantly it also illuminates manifold connections: connections of ideas, culture, travel, relationships, and a community of writers and readers connected by print. Even as the texts propagate community, they have to grapple with the fundamental experience of dispersal. Similarly, even as they draw ideological boundaries they deconstruct their own ideologies. The fragment of the nineteenth century considered here thus illustrates again that that time period was more complex and mobile than is often assumed. Rather than constituting the documents of an age of static dichotomies and binary oppositions, the texts discussed here offer ample, if often subliminal, space for destabilisation and subversion. Recently such connections and complexities have been the subject not only of academic research but also of the still growing wealth of Neo-Victorian fiction, films, graphic novels and other forms of cultural expression. Neo-Victorian culture recognises that nineteenth-century connections include connections to our own time: the nineteenth century is not the opposite of our time and thus something from which we can distance ourselves and which we can disavow, as the Cultural Nationalists did. Rather, there are continuities that are sometimes as frightening as they are surprising. However, these continuities always also have their own complexity and instability which can be explored. I see this thesis within this culture of exploration that probes deeper than received notions, and conclude it in the confidence that the work of other scholars will continue to surprise me with similar finds.

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