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Gender and Space in Rural Britain, 1840–1920

Edited by Gemma Goodman and Charlotte Mathieson

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IN RURAL BRITAIN, 1840–1920

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EDITED BY

Gemma Goodman and Charlotte Mathieson

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／# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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INTRODUCTION: GENDER AND SPACE IN RURAL BRITAIN, 1840–1920

Gemma Goodman and Charlotte Mathieson

> How little the real characteristics of the working-classes are known to those who are outside them, how little their natural history has been studied, is sufficiently disclosed by our Art as well as by our political and social theories. Where, in our picture exhibitions, shall we find a group of true peasantry? … The notion that peasants are joyous, that the typical moment to represent a man in a smock-frock is when he is cracking a joke and showing a row of sound teeth, that cottage matrons are usually buxom, and village children necessarily rosy and merry, are prejudices difficult to dislodge from the artistic mind, which looks for its subjects into literature instead of life.[1]

George Eliot's words in an 1856 essay on W. H. Riehl's *Natural History of German Life* provide an indicative starting point for this collection, encapsulating many of the myths and stereotypes that have typically dominated cultural ideas of rurality. Art and literature, Eliot argued, had long depicted a vision of rural life as a world of idyllic ploughmen, buxom maidens and rosy-faced children – a vision, she contended, that was far from the 'truth of rustic life': 'no one who is well acquainted with the English peasantry can pronounce them merry'.[2] Eliot called for a representation that would be attentive to 'the perennial joys and struggles, the toil, the tragedy, and the humour in the life of our more heavily-laden fellow-men' and that captured the distinct and unique characteristics of different rural environs – 'its dialect, its phraseology, its proverbs, and its songs, which belong alike to the entire body of the people'.[3]

In the essays throughout this collection we encounter writers, Eliot among them, whose works seek to redress many of these concerns, expanding the portrayal of rurality away from the myth of a rural idyll to instead show a more diverse and complex picture of rural Britain in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. Eliot's words are indicative in revealing not only the intentions but also some of the challenges and pitfalls of rural representation: as her comments on 'rustic peasants' suggest, classed perspectives and politics play an important role in shaping depictions of rurality. The mention of the jolly ploughman and buxom maiden are indicative of the perseverance of traditional gender struc-

tures, while indicating the possibility of looking beyond these tropes to examine a more complex set of gender relations and negotiations. And Eliot's call for attention to the distinct characteristics of rural spaces encapsulates the ethos of many writers discussed in this collection whose works present a nuanced portrayal of rural Britain at this time, representing a diverse set of gendered and classed perspectives on a range of rural geographies.

Writing at the midpoint of the nineteenth century, Eliot's essay was published during a period in which rural spaces were undergoing fundamental restructuring to become far from representative – if they ever had been – of the myth of an ideal rurality. During the nineteenth century the countryside continued to be irrevocably remodelled by enclosure, which not only left a visual imprint on the rural landscape but also put an end to many traditional methods of farming the land and its associated customs and cultural practices. The end of the Napoleonic Wars had been followed by a period of agricultural depression, made worse by the introduction of new Corn Laws. During the 1840s, where this collection begins, agriculture remained unstable, and the period gained the undesirable moniker of the 'Hungry Forties' due to the extreme poverty and hardship experienced by the working classes across Europe. From this point on, agriculture began to regain prosperity, and with the repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846, agriculture entered into the period of 'High Farming' as Karen Sayer terms it, although, as she notes, this brought about mixed fortunes and smaller farmers and rural labourers fared less well than the new breed of 'agri-capitalists'.[4]

Agriculture would continue to remain reasonably prosperous until the Great Depression of the 1870s, but other changes reshaped agrarianism during this time. The mechanization of agricultural practices improved farming in some respects – enabling more thorough and efficient production – but steadily changed the demands on the rural workforce, reducing the number of agricultural workers required. Many of the disenfranchised rural workforce provided labour for the Industrial Revolution, which, while not exclusive to urban environments – A. N. Wilson notes that in the 1830s half the population worked in rural environments and most industries were 'rural in base' – supported an inflow to towns and cities from the countryside, as well as emigration abroad.[5]

Whilst farming is the industry most readily associable with rural environments, mining, fishing and service to the large country estates were also a significant feature of rural life in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. Cornwall is a good example of this, with mining and fishing central to the rural economy in the nineteenth century and with both of these industries more dominant in the cultural identity of Cornwall at this time. Philip Payton argues that mining had 'become a geographically and culturally unifying factor by the 1850s' and it continued to be so even after the decline of mining from the 1860s.[6] In addition, working men and women would move between differ-

ent rural occupations as the availability of work fluctuated in each industry and some would work in more than one role at the same time. Wales, Cornwall and the North of England were all rural mining regions and it was the growth of such industries during the Industrial Revolution, the need for access to ports and to locate sizeable workforces close to the mines, which led to some previously rural areas becoming major towns and cities.

The railways were also instrumental in changing the countryside. The 1840s marks the beginning of 'railway mania': from 1844 to 1847 'a fever of unbounded optimism in the future of railways swept the country', resulting in the rapid spread of new railway lines throughout England and Wales.[7] Railways restructured rural landscapes spatially, economically and politically. The railways assisted with extending the reach of state power to the countryside through, for example, the more efficient enforcement of laws such as the Mines and Collieries Act of 1842 and the Education Act of 1870. Inspectors could now travel by train to the coal mines in the north of England or to rural schools (as the writer Matthew Arnold did as an inspector of schools).[8] Railway routes also had a damaging effect by cutting through the countryside with little regard for land usage, not only providing a visual blight on the landscape but also having serious consequences for agricultural practice. In George Eliot's *Middlemarch* (1871–2), for example, the land will be 'cut up into railways' with the building of a new line through 'Lowick parish where the cattle had hitherto grazed in a peace unbroken by astonishment'.[9] To the farmers, the cutting of 'the Big Pasture in two', such that it will be turned into 'three-corned bits', will produce a new organization of space that is 'nohow'; that is, it makes no sense to those who work and live on the land, reflecting only the concerns of the wider socio-economic order.[10]

However, another consequence of these rapidly expanding networks of travel was that rural spaces became more connected to the rest of the country and rural producers could utilize new modes of transport for the movement of their goods. Perishables such as milk, fish, meat and flowers were now easily transportable from rural regions to urban markets. In *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891), Hardy shows the rush to get the milk from Talbothays dairy to the station in time for the train that will take it to the city: Tess imagines how

> Londoners will drink it at their breakfasts to-morrow ... Strange people that we have never seen ... [and that] don't know anything of us, and where it comes from; or think how we two drove miles across the moor to-night in the rain that it might reach 'em in time.[11]

By the time Hardy was writing, rural spaces would go through another period of change with the onset of the Great Depression in the 1870s. A number of factors coincided to facilitate a turn in agricultural fortunes: poor weather blighted crops and spread disease among livestock; imports of grain and livestock from

America competed with home-grown produce; and rural labour forces were impacted by the Education Act of 1870 which reduced children's work capacity, as well as by ongoing disputes about pay and conditions. Gradual improvements took effect, with the formation of the National Agricultural Labourers' Union in 1872 and the Agricultural Holdings Act of 1883 which improved the rights of tenant farmers, but life remained an ongoing struggle in comparison to the more prosperous years earlier in the century.[12]

In addition to changing agricultural fortunes, in the second half of the nineteenth century a number of other significant factors also played a key role in reshaping the rural landscape. With the coming of the railways, there was an influx of visitors into rural sites as rail travel opened up opportunities for tourism around the country. The marketing of rural locations as holiday destinations, particularly from the end of the nineteenth century onwards, by companies such as the Great Western Railway, often drew on extant stereotypes of the rural as wild and less civilized than towns and cities while also recasting these same spaces as a place of sanctuary and escape within Britain's own borders: a home-from-home, therefore, and a place of safety, while simultaneously imbued with qualities of difference.[13] Yet at the same time, one effect of the increased traffic to a variety of rural locations was a better appreciation for the distinct and varied qualities of different regional locales. As W. J. Keith argues, rail travel helped enable a move from a generalized impression of the countryside to an appreciation of 'a series of different countrysides with their own physical features, history, customs, dialects and ways of living', one implication of which was the growth of regionalism in literature.[14]

The process of opening up access to rural environments through greater methods of travel and communication, and its concomitant effects, continued in the early twentieth century. Travel by car brought new opportunities for trips to the countryside and the seaside for the upper classes and, as rail travel become more widely accessible, increased the proportion of the middle-class population who could be tourists, leading to the years until the First World War being termed a '"golden age" for the railway companies of Britain'.[15] Intensive urban development in the early twentieth century also increased the pool of people looking to escape to the countryside and coast for their leisure while, at the same time, leading to a greater differentiation between cities, towns and rural locales. As Chris Thomas explains, 'the working classes were to benefit later from the railways' expansion of holiday making and had yet to venture much abroad – before, that is, the First World War sent them in great numbers to France and the Low Countries'.[16]

For those who returned to rural communities in Britain after the war, almost the end point of this collection, their experiences must have changed, among other aspects of their lives, their relationship to the familiar landscapes of home. For the poet Edward Thomas it was the rural countryside of home that was being fought for: as Peter Sacks explains

> when asked why he had volunteered for the army in July 1915, after the first crushing casualty reports had dispelled any illusions, and at the otherwise immune age of 38, he bent down, scooped up a handful of dirt, and said, 'Literally, for this'.[17]

His poems register the connection and collision of the natural world and war – 'the birds voice / Speaking for all who lay under the stars, / soldiers and poor, unable to rejoice' – and the impact of men's absence from the countryside during and after the war.[18] In the poem 'As the team's head brass', 'only two teams work on the farm this year' and the death of the speaker's friend in France has directly impacted on the natural world for 'if / He had stayed here we should have moved the tree. / And I should not have sat here. Everything / would have been different. For it would have been / Another world'.[19] While Thomas is not featured in this collection we mention him because he so beautifully articulates the nuances of the countryside within the context of the historical moment of the First World War. Also, the way in which he engaged with, witnessed and understood the rural environment provides a perfect example to those of us looking to open up discussion of ruralities, for as Sacks describes, his poems 'tread a series of paths' through rural landscapes 'each one distinct, each bringing the reader some unforeseen find, usually beyond the margin of the road'.[20]

Concurrent with the multiple shifts within rural environments at this time were the successive shifts in gender relations throughout the period. As Victorian Britain debated a host of ideas around what was broadly termed 'the woman question' – encompassing such issues as the ideal of femininity, fallen women and prostitution, women's place in the home and at work, women's education and their political and economic status – rural environments figured as particular sites of interaction with these discourses, and served to offer different iterations of key issues. Models of ideal femininity, as Karen Sayer identifies, took unique shape in 'the myth of rural femininity in which the most perfect of women lived an industrious and honest life, in an English country cottage'.[21] This myth – an ideology arising largely in the works of middle-class male writers outside of the rural sphere – played an important role in shaping the perception, representation and experience of rural spaces as well as 'contributing to the production of the wider definition of domesticity in the nineteenth century' and thus, as Sayer's study demonstrates, represents an important site of analysis in understanding rural gender relations.[22] Yet the reality of gendered experience and representation was of course much more varied, and the essays in this collection demonstrate a wide range of ways in which rural femininity and masculinity were understood, both in the rural context and in terms of how this contributed to wider discursive shifts in the era. Women played an important role in the rural workforce and the figures of 'women in the field', the dairymaid and farmer's wife occupied central sites of discussion for writers such as Thomas Hardy and Richard Jefferies, as explored in Roger Ebbatson's essay in this collection. But

women were also present as designers and artists shaping out cultivated spaces of rurality, as in the case of Gertrude Jekyll (explored in Christen Ericsson-Penfold's essay), and these gardens inspired other writers such as Virginia Woolf, taken up here by Karina Jakubowicz. Masculinity was also far from static and the shifts in women's position in the countryside had ramifications for such delineations of masculinity: the rural worker was often conceptualized as epitomizing typical masculine qualities of power and strength, heightened by the dirt and grime of their toil. Yet the changing demands on the agricultural labour force and resulting unemployment of many rural workers unsettled this notion of masculinity as a stable construct; as Barry Sloan's essay in this collection demonstrates, rural men such as the labourer and the carter are left 'stranded "between two civilizations"'.[23]

As this overview begins to make clear, rural environments were sites of active and dynamic change, yet, while this has been acknowledged in historical and geographical accounts of rurality, in literary analysis rural environments have often been understood only in relation to their urban counterparts – as spaces where traditional values and codes were upheld and, in the case of discussions of modernity and gender relations, typically overlooked by a focus on cities as the sites of active and progressive change. The political writing and action of suffragists was located in urban centres, and the figure of the New Woman that took hold towards the end of the century as a model of independent femininity is located as an urban figure.[24] Yet the divisions between town and country women are not so easily asserted: Sayer notes, for example, that the Langham Place women's group, campaigning for women's right to work and own property, advocated farming 'as a fruitful and potentially respectable occupation' for wealthy women, two of the group's members themselves having agricultural connections.[25] During the First World War, while there were more opportunities in urban areas for women to take over traditionally masculine roles, in rural parts of the country some women did also take up jobs as farm labourers and miners. Farming and mining were reserved occupations but, as Lynne Mayers explains, some men still signed up for service and so women were often called upon. Mayers provides an example of the china clay pits of mid-Cornwall where 'young women were sometimes called on to do very heavy manual work' and a 'Miss A Langley, from Lanner, [in Cornwall, who] managed the Magdalen Mine near Ponsanooth'.[26] The relationship between town and country in female experience is taken up in Samantha Walton's essay in this collection, which challenges the ways in which we might typically perceive this binary, arguing that in the early twentieth-century writing of the Findlater sisters in Scotland, it is the rural, rather than the urban, environment that comes to provide a space in which modern forms of selfhood can be articulated.

Despite these identifiable nuances, the more stereotypical conceptualization of the urban–rural relationship is still as culturally salient as it was when

Raymond Williams wrote *The Country and the City* and described the two environments as distinct, opposing, yet inextricably connected. He argues that:

> On the actual settlements, which in the real history have been astonishingly varied, powerful feelings have gathered and have been generalised. On the country has gathered the idea of a natural way of life: of peace, innocence and simple virtue. On the city has gathered the idea of an achieved centre: of learning, communication, light. Powerful hostile associations have also developed: on the city as a place of noise, worldliness and ambition; on the country as a place of backwardness, ignorance, limitation. A contrast between country and city, as fundamental ways of life, reaches back into classical times.[27]

It is a nexus of place identity which has previously privileged, and consistently continues to privilege, urban space over the rural, primarily due to its perceived qualities as progressive, yet also due to the urban-centric dominance over historical and cultural narratives of the rural and of Britain as a whole. Nick Groom tracks the development of this hierarchical interaction as precipitating what he calls a 'contemporary pastoral' whereby the current extensive migration back into rural space from the cities is part of an aestheticization, politicization and appropriation of rural space by an urban elite acting out 'an urban fantasy of country life'. He argues that, as a consequence, 'the English countryside now becomes the conservatory of the urban' and the requirements of urban colonizers within the rural has caused a homogenization, or 'Tescofication' of rural spaces.[28]

This understanding of the urban–rural relationship is important because the period under study in this collection is already imbued with, and even gave rise to, many of the stereotypes discussed above. Yet we can take our cue from Williams who, when defining the construction of the country and the city, simultaneously opens up space for a deconstruction and interrogation of those categories and their relation to each other. This collection takes the rural as its starting point and looks to demystify 'pastoral clichés that have tyrannized the land for decades, centuries even'. Equally we also recognize that, while it cannot be denied that the link between country and city is culturally prevalent, rural spaces form sites of cultural interest away from a totalizing urban perspective or through their connection to the urban as other and inferior, and thus we seek to resituate ruralities as important centres, rather than peripheries, for literary and historical study.

While the essays here are historically situated in the long Victorian period, their interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary bases are informed by, and seek to advance, recent theoretical discussions of gender and space. In the next section we discuss the key theoretical concepts that underpin this collection.

Gender, Space and Rurality

Amidst the wider spatial turn in cultural theory in recent years the relationship between gender and space has been the particular focus of attention by a number of feminist geographers whose work informs the basis of this collection. Feminist geographers' central concern has been to explore the ways in which cultural ideologies of gender play a fundamental role in the production, organization and experience of space. Binary meanings of gender are, as Linda McDowell writes, 'deeply implicated in the social production of space, in assumptions about the "natural" and built environments and in the sets of regulations that influence who should occupy which spaces and who should be excluded'.[29] Masculinity is equated with the public spaces of institutional activity, knowledge production and movement, whilst the feminine sphere is associated with the private places of domesticity, primarily the home.[30] This is not to say that the public/private binary upholds a sharp distinction between who can have access to either space, but that the ways in which masculine spaces and feminine places are inhabited, occupied and moved through differs for men and women according to the socio-material gendering of those spaces. So too does this perspective recognize that space–gender relations are not a simple 'mapping' of one context onto another, but rather work as integrated, mutually constitutive processes: as Alison Blunt and Gillian Rose write, 'gendered spaces should be understood less as a geography imposed by patriarchal structures, and more as a social process of symbolic encoding and decoding that produces a series of "homologies between spatial, symbolic, and social orders"'.[31] Neither gender nor space represent fixed categories of meaning, but rather are malleable constructs that shift in response to one another: gendered performances operate differently depending on spatial context, and spaces are shaped by the social interactions and gendered dialogues that play out within them.

Within this wider understanding, geographers have further theorized the ways in which rural spaces represent unique sites for interaction with gender identities: as Jo Little writes, there is a 'particular association between *rurality* and gender identity that goes beyond the specificity of individual places; that is, there is a shared understanding within rural communities of gender identities' such that 'the expectations surrounding gender identities are implied in rural areas in a way that is part of the social and cultural relations of the countryside'.[32] At the same time, rural spaces present challenges in how the particularities of individual rural sites interact with a broader category of 'the rural', requiring an awareness both of how gender identities are performed within different rural contexts and of how 'a set of characteristics associated with the rural woman and (arguably less so) the rural man' extend across the broader category of 'the rural'.[33] So too does understanding that the uniqueness of rural environments

need to be balanced with an awareness of interactions across wider contexts: as Little writes, studies of gender and rurality aim 'to draw attention to the distinctiveness of rural places' while locating 'the characteristics of men's and women's lives in rural communities within an understanding of wider regional, national and international gender relations'.[34]

Geographical understandings of the intersections between gender and space are also constructive in helping us understand some of the more embedded spatial myths that have shaped rural spaces and that can inform our reading of the various ways in which men and women were present in and interact with rural landscapes. Perhaps the most prevalent form that the gendering of rural space has taken is the myth of place as feminized. As Gillian Rose identifies, the visual ideology of landscape often employs a sexualized discourse of masculine conquest of the feminized, sexualized land.[35] This ideology serves to distance women from both representing the rural landscape, positioning them as objects of the myth rather than creators or subjects; so too does it position women as 'out of place' in natural spaces that are more typically understood as the realm of masculine subject-position.

As interpreters of the rural in relation to gender we also need to be aware of the persistence of stereotypical constructions of the rural in contemporary cultural consciousness which have become so ingrained and familiar, and the work of geographers is helpful in understanding the perseverance of myths of the gendered rural to the present day. As Sayer identifies, the 'myth of the rural woman is still with us and is still being constructed through the ever-changing discourses of femininity, national identity and pastoral, in many media'.[36] One indicative recent example of this is the TV programme 'The Farmer Wants a Wife' which centres around (male) farmers choosing from a selection of 'urban' women to fulfil the role of 'farmer's wife', thus continuing to perpetrate the idea of the rural farm as a space of heteronormative and patriarchal structures.[37] As Jo Little recognizes, despite women's increasing involvement in rural spaces, for example in recreational activities, women continue to be perceived as out of place in rural environments: 'their presence there may be seen as unsettling and inappropriate'.[38] Gendered discourses also continue to inform political and economic decisions about the rural environment: as Lynsey McCulloch's essay in this collection identifies, the Great Fens project in East Anglia, which aims to restore the wetlands, continues to employ a narrative that 'unknowingly romanticizes the masculine heroism of the old English'.[39] For these reasons, although the essays in this collection are focused on an earlier period in rural history, the discussions they generate around the gendered politics of the rural environment continue to have relevance and application to the rural debates of the present day.

Diverse Ruralities

In this collection, multiple ruralities emerge as nuanced spaces which are disparately experienced through a range of gender–class intersections that reveal a more complex picture of the variety of gendered codes at work, and thus the diversity of rural experience. In keeping with this we have chosen to consider locations that might not typically be represented in discussions of the rural, yet which, we believe, make important contributions to understanding the nuances and complexity of gender and rurality beyond dominant discourses: country gardens, fields, forests, villages, fens and beaches – sites of work and sites of leisure – widen the scope of how we picture the rural. For example, Christen Ericsson-Penfold's chapter focuses on Gertrude Jekyll's artistic cultivation of nature within the country garden as a gendered space, drawing out important ideas about women as active participants in the shaping of natural spaces. It is perhaps surprising that the garden is not already more central to our understanding of the rural given that garden spaces within country homes would have been experienced by the occupants and their staff, and the country estate is the most extreme visual demonstration of a, perhaps arbitrary, borderline between the serried ranks of carefully constructed flower beds and tree-lined paths and the wider park land. The domestic garden too, whether for food or flowers, is a small interruption to or interaction with the surrounding rural environment by the home owner. Karina Jakubowicz also explores a range of garden locations within Virginia Woolf's work, both in England and abroad and, significantly, in both rural and urban locations, thus opening up useful discussions about the transference of ideas of nature beyond strictly rural realms as well as the relationship, within rural locales, between cultivated and uncultivated nature. This is a perspective which immediately challenges initial perceptions and expectations of the rural as wild, natural and uncultivated and, while these environments are equally important to this collection, opens up fresh perspectives for discussion.

As with any collection there are limitations to the relevant topic areas it is possible to include and perhaps the most notable omission here is a consideration of a more diverse range of gender and sexual identities. As Little's work shows, geographies of queer rurality represent an important new area of study, countering the presumed dominance of heterosexuality within the rural environment.[40] In these essays, given the time periodization on which we have chosen to focus, it is not surprising that heterosexual structures prevail in the cultural representations of rural gender and place. Yet the essays we have included here do represent a diverse set of perspectives on the ways in which dominant concepts of gender and sexuality were experienced within rural environments.

The collection begins with rural agricultural spaces, commencing in Chapter 1 with Roger Ebbatson's 'Women in the Field', which explores literary and

cultural representation of women's field labour in the later nineteenth-century writings of two men, Richard Jefferies and Thomas Hardy. As two of the most significant writers of rural affairs in the late-century period, these literary representations afford valuable evidence about the rural economy during the Great Depression; but their classed and gendered perspectives also raise issues about the politics of authority and representation and, Ebbatson suggests, remain tied to a predominantly hegemonic paternalistic viewpoint. The work of Richard Jefferies features again in Chapter 2, '"Between Two Civilizations": George Sturt's Constructions of Loss and Change in Village Life', in which Barry Sloan looks at the themes of loss and change in rural village life. Focusing on George Sturt's *Change in the Village* (1912), as well as Sturt's journals, *A Wiltshire Village* by Alfred Williams (1912) and *Lark Rise to Candleford* by Flora Thompson (1939–43), Sloan looks at the experience of being 'between two civilizations' in these writings. Taking us just beyond the scope of this collection, Sloan's essay usefully identifies the ongoing perseverance of the theme of modernity and change as a key motif in rural representation, extending from the nineteenth-century worlds depicted in these works and persisting on into the twentieth century as an enduring concept of the period.

In Chapter 3, Gemma Goodman explores Charles Lee's little-known novel *Cynthia in the West* (1900) and the iterations of gender and class within the peripheral location of the Cornish coast during a moment of economic and cultural change. Two class-bounded groups – the indigenous fisher-folk and the incoming artists – occupy, negotiate and do battle, even, within the fishing village. It is the spaces of the beach and the cliff-top in particular where traditional gender categories and identities are subverted.

In Chapter 4, '"Going out, Going Alone": Modern Subjectivities in Rural Scotland, 1900–21', Samantha Walton discusses *Crossriggs* (1908), a novel by Scottish writers Mary and Jane Findlater and 'The Pictures' (1921), a short story by Jane Findlater, and how these works explore the interactions between rural and urban locations in the early twentieth century. This essay is useful in helping us to advance critical understandings of the meaning of modernity in rural places and to better understand the interactions between town and country that shaped rural women's lives. Walton suggests that the characters' responses to rural space in these works reveal the emotional and material frustrations of rural women's lives in early twentieth-century Scotland, but also realize the rural as a space of possibility for women. The imaginative possibility of rural spaces is also a theme of Chapter 5, '"Drowned Lands": Charles Kingsley's *Hereward the Wake* and the Masculation of the English Fens', in which Lynsey McCulloch explores the power of mythologies of Englishness and masculinity in the history and representation of rural spaces. In Charles Kingsley's 1866 *Hereward the Wake*, McCulloch identifies the familiar construct of the controlled, cultivated landscape as coded feminine, yet she problematizes the extent to which the por-

trayal of *Hereward the Wake* can be read as a straightforward depiction of heroic masculinity, suggesting a rather more ambivalent handling of gender codes.

With Chapters 6 and 7 we turn to novelistic representations of rurality by women writers of the mid-nineteenth century. In Chapter 6, 'Wandering Like a Wild Thing': Rurality, Women and Walking in George Eliot's *Adam Bede* and *The Mill on the Floss*', Charlotte Mathieson looks at the intersections between gender and rurality in George Eliot's first two novels, focusing on the representation of mobility as central to the narratives of Maggie Tulliver and Hetty Sorrel. Mathieson argues that Eliot uses mobility to delineate the particularly acute formulation of gender codes within the rural environment, but that rural mobility also comes to constitute a space of possibility in which Eliot recrafts the relationship between women and rurality in a more positive light. Katherine F. Montgomery's '"I Never Liked Long Walks": Gender, Nature and Jane Eyre's Rural Wandering' also explores women's position in relation to nature through Charlotte Brontë's characterization of the title figure of her 1847 novel. Jane Eyre is frequently represented through images of wild nature, and Montgomery sets these against Jane's experience of nature that unfolds in her escape from Thornfield to Moor House. In doing so, she comes to contend with one of the key gendered discourses of natural spaces, the sublime, providing an indicative analysis of how female self-assertion plays out in a highly gendered landscape.

With Chapter 8 we move into spaces of cultivated nature with Christen Ericsson-Penfold's 'Gertrude Jekyll: Cultivating the Gendered Space of the Victorian Garden for Professional Success'. Exploring the work of Gertude Jekyll (1843–1932), artist-gardener and horticultural journalist, Ericsson-Penfold looks at how one woman created a successful career by applying her artistic vision to the gendered, cultivated rural space of the garden, an acceptable feminine space in which a woman could work in a largely masculine profession. Arguing that Jekyll's success was a product of her ability to manoeuvre within and around social conventions of female behaviour, Ericsson-Penfold's discussion provides an indicative insight into how women could negotiate gender–space relations on their own terms. Gardens are taken up again in the next chapter by Karina Jakubowicz, 'From England to Eden; Gardens, Gender and Knowledge in Virginia Woolf's *The Voyage Out*', which traverses a variety of natural spaces, ranging from the English country garden to the wilds of South America. Jakubowicz explores how these spaces provide a mode through which gender identity is played out, through the relationship of protagonist Rachel Vinrace in response to different spaces. Here, moving out of England and into South America proves constitutive in her development, opening up interesting reflections on the transnational ideas of rurality at this time. Transnational ruralities are the subject of the final essay in this collection, Eliza S. K. Leong's 'The Transnational Rural in Alicia Little's *My Diary in a Chinese Farm*'. This account of an English woman's life on a Chinese farm between 1887 and 1907 provides a valuable narrative

of the ways in which rural identities are played out across international movements. Leong explores how Little's sense of Englishness, derived through an understanding of English rurality as a signifier of English national identity, is challenged and difficult to maintain when immersed in a Chinese rural context which subverts an English-centred narrative of rurality as idyllic.

The collection closes, therefore, with a perspective that takes us beyond the borders of Britain. Leong's essay establishes ideas about the transnational rural, reminding us that concepts which have been discussed in this collection in relation to British rural locales also extend across nations, thus forming a dialogue between local, national and global ruralities. Such a perspective broadens the scope of existing studies of rurality which are predominantly local in focus, and provides a context for further study of ruralities in relation to each other which extend across national borders. The assertion of national identity is often an implicit association throughout nineteenth-century conceptualizations of rurality. As Ebbatson and others in this collection identify, from the 1840s to 1920s landscape formed an important site for the location of national identity, providing a source of continuity in a time of change and so coming to be representative of a quintessential Englishness within the context of an expanding project of Empire.[41] This dominant conceptualization of landscape and identity is recognized and also resisted by a number of the chapters in this collection through the diversification and nuancing of both rural representations and British and English identities. The collection provides location-centred examples of the way in which rural locations can disrupt and question dominant understandings of English and British identities, both individually and in relation to one another – a perspective which is perhaps more accessible from within the current positive devolutionary political climate which is enacting within governance a recognition of difference within Britain.

The movement into rural spaces beyond British borders, represented here by China and South America, further contributes to and extends these debates by opening up an indicative exploration of the local-global negotiations involved in rural identities. In line with recent scholarship on the significance of Victorian Britain's colonial project to the construct of national identity, these essays demonstrate that the offshore enactment of British rural identity plays an important role in the constitution of national identities within Britain, but also demonstrate how rural environments abroad offer opportunities for the exploration of different gendered codes, and consequently the interrogation of core ideas of Englishness and Britishness.[42] This initiates dialogue about the 'transference' of British and English identities abroad, and also therefore informs understanding about how the ideology of rural landscape has been a key site of national identity formation, such that its movement overseas could operate in the relocation of Britishness.

The transnational rural represents an important new direction for the study of rurality, and is just one area signalled by this collection that holds much

potential for further study. The richly nuanced ruralities and gendered identities which emerge throughout the essays in this collection invite further discussion of the interstices of gender and rural space throughout a broad range of locales across a global nexus, and it is hoped that in coming years the multiplicitous possibilities of rural geographies will continue to unfold.

1 WOMEN IN THE FIELD

Roger Ebbatson

In *The Condition of the Working Class in England* (1845), Friedrich Engels offered a powerful account of current agricultural conditions, noting in particular how competition and large-scale farming operations now obliged the field-workers 'to hire themselves as labourers to the large farmers or the landlords'.[1] The ending of the Napoleonic Wars led to a lowering of wages and consequent agricultural distress which was scarcely mitigated by the new Corn Laws. The symbiotic and patriarchal relation between master and man (and woman) disappeared, with the result that, as Engels writes, 'farmhands have become day-labourers', being employed 'only when needed' and thus often remaining unemployed 'for weeks together, especially in winter'.[2] The inception of the harsh New Poor Law, together with 'the constant extension of farming on a large scale' in the wake of enclosure, the introduction of threshing and other machines, and the employment of women and children, would lead to a widespread 'disorganization of the social fabric'.[3] Engels's diagnosis inevitably focused upon the 1830s, the period of the incendiary 'Swing' riots and anti-Corn Law agitation; whilst there was an economic recovery in the countryside after this critical juncture, the 1870s saw the onset of the Great Depression which would stretch into Edwardian times. A succession of wet summers in the 1870s and early 1880s affected harvest yields and promoted pneumonia in cattle and foot rot in sheep, whilst refrigerated shipping began to bring imports of wheat and mutton, cheese and bacon, which affected the domestic market. Increased reliance on mechanization and shifting patterns of land use reduced the aggregate demand for labour throughout the period. The keynote of these trends, therefore, was the permanent existence of a new 'surplus population' which lived by hiring out its labour, an important fraction of which comprised women field-labourers. The overall impact of such changes was succinctly summarized by Karl Marx himself: 'By the nineteenth century, the very memory of the connection between the agricultural labourer and communal property had, of course, vanished'.[4]

This chapter sets out to examine the validity of this Marxian contention specifically in relation to the question of female land-labour during the period of

the Great Depression. It will be argued that overall the critical situation of the female field-worker in the labour market was typically described, analysed and represented by male 'authorities', and that the contested role of women in the fields was symptomatically inflected through ideological concepts of womanliness. This was evidently the case in the well-informed and extensive agricultural journalism and fictionalized sketches of Richard Jefferies, whose work offers a sympathetic and cogent account of the hardship of female labour at this juncture, whilst remaining anchored in a predominantly patriarchal set of values. Thomas Hardy would imaginatively reinscribe many of these issues in his fiction, whilst similarly retaining an overall ideal of a normative femininity in the 'unconscious' of the text. His novels, overtly sympathetic as they are to the individual female labourer (Tess Durbeyfield, Marty South), tend to mask or moderate class tensions in favour of a humanistic individualism.

> How it rained
> When we worked at Flintcomb-Ash,
> And could not stand upon the hill
> Trimming swedes for the slicing-mill.
> The wet washed through us – plash, plash, plash:
> How it rained!
>
> How it snowed
> When we crossed from Flintcomb-Ash
> To the Great Barn for drawing reed,
> Since we could nowise chop a swede. –
> Flakes in each doorway and casement-sash:
> How it snowed!
>
> How it shone
> When we went from Flintcomb-Ash
> To start at dairywork once more
> In the laughing meads, with cows three-score,
> And pails, and songs, and love – too rash:
> How it shone![5]

Thomas Hardy's poem, which refracts or condenses scenes from *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* (1891), raises crucial issues relating to voice, agency and gender ideology in the representation of female rural labour in the nineteenth century. Expressive of a deep sympathy for the 'cavalry of labour' experienced by Tess, Marian and the other former milkmaids, the poem attempts to inhabit a female self whilst retaining a sense of distance consonant with a middle-class readership. The poet, for instance, eschews the kind of dialect speech patterns which would inform the language of this class fraction in order to offer a telling but external picture of female labour. In her exemplary study of the nineteenth-century female rural labourer, Karen Sayer demonstrates how, in the late-Victorian period of the

agricultural Great Depression, 'working women were constructed as a threat to English labouring men's jobs, wages, and liberty, in other words, as a threat to their masculinity'.[6] Certainly the Agricultural Labourers' Union (from which women were debarred), established in 1872, promulgated a programme of discouraging women's field labour, and their newspaper looked to the day when the labourer's wife was 'no longer a drudge in the fields, but a managing, economical housewife'.[7] Although, as Sayer demonstrates, female workers were politically active and took part in strikes and related protests, with some exceptions their voices were muffled and their participation 'remained largely hidden'.[8] Nonetheless, actions such as the 1867 strike by Oxfordshire women day-labourers, or their 1873 intervention against blacklegs in the same county, meant that, in Sayer's terms, 'the dominant definitions of masculinity and femininity were called into question ... as were the supposed organic class relations in the countryside'.[9] Whether in the form of officially endorsed parliamentary reports or individual social analyses, however, it remained the case throughout the period that women field-labourers possessed virtually no voice of their own, their situation being represented, debated and analysed by paternalist male 'authorities'. In addition, it is clear that, in the late nineteenth century overall, as Alan Armstrong observes, 'the role of women was becoming confined to home-making', and that in the field their role was limited 'to subsidiary tasks such as gathering and binding'.[10]

The issue of the (mis)representation of the late-Victorian female country labourer raises key questions of agency and perspective which may briefly be illustrated with reference to two of the leading male authors on rural affairs at this juncture. Richard Jefferies first came to prominence with a series of letters to *The Times* on agricultural matters in the early 1870s, and in a subsequent essay published in the *Graphic* in 1875 he dealt specifically with the question of 'Women in the Field'. This piece offers a naturalistic and telling description of the women's working conditions:

> The cold clods of earth numb the fingers as they search for the roots and weeds. The damp clay chills the feet through thick-nailed boots, and the back grows stiff with stooping. If the poor woman suffers from the rheumatisms so common among the labouring class, such a day as this will make every bone in her body ache.[11]

As Jefferies depicts them, the women are impervious to the natural beauty of spring, the woods 'carpeted with acres upon acres of the wild hyacinth, or bluebell', the nightingale 'in the hazel copse, the skies full of larks'. Indeed, being virtually illiterate, the women 'can call up no beautiful thoughts' with the result, according to Jefferies, that 'she cannot see, that is, appreciate or feel with, the beauty with which she is surrounded'.[12] The male anxiety surrounding rural female sexuality surfaces in Jefferies's analysis when, remarking upon summer haymaking, he informs his readers that 'much mischief is done by the indiscrim-

inate mixing of the sexes', and adds laconically, 'the language of the hay-field is not that of pastoral poetry'.[13] But he also emphasizes here the unhealthy nature of the work in 'the blazing heat of the long summer day', a stress of labour whose 'effects are visible in the thin frame, the bony wrist, the skinny arm showing the sinews, the rounded shoulders and stoop, the wrinkles and lines upon the sunburnt faces'. The women need the work, but technology is inexorably altering conditions and reducing the level of casual labour; as Jefferies remarks, 'machinery has taken their employment away'. His solution, marked by an unconscious paternalism, is to conclude that young country girls now being taught in the new village schools should be provided 'with situations as domestic servants, for whom there is an increasing demand'.[14] Elsewhere, Jefferies would describe the 'excessive and continuous labour' of the harvest field, saying it was remarkable 'how the women endure it':

> The woman's bare neck is turned to the colour of tan; her thin muscular arms bronze right up to the shoulder. Short time is allowed for refreshment; right through the hottest part of the day they labour. It is remarkable that none, or very few, cases of sunstroke occur. Cases of vertigo and vomiting are frequent, but pass off in a few hours. Large quantities of liquor are taken to sustain the frame weakened by perspiration.[15]

Jefferies notes that in winter 'there is nothing for women to do', and also maintains that they 'never or rarely milk now', but 'in arable districts the women do much work, picking couch grass – a tedious operation – and hoeing'.[16] In his authoritative account of the agricultural scene, *Hodge and His Masters* (1880), Jefferies once again avers that the field-women 'do not find much work in the fields during the winter', and he adds:

> Now and then comes a day's employment with the threshing-machine when the farmer wants a rick of corn threshed out. In pasture or dairy districts some of them go out into the meadows and spread the manure. They wear gaiters, and sometimes a kind of hood for the head. If done carefully, it is hard work for the arms – knocking the manure into small pieces by striking it with a fork swung to and fro smartly.[17]

In sum, he claims, 'the number of women working in the fields is much less than was formerly the case', and notes that 'there are signs that female labour has drifted to the towns quite as much as male'.[18] The physical cost to the field-women who remain is again tellingly indicated in Jefferies's powerful essay, 'One of the New Voters':

> Look at the arm of a woman labouring in the harvest-field – thin, muscular, sinewy, black almost, it tells of continual strain. After much of this she becomes pulled out of shape, the neck loses its roundness and shows the sinews, the chest flattens. In time the women find the strain of it tell severely.[19]

A similar documentary realism is deployed in the short story, 'The Field Play' (1883), a tale of rural seduction which notably eschews the portentous symbolism of *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*. The narrative is split into two parts, 'Uptill-a-Thorn' and 'Rural Dynamite', the central figure, Dolly, being presented at the outset as a 'good-looking, careless hussy' who, at harvest time, boldly cultivates the company of the men to the disapproval of her fellow female labourers:

> The women accused her of too free a carriage with the men; she replied by seeking their company in the broad glare of the summer day. They laughed loudly, joked, but welcomed her; they chatted with her gaily; they compelled her to sip from their ale as they paused by the hedge. By noon there was a high colour on her cheeks; the sun, the exercise, the badinage had brought it up.[20]

Dolly is the focus of attraction for Big Mat, 'a powerful fellow, big-boned, big everywhere, and heavy-fisted', who kisses her in full view of the labouring crowd, but she is also admired by the farmer's son, Mr Andrew, who is attracted by 'those soft brown eyes, that laughing shape'.[21] Andrew however remains 'too knowing of town cunning and selfish hardness to entangle himself'.[22] After high summer in the fields, a significant change is perceived in Dolly, who displays symptoms of ill-health: 'There were dark circles round her eyes, her chin drooped to her breast; she wrapped herself in a shawl in all the heat'.[23] Although she eventually recovers, 'something of her physical buoyancy, her former light-heartedness never returned', and it seems 'as if her spirit had suffered some great wrong'.[24] By the time of the next harvest Dolly is living with Mat, 'unhappily not as his wife', and there is now 'a child wrapped in a red shawl with her in the field', and 'placed under the shocks while she worked'.[25] Mat takes to drink, hits Dolly and puts out one of her eyes. On encountering her again in the village Mr Andrew witnesses a shocking transformation: 'The stoop, the dress which clothed, but responded to no curve, the sunken breast, and the sightless eye, how should he recognize these? This ragged, plain, this ugly, repellent creature – he did not know her'.[26] Jefferies closes this first part with a resonantly metaphorical reflection, which speaks eloquently of the vicissitudes of rural labour:

> The poppies came and went and went once more, the harvest moon rose yellow and ruddy, all the joy of the year proceeded, but Dolly was like a violet over which a wagon-wheel had rolled. The thorn had gone deep into her bosom.[27]

The second section, 'Rural Dynamite', is largely taken up with what Jefferies concedes is 'a long digression' on rick-burning, and Big Mat is convicted of arson and imprisoned, whilst the man who identified him and who is Dolly's brother, drinks away his reward and dies of alcoholic poisoning.[28] Dolly, who is pregnant again, is now driven to 'the same workhouse in which her brother had but just died'. She survives, 'utterly broken, hollow-chested, a workhouse fixture', and is employed in the institutional laundry. Jefferies closes his account on an elegiac note:

> This was the girl who had lingered in the lane to help the boy pick watercress, to gather a flower, to listen to a thrush, to bask in the sunshine. Open air and green fields were to her life itself. Heart miseries were always better borne in the open air. How just, how truly scientific, to shut her in a steaming wash-house![29]

Jefferies's general conclusions on this vexed issue offer a sympathetic and yet ambiguous summing-up of female labour:

> The position of agricultural women is a painful one to contemplate, and their lives full of hardships; but field-labour cannot be fairly accused as the cause of the evils they endure. Their strength is overstrained in the cornfield; but what can you do? It is their gold-mine – their one grand opportunity of getting a little money ... Farm-labour is certainly to be preferred to much of the work that women do in manufacturing districts. At least there is no overcrowding; there is plenty of fresh air, and the woman who works in the field looks quite as robust and healthy as her sister sitting all day in a confined factory.[30]

Thomas Hardy also mulled over these questions in his 1883 essay on 'The Dorsetshire Labourer' where he suggests that, because of increased mobility in the countryside, female workers 'have, in many districts, acquired the rollicking air of factory hands'.[31] As Hardy observes, female labour is specifically required for turnip-hacking in winter, for haymaking in summer, and also for threshing the corn. As regards the latter he remarks, 'not a woman in the county but hates the threshing-machine', and he goes on:

> The dust, the din, the sustained exertion demanded to keep up with the steam tyrant, are distasteful to all women but the coarsest. I am not sure whether, at the present time, women are employed to feed the machine, but some years ago a woman had frequently to stand just above the whizzing wire drum, and feed from morning to night – a performance for which she was quite unfitted.[32]

Hardy describes the dizzying effects of such labour upon a 'thin, saucer-eyed woman of fifty-five' who was so disorientated she wandered around the fields 'bewildered and terrified, till three o'clock in the morning'.[33] The essay's judiciously neutral posture takes on a more apocalyptic tone in Hardy's later fictionalization of this passage when in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* he depicts the operations of the steam threshing machine on the bleak upland farm at Flintcomb-Ash:

> Close under the eaves of the stack, and as yet barely visible was the red tyrant that the women had come to serve – a timber-framed construction, with straps and wheels appertaining – the threshing-machine, which, whilst it was going, kept up a despotic demand upon the endurance of their muscles and nerves.[34]

The machine's operations are directed by an 'indistinct figure' dressed in black, his engine functioning as 'the *primum mobile* of this little world'. The engine man, 'a sooty and grimy embodiment of tallness' who speaks 'in a strange north-

ern accent', has strayed into the southern landscape 'with which he had nothing in common, to amaze and to discompose its aborigines'. He is, the narrator observes, 'in the agricultural world, but not of it', travelling from farm to farm because 'as yet the steam threshing-machine was itinerant in this part of Wessex' in 'the service of his Plutonic master'. Despite the resistance of those field labourers who, the narrator remarks, 'hated machinery', the work proceeds apace, 'the inexorable wheels continuing to spin, and the penetrating hum of the thresher to thrill to the very marrow all who were near the revolving wire cage'. It is the 'ceaselessness of the work', Hardy writes, which tries Tess so 'severely, and began to make her wish she had never come to Flintcomb-Ash' – a response intensified by her harassment at the hands of both the sexually predatory Farmer Groby and of Alec d'Urberville.[35] Keith Snell, in his authoritative study of nineteenth-century rural labour, states categorically that 'it would have been very unusual, if not unheard of, to find women attending threshing machines in the late 1870s or 1880s (as in *Tess*)'.[36] This claim might, however, be counterbalanced by Pamela Horn's observation as to how, in addition to the regular male workforce, 'most farmers would also employ some women – usually on a temporary or seasonal basis to help with weeding, stone-picking, haymaking, harvesting, potato-picking and similar tasks'.[37] Although some of the old men at Flintcomb-Ash reminisce nostalgically about 'past days', 'when they had been accustomed to thresh with flails on the oaken barn-floor',[38] in the earlier scenes of swede-hacking Hardy is at pains to stress the servitude of the women's hand labour in a hundred-acre field significantly scarred with flints with 'phallic shapes':

> The upper half of each turnip had been eaten off by the livestock, and it was the business of the two women to grub up the lower or earthy half of the root with a hooked fork called a hacker, that it might be eaten also. Every leaf of the vegetable having already been consumed the whole field was in colour a desolate drab; it was a complexion without features ... The sky wore, in another colour, the same likeness; a white vacuity of countenance with the lineaments gone. So these two upper and nether visages confronted each other, all day long the white face looking down on the brown face, and the brown face looking up at the white face, without anything standing between them but the two girls crawling over the surface of the former like flies.[39]

Snell has trenchantly queried the accuracy of the depiction of field labour in Hardy, claiming that 'the novels rarely enter seriously and sympathetically into the area of labourers' values, priorities, and subjective experience, and are revealingly reticent on the actual conditions of life in Dorset'.[40] The complexity of working-class life on the land, low wages, religious nonconformity, political beliefs, unionism and class division are, in his view, masked 'by a romanticizing and pastoral gloss' which is 'simplistically misrepresentative'.[41] The motivation behind this evasive portrayal of real conditions is traced by Snell to Hardy's class snobbery, to his fatalistic temperament, and to his position as a 'detached and

educated member of the Dorset market-town middle or professional class' which led to his stereotyping of the rural poor.[42] The class issue is clearly a significant one in this body of writing, and Hardy's 'intermediate' position was characteristic also of Richard Jefferies. As Jeremy Hooker has observed, the 'insecurity' of Jefferies's class identity is ascribable to his status '*between* the labourers and the farmers, and *between* the agricultural world and his urban, middle-class readership'.[43] This argument is worth pondering, but pays perhaps too little attention to aesthetic considerations in the shaping and nuance of Hardy's writing. Snell's notation of the way in which male labour 'came more to dominate economic production' whilst women 'became relegated to more strictly domestic functions' might for instance be countered by Hardy's eloquently understated remark that

> to stand working slowly in a field, and feel the creep of rainwater, first in legs and shoulders, then on hips and head, then at back, front, and sides, and yet to work on till the leaden light diminishes … demands a distinct modicum of stoicism, even of valour.[44]

It is in this extreme situation that Marian movingly points out to Tess 'a gleam of a hill within a few miles o'Froom Valley', reminding the girls of happier sunlit times at Talbothays Dairy.[45]

In what would amount to his final summation of the agricultural scene, submitted to H. Rider Haggard for inclusion in his wide-ranging study *Rural England* (1902), Hardy confirmed that up to the middle of the nineteenth century the field worker's condition was 'in general one of great hardship', whilst by contrast in the early Edwardian period 'life is without exception one of comfort, if the most ordinary thrift be observed'.[46] There were nonetheless other changes, he noted, 'which are not so attractive', the labourers becoming 'more and more migratory' and in consequence, 'a vast amount of unwritten folk-lore' has sunk 'into eternal oblivion'.[47] Hardy proceeds:

> I cannot recall a single instance of a labourer who still lives on the farm on which he was born, and I can only recall a few who have been five years on their present farm. Thus, you see, there being no continuity of information, the names, stories, and relics of one place being speedily forgotten under the incoming facts of the next.[48]

Hardy goes on, finally, to comment on the large-scale 'migration to the towns' and the decline of the life-holding principle in rural villages which has led to a state characterized by 'the uncertainties of a wandering career'.[49]

It is thus clear that the representation of field-women here and elsewhere in Hardy and Jefferies tends to conform to the stereotypes identified by Karen Sayer: the dairymaid or milkmaid offering 'an important category of normative femininity', whilst women's field labour was to be seen, in the terms of a commentator in the *Quarterly Review* in 1867, as 'essentially degrading to the female

character'.[50] It is generally held that women's field labour noticeably diminished in the later nineteenth century, and this is confirmed by Flora Thompson, who recalls former times in Oxfordshire when 'there had been a large gang of field women, lawless, slatternly creatures, some of whom had thought nothing of having four or five children out of wedlock'.[51] However, she notes that in the 1880s 'a few women still did field work', not alongside the men 'but at their own special tasks, weeding and hoeing, picking up stones, and topping and tailing turnips and mangle; or, in wet weather, mending sacks in a barn'.[52] Until the late 1860s, much of the labour force in the countryside was composed of 'gang' work, casual labour done by women and children. As Bethe Schoenfeld argues, there were three key factors which altered this state of affairs: 'the decline in the number of casual and/or migrant workers, wholesale depopulation of rural areas, and … the introduction of field machinery'.[53]

To sum up: this body of writing, overtly sympathetic and responsive as it is to the lives and working conditions of the 'women of the field', unconsciously refracts relations of dominance and subordination between the sexes and between classes. The contradictions inherent in the ideological practices and complex class positions of the two writers reflect tensions in the wider social formation, not least in relation to issues of gender. Their resonant imaginative response to the question of rural labour, in the blindness of its insight, remains unaware of or unreceptive to Marx's dictum that 'the seller of labour-power, like the seller of any other commodity, realizes its exchange-value and parts with its use-value'.[54] The representations of female rural labour examined here, as in the related writings of Flora Thompson, George Sturt and Alfred Williams considered by Barry Sloan, serve an ideological agenda which enables a paradoxically simultaneous masking and revelation of the realities of female rural labour in late nineteenth-century England.

2 'BETWEEN TWO CIVILIZATIONS': GEORGE STURT'S CONSTRUCTIONS OF LOSS AND CHANGE IN VILLAGE LIFE

Barry Sloan

In *Change in the Village* (1912) George Sturt writes of a young man who, he believes, soon after leaving school, probably found employment as a gravel-digger before becoming a night repairman on the railway until a chill contracted at work turned to bronchitis and pleurisy and nearly killed him. Unemployment would have forced him back to the same job had he not secured work as a coal-carter. Sturt expects that he will remain a coal-carter indefinitely, and acknowledges that it is 'more useful by far – to the community – than the old industries were wont to be'.[1] However, since the work itself, he claims, requires little skill or knowledge, it provides no opportunities for the man to broaden his mind. Sturt imagines, on the one hand, that he will have to suppress 'the zest and fascination of living, with the senses alert, the tastes awake, and manifold sights and sounds appealing to his happy recognition' until his brief leisure hours; and, on the other, that he will be so exhausted by his labours that he will have no energy to 'even begin to refresh himself with the arts, or even the games, of civilization'.[2] Worse still, he opines, in contrast with another exemplary figure, an elderly village labourer who has preferred the freedom of casual employment to the servitude of regulated work, the carter has no memories or experience of the variety of 'rural activities, changeful, accomplished, carried on by many forms of skill and directed by a vast amount of traditional wisdom, whereby the country people of England had for ages supported themselves in their quiet valleys'.[3] Sturt himself was a native of such a place; born in Farnham, Surrey, in 1863, he lived there until 1891 when he moved permanently to the neighbouring village of Lower Bourne. On his father's death in 1884, he inherited the wheelwright's shop which had been in the family since the early years of the century and he managed it until ill-health forced him to sell the business in 1920. Sturt's experience convinced him that the memories and knowledge of a community's life and of a particular area are an endless source of stimulus for the mind and imagination which the carter in *Change in the Village* will never possess: competitive

individualism, the wage economy, the reinforcement of the rights of private property owners and the shortcomings of an education which 'failed wholly to start him on the path to learning' have left the man stranded 'between two civilizations, one of which has lapsed, while the other has not yet come his way'.[4]

Sturt is well known for his dual project of recording the changing rural world of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as he encountered it in his own locality and of attempting to interpret the deeper significance of what he saw to extrapolate a view of how England itself was irretrievably altering. The contrasting stories of the carter and the labourer indicate key concerns in his work, and his method of presenting them, particularly in some of his other writings. The discussion in *Change in the Village* is conducted largely in general terms, but draws heavily on the insights and conclusions Sturt had formed from his knowledge of specific individuals and from his own work in the wheelwright's shop. In addition, the journal he kept from 1890 until his death in 1927 (which was not published in his lifetime) reveals how he combined detailed records of events, conversations and meetings with extensive speculation on questions such as the nature of 'peasant' civilization and the roles and relationships of men and women within it, the importance of tradition and of what he called the 'racial life' of the nation, the future social and political structure of society and, later, the impact of the war in influencing this. The purpose of this chapter is to examine how, taken together, these writings reveal the methodology of a social historian and commentator whose self-reflexiveness complicates his representation of the lives he observes. Furthermore, since Sturt was by no means alone in responding to the social and cultural changes affecting English rural life in the later nineteenth century, a comparison with contemporaries whose lives overlapped with his – Richard Jefferies, Alfred Williams and Flora Thompson – helps both to highlight common ground and to clarify his particular achievement.

Physical work is a shared point of reference for all these writers as they seek to communicate the experience of labouring people's lives, but for Sturt work always has cultural as well as individual significance. Accordingly, he observes the skills of working people and valorizes the dynamic relationship between their craftsmanship or expertise and their materials; and he reflects on how work itself is changing and on how these changes give rise to new attitudes and to a revaluation of the place of work in life as a whole. His style blends descriptive detail, interpretative comment and nuanced speculation, as the following example from *The Wheelwright's Shop* (1923) shows. Here Sturt records how the wheelwrights in his shop

> knew each customer and his needs; understood his carters and his horses and the nature of his land; and finally took a pride in providing exactly what was wanted in every case. So, unawares, they lived as integral parts in the rural community of the English ... They were friends, as only a craftsman can be, with timber and iron. The grain of the wood told secrets to them.[5]

The passage must be understood in the wider context of the combination of intimate local knowledge and highly specialized skill brought to bear on each individual task the wheelwrights undertake, which Sturt offers as the defining characteristic of the work done in the shop. The wheelwrights therefore do more than serve their customers well; they are, as it were, perfectly attuned to the demands of the local land itself. However, by describing them as 'unaware' of the profundity of this relationship which it takes Sturt himself to articulate, the writer implicitly claims a level of consciousness he denies to the wheelwrights and shows self-awareness of his own more detached position.[6] Furthermore, the metaphors of friendship and private communication he uses to suggest the intimacy between the wheelwrights and their raw materials turn description into an idealized interpretation of the craftsmen's labour. The significance of this is reinforced later, when Sturt records feeling 'really pained at the sight of an old farm-waggon' of the very kind so carefully made in his wheelwright's shop, laden with bricks and being towed by a steam tractor:

> Too plainly Old England was passing away; villas were coming, the day of farm-waggons was done. Here was this stately implement forced, like the victim of an implacable conqueror, to carry the materials for its own undoing ... I felt as if I were watching a slave subjected to insult and humiliation. It was not so much that bricks were out of place ... But here the shame seemed emphasized by the tractor. Instead of quiet beautiful cart-horses, a little puffing steam-engine was hurrying this captive along, faster than ever farm-waggon was designed to go. The shafts had been removed – as when Samson was mutilated to serve the ends of his masters – and although I couldn't see it, I knew only too well how the timbers would be trembling and the axles fretting at the speed of this unwonted toil. I felt as if pain was being inflicted; as if some quiet old cottager had been captured by savages and was being driven to work on the public road.[7]

This is, perhaps, one of the most emblematic moments in Sturt's writing, revealing several of his strongest beliefs with particular intensity. The vocabulary of military conquest, slavery, torture, distress and abduction personify the cart as the victim of change in which one form of civilization, timeless, dignified and traditional, is superseded by another which is modern, coarse and indifferent to the past. The capacity for suffering ascribed to the cart mirrors the empathy between the wheelwrights and their materials, and its mistreatment and misuse extend by implication to the men who made it, and beyond that to a careless rejection of a whole way of life which Sturt equates with 'Old England' itself. The rhetorical loading of this series of connections typifies a repeated strategy in Sturt's construction of the values and character of the past and the impact of change upon them. It also points to the depth of his personal pain at living in the midst of 'the disillusionments of this present time of transition' in a society in which he felt increasingly estranged.[8] Yet despite his animosity towards change here, Sturt did not always take such a negative view of modernity. He

ends *Change in the Village* by declaring that he 'would not lift a finger, or say a word, to restore the past time' lest he retard 'a movement which … looks like a prelude to the renaissance of the English country-folk'; but he still admits that he has lost 'a great deal of that pleasure which the English country used to give me, when I still fancied it to be the scene of a joyful and comely art of living'.[9] Again, the choice of verb here is notable: given Sturt's calculating use of language, it is impossible to ignore his implied admission that his view of country life may have been more notional than actual.

This may be contrasted with Alfred Williams's declaration at the start of *A Wiltshire Village* (1912), issued by the same publisher and in the same year as *Change in the Village*. He announces his intention 'to sketch out an old-fashioned village, and to give an unvarnished account of some portion of the life there', and his determination to exclude the 'merely picturesque', the 'romantic', and scenes or characters invented in order 'to weave a web of fantastic design with which to deceive others, and myself as well'.[10] To achieve his aim, Williams insists that he will only write about what he has seen and what he knows, and throughout his book he shows none of the hesitation or uncertainty that frequently interrupts Sturt when he writes about private lives and thoughts of people like the old labourer, Bettesworth, and his wife, Lucy. Williams started life in much less advantageous circumstances than Sturt. Born into an already large labouring family in the village of South Marston in 1877, he was precipitated into full-time farm work at the age of eleven to help support his mother after his father left home. In 1892, he followed two of his older brothers into the Great Western Railway workshops in nearby Swindon, where he was to work in heavy industry for many years while at the same time resolutely educating himself and struggling to make his name as a writer.[11] Williams explicitly situates himself as someone who knows what it is 'to labour in the fields and in the factory, too, to be both rural and urban, to have a knowledge of two spheres, and two sets of conditions'.[12] He claims authority from this dual perspective to judge the relative qualities of rural and urban life and work, defining the latter rather conventionally in terms of 'shackles', 'din and turmoil', 'strife and battle' and 'unnatural confinement'.[13] He is like Sturt in believing that factory work undermines individual self-reliance and weakens character, while town life creates false material desires; and also in associating rural life with 'health of body and happiness of spirit', a more independent way of life, and work that has none of the monotonous repetitiveness of mechanical production.[14] However, whereas Sturt is attentive to the nature of the losses involved in these differences, Williams is less interrogative and concentrates principally on establishing the contrasts. This difference is illustrated in the sanguine way he tells how the ancient landscape visible from Callis Hill above his native village is bisected by the east–west railway line, 'one of the great highways of travel and commerce', whose presence

has simply become an accepted feature of the topography.[15] There is nothing here to compare with Sturt's anguish at the sight of the cart being towed by the steam tractor; for Williams, this is something that has happened and has had a major impact on life and work, but it does not evoke any particular distress. Whereas Sturt seizes on the material symptoms of change to point to a deeper underlying crisis, Williams offers a cautionary tale, debunking the imagined advantages of modern town houses over rural cottages and insisting that urban workers become wage slaves forced to work long hours in an unhealthy environment to pay for material goods and entertainment. Although he accepts the need to address 'the insufficiency of remuneration and of leisure' in the country, he maintains that the rural population are happiest before they are tempted by the false attractions of urban life, and have no appreciation of what it will be like in reality.[16] Williams, who was deeply religious, couches his view of the fate of those who succumb to the lure of the urban in terms that are suggestive of an irreversible fall from a relative state of grace:

> If the dweller on the land knew to what extent he must eventually suffer, he would never be so anxious to get away into the towns; by the time he has made the experiment and finally learned for himself, it is too late for repentance.[17]

Yet even Williams concedes that rural work has changed, and he offsets a fulsome account of harvesting as he knew it in his childhood with regretful observation of the efficiency of mechanization which has ended the age-old custom of gleaning, and most female field labour – a subject of repeated attention in writing about this period. He regards this particular change as symptomatic of a weakening of female character resulting from modern social pretensions, and contrasts the alleged happiness of the women field workers in Wiltshire when he first joined them at the age of eight with 'that look of superiority and self-consciousness which is becoming more and more general everywhere throughout the land'.[18] Williams's moral affirmation of women field workers is in sharp contrast to the more conventional view of them as disreputable and indecent found in Flora Thompson's *Lark Rise to Candleford* (1939). Thompson, born the year before Williams, records that few women were employed in the Oxfordshire fields during Laura's youth, and that the bad reputation of gangs of female labourers in former times made most country women reluctant to undertake field work. 'In the eighties', she writes,

> about half a dozen of the hamlet women did field work, most of them being respectable middle-aged women who, having got their families off hand, had spare time, a liking for an open-air life, and a longing for a few shillings a week they could call their own.[19]

Thus, in Thompson's world, only when this kind of work is more genteel and undertaken voluntarily to provide a small supplementary income, rather than out of dire economic necessity, is it deemed morally and socially acceptable.

Williams singles out a particular woman, Betsy Horton, to represent the old-fashioned field worker who had toiled throughout the seasons all her life. Diminutive in stature, her 'face very wrinkled and sunburnt, like leather almost', Betsy is immediately reminiscent of Richard Jefferies's account of 'field-faring women' who 'in their latter days … resemble the pollard oaks, which linger on year after year, and finally fall from sheer decay'.[20] Thompson tells of Mrs Spicer, 'a pioneer in the wearing of trousers', and of Lily, 'big and strong and clumsy as a carthorse and dark as a gipsy, her skin ingrained with field mould and the smell of the earth about her'.[21] To these writers, such women possess something of the heroic in their capacity for a lifetime's sustained, unremitting hard work and endurance, but at the same time this is seen not merely to have defeminized them, but in a sense to have dehumanized them too, so that they became, as it were, assimilated into the natural environment. For Sturt, Lucy Bettesworth is a similar exemplary figure, but his representation of her is more expansive and complex. Initially he sees her only in external, ungendered and non-human terms: she is 'a kind of substantial shadow' who might be mistaken for 'a field scarecrow', a 'piece of antiquity resuming forgotten life', and an 'odd slate-coloured and dishevelled, not quite human, apparition'.[22] Even as he brings a closer perspective to bear, Lucy remains a grotesque whose 'face is a face of the fields', 'unhomely' and 'undomesticated'; she 'seems out of place, out of touch with our times', 'obedient and quiet and dumb, like an overdriven animal', 'too unlovely to be loved'; one of the 'unvalued products' of the fields which 'have overlaid her humanity with an enigmatic and half-dreadful composure like their own'.[23] Yet from this unpromising introduction, Sturt claims that the labours which have so disfigured Lucy 'rank among the great things for which our race has lived', and deserve to be remembered alongside the victory over the Armada, the occupation of India, and Britain's command of the seas: 'nor could there have been any Agincourt or Waterloo had there been no forgotten folk left at home to enforce the harvests from our English valleys'.[24] In this way she is unexpectedly idealized, not as a woman, since all traces of femininity have been eroded by her work, but as a type whose unnoticed labour has contributed to the greatness of Britain. Sturt's fascination with 'forgotten folk' like Lucy and her husband lies in their history which is so different from his own. Although (or, perhaps, *because*) he can only construct it from limited evidence and conversational fragments, he claims the Bettesworths as late embodiments of a mode of life which has already almost vanished, but which he regards as having formed the essence of Englishness.

In his journal entry for 21 June 1908, Sturt comments that with the decline of 'peasant-life, most of the meaning has gone out of our English landscape, and, for me, half of the charm'; and he goes on:

> If the peasant life was narrow and void of aspirations, at least it clung to the countryside with a more faithful love than ours. Faithful, respectful, nay, almost venerating, that love was: the love of children for their fathers, of patriots for their fatherland. In that temper the peasantry nestled in their valleys; more at home there – tied, subservient as they were to the soil and the seasons among the hills – than we can conceive, who but make a sort of toy and harlot of the beautiful country – keeping it to ourselves, or selling it, without true understanding.[25]

There is a tension, however, between this elevated, generalized view of 'peasant life' and such specifics of the Bettesworths' lives as Sturt is able to retrieve or imagine, and in his attempted history of Lucy's background and childhood he seems characteristically aware of the dangers of both over- and under-representing the material hardships of her circumstances. Although put to work aged about seven trimming swedes with her mother, Sturt suggests this was preferable to household drudgery so that rather than regarding her as 'a little slave', we are told that Lucy may 'be imagined a sturdy, matter-of-fact, careless creature, at worst subdued by her hard work, but not at all crushed by it'.[26] The unavoidable fact, however, is that this is merely Sturt's preferred conjecture, and as if recognizing it and seeking to redress the balance, he subsequently warns against 'sentimentalizing' over her field work 'in a romantic Wordsworthian way'.[27] Furthermore, the condition to which field work has reduced Lucy, as it did Betsy Horton, Mrs Spicer, Lily and the unnamed women in Jefferies's article, makes it problematic to accept in purely celebratory terms.

Sturt's treatment of Lucy Bettesworth points to the central dilemma in his work, for in spite of his apparent sympathy with socialist principles, and his genuine abhorrence at the indignities of the workhouse as the almost inevitable end point for people like the Bettesworths, the general direction of modern life dismays him and he hankers after an older way even though he has no personal place within it. This predicament is captured in his journal on 2 July 1908 where he attributes his own discontent and lack of peace to the 'distracted "times"' and 'a breach of continuity in the traditions of English country life'; he continues:

> I looked at the lights that came out in the cottages across the valley this evening: but they are not the cottage lights of a people with any peasant lore or peasant pride or contentment. And earlier, I walked up the last bit of our old road from the town, because for fifty yards or so it still has the look of a country lane. But to imagine the country folk, contented and sane, going home along it, or carting their hay there, and keeping their shrewd old-world eyes open, was not possible. I used to love those imaginings; they belonged to my people and home, to my family and my childhood; indulging them, I was one of the old sturdy English folk, and belonged to something

> ripened and steady-growing, rough but not without well-being. But I cannot do it now because I know it is so false to present the facts; and so I am all adrift in a world I don't understand – a raw restless world without dignity in spite of these marvellous summer days and the roses in the hedges and the quiet evening distance.[28]

What makes this entry particularly moving is Sturt's candour as he faces his own declining ability to sustain his sense of proximity to the past and the people who he believes embody it most fully. The forlorn nature of his endeavour finds symbolic expression in the reference to his walk up the remains of a country lane which is increasingly becoming a road, while the references to the 'imaginings' which he loved to indulge calls into question the extent to which he was ever 'one of the old sturdy English folk', other than in his longing. Although this issue receives particular attention here, it runs through Sturt's work. In June 1898, for example, he tried to give an account of the Farnham Fair, which he says should be written about because it is 'a part of the unknown life of these village people', but he simultaneously notes that he 'looked at it as in the Zoo one looks at the animals, knowing nothing of the inner life going on'; and in *Change in the Village*, he disconcertingly classifies the past generations as the 'human fauna' of the area.[29] Even in the history of his own family, *William Smith Potter and Farmer 1790–1858* (1919), he admits to using details of which he has 'no real memory', but that have helped

> to build up in me ... a feeling I should be very sorry to lose now – a feeling, however ridiculous, that in my childhood I looked upon England a hundred years ago and more, an England going strong then with vigorous country life.[30]

In the journal entry for 2 July 1908 cited above, Sturt refers to cottages no longer inhabited by people with roots in peasant culture, and the altering character of the rural population itself is another recurrent theme in the period, commonly taken to signify the impact of modernity on traditional life. Jefferies's satirical article 'Primrose Gold in Our Village'(1887) is an early critique of the insidious power of incomers to the new villas which grew up as improved transport and increased wealth encouraged townsfolk to take country residences. Money and influence are the weapons they use to force the original villagers to comply with their alien middle-class standards and desires, and, as Jefferies puts it:

> If you are pliant and flexible and don't mind being petted you have nice things put in your way, and you are passed not only in the local village, but right up to London if you want to do business there. If you are not pliant, you are not harrowed, but you are not watered, and it is best to get out of the local village.[31]

The expansion of villa life is also a reference point for change which affects the whole community by the end of *Lark Rise to Candleford* (1945). Thompson finds it paradoxical that, if the family income increased, the Candleford women in particular aspired to move from their old cottages into modern villas associ-

ated with rising social status, because in her view their acquisition of 'the *éclat* of living in one of the villas' came at the cost of living in an inferior property:

> The new house might prove to be damp and draughty, for the walls were thin and the woodwork ill-fitted, and the garden at the back of the house, formerly part of a damp tussocky meadow, left in the rough by the builder ... but as compensation, she would enjoy the distinction conferred by owning a smart front door with a brass knocker, a bay window in the parlour, and water laid on to the kitchen sink.[32]

Like Jefferies and Sturt, she mocks the pretensions of the villa residents who put up lace curtains and gave their properties names like 'Chatsworth', 'Naples' or 'Balmoral', and we are told that Laura regarded the incomers who occupied these houses as 'a class newly emerging in this country, on the borderline between the working and middle classes', distinguished mainly by their vulgarity of taste, delight in discussing the cost of their furnishings and ambitions for their carefully limited families.[33] For Thompson, however, these social, demographic and physical changes are inseparable from deeper cultural changes which she sums up as 'the mass standardization of a new civilization' driven by an overriding desire for social approval and to avoid controversy in word or deed.[34] Her account of the losses involved in pursuit of this 'new civilization' is slight and generalized – she mentions a reluctance to voice strongly held religious or political views, or to exercise independence of mind – but she specifically contrasts the 'flat and toneless' speech of the new villagers with that of their forebears 'whose talk had not lost the raciness of the soil and was seasoned with native wit which, if sometimes crude, was authentic'.[35] The implied inauthenticity of modern speech entails a significant value judgement on the premium the emerging society placed upon conformity to particular predetermined codes of conduct deemed respectable by an increasingly dominant middle class, which the upwardly mobile aspire to join and which is the arbiter of social acceptance into its ranks. In a different way, therefore, Thompson provides another example of the transformative influence of 'Primrose Gold in Our Village' and of the quiet displacement of old ways to satisfy new priorities.

The rapid population growth in the Bourne valley where Sturt lived helps to explain the prominence he gives to the accompanying social changes. At the start of *Change in the Village* he records that once a good water supply had been provided, the valley was '"discovered" as a "residential centre"' and increased in population from 500 to over 2,000 in the twenty years up to about 1910, with the consequence that the original inhabitants 'are being crowded into corners, and are becoming as aliens in their own home; they are receding before newcomers with new ideas, and, greatest change of all, they are yielding to the dominion of new ideas themselves'.[36] These two claims – the estrangement of the locals within their own community and their adoption of 'new ideas' – inform much of Sturt's analysis of the impact of newcomers and influence the larger specu-

lations he makes on the significance of this. Like Jefferies and Thompson, he emphasizes their lack of empathy with the existing residents, both in the dismissive or exploitative way in which they treat them and in their presumptuous imposition of different cultural standards on the community. While the relative wealth of the villa dwellers and employers may set them apart from the village labourers, Sturt defines the essential root of their difference as 'a question of civilization'.[37] This leads to an astute recognition of the insecurities of the newly rich who try to balance liberal concern or guilt about the predicament of the less well off against a determination to keep them in their place, and objections to the labouring classes having material aspirations of their own. Above all, there is a gap in understanding between the aspiring middle class and the old rural labouring population. Sturt indicates this in general terms when he tells how a labourer employed by a villa owner to perform 'wanton tasks' in his garden realizes these

> prove to him more fully than any language can do that they put a different sort of value upon the countryside from its old value, and that they care not a straw for the mode of life that was his before they came here;

and likewise, he knows that the praise of his employer is 'ignorant' and 'undiscriminating approval' void of 'the sympathy of a fellow-expert' who appreciates the 'cunning of his craft'.[38] This tension is reflected more graphically in *Memoirs of a Surrey Labourer* (1907) where the old labourer, Bettesworth, shows his contempt after being treated with 'patronizing familiarity' by Kelway, an incomer to the Bourne who purchased a former labourer's cottage and set about renovating it: asked by the man if he can recommend a plumber, because 'plumbing is a thing I never had any knowledge of', Bettesworth replies dismissively, 'if I was you I should sleep with a plumber two or three nights'.[39]

With the decline of traditional rural work for women, Sturt sees that they are equally caught in the double bind of having to take employment from the better-off which at the same time reinforces the social divisions between them. 'The truth is', he writes, 'that middle-class domesticity, instead of setting cottage women on the road to middle-class culture of mind and body, has side-tracked them – has made of them charwomen and laundresses, so that other women may shirk these duties and be "cultured."'[40] His judgement is that in becoming part of the wage economy, such women have lost what he calls 'the larger existence which enwrapped the peasant woman's house-drudgery and made it worthwhile', and although this is an unsatisfactorily vague proposition as it stands, taken in the context of comments Sturt makes elsewhere, it may be understood to refer to the more integrated and less materially competitive structure he ascribes to pre-modern village communities.[41] What is clear is that while women's work had become less harsh than it was for Lucy Bettesworth, the new domestic employment lacked the structure of service within grand houses, conferred little dignity

or status on the employee, and principally announced the enhanced social standing of her employers.

In his journals, Sturt makes repeated efforts to tease out and clarify his own thoughts on the significance of the changed nature of work. Sometimes he pursues this in highly abstract terms, referring, for example, to the warp and weft of '*Heredity*' [*sic*], which is 'the continuity of organic form *through* the generations', and '*Tradition*', defined as 'a continuity going on in the environment, and spreading *across* the generations', which 'unites them by an external tie'.[42] Modernity, he considers, has disrupted heredity and tradition, atomizing society and elevating the individual above the community. At a practical level, for people like the natives of the Bourne, the effects of this process

> resemble an eviction, when the inmates of a cottage have been turned out upon the road-side with their goods and chattels, and there they sit, watching the dismantling of their home, and aware only of being moved against their will.[43]

The simile combines literal truth in some instances with metaphorical suggestiveness of the general sense of displacement and helplessness in the face of an irresistible force.

This force is not limited to the changes in traditional employment and the large numbers of newcomers to the village but, as Jefferies had recognized, is signalled in other ways too, whether, for example, in the coming of road lamps and cars, or the sounds of tennis parties and pianos; or in the increasingly visible presence of the guardian of private property and respectable behaviour, the policeman. But for Sturt, one of the most offensive attempts to subvert traditional life was the 'Institute' designed with the dual purpose of giving men an alternative social meeting place to the public house and opportunities to 'improve' themselves. 'Controlled by people of another class whose "respectability" is irksome, and open only to members and never to women', it embodied a presumptuous and gendered rejection of the customs and recreations of the past, offering instead an alien and alienating environment with little appeal to its intended users.[44]

Sturt locates the basis of the disconnection caused by change, and so tellingly represented in the Institute, in the lost bond between people and the land. While he claimed this was at its worst in the rich who came to the country merely 'to pass time in it, bringing into it the town outlook, the town pursuits', he knew it extended beyond them as the advancing commercial imperative fuelled 'the readiness to sell or break up or cut down or level away or build over anything or any site'; and he concluded sadly: 'We are a decent people, but we have arrived at a very sordid out-at-elbows period of our nation's history'.[45] This opinion can be linked to his pessimistic view of the shift from a parochial to a cosmopolitan perspective on life at the cost of what he calls 'the old local "Spirit"', characterized as 'an understanding, common to all neighbours, of the neighbourhood

and its intimate personal demands'.[46] He also linked the decline of that mutual 'understanding' to the loss of what was accepted by previous generations as the essential need to live in a highly responsive relationship to the environment. Again Sturt complements his generalized hypothesis with a precisely detailed personal account of his own sensation of the 'old local "Spirit"' familiar to his forebears breaking in upon him with the force of a revelation:

> For a moment – no more – I recovered some of this understanding that was also theirs, this afternoon: I felt their 'spirit' all about me; It [*sic*] was on the road near the old Church … there on the road where as I passed all was fairly quiet, fairly still; where the sunlight and the hedgerow shadows lay calm and contented; there for that moment I 'understood' the world, and had volitions about it, like those I fancy our forefathers to have had. So, their 'spirit', their volition, came to refresh and strengthen me, as that of my contemporaries had failed to do. I was in their world – the world of slow-moving gentle farm-horses and shapely trundling waggons; the world of jogging old country folk. In fact, however, all this has gone; all the old volitions of that time have been swept away, by the War, by the Newspaper; have been obliterated by the Cosmopolitan world.[47]

While the intensity of the moment for Sturt is indisputable, he can still do no more than 'fancy' that his sense of relationship to the world corresponded to that of past generations, and as usual he is quick to acknowledge that the condition he has fleetingly 'understood' has irretrievably 'gone'. Furthermore, the transience of his experience contrasts with what he suggests was the normal ambience of life in the past. The strong sense of retrospective recognition of a watershed in country life produced here has something in common with Thompson's observation at the end of *Lark Rise* that 'after the Jubilee nothing ever seemed quite the same': she continues,

> Wages rose, prices soared, and new needs multiplied. People began to speak of 'before the Jubilee' much as we in the nineteen-twenties spoke of 'before the war', either as a golden time or as one of exploded ideas, according to the age of the speaker.[48]

Both writers see their particular small communities penetrated to an unprecedented extent by cultural changes flowing from external events, their self-sufficiency challenged, and the attention of their people distracted by the metropolis or beyond. Williams, too, regretted the invasive influence of the cities, complaining that with urban interests dominating modern legislation, 'the dweller in the country – the humble agriculturalist, the most humble and most necessary of all workers … the very backbone and support of every industry and all society, is forgotten, spurned, despised and ridiculed'.[49]

Sturt repeatedly strives to find images and examples to evoke the 'old spirit' of intimacy he ascribes to the past. In one instance, he imagines that a peasant handling turfs, faggots or timber at home could visualize the landscape they came

from; but he is immediately obliged to concede that 'it is impossible to give an idea' in detail of 'the intimacy of this knowledge'.[50] However, a more immediate sense of this elusive detail emerges in his reconstruction of Bettesworth's voice as he talks aloud, less to himself than to the turfs he is laying and the tools he is using:

> 'Hullo there!' exclaimed the old man, 'what be you up to? Anybody'd think you was alive'. Then, to make room for a third turf, two already laid had to be squeezed closer. 'You two git up more together! There, my man; that's your place. They two wanted to crowd you out o'bed'. The adjustment, alas, proved not to his mind, and he spoke dubiously, ''T en't a fit, now. 'Tis more like a perilatic stroke than a fit ... However, if I pays 'em with the spade ...There, my lads, *I'll* give you socks'.[51]

Although Sturt remained dissatisfied with his efforts to capture Bettesworth's voice and was well aware of the distortions arising from his own inevitable role as intermediary, arranger and editor, however much he might try to subdue it, in a passage like this his interventions are minimal and he adds no interpretation. Instead, the reader has the experience of *visualizing* the man's work and of *hearing* him talk, sounding more as if he was humouring a small child he was dressing than repairing a lawn; and this in turn is highly suggestive of the quasi-human relationship between Bettesworth, the ground he is working and the tool he is using.

The particular effectiveness of that presentational strategy may be contrasted with the commentary Sturt gives when Bettesworth explains the technical features of a handmade 'polling beck' (a digging fork) which had come through several generations of his wife's family. For the writer, the tool is a kind of 'objective co-relative' giving him imaginative entry into the history of successive generations' relationship to the land, and a vicarious sense of involvement in it:

> Through a hundred seasons men's faces had bent over it and felt the heat of the sun reflecting up from off the potatoes, as the tines of the beck brightened in the hot soil. And what sweat and sunburn, yet what delight in the crops, had gone to the polishing of the handle! A stout ash shaft, cut in some coppice years ago, and but rudely trimmed, it now shone with the wear of men's hands; and to balance it as I did, warm and moist from Bettesworth's grasp, was to get the thrill of a new meaning from the afternoon.[52]

This highly selective construction of the polling beck's history valorizes physical labour and the fruits of the earth brought up by the tool without consideration of the hardship and human cost of such work, especially on days when the sun was not shining. Ironically, too, it is work that Sturt himself, who was a chronic asthmatic, would probably have found impossible. It is also notable that while Bettesworth is interested in explaining certain 'particularities' of the polling beck, the writer excludes these as 'hardly to be described here' in order to privilege his own reflection, which is at odds with his declared aim of allowing the old man's voice to prevail. Although Sturt is not usually given to romanticizing, this passage displays the kind of self-pleasing indulgence Jefferies sharply rejects in,

for example, his graphic description of the sheer drudgery and wretchedness of a fogger's early morning work in the dead of winter as he tends his cattle, which he sets against the pastoral fantasies of the uninformed.[53]

W. J. Keith observed that 'one might well see Sturt's works as documenting the occurrence, sometime in the 1880s, of an urban-rural dissociation of sensibility'.[54] The key to this process as Sturt understood it is perhaps signalled in *The Wheelwright's Shop* where he declares that the economy has shifted from 'a nation of self-supporting workmen' to 'a population of wage-slaves'.[55] The two terms, 'a nation' and 'a population', have different implications: while the former implies a shared sense of identity and belonging, the latter suggests a more disparate and random grouping, the product of chance rather than of a common history and remembered past. Likewise a further value judgement emerges from the contrast between 'self-supporting workmen', a phrase indicative of dignity, independence and pride in labour, and 'wage-slaves' who have no autonomy and work only for money. Yet Sturt's view of modern work was not always so negative. Pondering the 'deepest meaning' of the 1912 national miners' strike which he thought marked the beginning of 'a vast social revolution' by setting the workers against the government in an unprecedented way, Sturt speculates that the real issue is not the campaign for a minimum wage, but an underpinning 'ethical idea' that

> comes from within, and is full of a life which will not die for centuries ... And in the main this is what it is: a persuasion, not to be argued down, that Work itself is but a means to well-living; that it ought to secure happiness, cheerfulness, vivacity to those who do it, and that if it fails to do that there is something wrong, which must be put right at all costs.[56]

According to this view, there is something deep-seated or intuitive in human nature that will rebel against work that is divorced from or antithetical to the need for quality of life.[57] The character of modern industrial work neglects this connection, and is therefore the real source of unrest rather than the actual claims of the strikers.

Later the same year Sturt returned to the issue from a different perspective. Taking the example of Nipper Slingo, he claims that this local labourer's 'skill and prowess ... fill his whole being with a subtle, though sub-conscious satisfaction' which he likens to the pleasure that golf gives an idle man.[58] He attributes the alleged subconsciousness of Slingo's 'satisfaction' to lack of awareness of selfhood, and associates it with what he calls 'the folk way' of peasant culture where 'it was enough for men to live ... fulfilling the traditions of their community, or of their caste'.[59] At the same time, in a similar vein to his comments on the significance of Lucy Bettesworth's field labour, he likens this mode of work to that of bees or ants, 'absorb[ing] its millions of Slingos' whose individual existence is of no consequence 'in comparison with the immense web or network of

Doings, to which each contributes his tiny part'.[60] Modern society, he believes, has produced a growth of consciousness, resulting in an 'increasing conviction that the Individual Self must be considered ... incompatible with that servitude to Industry which enthrals the Slingos of the world'.[61] Sturt regarded this as an irresistible development with uncertain consequences bringing radical change to traditional industry and society in the name of democracy. Paradoxically, while he himself was sympathetic to democratic socialism, his discussion of Slingo reveals contradictory tensions in his thought: on the one hand, he presents the labourer, like Bettesworth or his wife, as representative of an older, more rooted, self-sufficient and satisfied way of life; but it is also characterized as an insect-like existence, intuitive rather than intellectual or spiritual, at or below subsistence level and largely void of knowledge of or interest in the wider world. If the modern industrial worker is a 'wage-slave', Slingo and the Bettesworths are also 'enthral[led]' in their own way. As his journals show, Sturt had no desire to see the perpetuation of the hardships and limitations of such people's lives; but nor could he ever envisage how the transition from a traditional to a modern society could be effected without it becoming wholly fragmented and succumbing to the influences of money and materialism, more especially so because, as he noted in July 1909, 'it is the unhappy position of labouring people to be encumbered with traditions which no longer fit their circumstances'.[62]

At the close of his discussion of Jefferies, Keith argues that whereas his earlier work perpetuates the strong sense of relationship to the external world found in older rural writing, the introspection and self-reflexiveness of *The Story of My Heart* (1883) and the late essays point to the direction that would become dominant in Sturt. 'Here', he writes, 'solitary theorizing and intellectual analysis form the main staple of the work. An almost obsessive introspection becomes the norm'.[63] The truth of this is particularly borne out by the evidence of the journals, which Sturt told Arnold Bennett was 'the best book I shall ever write'.[64] They record the restlessness of his mind in its endless quest not only to understand and define the physical and social changes he saw taking place around him, but also to grasp and articulate the elusive nature of the qualitative changes to the culture which, he believed, had been the essence of England itself for generations. The incompleteness of the latter project is unsurprising, but it is richly complemented by the remarkable exemplary studies of individual men and women who were among the last survivors of the earlier part of the nineteenth century and had become leftovers in the modern age. As David Gervais has observed, 'some of the most moving things in Sturt's books occur when, though a looker-on, he is privileged with a sense of whole generations of English people, emerging through the presence of some humble peasant descendant'.[65] Late in his life Sturt reached even further back, reconstructing and imagining his own family history before life and work were transformed by modernity. The

journals, however, remain much more provisional in their analysis of change and their attempts to foresee the future character of society and culture. The challenge appeared to mount when he felt that the war had 'wiped out' the past, making it almost impossible 'to get the long vista' of history 'where the name "England" called up readily [the] august progress through the centuries'.[66] Sturt himself felt increasingly stranded between two civilizations like the carter he describes in *Change in the Village*. He did not belong to the society of men like Bettesworth or the wheelwrights in his shop, and was always conscious of the limits to his understanding of their lives; but he found the contemporary world alien and unappealing, and regarded the arts as a poor substitute for tradition, and machines as the enemy of skill. Near the end of his life he wrote:

> I had rather be a faulty amateur, dependent on faulty amateurs, than a connoisseur dependent on a machine; for the latter may hardly taste the inwardness of the delight reached by having the tools in one's own hands or at least by fellow-feeling with those who have.[67]

Yet with characteristic wryness he also remembered his own limitations as a spoke-maker compared with the expertise of the master wheelwright, George Cook, who could find and correct faults in his employer's work that were imperceptible to him. The distinctive mark of Sturt's best work is his capacity both to record the phenomena of change and loss and his own emotional reactions to them, and to resist self-pity or a lapse into nostalgia for the past by means of a counterbalancing irony and attention to material facts. This is implicit in a late journal entry following the death of his beloved sister, Mary, who had been his principal carer for many years. 'I would not have her back any more than I would have the crocuses back or go back, myself, to youth', he wrote:

> The process must not be disturbed. A stream of vitality, millions of years old (ceasing indeed in our celibate family) built up in her a set of sense organs that responded, much as in myself, to contacts with the environment. In me too it will stop by and by. But I would not have it otherwise.[68]

Here, even as he mourns his deeply felt personal loss, Sturt faces it philosophically and unresentfully, as he also faces his own eventual extinction, the finality of which will be just as complete as the passing Bettesworth's generation, the sale of the wheelwright's shop or the changes in the village.

3 AT WORK AND AT PLAY: CHARLES LEE'S *CYNTHIA IN THE WEST*[1]

Gemma Goodman

> They have no time to sit and look at Nature. Their life is one long fight with her. I am ashamed sometimes. This painting as a life-work – it is playing at living. They live.[2]

So says Mr Forrester in Charles Lee's novel *Cynthia in the West*. Published in 1900, the novel is set in the fictional Cornish fishing village of Tregurda. 'They' are the local inhabitants whose lives and livelihood is entirely dependent on the sea. Being both a local man and a painter, Forrester occupies a unique position in the novel – his perspective on the workers is sympathetic and, as can be seen above, makes him question painting as an occupation. Yet within the novel he socializes with a colony of painters who have descended on Tregurda from London. They view the local inhabitants with scorn, distrust and as an 'alien race' and it is the complex relationship between the two groups which Lee's novel explores.[3]

Charles Lee was a popular novelist in his own lifetime but he and his work have largely dropped out of cultural consciousness. He has received a small amount of recognition in the last twenty years with the republication in 2003 of his anthology of bad verse *The Stuffed Owl*.[4] Given that Cornwall is the primary focus of his literary output there remains some awareness about his work in this area and in 1995 the Cornish publisher Tabb House published *The Cornish Journal of Charles Lee* – extracts from his five notebooks which cover the period 1892–1908.[5] It is here that we see Lee's acute observation of local life – customs, folklore and the Cornish dialect – and with a specific purpose. As K. C. Phillipps notes in his introduction to Lee's journal, entries which include 'work up' or 'might make something of this' show Lee's intention to use the recorded material in his novels.[6] Alan M. Kent believes him to be 'one of the most successful re-creators of Cornish life in fictional form' with an accurate understanding and ability to delineate in his novels Cornish dialect, humour and Cornish experience during the period 1890–1940.[7] To date, however, there has been no academic exploration of his Cornish novels: *The Widow Woman* (1897), *Paul*

Carah, Cornishman (1898), *Cynthia in the West* (1900) and *Dorinda's Birthday* (1911), or his short stories.[8]

In *Cynthia* the narrative is told from the perspective of Robert Maurice, a would-be writer from London who arrives at the beginning of the novel to join the artist colony for an extended summer in Cornwall.[9] Maurice is a thinly disguised fictional representation of the author who replicates Lee's own position within the artist colony in Newlyn. While not a painter himself, as a cultured, middle-class Londoner Lee had immediate affinities with the Newlyn set and began to keep company with artists such as Stanhope Forbes and Walter Langley.[10] Within the novel Maurice too is welcomed into the social world of the artists but acts as both social participant and observer.

This chapter examines the fixity and fluidity of gender categories in relation to the peripheral space of the coast. The novel at first seems to read the relationship of the protagonist Cynthia to the landscape, and of the artists and the fisherfolk within the space of the beach, as predicated on static gender codes. Yet it actually makes possible an alternative reading of these two culturally opposed groups whereby those same gender codes are contested and challenged through their specific negotiation with the coastal locale.

Cornish Ruralities

Before looking at *Cynthia* in more detail it is useful to consider the coastal setting of the novel with regard to perceptions and constructions of rurality and the implications of this within a specifically Cornish context. Pauline Barber et al. recognize 'a series of interlinked silences surrounding rurality' and call for a new perspective which is able to 'identify the changing articulations of gender and class in rural localities'.[11] This is certainly one of the key aims and focus of this collection and also informs an approach in this chapter to unravelling the complex classed gender codes which are being established, challenged and changed in the moment of economic and cultural change in which the novel is set.

The idea of rurality as silenced is also pertinent to a Cornish context – it is those very areas of silence that most need to be spoken of, such as how gender and class operate within rural locales. At the same time, gendered experiences within the rural are silenced when dominant narratives of place suppress alternative understandings of the rural. As a predominantly rural territory Cornwall has in common with other rural areas that it is continually regarded as possessing qualities which are retrogressive when compared with urban environments. Yet this stereotypical designation is further cemented by Cornwall's peripheral geographic location and Celtic identity. The remoteness of Cornwall from London has been understood, and continues to be understood as, suggestive of a concomitant disconnection from civilization and progress. While contemporary means

of communication, travel and access to goods via the internet mean that distance is really no longer a factor in rural locations 'keeping up' with progress in cultural terms (economic terms is another matter), constructions of Cornwall in our media continues to inscribe age-old stereotypes. The portrayal of the inhabitants of Port Wenn in the television show *Doc Martin* is one such example where an in-comer from London lives amongst a tribe of locals who are little more than strange, stupid and completely cut off from or ignorant of a world outside of their odd Cornish idiom. Such constructions also draw upon delineations of Celtic peoples as uncivilized and in need of control and instruction from their Anglo-Saxon betters. Once again this is a well-worn stereotype but it continues to inform how Celtic regions of Great Britain and Ireland are understood and portrayed.

As Bernard Deacon has established, from the late eighteenth century a prevalent representation of Cornwall as West Barbary – a land foreign to England, its inhabitants dangerous and barbaric – was being readily consumed by 'a voyeuristic metropolitan market, fascinated by news from the peripheries'.[12] However, both Deacon and Philip Payton argue that this identity, over which the Cornish themselves had no control, was by the 1820s supplanted by an insider-derived identity of 'industrial prowess', or what Deacon refers to as 'industrial civilization'.[13] Cornwall was the site of immense industrial activity in mineral mining and earned a world reputation as an industrial leader in technology and expertise. This reputation survived the collapse of mining in Cornwall in the 1860s as Cornishmen travelled to places such as South Africa, Australia and America to impart their industrial knowledge and provide manpower. The reality of the state of mining within Cornwall by the second half of the nineteenth century, the privations experienced at home and by those forced to travel abroad for employment is another story, which there is not time to discuss here, but this does not distract from the power of Cornwall's industrial prowess moniker. This was a reputation earned through what happened and what was produced within Cornwall in the first half of the nineteenth century which was promoted by the Cornish themselves and accepted beyond its borders. Such an identity complicates the idea of the rural location as antithetical to the progression of the city.

Cornwall, then, is a site where multiple narratives of place and identity exist and intersect, which are both constituted from within and imposed from without.[14] As Rachel Moseley has recently suggested, it is a contested space.[15] This is despite the irresistible desire by some, in the nineteenth century and still today, to try to fix Cornwall with an overly simplistic historical and cultural narrative. Payton, in his comprehensive history of Cornwall, identifies an example of what he calls a 'gross oversimplification' of Cornwall's history in Maxine Berg's *The Age of Manufactures* where she simply states that 'in the middle of the nineteenth century mining suddenly declined and the region was rapidly transformed into a holiday resort'.[16] This kind of analysis is perhaps partly due to Cornwall's geo-

graphical distance – its peripherality seems to prevent those writing from an English or London-centred perspective from zooming into the required level of detail with regards to what is going on within Cornwall. As a result particular narratives of place dominate. Tourism too, from the second half of the nineteenth century onwards, seems to require and to create a homogenous and so marketable construction of Cornwall so that it can package Cornwall to the potential visitor in an attractive and coherent way. Yet even here there exists multiple and conflicting versions of place in operation simultaneously. Cornwall is England but not England, wild, barbarous and dangerous while also being home. It is remote but easily accessible by train. It is exotic and lush and also an industrial 'granite kingdom'.[17]

An understanding of Cornwall as a contested and paradoxical space (or as a series of conflicting and overlapping spaces even) provides an important context for Lee's novel, while the novel is also set within a microcosmic contested space within Cornwall – that of a small coastal fishing village. It is a site of work for the fisherfolk, and of play for the incoming artist set. These two groups are separated by class, culture and origin. Yet they occupy the same rural space at the same moment in time. Cornwall has not, therefore, as Berg may have us believe, transitioned swiftly and smoothly from mining and fishing into the tourist industry, either economically or culturally.

Picturing Fishing

Deacon's important article 'Imagining the Fishing' makes a number of points about the fishing and artist communities, and their relationship to each other, which provides a useful context to Lee's *Cynthia in the West*. He points out that 'the fishing communities of Cornwall occupy a marginal space within a margin'.[18] The marginal space of the coastal fishing village is 'discovered' by guidebook and travel writers from the 1780s onwards so that

> from the 1780s to the 1870s a trope of fishing ports as the proto-picturesque established itself and then, from the 1850s to the Edwardian era, fishing communities began to be subjected to a process of 'othering' which contributed to a wider romanticization of Cornwall. While the focus was initially on the landscape of these spaces, the fishing community also became of interest to artists and so the native inhabitants were also subject to this process of 'othering' – conceptualized as 'primitive components of the landscape'.[19]

The incoming artists were instrumental in bringing the attention of the English, and in particular the urban middle classes, to the Cornish fishing village. From the early 1880s there was an influx of artists into Newlyn. The 'Newlyn School', as it became known, included Walter Langley, Frank Bramley, Norman Garstin, Stanhope Forbes and 'Lamorna Birch'. It was a large group of artists

to be concentrated within such a small place and their paintings were primarily responsible for the version of this place received by the affluent Londoners. Deacon argues that while the school professed to be engaged in painting with 'unflinching realism' their realist project 'had clear limits' and could not resist elements of sentiment and pathos. He identifies such paintings as Walter Langley's *Among the Missing – Scene in a Cornish Fishing Village* (1884) in which a woman weeps at the harbour-side for her missing husband, as being imbued with sentiment and overlaid with its own narrative.[20] In the limitations of the artists' quest for realism is revealed a need or desire to see Newlyn as a pocket of timelessness protected from encroaching modernity.[21] The way in which the artists relate to Newlyn typifies the creation of rural locales from an urban-centred perspective as a place anchored in tradition and old-fashioned ways, a place of charm and simplicity which was in some way immune from the wider world which the artists shut out of their paintings as they looked in on the fishing community with nostalgic yearning. This was in the face of actual change within the fishing communities, the gradual decline of the industry but also material changes to the houses and harbours and the type of fishing undertaken. Yet this reality was not of interest to the artists whose imposed representations were becoming important to an emerging construction of Englishness. As Deacon argues, 'while fishing communities were constructed as a primitive, conservative and timeless "other" they were also being recuperated as part of a reconstructed English "nation", one that included the domestic, the rural and the provincial'. Cornwall's hybridity as simultaneously English and not-English made its incorporation into such a narrative possible, but it also made possible what followed. Deacon asserts that

> the artists' incorporation of Newlyn into an English nationhood soon clashed with another interpretation of this 'remote other', as a Celtic periphery. In the Edwardian period and later in the twentieth century it was to be the 'Celtic' representation that became fixed in Cornwall rather than the representation of 'rural England'.[22]

Cornwall's difference ultimately prevented its incorporation into an English narrative while suggesting other possibilities beyond the boundaries that an English identity imposed.

Coastal Boundaries

In her forthcoming article on women and the Cornish coast in film and television, Moseley suggests that because 'Cornwall's own identity ... is uncertain, anxious, perpetually in process; for Cornish cultural practitioners, it might be described as a representationally "liminal" or "Third Space" of enunciation, a landscape of both indeterminacy and possibility'. While arguing that this is relevant to the place-image of Cornwall as a whole, Moseley demonstrates that it has particular significance for the coastal borderland of the beach and the sea:

> The coast might be understood as a liminal space, then, partly because it is precisely 'betwixt and between' land and sea. The beach is neither one nor the other, neither wet nor dry, with its own flora and fauna, and the rocky edges of the land occupy a similar position, with, for instance, grassy overhangs which seem, at first glance, solid, but which may give way, without warning, exposing the treacherous rocks and waves below – these spaces are constantly in flux, subject to perpetual change and shift.

The coastal space, then, such as the space within the novel *Cynthia in the West* 'can thus become a space through which to speak about unsettling questions around gender, sexuality and disruption of traditional discourses around gender'.[23] In Lee's novel the space of the fishing village is disrupted and unsettled by the influx of artists who are inspired by the Cornish coastal landscape and this situation makes possible the subsequent disruption of traditional gender codes, as will be discussed later. Yet, while these cultural changes destabilize gender boundaries they reinscribe class boundaries.

There is an uneasy relationship between the artists and the local fisherfolk in the novel which reflects the historical reality. There is a degree of acceptance (not assimilation) of the artists by the locals but equally an ever-present enmity. Sampy, for example, described in the text as an 'imperious rustic', supplements his income from the more traditional uses of his horse and cart by ferrying the visitors from the station to Tregurda.[24] Yet, as I have argued previously,

> the novel registers the impossibility of complete assimilation due to the distinct separateness of the two groups. This is reflected in the instinctive reactions on both sides when a scandal breaks in the village which aligns them in support of two opposing women. Mrs Wilmington calls the locals 'savages' and a local man declares ''tis time for 'em [the artists] to clear out and leave we in peace'. There is a sense that under the surface of any interaction are these indelibly opposed positions.[25]

Those positions are created and maintained by class boundaries. Class is the overriding factor which distinguishes the two groups and determines the way in which they relate to each other. In particular, they are separated by their social positions as working class and leisured class and so their classed perspective on work and play (or idleness). At the opening of the novel, when Sampy collects Robert from the train station, his attitude towards the painters is humorous yet revealing:

> Ah! Well, for doing nothing in p'tickler if that's your trade, you couldn't have pitched on a better place. Artists! And they call it working! I seed them at it. One dab, two dabs, jump back a yard, head on showlder and eyes scriffed up. Jump for'ard agin, rub out what you've done. Off hat, set down, light your pipe, puff puff, for ten minutes.[26]

The artist set, however, see what they do as work and Jack Gibbs is conscious to communicate how hard they have been working to the newly arrived Robert. As observer and commentator Robert's position reflects that of the text as a whole

when he characterizes the artists as 'a party of young gentlefolk at play – playing at work, playing at love, self-absorbed, with an occasional glance of amused incomprehension at the herd of watching rustics'.[27] The text is playful with both the artists' attitude towards themselves and towards the local fisherfolk, allowing their unconscious irony to be unmasked by the reader. It mocks their conceptualization of their lifestyle as work when, for example, Jack Gibbs, identified as 'one of the idler folk of the colony', bemoans how the hot weather is tiring him when he has been seen to do nothing all day.[28] His work, which the novel sees as play, is contrasted with the work of the fishermen and women which is identified as 'a real world, a world of toil'.[29] As can be seen from the quotation which opens this chapter, Forrester, through his unique position as a local painter with connections to both groups, is the one to identify the full implications of this for the artists, and so for himself. Cynthia, through him, comes to understand too – 'He is right', she says, 'they live and we only play at living'.[30] It is a melancholy revelation for them both. The position of the text is that work connects the fisherfolk to the world around them, making it and their lives real, even though that relation to the surrounding natural environment in is the form of 'one long fight with her'.[31] Whereas, peering at that world from around the edges of an artist's canvas, or when in repose, is both a failure to access the realism of the scene which they paint, the rural environment which they occupy, and the reality of their own lives. The classed positions of the two groups, therefore, determines how they create the space around them.

Cynthia

It is possible to read the relationship between gender and space in a similar way. Like class, the novel offers a reading of gender as two opposing categories of fixed meaning within the rural space which are created through traditional and universally understood gender codes. For example, Cynthia's name invites the reader to make a specific association between her and the moon which is based on her gender. It is a connection that is continually referred to in the novel. Before we meet Cynthia, Sampy sets up the importance of the moon to the narrative: 'she've got authority', he says. 'Rules the tides, she do, and the weather, and the hearts av young folks'. He advises Robert to 'shteer out av moonlight so much as you can, young chap'.[32] The moon's power to control the tides determines the fisherfolk's ability to make their living from the sea and, as Sampy believes, the weather, and so the moon is also believed to pose a continual threat to life for those at sea. The moon's power draws the sea into the shore and pushes it away again. As a doubling of the moon Cynthia has the power over men's hearts within the artist colony. She draws them near her, attracted by her beauty, and sends them away with her rejection of their advances, even if she does not wish to

do so (she confides to Robert '[t]hey *will* singe their wings, Mr. Maurice. Is it the lamps fault?').[33] Vincent, for example, is irresistibly attracted to Cynthia at the start of the novel, but leaves Tregurda when she spurns his marriage proposal.[34]

When Robert first meets the earthly Cynthia that evening he deduces that 'this was not the high, unattainable moon, fulfilled of her destiny, cold and glassy, but the delicate slim crescent, hinting a future, yet hesitating to alight on the horizon hills, with the pink and gold of sunset about her'.[35] Robert talks to Cynthia of the moon while both are in full knowledge of the association being made – 'here I find she rules', he admits.[36] The gendering of the landscape and of Cynthia is neatly aligned through the simultaneity of their powerful femininity. This creates a space for Robert to discuss her body (the 'slim crescent') and his and other men's attraction to her through an albeit thinly veiled disguise, yet one which is reliant on a shared cultural understanding of the feminization of landscape and the traditional characteristics of femininity.

The way in which the novel connects Cynthia with the moon suggests, therefore, that the narrative reinscribes rather than challenges common representations of gender. However, this position is complicated through Cynthia's own understanding of and artistic recreation of nature. Given that the artist colony has set up temporary home in Tregurda for the purpose of painting it is perhaps surprising that they are almost exclusively to be found working behind the closed doors of their studios – a 'nest of fish cellars' converted for the purpose.[37] Cynthia, however, is 'not often in her studio' and is rather seen to paint out-of-doors, capturing what she sees before her.[38] The more subversive reading of relationship to nature is suggested even by her breaking the boundaries of the studio in order to paint.

Flowers hold particular importance for Cynthia, a characteristic which, at first, seems to further inscribe her connection to nature though traditional gender codes. While 'caressing' a rose in Mrs Wilmington's garden she tells Robert:

> I love flowers … they are living creatures with no touch of the animal about them. That makes their charm, I think. Their life and beauty bring them within the range of our sympathy, and they never do anything to distress one.[39]

Unsurprisingly then, flowers are the focus of her artistic endeavour. 'Cynthia paints flowers', Jack informs Robert when he has just arrived in Tregurda, 'one isn't sure that she has a heart – she doesn't give a glimpse of it. But a soul she has, and she puts it into her flowers. They live, sir!'[40]

Mrs Wilmington also paints flowers but these are 'arranged in a pretty bouquet in a Japanese vase on a polished table, with a Liberty cretonne for background'.[41] She likes to be in control of nature, just as she controls the movements and social interactions of the group, and this is reflected in the cut and arranged flowers she paints and her intensely manicured garden with regimented bor-

ders.[42] Mrs Wilmington is a point of contrast to Cynthia and the reading of her and her gender in relation to flowers which is available in the text. On an evening walk with Robert in the chapter entitled 'Cynthia Unveils' she confides to him – 'there is a love – I have dreamt of it – that would grow up unasked and unforced, like a wild flower in a garden; unsuspected, til one day it opened a sudden blossom'.[43] Cynthia uses the flower as a simile to talk of a love which is unrestrained, which has freedom even in a garden in which nature is under some form of control. That control is imposed upon nature by a human element is suggestive, in relation to the love which the flower represents, of a social control of women and of sexuality. Her comments are prompted by a courting couple whom they encounter on their walk and who she sees to be '*making love*'. 'It is a hideous phrase to me', she tells Robert. Crucially, however, this is not simply a case of prudery on Cynthia's part – even though her ice-like demeanour and cool rejection of potential lovers until this point may suggest this to be so. Instead it is 'that it is *made* – manoeuvred, coaxed, urged, forced!' to which Cynthia so strongly objects.[44] Here, then, is a desire to break the social bonds of behaviour and expectation which is expressed through her understanding of nature.

This idea is brought to fruition during a scene in which Cynthia paints *en plein air*. She paints, not simply nature, but a 'neglected garden' of a large house which was once on a par with the Wilmington's home. Mrs Wilmington's manicured garden acts as a significant point of contrast to the garden Cynthia has chosen to paint and which is described as follows:

> Cynthia was painting the neglected garden, with its litter of rose petals, its once trim-shaven hedges crowned with scrubby bristles and long waving locks intermingled, and its throng of plebeian weeds elbowing the dainty scions of horticulture, some of which were strongly rejoicing in their new freedom, while others pined bewildered, like canaries let loose. It was a crowded scene of various drama, the actors all dumb, rooted things. Man had departed; the benign Mother called her children back from their divided allegiance, and they were running back to her bountiful arms with such disorderly haste that the weaklings were crushed in the press. Or in another aspect one might picture her as the wild witch, her captors gone, stretching her cramped limbs, tossing aside her irksome robe of civility, and summoning her untamed ones to harry and lay waste the place of hated imprisonment. And over the wall the elfin thistledown came eagerly tumbling, heels over head, and the bramble and woodbine, and all the host of lassooing [*sic*] savages, crept through every unguarded gap, and the lurking nettles came out of their corners and ran riot over the lawn and border.[45]

There is so much that is of importance to our understanding of Cynthia in this scene which is conveyed through her connection to nature and to the landscape of Tregurda. The house to which the garden belongs is situated 'in the dip of the hills by the sea' and so once again at that borderland of flux and possibility.[46] The text prompts us to look beyond the surface meaning here, I think, suggesting

that the plants or 'actors' were merely 'dumb, rooted things' whereas the reader is already aware that Cynthia had called them 'living creatures' and Jack Gibbs had called the flowers in her paintings 'alive'. The scene can be read in relation to the more general historical context of suffrage and the New Woman figure, a blossoming of possibility for women and a new freedom from previous socially imposed restraint, but it is also specific to the character of Cynthia, or what Robert terms only a few pages later her one contradiction, 'that strange essential contradiction of flesh and spirit' which he comes to understand on their walk which encountered the courting couple.[47] There is ambivalence in the passage, and danger, as Mother Nature's children trample each other in the bid to reach her arms but ultimately the passage rejoices in a female nature 'stretching her cramped limbs, [and] tossing aside her irksome robe of civility'.[48] Crucially, this is what the process of painting within this environment, in relation to this rural location, enables Cynthia to do. It is a space of possibility and through her connection to it Cynthia comes to understand the possibilities open to her as a woman. Robert describes the blossoming of this understanding in Cynthia shortly after the above passage, the gradual dissolution of her 'reserve' which is registered through small gestures of her body which he perceives, such as 'wrists crossed upon the knee, and hands lying half open with the palms upwards'.[49] Despite this Robert still describes her as 'reticent of gesture' but it is the possibility for the future which is most important in the scene, that Cynthia is waiting 'on her mountain height' for the 'compelling summons'.[50] It is Cynthia's relationship to this rural location, the space at the margins of rurality between land and sea, which creates a site of possibility distinguishable from her previous connection to the moon in its freedom from a preconceived identity based on gender.

Gendered Readings on the Beach

The central scene of the novel takes place on the beach. The artists are invited by local man Mr Blewett to watch the bringing in of a pilchard catch and so both groups occupy the space of the beach at the same time – one for work and the other at leisure, observing the work of the locals.[51] In the films and television adaptations set in Cornwall that Moseley examines, the beach is found to be 'a less dramatic, less unsettling and safer space than the cliff-top'.[52] In *Cynthia in the West* the beach is the scene of a dramatic rescue at the end of the novel and, in the scene on which I concentrate here, a place of frenetic activity and a coming together of the two social groups which unsettles gender codes that had seemed to be stable earlier in the novel. Here they are in flux, like the action of the waves on the sand.

How the beach operates as a site of possibility but also uncertainty with regards to gender will be discussed below, yet it is important to note that class boundaries which define and divide the two groups remain fixed. As I have

argued previously, on the beach the two groups are 'most notably contrasted'.[53] That contrast is effected by the activity of the locals working hard to bring in the catch (their livelihood dependent upon it) and the passivity of the artists. I wish to develop here an argument about the beach scene which I put forward in the article 'Rural Geographies', I have therefore quoted a section of this article below:

> Lee emphasizes both the number of men under task on the beach and the intensity of their labour, carried out with an acute sense of urgency. He explains that, "men rested, panting, and were summoned to fresh exertions before breath returned to them".
>
> Meanwhile
>
> 'The pictorial possibilities of the scene were discussed amongst the group [of artists]. Such talk at such a time completed their isolation … One man held his lantern high in the air, and the two parties surveyed each other curiously. The contrast – the essential contrast of Tregurda – flashed before one.'
>
> …
>
> However, while the contrast is clear to the reader and the narrator, of the colony, only Robert appraises his position. Robert is affected by contemplation of his own inactivity in relation to the fisherman:
>
> 'The thick darkness shut in the scene with its moving lights and figures; the insistent roar of the sea filled the air like a tangible presence; and somehow, in the darkness and uproar, the business of grievous muscular toil took majestic proportions in Maurice's eyes. The men loomed bigger, grew Titanic in their struggle for the few shining fish. He was ready to doubt the existence of a world beyond this world in brief, with its toilers and lookers on. They were adrift together on dark space. And it was hard to stand idle in the midst of violent exertion; he was angry with his weedy frame and underdeveloped muscles; he was man incomplete and degenerate; the desire obsessed him to tug at ropes, to feel his sinews crack, to taste the delicious pain of physical fatigue.'
>
> …
>
> 'Robert is made to feel inferior through his idleness but also, crucially, his physical deficiency which prevents him from being active in the same way as the fishermen. For Robert, masculinity is clearly still defined by physical strength, which the local men demonstrate, rather than the intellectual or artistic ability of the set to which he belongs.'[54]

It would seem then, that both class and gender remain fixed on the beach just as elsewhere in the novel: the two groups remain divided on the basis of their class-determined activity and passivity and Robert's understanding of nineteenth-century gender codes leads him to feel emasculated. He can only read the fishermen's activity as 'majestic'.[55]

Yet this is not the case. Pilchard fishing was in rapid decline by the 1900s – the large shoals appearing on the Cornish coast like clockwork each year were a thing of the past. The activity on the beach, therefore, is not a triumphant hauling-in of a catch but rather a desperate struggle to reap what the sea has afforded in an ongoing battle with nature which the fishermen are destined to lose. They are fighting to be able to feed their families against what is described

as a 'flinging, roaring sea [which] seemed to be crying thieves and murder at the fishermen'. Rather than yielding them food, the sea is a 'grey hissing spectre' out of whose teeth they must try to steal their catch.[56]

In his appreciation of their physical prowess Robert overlooks the desperation which makes such activity necessary and is blinded to the reality that they too may soon be as idle as he. These men are scrambling to bring the catch in from boats which are 'stranded at the water's edge' not safely secured.[57] They need people like Mr Blewett and Mr Forrester to 'lend a hand'[58] and the calls to 'Haul – *Up* with her! Haul – *Up* with her!' comes from 'a dozen gasping throats' as does the 'confused shout of Up, up, up!'.[59] There is fear here rather than triumph and always present is the potential failure of the masculine abilities Robert so admires to bring in the catch.

Robert's vision of the physical prowess of the men is also undercut by the text which registers instead that the exertions were 'making hunchbacks, cripples, miracles of ugliness of the straightest and comeliness'.[60] Robert's vision of masculinity is literally dismantled as the men cannot be seen fully in the darkness. Only parts of their bodies can be glimpsed in the wavering lantern light which 'caught here a face, there a trunk, or an elbow, or one leg to the neglect of its fellow'.[61] The text even expresses incredulity that 'somehow' the 'grievous muscular toil took majestic proportions in Maurice's eyes' suggesting not only that it was difficult to see events in the 'darkness and uproar'[62] but equally that Robert could not see everything that was going on and so has supplied his vision from his sense of his own emasculation. The text, therefore, continually undermines Robert's vision, ultimately showing the fishermen to be at the mercy of, not only the sea, but of a fish which is 'absurdly little by itself, to set all this toil and excitement in motion'.[63] Gender categories are not stable in the space of the beach which the two groups occupy but are in a state of flux and uncertainty.

The instability of gender codes in the beach scene is contextualized by the historical reality of the fishing industry in Cornwall, Cornwall's economic future, and how this intersects with the beach as a rural space. For an island nation such as Britain, and for a territory such a Cornwall with 250 miles of coastline, the beach is a site of possible invasion via the sea: Cornwall's maritime history includes, for example, a Spanish invasion in 1595 when 400 men landed at Mousehole and Newlyn.[64] In the beach scene, however, that threat of invasion is reversed and, while the sea poses its own danger, it is the artist colony which is actually the invading foreign element. The invasion or colonization of the coastal space now comes from the land rather than the sea as the artists descend from the Wilmingtons' house which is located on the hill overlooking the beach.

On the surface their presence on the beach appears to be entirely benign. They have, after all, been invited to witness the bringing in of the catch by Mr Blewett, who ensconces them on a 'little eminence'.[65] Yet when we connect their presence with the wider historical and cultural context, and with the discussion

above, they should be read as a new kind of invader. First, the painters break the boundaries of the eminence on which they have been placed. Jack Gibbs infiltrates the action on the beach, attempting to bodily insert 'a shoulder between a broad back and burly chest'. While the previous reading above, which emasculates characters such as Jack, who is 'pushed aside' by the workers, is still evident here, an alternative reading is simultaneously possible.[66] Jack encroaches onto the space of the beach occupied by the fishermen who are trapped between a hostile sea and dragging their boats towards the artist colonizers representative of the future, the inevitable spread of tourism, and the equally inevitable decline of the industry which is their livelihood.

Concurrently, the eminence of rock from which the painters watch the scene on the beach replicates the location of the Wilmingtons' house overlooking Tregurda. It is a topography which suggests their class position in relation to the locals but which also both enables and represents their role as observer and the locals' position as the observed. The fishermen are the object of their gaze in this scene and throughout the novel. This suggests the future fate of the fishermen, desperately toiling for their livelihood here, but destined to become immortalized yet immobilized in the work of the incoming artists. While the paintings may suggest and create a timelessness which, as Deacon argues, was one of the primary attractions of the fishing villages in Cornwall to artists, their very presence in this scene belies the timeless quality which they seek. Instead, they are part of the process of industrial decline and cultural change in the face of which the fisherfolk can offer no resistance. They are the invasion of modernity. Once again, the site of the beach is a space of possibility, uncertainty and danger, a site of flux where boundaries are permeable.

The readings of gender and place in this chapter are possible only though an understanding of the particularity of the rural space: the uniqueness of the historical, cultural and economic processes which both create that space and enable an interpretation of it. This perspective enables an interrogation of fixed structures of gender within the coastal space to reveal the beach and cliff as a site of possibility and fluidity where such structures are broken down. Whereas Robert is still locked into a melancholy self-loathing on the beach through his understanding of the expectations of masculinity, it is Cynthia who is most attuned to the possibilities for her as a woman, realized through that coastal landscape. The result is a subtle yet flowering (a term which is recoded in this context) defiance of the masculine perspective which offers a connection to the landscape only through a feminization of the moon. Instead, she creates her own space, within the unruly garden on the cliff top, within which to challenge dominant social constructions of gender. Significantly, these possibilities for social progression are provided through a rural environment, thus also subverting traditional understandings of rural and urban locales and positing the rural as a site of possibility with regards to the interpretation and lived experience of gender.

4 'GOING OUT, GOING ALONE': MODERN SUBJECTIVITIES IN RURAL SCOTLAND, 1900–21

Samantha Walton

The Findlater sisters, Mary and Jane, published much of their poetry and fiction at a specific interlude in the advance of modernity in Scotland, between 1895 and 1921. As attention to their co-authored novel *Crossriggs* (1908) and to short stories by Jane authored in the aftermath of the First World War will show, their ambivalent responses to the changing times informs writing which, although conventional in form and traditional in its focus on rural and domestic settings, expresses the challenges and opportunities afforded by new forms of subjectivity available for women in the early years of the twentieth century. Recent scholarship on the Findlater sisters has drawn attention to this ambivalence: Sandra Kemp, Charlotte Mitchell and David Trotter describe *Crossriggs* as both a 'lightly told vignette of Scottish village life' and a 'despairing exploration' of one woman's 'lonely situation', while Douglas Gifford has explored how in various ways, the Findlaters were aesthetically, politically and emotionally 'Caught Between Worlds' (the title of his essay on the sisters).[1] In this chapter, I will contribute to current (and by no means extensive) scholarship on the Findlaters by suggesting how significant their characters' responses to rural space are in their explorations of some of the most pressing emotional and material frustrations of rural women's lives in early twentieth-century Scotland. Attention to these authors, whose works were popular and widely read in their lifetimes, can provide a valuable contribution to wider discussions of gender and space in this era, as well as help to advance critical understandings of the meaning of modernity in rural places and the distinct, and often obscured, relationships that formed between country and city in rural women's lives.

The direction I have taken has been informed by new critical approaches to mobility, modernity and gender developed in feminist literary scholarship. In recent retellings of modernity by Wendy Gan and Wendy Parkins, histories of women's experiences have emerged as distinct from dominant male narratives of speed, change, fragmentation and urban spectatorship.[2] Combining Gan's emphasis on the meaning of privacy for the modern female subject, with Parkins's

focus on female mobility and social transformation, a more precise understanding of the meaning of rural space for Scottish women in the early twentieth century emerges, along with a clearer sense of the opportunities the countryside affords for invisibility, freedom of movement and self-determination.

Physical or imaginary escape to urban spaces and modernized societies may have promised to satisfy women's needs for career advancement and intellectual and financial independence, but in works by the Findlaters, rural space permits women moments of privacy and liberty – moments of transcendent invisibility – impossible in the crowded city. Such invisibility may be cause for elation, as women momentarily escape the confines of gendered behaviour to achieve moments which approach the expression of an 'authentic' self on the peripheries of gender and class norms, as shall be seen in the Findlaters' *Crossriggs*. However, isolation in natural environments is also represented with deep bitterness, as in Jane Helen Findlater's short story 'The Pictures' (1921), in which a young woman's cravings for the stimulations of modernity make her blind to visions of natural beauty which might otherwise inspire moments of self-reflection and the potential for redetermination and renewal. Meticulous in their delineations of the ways in which women's lives are circumscribed by gender privilege and class, the rural is acknowledged as the context of the continued exclusion, domestication and exploitation of women, at the same time as it holds the promise of providing a valid site for the creation of new and modern forms of selfhood.

Ambivalence, as suggested above, is an attitude persistently adopted in the writings of the Findlaters. In his analysis, Douglas Gifford attributes this tendency to their experiences as educated women in Scotland during the transition from Victorian to post-War values. For Gifford, they 'exemplify the profound and paralysing internal debate concerning sexual and gender freedoms' for women 'caught between two different worlds'.[3] As I hope to show here, their female characters do indeed yearn for, even occasionally achieve, a modern female subjectivity defined by relative freedom of mobility and access to privacy, but their rural location, both distant from and out of sync with the pace of urban life, can mean that they face distinct disadvantages in the battle for agency and independence that was so central to women's struggles in the 1900s to the 1920s.

That is not to say that the rural was without its unique advantages for women too; as attention to the distinct dimensions of the rural in these works will show, the often assumed binary between rural/urban and traditional/modern is frequently difficult to uphold. This is due in part to the insights gained from Gan's recent attention to the meaning of privacy in early twentieth-century women's lives. Gan asserts that, dull though it may seem in contrast to frenetic and populous representations of urban modernity by male writers from Charles Baudelaire to T. S. Eliot, the occupation of a room – not the busy space of the family home, but a private room of their own – was central to women's 'sense of self as a sub-

ject of modernity'.[4] In contrast to the emphasis placed on the city street, the locomotive or the car as uniquely conducive to modern experience, the privacy of the interior offered women space to shield themselves 'from the grasping hand of social convention … to pause and reconsider one's place in modernity'.[5] The sense of a right to, or a need for, privacy was no less than a crucial step in the transformation of society, as by claiming the need for private space women upset the division between a public and private sphere developed in Enlightenment thought and social life. No longer content to uphold the sanctity of the home as a respite for men from the stresses of public life, in the modern era women began to define themselves as individuals and demand a share of privacy and respite too. Yet, as Gan asks, 'where was the private sphere's equivalent to the public sphere's private sphere? Where was the space to which a woman could retreat to shield herself from the demands of convention and society?'[6] It is of little use here that Gan dismisses rural retreats as the convergence of the 'pastoral, privacy and privilege', describing scenes in which women seek privacy in expansive country gardens.[7] Aside from the rarefied locations described in the texts under study, she notes that to an extent privacy is always a privilege, and the demands for an internalized form of privacy marks a class identity. Nonetheless, the case of a working woman who takes 'refuge in her long walks in the city on her days off to regain an identity apart from her job as a maid', can be taken as a case in point that the definition of oneself as a subject in need of space for privacy and self-reflection was part of a general move towards the democratization of demands for female equality and independence during the modern era.[8] This is a point that will become increasingly relevant in regards to the works of the Findlaters under consideration here.

The Scottish context of these works also raises unique considerations. Although Scotland's cities had their share of rapid population increase, industrialization and mechanization, and though the advance of railways and new roads offered new opportunities for movement and mobility, at the turn of the twentieth century Scotland remained a rural nation; as Robert Irvine points out, 'at the time of the 1891 census … nearly half of Scots did *not* live in urban areas'.[9] Even Scottish modernist writing of the interwar years is striking for its emphasis on small communities and rural life. The persistent relevance of the rural for modernist writers including Lewis Grassic Gibbon, Nan Shepherd and Willa Muir is telling of both Scotland's literary heritage (chiefly, the notorious Kailyard novel, to be discussed) and the material realities of life in Scotland. Access to rural space tells us less about class and privilege in a nation in which more than half the population lived in small communities surrounded by fields, forests and mountainous grazing land, and in which even the largest conurbations could easily be left by train or local bus. Of course, the capacity for working women to enjoy the land they or their families work on as 'scenery', or indeed to have

the time, strength and independence to access it away from working and family responsibilities, was far from evenly distributed. Subsequent attention to the meaning of accessing and enjoying natural sites and scenery in *Crossriggs* and 'The Pictures' will demonstrate how disparities in women's freedom to move and retreat can be seen in light of a nexus of inequalities in class and status, economic responsibilities and cultural location, which will help me to unpack the intersectional complexities of women's engagements with 'modernity' in rural Scotland.

The sense of a need to retreat and be private is crucial in these texts, but this was only made possible by the increasing mobility which many women were demanding and coming to enjoy in the modern era. In her recent monograph – appropriately subtitled 'Women Moving Dangerously' – Parkins examines representations of women walking or moving by means of train, bicycle, car and plane between 1850 and 1930. Women's movement has had, she notes, a complex and controversial history: mobility was a concern in the mid-Victorian suffrage debates, for example, when the threat of women, married or unmarried, 'gadding about' was raised as a dangerous possible outcome of their new freedoms, and a sign that the times were changing for the worse.[10] To Parliamentary defenders of the *status quo*, 'a woman with freedom of movement signified a potentially unfettered female agency, which might pose a danger to the stability of social and familial order'.[11] Accordingly, Parkins addresses the ways in which women's mobility was tethered to questions of agency, social transformation and disruption throughout the long nineteenth century and into the interwar years. Agency, in Parkins's analysis, is defined as both the 'individual's capacity to act meaningfully in the world' and (to requote Lois McNay), to act in 'unanticipated or innovative ways which may hinder, reinforce or catalyse social change', and I see little cause to disagree with her definition within the scope of this chapter.[12] Undoubtedly, movement acquires different meanings within each of these works, with the meaning that women attribute to their own movement often considerably at variance with how their movement is read. What characters like Alex in *Crossriggs* want, or Katie in 'The Pictures' need, is not only to be seen to be moving in autonomous and self-directed ways that test or resist social conventions, but to achieve invisibility and privacy in order to better understand the meaning of agency and autonomy within their own lives.

In this respect, the depopulated rural has certain advantages, and indeed natural and rural spaces are presented in works by the Findlaters as an occasional antidote to domestic and urban spaces. The rural provides privacy for retreat and reflection, specifically because women needed these spaces, and because they were becoming more mobile, more concerned with directing their own movement and changing their location to reflect emotional and psychological, as well as intellectual and financial, needs. Although, as Parkins states, in much modern fiction,

> the heroine's desire for mobility as both a symbol of and a means to liberation is bound up with ambitions to experience what modernity has to offer: the diversions and stimulations of city life; opportunities for creative expression and recognition; and expanded networks of social exchange and intimacy;[13]

the rural offers women the freedom to be both private and mobile, an unobserved spectator and affectively engaged walker in a living world. With its crowd of spectators and its limitless codes concerning feminine behaviour and propriety, neither the city nor the home could offer such freedom. In a similar vein, this is how Simone de Beauvoir established the meaning of natural spaces for women in her landmark feminist study, *The Second Sex*:

> At home, mother law, customs, routine hold sway, and she would fain escape these aspects of her past; she would in her turn become a sovereign subject. But, as a member of society, she enters upon adult life only in becoming a woman; she pays for her liberation by an abdication. Whereas among plants and animals she is a human being; she is freed at once from her family and from the males – a subject, a free being.[14]

For women, the rural offers the freedom not to be an object – the Other – but a sovereign subject, capable of gaining a sense of autonomous selfhood, which de Beauvoir describes as the attainment of 'liberty through a continual reaching out towards other liberties'.[15] De Beauvoir goes on to describe the ecstasies reported by young women who feel, in the solitude of nature, a rare sense of sovereignty over themselves and their world. This she relates to the early sense of transcendence felt by all infants before gender division forces women to suppress 'the fundamental aspirations of every subject (ego)' to transcend itself – 'to engage in freely chosen projects' – and consigns women to immanence, a state of interiority, passivity and self-immersion: 'The adolescent girl has not yet acquired for her use any portion of the universal; hence [nature] is her kingdom as a whole; when she takes possession of it, she also proudly takes possession of herself'.[16]

De Beauvoir's writing is crucial here because of the insight she gives into the importance of invisibility for women in natural spaces, and its significance in their attainment of subjecthood and transcendence. Alone in the countryside, the woman is out of the grasp of routine and custom, and also out of sight of anyone to consign her to the social category 'woman'. In nature, 'to have a body no longer seems a blemish to be ashamed of … The flesh is no longer a defilement; it means joy and beauty'.[17] Self-consciousness about the body and its impulses is put on hold, and the free subject escapes momentarily the whole realm of social signification, achieving freedom and transcendence by being unobserved, uncategorized and unconstrained.

By contrasting depictions of female and male movement in the city and countryside in the Findlaters' novel *Crossriggs*, and then turning to depictions of rural retreat and exclusion in works by the Findlaters which depict rural poverty,

I hope to synthesize the critical insights into mobility, privacy and transcendent invisibility I have just developed, with the aim of achieving a new understanding of the experience of modernity in rural Scotland during the early twentieth century, and its meaning in the lives of rural women.

The Meaning of Privacy in *Crossriggs* (1908)

The Findlater sisters published *Crossriggs* in 1908. In its first pages, the narrator muses on the changes that have come over the small east-coast village since the novel's setting, as inhabitants have died or resettled in nearby Edinburgh, following the seemingly inevitable narrative of progression through urban relocation. These early pages are evocative of much late nineteenth-century Scottish 'Kailyard' fiction – in particular J. M. Barrie's *A Window in Thrums* (1889) – not least because of the nostalgic tone of the narrator, who claims to have witnessed rural life change and communities disperse and depopulate under the advance of modernity. In Kailyard fiction, sentimental attachments to the home, the social ties of rural communities and traditional domestic roles for women were celebrated and eulogized, and it is knowingly that the Findlaters evoke this critically infamous and immensely popular genre (in 1904 Jane Findlater included a scathing account of archetypal Kailyard narratives in her collection of critical essays).[18] Yet while Kailyard women were defined by their loyalty to the community, the family and the private and domestic space of the home, *Crossriggs*'s female protagonist (who is known as Alex, instead of the feminine Alexandra) seeks to define herself in a variety of new contexts and settings – urban, professional, romantic and as an individual – as a means of renegotiating the meaning of her commitments to the community, and achieving new liberties as an individual outside of home and hamlet.

Characters are understood through their mobility: Admiral Cassilis's age and visual impairment make it impossible for him to move freely without a guide; Alex's sister Matilda's widowhood and conformation to her gendered domestic role mean she is rarely seen outside of the home, and even there she is passively situated in the parlour rather than actively working in the kitchen or garden. The New Woman figure, Dolly Orranmore, is always moving in unpredictable, even scandalous ways, sprinting through the garden in her evening gown, pacing the fields with her hounds or athletically scrambling up rocky slopes in scanty rational dress.[19] For Alex, significant emphasis is placed on walking, and in particular on the walk between Alex's small cottage home and Foxe Hall, the mansion house of the Admiral. Alex starts making this journey when she begins her first waged job, reading newspapers to the Admiral for a few hours a week. This is relatively skilled work and a springboard for subsequent employment as an elocution teacher in Edinburgh and, on one successful occasion, a public reader at a society event.

The walk, then, is first undertaken by a woman seeking greater independence and self-sufficiency by seeking employment. From the moment the impulse first seizes her she begins to act with unconventional decisiveness and autonomy: '"I'm going out, Matilda," said Alex, rather abruptly, "going alone, so you'll have to looking after the chicks by yourself to-day"'.[20] Her household is already unconventional as her father, a vegetarian socialist, has educated his daughters, and Alex enjoys unique intellectual freedom at home. Still, the choice to look for work outside the domestic economy is pioneering even for the progressive Hopes, and it is clear that this is a journey she must walk alone, down what is described as 'the solitary road' to Foxe Hall.[21] That Alex's is a uniquely modern quest is determined by her dual need for mobility and privacy, and it is not with bitterness or a sense of Alex's peripherality that the narrator remarks that 'one may walk for a mile without meeting anything more interesting than a string of farm carts or a ploughman and his team'.[22] The emptiness of the rural location becomes the catalyst for necessary self-reflection:

> It was a bitter afternoon, yet when Alex had walked for about a mile she sat down on one of the low dykes by the roadside, apparently forgetting the cold. Her thoughts were busy with something else, and suddenly exclaimed aloud – 'I can't! I can't!' as if she were rejecting some suggestion that had come to her.
>
> The sound of her own voice in that solitary place startled her.[23]

Voicing her doubts enables her to confront and overcome them, something she could not do in the intimate space of the house, where sympathetic ears would overhear and ask for an explanation. Even the act of sitting alone to reflect would draw attention, should anyone have been there to observe her. So, in spite of the superficial desolation of the scene, the rural at this moment provides the precise conditions necessary for Alex to consider her place in the world, her needs and ambitions, and to act under her own agency. After being startled by the sound of her own voice expressing her private doubts, she becomes conscious of the forlornness of the scene. Having had the chance to reflect in privacy, she achieves what de Beauvoir calls sovereignty over herself and acts with resolve, moving 'swiftly along the road in the direction of Foxe Hall'.[24]

This scene marks a significant change in Alex, and *Crossriggs* is in effect bookended by two such incidents in which rural retreat enables the Findlaters' heroine the chance to reflect on her own situation and in turn, change it. However, what intervenes is a succession of episodes in which Alex is denied such privacy and freedom of movement, being politely hounded by men whenever she steps outside. Less populated than the city, and more likely to permit solitude, the Scottish countryside is still fraught with difficulty as women hoping to walk alone are accosted by men, followed out of concern and rarely left alone. Having walked to Foxe Hall alone to achieve her job, she leaves in a state of

nervous excitement. Metaphors of extraordinary mobility convey her new sense of freedom, and as she leaves, 'her feet seemed to tread upon air' and she feels that she is 'shod with triumph'. Alex is, however, immediately 'confronted' with the Admiral's nephew Van: 'she wanted to hurry past him with a word, but he jumped up'.[25] The mansion house and the rural space that surrounds it feel, to the cosmopolitan Van, like a trap. Even though Alex is experiencing her surroundings as a space of new-found independence, Van sets the pace as he walks with her, venting his boredom and sense of isolation in the countryside. In a manner that will mark her journeys to and from Foxe Hall, Van unconscientiously, but decisively, accompanies Alex, putting his need for conversation and affirmation ahead of her need for privacy and free movement.

It is a pattern Alex and Van will fall into throughout the novel, as in his loneliness the young Van involves himself in the life of the Hopes, eventually falling in love with Alex. Although she cares for Van, Alex cannot reciprocate, but neither does she have the strength to firmly reject him. Their manner of walking together, then, reflects her inability to fully direct and define her life as yet, and achieve independence. When, at the end of the avenue after her next appointment at Foxe Hall, she tells Van 'You mustn't come any further with me, it's not a bit dark', he responds, '"Oh do let me come!" … so earnestly that she could not refuse his escort'.[26] A sense of politeness and compliance entrap her, and though she would like to be 'disagreeable' and send him away, feminine codes of conduct restrain her. When, after a painful argument concerning money at the Hope's cottage, she most needs privacy – 'She must be alone and quiet, she felt' – he pursues her. He asks if he can come with her, to which she responds first negatively, and then moderates her tone: 'No … At least, of course, the high road is free to every one. You can walk where you like. But I want to walk as fast as ever I can for *miles*, without speaking a word'. In the subsequent walk across the rural landscape, Van accompanies Alex in silence, at points even outpacing her so that 'she had to quicken her steps to keep up with him'.[27]

The scene encapsulates the ambivalences of Alex and Van's relationship: while respecting her need for silence to reflect, his own need to accompany her outweighs her desires for solitude and free movement. Although they both, at points, follow and lead, walk 'nearly at the same pace' and agree to stop and turn back with some consensus, her initial desire to be, for a time, outside of anyone's consideration and view, are not met. Van is there to look at her and to take in how flushed her face is and how out of breath the walk has made her.[28] It is a scene of romantic tension, and at the end of their walk Alex feels elated, having found someone to share her privacy and, perhaps, accompany her as an equal as she achieves a modern sense of freedom and independence. However, as the deterioration of their relationship will demonstrate, Alex's needs cannot be met within conventional arrangements, even in her potential, but never realized, marriage to the intellectually progressive

and socially desirable Van. By allowing Van to walk with her she has delayed, but not avoided, coming to the decision she will eventually be able to make when she is given the freedom to walk in private.

The scene in which Alex is finally able to walk alone occurs after a sizeable shift in the lives of the major characters. Alex is travelling to Crossriggs with Robert Maitland, the married man whom she has secretly loved all her life. Alex and Robert's sense of duty have stopped them ever acting on their mutual feelings, although under grief and stress they are briefly drawn together. At first they are travelling in a carriage, but Alex asks to be let out as she thinks it would do her 'good to walk for a little'. Walking has by this stage been well established as a context for Alex to make sense of her situation, and Robert gets out of the carriage too and walks up the steep road 'in silence' beside her. First, she asks him to go on as she wants to rest in a field bordered by symbolic foxgloves, a plant that is as toxic to the heart and mind as it is medicinal. Robert would 'not go on alone', and instead follows her and, in a sudden movement, tries to take her in his arms. She resists, and tells him definitely to go on, in a more decisive manner than she has achieved throughout the entire novel: 'Go, go now' she states simply, in contrast to her numerous internally-voiced desires for privacy, and gentle requests to be left alone.[29] For example, in an earlier, mirrored scene with Robert by a secluded burn, the narrator has reflected, 'his presence seemed an intrusion to her just then, she would much rather than been left alone', but externally Alex has responded to Robert with conventional politeness.[30]

As in that earlier scene, Robert has taken advantage of their seclusion to hint implicitly to, and here to act explicitly on, their feelings for each other, exploiting rural seclusion to trespass conventional sexual boundaries. Alex's refusal in both scenes to treat the rural location in the same way as the men do may signify her acceptance of those boundaries; this is certainly how Gifford interprets it in his assessment of the Findlaters' novels, which show 'women trapped in variations of the same predicament, in which they feel their confinement the more keenly since they are all too aware that it is their own acceptance of the rules of conventional society which imprisons them'.[31] Alternatively, I would suggest that the sexual freedom tantalizingly promised in the secrecy of rural spaces sits imperfectly with her wider desires for free movement, privacy, thought and self-definition: indeed, for the things so far used here to define women as 'modern'.

Justification for this is found in another emotionally ambivalent scene with Van. It takes place after an excruciating tea party at Foxe Hall, to which Alex has worn a flimsy smart gown very uncharacteristic of her usual practical dress. Escaping with relief from the gathering, Van starts to accompany Alex home, but they must shelter from a sudden shower under a cavernous yew tree to protect her silk skirts from the rain. A timeless, silent, 'twilight' space, the yew tree conceals Alex and Van from the gaze of anyone but each other, and as the scene

unfolds Alex finds herself admiring Van's beauty, and he hers. She is content to regard him aesthetically, like a carved object or 'modern bust', but when she becomes conscious that she is being regarded by him, she becomes uncomfortable in her objecthood.[32] 'I've sense enough to see that it only adds a great deal of trouble to a woman's life when she's a beauty', she reflects, and finds herself identifying with a 'dismal, moulting summer robin' hopping beneath the tree, which Van is at that moment pelting with berries. Although Van takes her words as excessive modesty intended to push him away from her and reject his advances, she is in earnest when she says,

> I respect the shamefaced feeling that makes it lurk in the undergrowth when it is all shabby like that. I've often felt just the same on the days when I look particularly ugly. I'd like to hop about under a hedge, and never issue into light or company at all.[33]

The kind of invisibility Alex is describing is not simply an urge towards self-effacement, but an acknowledgement that the confines of gendered behaviour and the inevitability of being regarded, and judged, as a woman in a public settings forbid women from achieving moments of what the text constructs as 'authentic' self-expression and liberated subjecthood.

Invisibility and the Urban

Transcendent invisibility, by which women escape social signification in ways essential for the achievement of that modern promise – privacy – is more feasible in rural locations than urban, as Alex's forays into Edinburgh, with its additional complications and constraints on female behaviour, show. The men, Van and Richard, enjoy an unselfconscious mobility, moving between rural and urban locations and contexts with ease and self-confidence, at points of direct contrast with Alex. When, for example, she encounters Van in Edinburgh it is at the moment that her uncharacteristically fashionable clothing – a long skirt and preposterous, precarious hat – are once again making movement impossible. The scene occurs on North Bridge, an elevated spot which is most exposed to the strong and damp winds from the east coast. It is, however, Alex's clothes and her sense of her own visibility in them, which specifically curtail her movement:

> She stood for a moment on the wet pavement, whilst the wind drove her petticoats in flapping wreaths about her ankles; it beat her umbrella until she had to put it down, and as she came to the bridge she stopped for a little to readjust her hat and breathe, before beginning to struggle across the unprotected bit of roadway.[34]

Not usually one for complex and ornamental dress, Alex has worn a hat and long skirt to complement her appearance as a public reader. Although she has just achieved a new form of financial and professional freedom, urban etiquette

and fashion and codes around women's appearance continue to limit her in the public spaces of the city (a city, incidentally, in which weather conditions frequently make the fulfilment of these codes impossible for the walker). The city may contain social and professional spaces which offer new forms of mobility for women, but its additional constraints form an ironic counterpoint to its promised freedoms: 'I'll never wear a long skirt out of vanity again ... It hasn't made much difference to my appearance, and it only makes me look silly in the street, and doubles the bother of walking' remarks a disillusioned Alex, who reflects with regret on the composure and elegance of her audience who all, presumably, make their way around the city by carriage.[35]

Alex is rendered doubly immobile by her wet and flapping yards of dress and her own excessive consciousness about her appearance, and it is this dual impairment that Van alleviates when he encounters her in that dreich and stormy scene. He appears as a remarkably solid and stationary presence at her side, forming a physical and social bulwark against public propriety and the elements. When, helpfully, he tries to move her bodily off the bridge, Alex is embarrassed that they should be seen linking arms in public, but Van proclaims: 'Don't we live in the country? And mayn't we do as we choose in spite of every citizen in Edinburgh?' He then 'hurried her along ... and for a minute or two she held tightly to his arm, as they struggled against the wind and reached the corner of the street, where it was comparatively quiet'.[36] The significance of this change here is representative of the calming effect of Van, who with masculine and patrician certainty and self-assurance is able to counteract the immobilizing material encumbrance of femininity and the anxieties of appearance.

Of course, Van's rebelliousness in grabbing Alex's arm is spurred by a kind of libertine spirit that has come over him in the city, where he believes their actions will go unobserved. The commonplace critical association of the late nineteenth-century urban metropolis with invisibility and anonymity was, perhaps, not completely feasible in the compact and neighbourly streets of the Scottish capital, and yet as low-profile country visitors, Van and Alex have somewhat greater freedom than settled residents. Being outsiders in the city gives them the freedom to experiment with alternate roles, and here Van revels in his performance as her lover and saviour. His sense of liberation, however, meets resistance from Alex, who persists in her anxieties about her visibility and the dangers of being observed. When Van asks if they can have tea together, a question 'which upset her gravity', Alex replies 'of course we can; they'll think I'm your aunt if any one we know comes in!'.[37] Alex, like Van, recognizes that she can play a role in the city, and to an extent imaginatively reinvent herself. Her performance as Van's aunt is just as fabricated as his as her lover, and yet while he, superficially at least, defies social conventions, she painfully (to both Van and herself) enforces them by assuming the harmless role of the unsexed, elderly chaperone. Van's performance

is, as I suggest, only superficially subversive, because there are no meaningful obstacles in the way of their marriage (it is marriage that Van wants, rather than a scandalous affair). Van's performance, then, is merely a hopeful simulation of an eventual outcome which, though somewhat modernizing in spirit, could nonetheless be quickly integrated into conventional propriety. By refusing to play at being Van's wife, Alex makes a gesture towards non-conformity on a par with her expressions of dissatisfaction at restrictions on women's movement, dress and behaviour, all of which act as a synecdoche for the wider curtailments of women's lives. Going along with Van's performance would further corner her into a conventional setting, which is in effect what the city, with its crowd of spectators, forces them to do, and it is by escaping back to the countryside, to invisibility, that she has space to reflect on these constraints and expectations.

Urban space, then, instead of offering a liberating alternative, presents Alex with a stark and oppressive sense of her disabling femininity. In the crowd of 'draggled looking women in mackintosh cloaks' on Princes Street, and in the Edinburgh Waverley Station waiting room, where Alex reflects on the women around her and tries to guess whether they are married, she finds herself not autonomously anonymous, but hideously visible:

> She was moved to bitter mirth by the row of women ... their sordidness, their damp tasteless clothing, their weariful unattractive faces ... How terrible, thrice terrible too, is that grim spinster ... who looks as if she were entreating the world not to laugh at her. I just need to give one glance at my own appearance in that mirror to assure myself that the woman who keeps the waiting room is a beauty compared to me too – but I won't – I'd rather not know what I'm looking like![38]

Alex finds herself too visible, too open to critique and judgement in an urban context where she is just one of a mass of weariful, unattractive women open to the gaze of the crowd of critical, and yet indifferent, individuals. Physical or imaginary escape to urban spaces and modernizing communities may promise to satisfy women's needs for career advancement and intellectual and financial independence, but natural spaces, in spite of the constraints of rural existence, do at least permit Alex moments of privacy and liberty – moments of transcendent invisibility – impossible in the crowded city.

This is in spite of the desire of Van and Robert to exploit these moments of privacy and invisibility to try to corner Alex romantically. When Van hints at the liberty the two of them have when alone in the countryside, Alex makes her strongest statement about how nature frees her from what de Beauvoir calls immanence:

> How can you talk of being 'alone' on a day like this, with larks, and bees, and butterflies, and flying things all through the air, and birds in the hedges, and horses ploughing, and dogs barking, and everything expressing its happiness around us – that's what I like – the feeling of sharing it all on such a morning with every other thing that lives![39]

In *Crossriggs* the rural does not entirely satisfy Alex's demands for freedom, and neither does the urban. At the novel's close she leaves Crossriggs and begins a voyage around the world. Before she boards the ship, she visits the suburban home of Bessie Reid, a woman a few years older than Alex who previously escaped from her spinsterhood at Crossriggs. As the disappointing visit to Bessie's conventional household demonstrates, rural women may move to the centres of urban modernity, but what awaits them is a recognizable domestic suburbia. A modern temperament can be nurtured in a rural setting, but its attendant needs may not be met in the urban, where traditional demands of women still persist. Alex's escape from Scotland and from Britain altogether therefore gestures at the paucity of opportunities in these Isles for progressive women in those years. Alex must be moved beyond the confines of contemporary society to make it possible to imagine her achieving the new and modern form of selfhood that she craves.

Modernity as Amusement in 'The Pictures' (1921)

The theme of modern subjectivity in a rural space receives a different treatment in Jane Helen Findlater's short story, 'The Pictures'.[40] Set in the isolated farmland of Scotland's West Coast, the story highlights the tragicomic plight of a young farm worker, Wee Katie, who is deprived of the chance to attend the sole showing of a touring cinema because her employers' baby is suddenly taken ill. With all the work of the farm her responsibility, Katie is denied her chance to witness this modern amusement which, as the narrator states, is what the lonely child craves most: 'in her heart burned a wild thirst for amusement'.[41] This craving is a consequence of more than youth, as 'remote as Olnig Farm was some modern ideas had penetrated to it'.[42] From the melodies played by a passing tinker, Katie has learnt to drop her work and dance; through newspapers, she keeps up to date with the latest sensational murder cases;[43] and again, through reading of such things in the *Weekly Scotsman*, she has been inspired to demand a particularly modern form of liberty – an afternoon out. Recalling the incident mentioned by Gan of the urban maid who paces the city streets to regain a sense of identity, Katie puts on her Sunday gown, crams 'her empurpled hands into a pair of cotton gloves' and, with nothing else to do, walks 'in solitary (albeit gloved) splendour, along the wind-swept moor road to Achinbeg' to be amused by nothing more than a closed Hotel, a poorly stocked shop and the railway station, where 'two or three trains came crawling in almost at a foot pace!'.[44] Katie may try to inhabit a modern consciousness by emulating a leisured, mobile, consumer identity, but the material amusements of modernity have not kept pace with their cultural representations. While to Alex in *Crossriggs*, modern subjectivity is achieved through privacy and self-reflection in the transcendent invisibility of rural locations, Katie's only consolation is to dress up and become an object – if only of her own imagination – and a spectacle of modernity visible to no one on the solitary road.

In her depiction of Katie's pitiful rural pastiches of urban activities, Jane Findlater mounts a dual critique: on the one hand, of the economic and social order that disenfranchizes, immobilizes and immiserates young women like Katie; on the other, of the hollowness of modernity's promise to alleviate the burdens of the masses, and women in particular. The narrative observation that the 'country-dweller hungers for stir and amusement; the town-dweller for quiet and repose' may seem little more than folk philosophizing about the impossibility of objectively assessing the nature of the good life, but the lessons of the story go deeper.[45] As closely as Findlater delineates the frustrations Katie meets on the road to modernity (via Achinbeg), she more precisely describes the ways in which the attractions of modernity have circumscribed and impoverished Katie's imagination and intellect. Modernity, then, represents less the high ideals of democratization, anti-traditionalism, freedom of thought and advances in technology, communication and science, than a vision of a society geared towards providing a succession of shallow amusements to distract, without nourishing or challenging, the interest of workers. Although I do not suggest that their thesis maps unproblematically onto Findlater's story, there are important resonances with some ideas concerning the development of early cinema in the interwar years expressed by Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer in 'The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception' (1944). Popular culture, as they see it, offers uniform thrills to the masses and, by posing as the sole and highest form of pleasure and escapism from the dreary routines of work, creates passive consumers of mass entertainment who collaborate in reproducing the economic relations which disempower them: 'Amusement under late capitalism is the prolongation of work. It is sought after as an escape from the mechanized work process, and to recruit strength in order to be able to cope with it again'.[46] Workers do not return from the cinema satisfied or dissatisfied; mass entertainment does not encourage workers to reflect critically on their place in modernity, but neither does it provide a sense of beauty, catharsis, critique or a nuanced insight into the organization of the world. Instead, the film stimulates 'semi-automatic responses' to established psychological triggers leading, in the audience, to an ultimate 'stunting' of imaginative capacities:

> The stunting of the mass-media consumer's power of imagination and spontaneity does not have to be traced back to any psychological mechanisms; he must ascribe the loss of those attributes to the objective nature of the products themselves ... They are so designed that quickness, powers of observation, and experience are undeniably needed to apprehend them all; yet sustained thought is out of the question if the spectator is not to miss the relentless rush of facts. Even though the effort required for his response is semi-automatic no scope is left for the imagination.[47]

Wee Katie does not make it to the pictures, yet the poignancy of the story lies not in her anguish at being denied this isolated treat, but in the general impoverishment of her imagination as a consequence of fixating on the simulated pleasures promised by the film, and the novelties she associates with modernity in general. Her poverty, oppressive working life and lack of education – all realities of rural life for women – of course have formed her as such. Still, urban modernity as Findlater represents it promises no means of escape or meaningful identity construction, but threatens to further restrict Katie's powers of thought. She is first presented as a creature that 'seemed scarcely to have a life of her own at all'.[48] This is as much due to her exhausting work routine as her lack of 'vision'. She remains unmoved by a view across the sea to the Isle of Skye which the narrator compares to the 'the shores of Heaven as weary mortals think of these'. Instead, 'when released from her toil in the byre [Katie] would stand and gaze out at the wonder of beauty without a single exclamation of surprise or pleasure'.[49] What Katie is looking for instead is the arrival of the newspaper, the sound of the tinker's pipes, or any other mass-produced novelty which represents Katie's humble, but insistent, craving for modernity's amusements.

While 'The Pictures' presents an unromanticized rural, rather than a stereotypically bucolic community, a kind of elevated pastoral vision runs through the story. The notion of natural beauty is seen as an essential part of understanding the rural and its appeal, so lacking a pastoral vision makes Katie metaphorically blind to both her surroundings and more complex thought processes which Findlater links with responsiveness to natural beauty. She states, 'grand pictures were to be seen in these winter storms by anyone with seeing eyes: but Katie's eyes were holden', and as a consequence, 'no distressing thoughts of the terrors of space or the insignificance of man's place in it visited Katie's brain when she looked out of the skylight'.[50] The meaning of 'pictures' is evidently twofold: while natural 'pictures' elevate consciousness and thought by alerting the viewer to the desolation and beauty of the world, cinematic pictures offer diversions which excite, but do not sustain, and ultimately stultify the imagination. Although Katie believes that she will come back from the pictures transformed – 'a new creature' – the sense of irony that runs through the story makes such a radical transformation doubtful, meaning the real denial of her desire to see the pictures can be read as a metaphor for mass culture as a continuous deferral of desire.[51] When Katie tries to convince a hard-hearted elderly local to cover her duties at the farm by talking effusively about what she supposes the pictures to be like, it is worth noting that Katie's words and explanation are not given, although the rest of their conversation is meticulously recorded.[52] Katie's imagination may be able to overreach reality in concocting vague and fantastical ideas about the pictures and their revolutionary potential in her life, yet in all other respects her thought and vision are debilitated, meaning that she is unable to see things which, the narrator suggests, might enable her to perceive more clearly her own place in the world and the injustices of her situation.

Adorno and Horkheimer describe the consumer who can only think and feel when stimulated by mass culture. Although she does not have access to the stimulations of modernity, merely knowing that they exist has devalued the rural for Katie, meaning that when she is presented with something truly singular she is unable to perceive its rareness and quality. In a short story which ironizes its depiction of the small tragedies of Katie's life, a more solemn tone is adopted at its close when her employer calls a miserable Katie away from the byre. Promising to show her something 'ye'll no' see the likes of twice in a lifetime', the Farmer draws her attention to the atmospheric effects and extreme clearness of the air, which has made the rarely sighted distant Island of Barra visible on the skyline: 'as far as the eye could venture – so far that it seemed more like a delusion of the senses than a reality – away on the utmost horizon, another Island had become visible'.[53] Findlater has already described the Western Isles as the 'Isles of the Blessed' in reference to their associations with paradise in Gaelic folklore, which had recently been revived and resituated in contemporary culture by late nineteenth-century Celtic Twilight writers, most notably Fiona Macleod (William Sharp) in his 1894 'Romance of the Isles' *Pharais*.[54] In *Pharais*, the retreat of the island dwellers from the mainland symbolizes the rejection of modernity and the conversion of Gaelic beliefs from living culture into dead myth, but for Findlater, neither traditional culture nor the charms of urban modernity hold the key to future independence and self-determination for women. Katie's blindness to the worth of the vision of Barra functions as a metaphor for her dulled senses and reduced imagination: a vision that is subtle, nuanced and speculative is intangible to her, and along with it, the subtle and speculative thought-processes that such a vision might have inspired. The catastrophe of 'The Pictures' is not that Katie misses the 'one off' screening of the film, but how she responds to the Farmer's delight at seeing Barra for the first time in years:

> But Katie did not see anything to be excited about.
> She turned away without a second glance at the land that was very far off.
> 'I'm no' carin'', was all she said.[55]

Although she has never experienced the excitements of modernity, simply knowing they exist and feeling, without experiencing, the syncopations of modern life, have made the rural lose all possible meaning. Unable to appreciate the rewards the rural offers in terms of privacy and invisibility, she is neither a mobile nor a self-reflexive subject and her existence, which she is unable to gain any perspective on or to change, is effectively doomed to stasis and autopoiesis.

In these two works by the Findlaters, the distinction between the sense of selfhood experienced by women in urban versus rural space is key to making sense of gendered socio-spatial codes and their negotiation by female characters in early twentieth-century Scottish women's writing, and in transitional

modernist writing more generally. As the critical framework adopted by Gan and Parkins demonstrates, a more plural and more gender-aware understanding of the ways in which women understood themselves in their changing times is needed to contextualize and account for the lived experience of modernity outside of the familiar story told by white and male metropolitan writers. Scotland's distinct topography and literary and cultural heritage intersected in definite and precise ways with the material productions of modernity and its economic and cultural effects. As such, the rural is never fully distinct from the urban in early twentieth-century writing, leading both to the forms of rural modernity imagined by writers like Gibbon and Shepherd in the interwar years, and the ambivalent responses to the promises of the urban seen in the Findlaters' works. In *Crossriggs*, the progressive woman finds herself immobilized and monitored across varying terrains, both urban and rural. While the city offers her a wage and recognition in return for her skills and labour, the rural offers her greater freedom to move unimpeded by dress or codes of behaviour, and the privacy and invisibility to retreat and reflect on her position in the world, with the ultimate reward being the space it gives her to imagine and pursue new and modern forms of selfhood and experience. 'The Pictures' takes a more pessimistic stance on the rural, acknowledging that traditional labour patterns and a lack of education and opportunities for rural women make them incapable of grasping the more esoteric and intellectual gifts of natural spaces. However, the promises of modernity offer only intellectual and imaginative stultification in a different tempo, and with no heightened capacity to judge and reflect, the working woman is promised not full and free subjectivity but insubstantial thrills as a distraction from labour. Writing at a time of transition when incursions of modernity were being felt and perceived in rural communities, the Findlaters' works gave voice to their own anxieties and concerns, and so too do they reflect on the hopes and ambitions of women living in what could be seen as the peripherals of modernity. Their careful delineations of these changes in the lives of women from different social and economic backgrounds and in disparate regions of Scotland form an important chapter in the chronicling of modernity, demonstrating that the meaning of the 'new' to women was bound up in freedoms and forms of subjectivity not dependent on urban stimulations, but available in rural locations that afford opportunities for privacy, freedom of movement and thought, and self-determination.

5 'DROWNED LANDS':[1] CHARLES KINGSLEY'S *HEREWARD THE WAKE* AND THE MASCULATION OF THE ENGLISH FENS

Lynsey McCulloch

> Imagine a vast sheet of paper on which straight Lines, Triangles, Squares, Pentagons, Hexagons, and other figures, instead of remaining fixed in their places, move freely about, on or in the surface, but without the power of rising above or sinking below it, very much like shadows – only hard and with luminous edges – and you will then have a pretty correct notion of my country and countrymen. Alas, a few years ago, I should have said 'my universe': but now my mind has been opened to higher views of things.
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> E. A. Abbot, *Flatland: A Romance of Many Dimensions*[2]

In 1866, Charles Kingsley published *Hereward the Wake: Last of the English*, a quasi-historical novel based on the life of an eleventh-century Anglo-Danish outlaw and his last stand against William the Conqueror's Norman incursion into England. Described by Graham Swift as a 'fenland fabulist', Kingsley opens his text with a prelude dedicated to the novel's setting, the lowlands of East Anglia.[3] Read as a defence of the Fens against the domination of highland spaces within romantic and historical literature, Kingsley's preface usefully represents the bifurcation of British rurality, a division based on gradient. But his championing of East Anglia is partial. While the nineteenth-century flatlands were drained, cultivated and effectively tamed by engineers and agriculturists – a process initiated formally in the seventeenth century – Kingsley's medieval fens are a morass of marshlands and Dark Age superstition. Rather than patronizing the 'modern' lowlands, Kingsley takes advantage of his novel's eleventh-century context to romanticize the pre-drainage Fens. In describing the region's great cathedrals as promontories, the author elevates the landscape; lowlands become highlands and the gentlemen farmers of eastern England are replaced by the Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Danish savages (née heroes) of British myth, figures of overbearing masculinity. Like Edwin A. Abbott's 1884 experimental novella *Flatland: A Romance of Many Dimensions* – which imagines a similarly two-dimensional landscape and contrasts the rigidity of its class structure with the movement and imaginative freedom available in the third dimension – *Here-*

ward the Wake lifts the English lowlands into the higher sphere of romance. But while Abbott's satire looks forward to a multi-dimensional and enfranchised future, Kingsley's mythology appears to look back to a 'history' of authentic Englishness and rugged muscularity.

This paean to an imaginary English past – familiar to readers of historical fiction as a nationalist trope – may of course align Kingsley with the contemporary concerns of Britain's nineteenth-century imperialists but its elegiac (and ultimately defeatist) register compromises the extent to which it can be used as a form of modern propaganda. And, although Kingsley's re-masculation of fenland space suggests that a controlled landscape is always coded female – an image of both cultivation and suppression – it also identifies heroic masculinity as archaic, the anachronistic feature of another time and place, and hints at a new freedom of female existence in the low-lying and commercial regions of Victorian Britain. At a time when the UK Government Environment Agency – through its Great Fen Project – looks to restore parts of the Fens to a pre-agricultural state, this chapter examines the gender politics of this transformative landscape and asks whether attempts to recreate the wetlands can ever be entirely without agenda. It also suggests that Kingsley's romantic reimaging of the Fens as a backdrop for his favoured personality type – the muscular Christian – situates him not only within the context of a wider gender debate but in direct literary competition with his fictional forbear, Sir Walter Scott. This much more personal act of male one-upmanship informs Kingsley's transformation of the English Fens and problematizes any straightforward reading of *Hereward the Wake* as a portrayal of confident masculinity.

Hereward the Wake opens with a scene-setting prelude; this sizeable section, entitled 'Of the Fens', comprises an ethnographic study of medieval Englishness, a comprehensive genealogy of the novel's eponymous hero and – significantly in my view – a robust justification of the tale's fenland context. Kingsley is, of course, bound by the realities of Hereward's history, as far as they can be evidenced. Although Hereward's parentage has never been established conclusively – Kingsley opts for the most aristocratic proposition and presents him as the son of Leofric, Earl of Mercia, and Lady Godiva – the outlaw's association with East Anglia is documented in all the major sources for his life and death.[4] Most notably, Hereward figures as one of several English rebels besieged on the Isle of Ely by William the Conqueror in 1071; all the rebels surrendered 'except Hereward alone and those who could escape with him, and he led them out valiantly'.[5] The novel follows Hereward's young manhood; outlawed at his parent's request for riotous behaviour, he adventures as a sword for hire across Europe (in many of the more traditionally romantic and heroic locales: Scotland; Ireland; Cornwall) before returning home to defend the Fens against the Normans. Kingsley has no choice but to adopt the Fens as his novel's principal setting but his employment

of this particular landscape – a region of rural Britain under-utilized in its literature – becomes, not an obligation, but an opportunity:

> The heroic deeds of highlanders, both in these islands and elsewhere, have been told in verse and prose, and not more often nor more loudly than they deserve. But we must remember, now and then, that there have been heroes likewise in the lowland and in the fen.[6]

Acknowledging the dominance – some might say monopoly – of highland heroism within romantic and historical fiction, Kingsley now foregrounds 'English' in place of Celtic and Gaelic peoples and offers East Anglia's Fenland as the successor to northern English, Cornish, Welsh, Irish and Scottish ruralities. British masculinity is relocated in an act of historical revisionism and Kingsley redresses the spatial imbalance of the European literary tradition: 'there may be a period in the history of a lowland race when they, too, become historic for a while'.[7]

The romanticism of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries – a movement that influenced literature, art, music and philosophy amongst other media – radicalized attitudes towards the natural environment and subsequently codified cultural responses to the diversity of landscapes within Europe. These responses continue to dominate scenic taste and to shape several cultures' appreciation of nature, and nature writing. As the cultural geographer John Wylie outlines:

> A sense, today, that something beautiful, good and true can be witnessed in 'wild' landscapes, and moreover that such landscapes offer aesthetic and spiritual sustenance in a manner that transcends utilitarian and rational attitudes is a clear romantic inheritance. A solitary 'confrontation' with landscape, and a subsequent epiphanic sense of connection and oneness, is another.[8]

Oneness with nature – an idea exemplified by Lord Byron's 'High mountains are a feeling' – was, however, limited in spatial terms, as Wylie's emphasis on 'wild' landscapes and Byron's own focus on elevation suggest.[9] In composing parts of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, Byron was – to use Wylie's terms – aesthetically and spiritually sustained by the Swiss Alps, as were his companions Percy and Mary Shelley. William Wordsworth's debt to the English Lake District offers another example of the romantic preference for mountainous regions. The added reliance within constructs of the sublime on grandeur, danger and a frightened delight in extremities (of terrain and weather) led poets and artists towards a particular type of landscape and often a particular type of climate. In addition to European mountain ranges and the polar regions, the uplands of Cornwall, Wales, Ireland, Scotland and the North of England were identified as 'romantic' spaces. The isolation, solitude and threat of these landscapes predictably gendered their literary inhabitants. Men dominated this highland discourse; not only that, but male physicality and vigour were held at a premium.

Walter Scott's early nineteenth-century Waverley novels, set predominantly in Scotland, cemented the highland hold on the romantic imagination. His first, *Waverley; or, 'Tis Sixty Years Since* (1814), exposes its English protagonist to the sublime Scottish uplands and their insurgent clans in the wake of the 1745 Jacobite uprising. The popular novelist's own juxtaposition of highland and lowland within Scottish historical geography identifies the former as an imaginatively dominant if peripheral and, in due course, doomed space. Lowland contexts – in *Waverley* represented by both England and the Hanoverian strongholds of Scotland – signal centralization, civilization and progress. As Saree Makdisi has noted, 'coextensive with the overarching *spatial* opposition between Highlands and Lowlands is an overarching *temporal* opposition between past and present'.[10] Kingsley's adoption, over fifty years later, of a romantic discourse for a specifically lowland setting would seem to run counter to Scott's underscoring of an enlightened, modern and low-lying future. But in East Anglia, if not in Scotland, the *temporal* opposition between past and present is played out in the same *spatial* environment. Scott's historicism, with a few medieval exceptions (*Ivanhoe* being the most prominent), is primarily early modern; in most cases, as the subtitle to *Waverley – 'Tis Sixty Years Since* – suggests, he is reanimating the history of living memory. But the passage of time between the Battle of Hastings in 1066 and the publication of *Hereward the Wake* exactly 800 years later – and the radical transformation of the East Anglian terrain – allow Kingsley to romanticize the pre-drainage Fens and set their heroic spirit against the commercial enterprise and conformist character of the Victorian lowlands.[11]

The Fens are a distinct region of East Anglia and the East Midlands encompassing areas of Lincolnshire, Cambridgeshire, Norfolk and Suffolk. The natural terrain of the Fens is nutrient-rich marshland, close to sea level. These fresh- or salt-water wetlands have been drained intermittently since Roman settlement in the area – by the digging of drains and the use of primitive hydraulics – but it was in the seventeenth century that concerted efforts were made to drain the Fens and make them fit for intensive arable farming. Famously, Cornelius Vermuyden brought Dutch land reclamation methods to England in the 1620s although the failure of the Dutchman and many others to recognize the delicate ecology of the Fens – and that the drying of the earth would cause peat to shrink, lowering the land further below sea level – resulted in an increased vulnerability to flooding by the end of the seventeenth century. In the early nineteenth century, steam drainage engines replaced the wind pumps previously used to divert water and prevent flooding, alleviating the problems caused by the drop in land levels. With a drainage system to harness its natural verdancy, the Fens currently contain roughly half of the grade 1 agricultural land in England. Charles Kingsley recognizes the Fens' commercial significance – 'lowlands of a fertility inexhaustible' – but also the poetic losses sustained in the transformation of the landscape:

> The lowlands of the world, being the richest spots, have been generally the soonest conquered, the soonest civilized, and therefore the soonest taken out of the sphere of romance and wild adventure into that of order and law, hard work and common sense, as well as – too often – into the sphere of slavery, cowardice, luxury, and ignoble greed.[12]

Given Kingsley's apparent ambivalence towards the Victorian Fenland – he admires the respectability and religiosity of its inhabitants but derides their petty, mercantile concerns – it should come as no surprise that he romanticizes the original wetland at the expense of its nineteenth-century counterpart. In terms of masculinity, Kingsley's modern lowlander 'has his own strength, his own "virtues," or manfulnesses, in the good old sense of the word; but they are not for the most part picturesque, or even poetical'.[13] The muscular Christianity that Kingsley became closely associated with – a term coined in an 1857 review of the author's *Two Years Ago* and a concept allied closely with his Christian Socialism – demands intelligence and piety in men as well as brawn and courage. For Norman Vance, in his study of Victorian masculinity *The Sinews of the Spirit*, 'Christian manliness represented a strategy for commending Christian virtue by linking it with more interesting secular notions of moral and physical prowess'.[14] Although Vance's preference for the term 'Christian manliness' over the more popular 'muscular Christianity' foregrounds morality at the expense of athleticism, the movement's mix of poetic virtue and physical potency remains intact. It is this mix that *Hereward the Wake* personifies.

Kingsley's muscular Christianity also demands a particular ethnic profile, typically an English sensibility mixed with a northern European physicality. Recent scholarly interest in *Hereward the Wake* has focused on its contribution to the development of an English national identity. Kingsley is not alone in celebrating England's Saxon and Scandinavian pedigree at the expense of its Norman past. Once again, Scott provides the model for this literary project. His 1819 *Ivanhoe* – set in twelfth-century England – pits its Anglo-Saxon protagonist against the Norman Prince John. Richard the Lionheart may rehabilitate the Norman contingent in collaborating with Ivanhoe against his brother but the novel enshrines the Saxon's moral and physical superiority. Edward Bulwer-Lytton's 1848 *Harold, The Last of the Saxon Kings* and Benjamin Disraeli's 1845 *Sybil* continued the trend for Anglo-Saxon hagiography and Patrick Brantlinger notes how 'Disraeli draws from Scott the standard equation of the common, authentic English people (the mainstay of the working class) with the Anglo-Saxon race'.[15] Kingsley, although Hereward's background is more Anglo-Danish than Anglo-Saxon, perpetuates this literary mythology and the Fens become an imagined community in which the racial multiplicity of eleventh-century Britain is channelled into an Anglicized purity. For some readers of Kingsley, this myth-making inevitably buttresses (and indeed glamorizes) Britain's imperial project abroad.[16] Staged as Victorian crusades, British incursions into Asia

and Africa used romance as both justification and mystification. Other thinkers concentrate on the class identity of Kingsley's Anglo-Vikings and the novelist's vexed relationship to the Chartist movement and other working-class reformists.[17] The tendency Kingsley describes in modern lowlanders towards secularism and a 'dull brutality' warns readers against the dangers of working-class enfranchisement and the prospect of genuine devolution.[18] The fen dweller, unlike his highland counterpart, is able to conquer nature by 'clearing, delving, dyking, building'; in knowing no greater force than himself, he rejects religion: 'With the awe of Nature, the awe of the unseen dies out in him. Meeting with no visible superior, he is apt to become, not merely unpoetical and irreverent, but somewhat of a sensualist and an atheist'.[19] Kingsley fears the brute masculinity of the nineteenth-century working classes. His masculation in *Hereward the Wake* of their medieval ancestors is carefully delineated to sidestep a version of manliness that is unromantic, godless and potentially revolutionary.

But in addition to reflecting Kingsley's political affiliations, ethnic preferences and gender assumptions, romanticizing the Fens also serves his literary agenda. As well as supporting the burgeoning heritage industry, Kingsley's fenland fable wrests literary control from the overwhelmingly popular Scott and complicates the tension that the earlier novelist had established between highland and lowland environments.[20] *Hereward the Wake* – in identifying the Fens as a romantic space capable of competing with the highlands – captures the particularity of the lowlands and their peculiar attractions: 'beauty as of the sea, of boundless expanse and freedom'.[21] Herbert Butterfield has spoken of the 'devotion to locality' in the historical novel and, in *Hereward the Wake*, the flatlands offer a very specific vista, a unique spectacle, in fact: 'Overhead the arch of heaven spread more ample than elsewhere, as over the open sea; and that vastness gave, and still gives, such cloudlands, such sunrises, such sunsets, as can be seen nowhere else within these isles'.[22] In these descriptions of the Fens' specificity as a landscape, Kingsley asserts himself as a genuine threat to Scott's dominance and the authority of the highlands as the preeminent romantic space. But it is a distinction that he fails to maintain. Kingsley's efforts to romanticize and indeed masculate a regional environment with no established literary identity fall short and he is forced to appropriate Scott's highland discourse – the very rhetoric he has set himself against – in order to complete the transformation of the Fens into an appropriate environment. In doing so, Kingsley undermines any political undercurrents his novel may have – he was a strong advocate for social reform from a Christian Socialist perspective – and reverts to generic statements of romantic intent. Scott himself recognized, with regret, the process by which romance as a genre depoliticizes space. Ian Duncan, describing *Waverley*'s counterintuitive preservation of its banal English hero while its highlanders are executed for treason, explains that, in Scott's romantic framework, 'once Jacobit-

ism and the clans are destroyed as political and social realities, civil society can reclaim them as a form of aesthetic and sentimental capital'.[23] Kingsley, in turn, co-opts Scott's once-Jacobite romantic aestheticism for his medieval narrative. Any political exceptionality evaporates and Herbert Butterfield's belief that historical novels have 'something more firm about them than is found in the more vague and dreamy products of romanticism' seems hopelessly idealistic.[24]

Recent commentators have been slow in recognizing Kingsley's literary pragmatism. Billie Melman, in her essay 'Claiming the Nation's Past: The Invention of an Anglo-Saxon Tradition', makes a key division between the Celtic/Gaelic thrust of early historical fiction – one tied variously to Whig historiography, Tory sentiment and romanticism's interest in the geographical margins – and the subsequent emergence of England and Anglo-Saxonism at the centre of British national identity and the new conservatism. Melman views *Hereward the Wake* as the conservative antithesis of Scott's poetic sentimentality but she fails to acknowledge – in describing Kingsley's 'unromantic ruralism' – the distinction Kingsley makes between the medieval and Victorian Fens.[25] The historical ruralism of the novel *is* romantic, even if Kingsley notes its subsequent dissolution. The poetic disparity between Kingsley and Scott does not stand up to close scrutiny. Melman fails also to note the distance between Kingsley's stated intention to challenge Scott's hegemony and the ultimate conformism of the novel to Scott's model of historical writing. The following passage from Kingsley's Preface to *Hereward the Wake* reveals some of the tensions and contradictions caused by this gap between intention and reality:

> Another reason why lowland heroes *carent vate sacro*, is that the lowlands and those who live in them are wanting in the poetic and romantic elements. There is in the lowland none of that background of the unknown, fantastic, magical, terrible, perpetually feeding curiosity and wonder, which still remains in the Scottish highlands; and which, when it disappears from thence, will remain embalmed for ever in the pages of Walter Scott. Against that half-magical background his heroes stand out in vivid relief; and justly so. It was not put there by him for stage purposes – it was there as a fact; and the men of whom he wrote were conscious of it, were moulded by it, were not ashamed of its influence.[26]

Kingsley again stresses the unromantic nature of the Fenland landscape, an environment contrasted with the magic of the Scottish highlands. Scott's achievement in inscribing this mountainous region in print is singled out for special praise by Kingsley and yet the English novelist describes this 'half-magical background' as a statement of fact rather than a literary accomplishment. Lowland heroism, by contrast, requires poetic elaboration. The Fens may lack a sacred bard but, in establishing a prosaic geography 'wanting in the poetic and romantic elements', Kingsley puts himself forward as East Anglia's literary saviour. Later in the novel, Kingsley suggests that the Fenland terrain is one that

can be imaginatively reclaimed. The tale's central section takes place in northern France. Close to the Low Countries, this is a landscape that the exiled Hereward recognizes: 'Hereward was silent. It was so like his own native fens'.[27] Hereward responds instinctively and nostalgically to this redolent landscape. But his future wife, the Provençal Torfrida, has no such connection to the levelled landscape. Her only means of elevating such a space is via her imaginative faculties:

> So Torfrida beguiled her lonely life in that dull town, looking out over dreary flats and muddy dykes, by a whole dream-world of fantastic imaginations, and was ripe and ready for any wild deed which her wild brain might suggest.[28]

Like Torfrida, Kingsley sees imagination as the key to romanticizing the novel's flatlands. Unlike Scott, who is fortunate in inhabiting an already sublime rural landscape, Kingsley must poeticize the Fens. The distinction Kingsley makes between the two authors establishes a useful paradigm; it promotes Kingsley's literary achievement while diminishing Scott's. But it also acknowledges the extent to which Kingsley situates his novel in the shadow (or glow) of Scott's achievement.

The problem that Kingsley immediately encounters in challenging Scott is one of literary precedent. In characterizing the Victorian Fens as unromantic, the novelist takes advantage of the easy alignment of low-lying ground, moral turpitude and the binary imagery of flat/raised. Consider this description of the modern lowlander:

> He has little or nothing around him to refine or *lift* up his soul, and unless he meet with a religion and with a civilization which can deliver him, he may *sink* into that dull brutality which is too common amongst the lowest classes of the English lowlands.[29]

As Kingsley suggests here in his use of the word 'lift', the inevitable romantic counter to a literary alignment of low-lying ground and moral turpitude is the equation of higher ground and moral elevation. Reverting to the medieval Fens, Kingsley begins to apply the romantic rhetoric of the highlands to his lowland setting. Like the heroes of Scott's fiction, standing out in 'vivid relief', Kingsley's lowlanders are raised from the page.[30] Hereward – in addition to cutting a particularly muscular figure – is imaged in the likeness of a Scottish noble. In his wilder youth, Hereward makes mischief with his men-at-arms: 'To keep a following of stout housecarles, or men-at-arms, was the pride as well as the duty of an Anglo-Danish lord, as it was, till lately, of a Scoto-Danish highland laird'.[31] Hereward's household resembles that of a highland aristocrat – one of his messengers later appears in a 'kilt' – but his physical appearance is even more suggestive:

> His face was of extraordinary beauty, save that the lower jaw was too long and heavy, and that his eyes wore a strange and almost sinister expression, from the fact that the one of them was gray and the other blue. He was short, but of immense breadth of

> chest and strength of limb; while his delicate hands and feet and long locks of golden hair marked him of most noble, and even, as he really was, of ancient royal race. He was dressed in a gaudy costume, resembling on the whole that of a Highland chieftain. His wrists and throat were tattooed in blue patterns.[32]

Hereward's image – an almost irreconcilable mix of the delicate and the thickset – looks to resolve the contradictions inherent in Kingsley's muscular Christianity but it is also patently Scottish, to the extent that the novelist offers a footnoted defence of his decision to present an Englishman tattooed when antiquarian consensus suggested that this was an exclusively Celtic or Pictish activity. Hereward is every bit the highland outlaw. Shipwrecked in France on his way home from his romantic adventures, Hereward rewards French hospitality with 'a great Scotch Cairngorm brooch'.[33] His masculinity is borrowed; borrowed from Scott.

Kingsley's appropriation of highland masculinity is not undertaken with subtlety; he even imagines a highland visitor to the Fens to test the manliness of these presumptive lowlanders:

> And the highlander who may look from the promontory of Peterborough, the 'golden borough' of old time; or from that Witham on the Hill which once was a farm of Hereward the Wake's; or from the tower of Crowland, while he and Torfrida sleep in the ruined nave beneath; or from the heights of the Isle of Ely which was so long the camp of refuge for English freedom – over the labyrinth of dykes and lodes, the squares of rich corn and verdure, will confess that the lowlands, as well as the highlands, can at times breed gallant men.[34]

The highlander acknowledges the gallantry of the lowlander but, as he does so, the lowlands themselves become highlands. Peterborough is a promontory, Witham sits on a hill, Crowland Abbey has its tower and Ely its heights. The region's religious and commercial centres were – for practical reasons – situated at higher points than much of the surrounding fen marshland, but Kingsley's elevation of the Fenland 'islands' dramatically overstates their stature and his description of Bourne in Lincolnshire follows the same pattern:

> He *rose* slowly into the long street between the *overhanging* gables, past the crossways, and along the Water-gang and the *high* earth-banks of his ancient home. *Above* them he could see the *great* hall, its narrow windows all ablaze with light.[35]

The landscape itself is aggrandized; the terrain is muscular, the architecture prominent. Kingsley masculates the Fens, even when it compromises their integrity:

> The low rolling uplands were clothed in primeval forest; oak and ash, beech and elm, with here and there perhaps a group of ancient pines, ragged and decayed, and fast dying out in England even then; though lingering still in the forests of the Scotch highlands.[36]

It is perhaps possible that, prior to the deforestation witnessed in East Anglia during the thirteenth century, Scots pines populated the Fens but Kingsley's reference to the highlands reiterates his literary borrowings. Not only that, but his description of the 'low rolling uplands' – confusing in its contradictory mix of gradients – suggests the extent to which Kingsley is prepared to skew the geological reality of his Fenland setting.

But Kingsley's explicitly derivative stance – while it ostensibly masculates the Fenland and its inhabitants – also has the opposite effect. In citing Scott – whose works, although still popular, were the products of the previous generation – Kingsley exposes himself to accusations of antiquatedness, even redundancy. Not only is the gap of time between Hereward's rearguard action and its fictional immortalization substantial but Kingsley seems to adopt a deliberately outmoded register with which to narrate the outlaw's life story. This has the effect of rendering Hereward's masculinity archaic, not unusual perhaps in historical fiction. But the dual impact of a historical framework *and* a romantic context that is carefully established but consistently undermined is significant. It not only suggests that heroic masculinity, of the type demonstrated by Hereward and his band of rebels, is anachronistic in Victorian society, but it revises our appreciation for the 'unromantic ruralism' of the modern Fens and, with it, the role of women in such an environment.[37] It also satirizes, as it plagiarizes, Scott's romantic discourse. Is this a deliberate act on Kingsley's part?

The novel's final chapter moves the action forward by eighty years, long after the death of Hereward and his wife Torfrida. Kingsley relates how the Deeping Fen, located in south Lincolnshire, was finally drained by the Norman Richard de Rulos, new Lord of Bourne (Hereward's former title) and William the Conqueror's Chamberlain. The new Fens may be unromantic but they are now modernized and commercially viable:

> Where had been lonely meres, foul water-courses, stagnant slime, there were now great dykes, rich and fair corn and grass lands, rows of white cottages. The newly-drained land swarmed with stocks of new breeds – horses and sheep from Flanders, cattle from Normandy; for Richard de Rulos was the first – as far as history tells – of that noble class of agricultural squires who are England's blessing and England's pride.[38]

The formerly insular Fens have become outward looking, housing has been built for local citizens and Hereward's dramatic stewardship of Bourne has been superseded by the care of a very different kind of nobleman, a 'man of peace'.[39] Hereward is here no more than a distant memory although, significantly, the new master and mistress of Bourne have a familial connection to the outlaw. Richard's wife, Torfrida, is Hereward's granddaughter. This connection through the female line – Torfrida is the daughter of Torfrida, daughter to the original Torfrida – speaks strongly for the survival of women and the adaptability of

female fen dwellers.[40] Torfrida's warring spirit – inherited from her grandmother – dissipates under the influence of her pacifying husband and the novel's end departs radically from its hectic beginning as Richard and Torfrida discuss the tomb epitaphs for the new monument they plan to raise to the legendary Hereward and his wife. Torfrida wonders what inscription would best suit the couple:

> 'And what shall we write thereon?'
> 'What but that which is there already: "Here lies the last of the English."'
> 'Not so. We will write – "Here lies the last of the old English." But upon thy tomb, when thy time comes, the monks of Crowland shall write, –
> "Here lies the first of the New English, who, by the inspiration of God, began to drain the Fens."'[41]

Torfrida monumentalizes her husband's achievement and foregrounds the Norman basis of modern Englishness at the expense of the Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Danish influence. The novel suddenly shifts from a celebration of Englishness – in the sense agreed by historical novelists from Scott to Disraeli – to a defence of the Norman invader. In doing so, it also becomes less a paean to the past and more a consideration of – and appreciation for – the present.

Michael Young has discussed the apparent ambivalence towards the binary of romance and civilization that Kingsley establishes in *Hereward the Wake*, a binary that can be mapped onto Hereward's Anglo-Danish brigade – the romance – and Norman incumbents like Richard de Rulos – the civilization. Romance may be heroic but it is also lawless and chaotic. Equally, civilization fosters respectability and hard work but engenders greed and cowardice in equal measures. While Kingsley appears to chart the civilizing of the formerly romantic Fens – a trajectory that also allows readers to recall this romantic inheritance from the comfort of their civilized existence – Young suggests that this trajectory is, in actual fact, reversible. Civilization does not follow romance. Rather, romance is a direct response to civilization, a necessary fantasy to satisfy the yearnings of a conformist society: 'the relationship between the romance sphere and the civilized sphere is exposed not as one of opposition but as one of complicity, in fact, of symbiosis'.[42] Young's interpretation explains Kingsley's dramatic about-face; the romance of Hereward's adventuring shores up, rather than gives way to, the novel's 'civilized' finale. The ambivalence shown by historical novelists to their heroic protagonists has long been recognized but the idea that romance follows civilization, rather than vice versa, points to the artificiality of historical fiction. In Kingsley's case, I would suggest that this romantic artifice is self-consciously expressed, so much so that it satirizes the genre it inhabits. Kingsley, like so many historical novelists before him, provides extra-textual material – mostly in the form of footnotes but also including genealogical data – to support his historical claims. But his antiquarian discourse is set alongside his literary bor-

rowings in a manner that inevitably undermines it. Historians and historicists have recognized Kingsley's vacillation in weighing the respective advantages and disadvantages of Saxon/Danish and Norman culture, but only a close analysis of his literary behaviour reveals his unfashionable leaning towards the latter and his experimental appropriation of Scott's highland romanticism. Georg Lukács has suggested that Walter Scott

> was able to portray objectively the ruination of past social formations, despite all his human sympathy for, and artistic sensitivity, to the splendid, heroic qualities which they contained. Objectively, in a large historical and artistic sense; he saw at one and the same time their outstanding qualities and the historical necessity of their decline.[43]

Charles Kingsley – omitted by Lukács in his seminal study of the historical novel – would seem to share Scott's pragmatism but his playful imitation of Scott's style pushes this pragmatism towards cynicism or at least towards an acknowledgement of the historical novel's antiquated form, a tag it has found difficult to shift since.

Kingsley is not, then, the victim of Scott's popularity, forced into using an alien language in order to compete. That's not to say he doesn't compete with his fictional rival but it is a literary face-off in which Kingsley sidesteps the main argument and, instead of meeting Scott on his own terms, produces a metanarrative from the traces of Scott's highland writing. Exploiting echoes also from the mid-nineteenth-century Anglo-Saxon championing works of Bulwer-Lytton and Disraeli, the effect of this *imitatio* is to discredit both the Gaelic affiliations of Scott and the Germanic leanings of English historical novelists. Against Kinsley's best anti-Catholic intentions, he ends up siding with the Normans. In the final analysis, the 'muscular' in Kingsley's muscular Christian is no longer necessary. The novelist instead opts for Richard de Rulos's administrative competencies and, significantly, his relationship of (near) equality with his wife. Historically, the Fens were by no means drained by the twelfth century but it is important to Kingsley's narrative that the flatlands are civilized by the novel's end. Although traditional feminism might assume that this cultivation of the landscape represents the taming of a wild and feminine nature by a male hand – and Richard's pacification of his fiery wife would support this – Kingsley suggests instead that drainage allowed women to finally enter the Fens and contribute fully to the region's development. And, as the latter Torfrida's contribution to the monuments of her grandfather, grandmother and husband suggests, women are also fully involved in an even-handed historicization of the region, one that acknowledges both old and new, wetland and fen farmland, romance and civilization.

The Great Fen Project in Cambridgeshire – the UK Government Environment Agency's current effort to restore the wetlands of East Anglia – is one of the largest habitat restoration projects in Europe and aims to create a 3,700 hectare landscape to sustain Fen wildlife and expand the region's green space. The

project's commitment to conservation is unquestioned and its anticipated fifty-year duration demonstrates the extent of the challenge it faces. Approximately 99 per cent of the original wetland habitat disappeared in the wake of Fenland draining. The project will be unable to restore much of this but the amalgamation of Woodwalton Fen and Holme Fen will produce a nature reserve large enough to support several rare wetland species of flora and fauna. Given the wetland's ability to absorb water, it is hoped that the project will alleviate the flooding that the area is prone to. Carbon dioxide released from exposed peat soils should also be reduced by the provision of new plant cover. Although the project is environmental in focus, its rhetoric also acknowledges a heritage function and one that inevitably privileges the ancient wetland over the modern Fen. The project has, for example, been supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund, the organization that distributes a share of the UK National Lottery's income to preserve the nation's heritage. The Great Fen website celebrates the Fenland's resistance to William the Conqueror and Hereward's last stand against the Normans.[44] Although it concedes the profitability of the drained Fens, references to the region's commercial success are accompanied by elegiac descriptions of soil erosion, loss of traditional Fen occupations and the disappearance of the meres, or lakes. While the project looks to rebalance the ecology of the region, it may have been looked on as a retrograde step by Kingsley, one that unknowingly romanticizes the masculine heroism of the old English and bypasses the engineering endeavours of their descendants.

6 'WANDERING LIKE A WILD THING': RURALITY, WOMEN AND WALKING IN GEORGE ELIOT'S *ADAM BEDE* AND *THE MILL ON THE FLOSS*

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In George Eliot's early fiction – the short stories of *Scenes of Clerical Life* (1857–8) and the novels *Adam Bede* (1859), *The Mill on the Floss* (1860) and *Silas Marner* (1861) – a range of locations serve as landscapes for crafting the 'rural realism' that Eliot found to be lacking in many literary and artistic representations of rural spaces.[1] Drawing on the scenes of her early years in Warwickshire and further developed through meticulous research into agricultural life and rural traditions, these works are tightly plotted against sharply observed details of the agricultural landscape – harvest dates, flora and fauna – and enlivened with acute attention to the distinct local dialects and customs that give each rural location its individual characteristics.[2] As critics have often remarked, Eliot's use of early nineteenth-century settings can at times evoke a romanticized nostalgia for an idyllic pre-Industrial landscape, and despite the intention to better depict the rural working classes, Eliot's social vision remains limited in scope.[3] Yet at the same time the human interactions that play out in these places are often far from idyllic, demonstrating the moral complexities of socio-cultural ideologies that shape, and are shaped by, the rural locale.

In the first two full-length novels, *Adam Bede* and *The Mill on the Floss*, gender ideologies form a central point of critique in Eliot's examination of the rural: the stories of Hetty Sorrel in *Adam Bede* and Maggie Tulliver in *The Mill on the Floss* examine the implications of social and sexual transgression for women within the rural community. Intersecting with wider debates about female sexuality current at the time, these novels demonstrate the acute formulation of gender codes within rural environments and utilize these spaces as sites through which to mediate and reflect on wider cultural questions around femininity and sexuality. In particular, as this essay will show, these texts explore the intersections between sexuality and mobility in rural locations: mobility operates as a

key site through which the novels make visible the extent and effects of gender ideologies, and the gendered politics of mobility that constrain and curtail women's lives come to constitute a central site of critique. Other scholars have discussed the ways in which Eliot engages with wider discourses about female mobility and modernity, and I hope here to draw more distinct attention to the ways in which these themes are informed by the use of rural environments as central to the articulation, contestation and reformulation of debates around female sexuality and mobility.[4] In Eliot's delineation of female mobility we find representations that, while recognizing rural spaces as actively engaged with wider debates about female mobility and modernity – an important contestation of rurality as a space of nostalgic isolation – are also attentive to the particular, and often more acute, iterations that gender ideologies take in the rural environment. Yet at the same time, rural mobility comes to constitute a space of possibility in which Eliot explores the positive potential of locating women in rural spaces, reassessing the relationship between women and rurality in such a way as to offer an alternative formulation of the discursive associations between female mobility and sexuality. While mobility has thus far received little attention in the context of rural environments, either in Eliot's work or in feminist revaluations of women in rural spaces, this essay hopes to demonstrate that spaces and structures of mobility represent important sites for interrogating the relationship between gender and rural space.

'Wandering Like a Wild Thing': The Politics of Women's Walking

The rural locales and the representation of the two central women in *Adam Bede* and *The Mill on the Floss* differ in a number of significant ways. While *Adam Bede* centres upon an agricultural landscape structured through the dynamics of the country estate and the rural farm, in *The Mill on the Floss* the pressures of urban industry and business impinge upon provincial life – pressures that eventually result in the financial collapse of the Tulliver's mill as a family business. So too do Maggie Tulliver and Hetty Sorrel vary in their complexity as characters and in the degree of sympathy afforded by Eliot's representation: Maggie Tulliver is unarguably one of Eliot's great heroines but Hetty Sorrel, as many critics have discussed, is portrayed with a sharp critique of her lack of emotional and psychological depth that restricts reading her as a sympathetic or heroic figure.[5]

Yet an initial overview of the novels reveals a number of telling similarities in the structures of mobility and sexuality that unfold. *Adam Bede* looks back to a rural community at the turn of the nineteenth century, the narrative commencing in 1799 in the fictionalized Midlands village of Hayslope, Loamshire, an agricultural landscape centred on the Donnithorne estate. The young farmer's niece Hetty Sorrel falls in love with the gentleman of the estate, Arthur Don-

nithorne, and finds herself pregnant as a result of the affair but seeks to conceal the pregnancy from those around her. By the time the birth draws near Arthur has departed with his army regiment to Windsor and Hetty sets off, alone and on foot, in search of him. She arrives to find that she is too late and reverses her movement, but in the course of her journey gives birth, and in a hasty panic she hides the baby in the woods where it is soon discovered, dead. Hetty is tried and found guilty of child-murder for which she is sentenced first to death and then, with a last-minute plea, to transportation to Australia. In *The Mill on the Floss* the provincial locale centres around the activity of Dorlcote Mill on the banks of the River Floss, and includes the nearby town of St Ogg's, another fictionalized Midlands place. The narrative traces Maggie's development from childhood to early womanhood, and sees her become involved in two forbidden relationships: first with Philip Wakem, son of the lawyer with whom her father has a long-standing feud that reaches its climax in Wakem's purchase of the Tulliver mill; and then with Stephen Guest, the lover of Maggie's cousin Lucy. The narrative of Maggie and Stephen culminates in a misguided attempt by Stephen to persuade Maggie to elope, rowing her miles downriver and causing an absence of several days. Maggie meets with strong condemnation for her actions once she returns home, and her fate is finally sealed in the flood of the Floss that drowns Maggie and her brother Tom.

The novels thus chart a trajectory of female sexuality through a structural use of mobility, with significant journeys marking crucial stages in the development of each novel. This further extends to a representational use of mobility throughout the novels, and in order to fully interpret the movements of each text it is first helpful to explore the wider dynamics and intersections of gender, rurality and mobility at this point in the century.

The historically problematic connotations of female mobility are well documented in feminist literature, which recognizes that women's presence within and movement through public spaces represents a distinct challenge to the discursive gendering of public/private spaces as masculine/feminine.[6] The cultural denigration of female mobility has frequently centred on the association of mobility with sexuality, freedom of movement indicating the freedom of 'a sexuality that needs to be controlled and contained' as Rebecca Solnit writes; furthermore, as Wendy Parkins identifies, the connections between mobility and sexuality also attest to a profound cultural anxiety about 'a potentially unfettered female agency'.[7]

Within this wider discourse of sexuality and mobility, it is walking that entails the strongest sexual connotations – encapsulated in the use of 'streetwalking' to signify prostitution, a usage which directly associates female mobility with sexual promiscuity.[8] With the rise in social and medical literature concerned with the growing problem of prostitution in the mid-nineteenth-century city, the streetwalker became a particularly pertinent and widely discussed figure;

the simultaneous strengthening of a discourse of respectable femininity meant that walking out alone or with a man became problematic for even the most reputable of women such that, as Linda McDowell writes, 'the very act of their appearance on the streets left the status of women open to interpretation and, often, to unwanted sexual attentions'.[9] These discourses might typically be associated with the urban environment but, as Karen Sayer recognizes, 'the projection of urban concerns onto the rural' was typical in discourses of sexuality and these ideas thus resonated with equal strength in rural contexts.[10] Furthermore, the associations between walking and sex were present in the concept of 'walking out' which constituted a traditional part of rural lower-class courtship patterns and, as Anne Wallace writes, was often 'understood to include sexual intercourse … the lovers' walk [providing] the perfect opportunity for such activity'.[11]

Women's walking could also carry positive connotations as a feminine pursuit, 'the country lady's amusement', as Dorothy Wordsworth wrote.[12] In novels such as *Pride and Prejudice*, Solnit identifies, the walk is 'both socially and spatially the widest latitude available to the women contained within these social strictures, the activity in which they find a chance to exert body and imagination'.[13] It is also often a space of female companionship, providing an opportunity for friendships to form: in Charlotte Brontë's *Shirley*, for example, walking in the woodland solidifies women's connections to one another and to the natural environment.[14]

Walking also connotes a further set of associations in the rural context, suggesting the nostalgic formulation of the rural as space away from the forces of modernity. If new forms of mobility were becoming increasingly widespread by the mid-nineteenth century, then walking resonated as a persistence of pre-Industrial transport modes, seemingly playing into the cultural evocation of rurality as remote and pre-modern. In this vein, Wallace suggests that in *Adam Bede* walking operates as 'a sign or agent of continuity with an imagined English past, a more rural and more communal way of life' which contributes to the novel's continued assertion of 'the possibility of some recovery of past value into an "existing society"'.[15] However, this obscures the fact that even by the late 1850s walking continued to be a necessary form of mobility for many of the rural working classes, constituting part of the daily fabric of the present-day rural context and thus, as we see in Eliot's usage, could figure as a meaningful site for engaging with contemporary discourses around female mobility.

The associations between wildness and wandering are forged from early childhood in *The Mill on the Floss* in the narrative of Maggie Tulliver. Maggie's mischievous nature is immediately signalled through her mother's complaints: 'how to keep her in a clean pinafore two hours together passes my cunning' notes Mrs Tulliver, citing her particular fondness for 'wanderin' up an' down by the water, like a wild thing: she'll tumble in some day'.[16] The use of 'wild' here is indicative of Maggie's character: she is of a passionate nature that does not con-

form to the social expectations of femininity and her habit of 'wanderin' like a wild thing' is just one aspect of a character that refuses the constraints of typical notions of femininity – clean pinafores, neat hair – and signals an association with an uncivilized, untamed nature. Yet it is significant that her 'wildness' is expressed through a reference to mobility, indicating that the primary issue at stake is Maggie's 'wandering' beyond the place of the home: it is wandering, and the threat to social order that this uncontained mobility represents, that constitutes the true wildness of Maggie's behaviour.

Mrs Tulliver's dismay at Maggie's wandering also emphasizes cleanliness: her chief problem is 'how to keep her in a clean pinafore two hours together', and in a similar vein we are later told that her brother Tom's 'contemptuous conception of a girl included the attribute of being unfit to walk in dirty places'.[17] This introduces a further association between femininity and dirt, picking up on the symbolic resonances of purity and cleanliness in the ideal construct of femininity, set against the moral and social uncleanliness of women who stray beyond the bounds of feminine respectability. If girls are 'unfit to walk in dirty places' then wandering women, it is implied, risk the association with moral impurity.

The connections between wandering and wildness forged here thus immediately situate women's walking as problematic; this represents the start of a theme that develops as Maggie grows up into an articulation of the wildness of wandering as more specifically connected to female sexuality. After a lapse of several years, in book 5 we encounter Maggie now at seventeen years old and see the first glimpse of her having developed from a girl into 'the mould of early womanhood' whilst she is out walking in the Red Deeps: the narrator describes her 'broad-chested figure', with her 'dark colouring and jet crown surmounting her tall figure'; her 'brown cheek is firm and rounded, the full lips are red' and she is said to 'seem to have a sort of kinship with the grand Scotch firs'.[18] Her entrance into sexual maturity is revealed through, and thus connected with, the natural outdoor space and with the act of walking out alone, suggestive of the way in which women have traditionally been associated with nature and the rural landscape as a feminine, sexualized space.[19] The language throughout the passage also carries sexual connotations, alluding to 'pleasure' and 'indulgence'. Maggie herself is a chaste young woman, but the surroundings in which she appears signal the potentially perilous implications of her presence in that space.

Maggie's childhood wildness thus becomes recast, as she matures, to be more clearly suggestive of the connections between sexual dangers and women wandering alone out of doors. In turning to *Adam Bede*, similar issues are demonstrated in Hetty Sorrel's narrative which commences when she is already at maturity. The class dynamics of *Adam Bede* situate Hetty's walking within a different context: Maggie Tulliver's wandering in the Red Deeps is possible due to the relative amount of free time in her day as a middle-class woman, but for the

rural lower classes like Hetty Sorrel walking is a necessary act of everyday life.[20] The narrative first encounters Hetty at work in the dairy on her uncle's farm, but soon after this she appears on one of her journeys to the Donnithorne estate where she learns lace-mending and stocking-mending from the lady's maid. Walking is noticeably restricted for Hetty: in the first part of the narrative she is rarely depicted beyond Hall Farm, and when Arthur comments 'I hardly ever see you anywhere except at home and at church', Hetty replies 'Aunt doesn't like me to go a-walking only when I'm going somewhere'.[21] Even on this necessary walk she is conscious of having to return home on time, and chastised by her aunt when she is late; when out walking, she goes 'hastily across the short space of pleasure-ground which she had to traverse', aware that walking is constrained and prohibited.[22] In these short but telling instances, the narrative thus gestures towards the restrictions placed on female mobility on a daily basis.

As the narratives progress, the associations between femininity, sexuality and walking develop more explicitly into the idea that wandering is hazardous to a woman's reputation and encounters ensue that allow for the development of illicit relationships while out walking. Hetty's walk through the Chase affords the possibility for meeting and falling in love with Arthur Donnithorne, heir to the estate on which Hetty's family farm is situated. Arthur's reflections on the episode emphasize the forbidden pleasure of walking alone with her: 'they were alone together for the first time. What an overpowering presence that first privacy is!'[23] It is in fact not quite the first time: in the dairy, they had a few moments for a 'tête-à-tête', Arthur inviting Hetty to 'have a walk in the Chase sometimes, now it's so green and pleasant'.[24] Physical contact, however, was impossible, and Hetty's 'pretty arms' only an object of observation to Arthur as she churned the butter.[25] Out walking, this boundary can be crossed: Arthur 'laid his hand on the soft arm that was nearest to him, stooping towards Hetty with a look of coaxing entreaty', and with 'his arm … stealing round the waist again … tightening its clasp', they kiss.[26]

This initiates the start of Arthur and Hetty's relationship that proceeds to take place entirely through these outdoor meetings: although the narrative avoids depicting this, it is understood that they continue to meet in the woods: in one instance, Adam stumbles upon the 'two figures … standing opposite to each other, with clasped hands, about to part'.[27] Following the fight that then ensues between Arthur and Adam, it is implied that Arthur and Hetty's relationship has been consummated in the woods: the Hermitage bears 'all the signs of frequent habitation', including 'a woman's little pink silk neckerchief' dropped on the floor.[28] The narrative thus sets up a structure in which walking-out affords the space for sexual contact between Hetty and Arthur.

A similar structure is established for what remains a rather more innocent relationship between Maggie and Philip, yet is nonetheless cast as forbidden within the narrative. Following our encounter with Maggie in the Red Deeps,

she and Philip meet again for the first time in five years while walking there; following this there are two further meetings in which it is implied that they have continued to meet in the woods regularly.[29] Although Maggie's behaviour remains sexually pure – their meetings consist of discussions about books and 'the thoughts that had come into my head while I was away from you' – the narration again alludes to the awareness that her presence in this concealed, private space strays close to the borders of propriety.[30] Their first meeting is preceded by a description of Maggie entering into the Red Deeps and removing her bonnet 'now she is sure of being unseen', and it is in this state that they meet; as they talk, the narrator notes that her 'words might have been those of a coquette, but the full bright glance … was not that of a coquette', alluding to the potential impropriety of her actions in meeting Philip.[31] Eliot is careful to keep Maggie's behaviour within socially acceptable bounds, yet at the same time the awareness of the forbidden nature of walking-out is alluded to, seeking both to define Maggie as different from expected models of femininity but also to highlight the prevalence of societal expectations of female behaviour.

Both narratives thus draw on a familiar discourse that situates female wandering as a potentially dangerous act, and the interactions that result from women walking confirm this expectation: while it is only Hetty who sexually transgresses, Maggie's narrative nonetheless draws on associations between nature, mobility and sexuality. Yet at the same time there is a subversion of these discourses at work. This is suggested by turning to consider another of Maggie's interactions: after her meetings with Philip in the Red Deeps Maggie later becomes involved with Stephen Guest, a relationship that again pivots around mobile encounters. Stephen's attraction to Maggie – forbidden as he is her cousin Lucy's lover – causes him to pursue Maggie in spaces where they can talk alone. In the first of these episodes, Stephen seeks out Maggie at her aunt's house and, in another approximation of the walking-out ritual, leads her down the road into a private space away from the house: 'May I take the liberty of asking you to walk a few yards with me?' he asks; Maggie feels 'all the embarrassment of the situation' but obliges, putting 'on her bonnet and turned to walk towards the gate'.[32] Once in the lane, she directly points out the impropriety of such behaviour:

> There is no need for me to go any farther. I don't know whether you consider it gentlemanly and delicate conduct to place me in a position that forced me to come out with you – or whether you wished to insult me still further by thrusting an interview upon me in this way.

Stephen responds that 'it is only your woman's dignity that you care about'.[33]

Later, Maggie's brother Tom reproaches her for her actions and this again clearly indicates the impropriety of this act: 'you walked alone with him in the lanes: you *must have* behaved as no modest girl would have done to her cousin's

lover, else that could never have happened'.[34] Tom's assumption that she 'must have' behaved improperly signals not that he assumes sexual interaction to have taken place, but rather that the very act of walking-out is in and of itself immodest behaviour. Mobility and sexuality are at once conflated and simultaneously disentangled, such that the act of mobility is not only representative of sexual impropriety but *is itself* immodest enough that it can stand in lieu of that behaviour.

This becomes more pertinently reiterated in a further instance in which Maggie and Stephen meet in a space of mobility. When the arrangement of a boat party falls through, Maggie and Stephen are left to go out on the river together for what Maggie thinks will be a brief trip: 'we shall not be long together'.[35] Maggie's awareness again of the impropriety of the act is accompanied by a strong emphasis on her passivity throughout the episode. In getting onto the boat, for example, the narrative describes how

> Maggie felt that she was being led down the garden among the roses, being helped with firm tender care into the boat … all by this stronger presence that seemed to bear her along without any act of her own will … and she felt nothing else.[36]

The passage initially remains dubious as to how responsible Maggie is for her actions, but as the journey progresses there develops a clearer indication of her lack of consent in being led away: Maggie stares idly from the boat 'only dimly conscious of the banks', while Stephen knowingly takes her further and further from their intended destination.[37] On Maggie's discovery of the mistake, it transpires that Stephen has meanwhile been planning the direction that events can now take: 'everything has come together without our seeking', he tells her, 'see how the tide is carrying us out – away from all those unnatural bonds that we have been trying to make faster round us'. Maggie's distress – she is 'in an agony', and 'she clasped her hands and broke into a sob' – is met by a calmness in Stephen that, although he says that he has 'contrived nothing, we have thought of nothing ourselves', nonetheless sees him insist that their only option is to 'hurry on to York, and then to Scotland – and never pause a moment till we are bound to each other so that only death can part us'. Maggie becomes 'faint and trembling with fear', having no option but to be drawn into a plan that, at best, will now take her several days to return home from and will still be ruinous to her reputation.[38]

It is notable, then, that this episode recasts the way in which mobility is sexually problematic for women: Stephen's behaviour is written in such a way as to suggest that it is the predatory nature of men, rather than the sexual availability of women, that is at work here. Although Maggie complies with his wish to travel in the boat, thus taking herself into a space where she may be perceived as sexually available, Eliot highlights instead that it is Stephen's actions that prey upon her presence there. This draws to light a feature that is present in the other mobile encounters between men and women in both novels: in the Red Deeps episodes between Philip and Maggie it is again noticeable that their encounter has been orchestrated by Philip:

> I wished to see you very much. I watched a long while yesterday on the bank near your house ... Then I watched again today, and when I saw the way you took, I kept you in sight and came down the bank.[39]

Although Maggie is 'very glad' that he has taken this action, it is nonetheless again indicative that it is not her walking in the Red Deeps but rather Philip's opportunistic use of that walk that effects subsequent events. A similar pattern is identifiable in *Adam Bede* in Arthur's encounter with Hetty: he thinks of how

> the desire to see Hetty had rushed back like an ill-stemmed current ... The Hermitage stood in Fir-tree Grove – the way Hetty was sure to come in walking from the Hall Farm. So nothing could be simpler and more natural: meeting Hetty was a mere circumstance of his walk, not his object.[40]

Each instance works to subvert the implication that female wandering is dangerous because of the woman's actions, instead iterating that the problem is not so much women's presence in these spaces but rather men's actions to abuse that situation.

In Maggie's journey down the river it is further noticeable that despite her lack of compliance with Stephen's plan and her insistence on turning back, this counts for nothing on her return. Maggie meets with immediate, strong reproach from her brother and before she can tell him that she is 'perhaps not so guilty as you believe me to be' and explain how she 'came back as soon as I could', she meets with his condemnation: 'you have disgraced us all ... you have been base – deceitful – no motives are strong enough to restrain you'.[41] This is echoed, too, by the community's response that clearly iterates the sexual double standard: 'The world's wife, with that fine instinct which is given her for the preservation of society, saw at once that Miss Tulliver's conduct had been of the most aggravated kind'; meanwhile, Stephen is relieved from responsibility as 'rather pitiable than otherwise ... it was clear that he had given way in spite of himself – he had shaken her off as soon as he could'.[42] Notably it is the 'world's wife' that iterates these codes, situating women as the 'preservers' of social values, and thus strictest perpetrators of gender ideologies, within the rural community.

What again becomes clear in this response is that the reaction to Maggie's behaviour operates via a conflation of sex and mobility, such that mobility can come to stand in place of, and be constituted as equally transgressive as, sexual wrongdoing. Despite the fact that any sexual wrongdoing could only be assumed and that Stephen writes a letter 'making her appear quite innocent', Maggie is nonetheless positioned and treated as a fallen woman: the very act of going on a journey with Stephen is, in and of itself, constitutive of 'fallen' behaviour.[43] While Tom's earlier scorn of Maggie focused on the act of walking rather than the act of sexual transgression, so too does the community's response to her conduct serve to reiterate that Maggie's mobility, and the terms on which it took place, count for more than the reality of sexual interaction between Maggie and Stephen. Just as fallen women could never retain the status of virtue, for the

woman who has travelled away in such circumstances, nothing can reclaim her virtuous status; the perception of female mobility amounts to the same thing and results in the same structure of social condemnation as that employed for sexual fallenness.

Furthermore, the full hypocrisy of the community is made clear through another iteration of mobility: had Maggie's journey taken a different form and she had returned 'after a few months of well-chosen travel, as Mrs Stephen Guest – with a post-marital trousseau' then public opinion 'would have judged in strict consistency with those results' – that is to say, she would have been accepted back into the community as the rightful wife of Stephen.[44] The honeymoon journey would have rendered Maggie acceptable, absorbing her into the community of 'the world's wife' that represents the only socially acceptable position for women in this society; instead, her journey stands as a failed attempt that casts her out from this possibility.

The narratives thus use mobility to make visible the sexual moral codes of the community and the gendered imbalances through which it is structured: at no other point do the texts explore these codes to such an extent. At the same time, this last example suggests that they also draw attention to crucial distinctions that make clear the ways in which the condemnation of female mobility is not just a corollary of the sexual moral code but comes to constitute transgression in and of itself. This ability to detach sexuality from mobility is important because this begins to suggest that these narratives are not only concerned with the damaging implications of the sexual moral codes placed on women but also the effects of a gendered politics of mobility in which female movement – and thus, freedom and individual agency – is repeatedly curtailed and constrained.

In and Out of Place: Women and Rural Space

Despite the apparent differences between the rural locales of each novel, both places are clearly situated within the wider context of the region and the nation. In *The Mill on the Floss*, a wider network of trade is immediately signalled: the novel opens with 'the broadening Floss hurries on between its green banks to the sea ... on this mighty tide the black ships ... are borne along'.[45] So too is Maggie distinctly knowledgeable 'all about the different sorts of people in the world', from the 'Dutchmen very fat, and smoking', to the 'lion countries ... Africa, where it's very hot'.[46] Yet this opens up a painful contradiction for Maggie, as reading and learning about the world beyond her limited sphere breeds discontent with the constraints of her situation: she tells Philip that reading 'has made me restless – it has made me think a great deal about the world; and I have impatient thoughts again – I get weary of my home'.[47] Indeed it is notable that the one opportunity that would take Maggie into the wider world is curtailed:

while making her way home alone from the journey upriver with Stephen she finds herself in York for the night, but while the city would offer the potential for escape and independence after Maggie's perceived transgression – a freedom that becomes available to Stephen Guest – she returns immediately home, cast back upon the rural environment as the only space available to her.[48]

In *Adam Bede*, discussions of the wider world are opened up primarily through Dinah Morris, the female preacher, who speaks of regional variation in the people and landscapes that she traverses.[49] Yet although Dinah represents a rare opportunity for female mobility, the narrative does little to explore the implications and meanings of her mobility as an act of independence or freedom, and in this context it serves primarily to highlight the contrast with Hetty's limited sphere. As we have already seen, Hetty's movements in the local area are constrained by her aunt, and we are further told that her 'farthest journey had been to Rosseter on the pillion with her uncle'.[50] Hetty's situation isn't unusual: as Gillian Beer notes, there is a 'heavy weighting' of people in place through labour and Dinah is 'the only person in the book who can travel freely and without consequences'.[51] But Hetty is distinguished from others through her expression of a desire to move further away: she wishes 'to go for a lady's maid' which would help her escape social condemnation for her wrongdoing, but this wish is immediately curbed by her uncle.[52] In this suppressed potential of moving away, Hetty serves to reiterate the structure of the rural locale as a place where, as Lucie Armitt writes of the novel, 'whatever happens, hearth and home will always be waiting. It is a reassuring reflection of rural "real" life for patriarchs, but less promising for female readers'.[53]

However, Hetty's narrative takes another divergence from this structure, for as fallen woman she cannot be the ideal 'keeper of home and hearth' and her sexual transgression results in movement away from the community. Having concealed the pregnancy for as long as she can, Hetty fears the discovery of her 'great dread' and perceives that her only options are to drown herself or to flee in search of Arthur. A long journey ensues that, in the symbolic terms of the text, operates as an articulation of the penalties for Hetty's earlier actions: as Parkins writes, 'the "wandering" woman literalises sexual transgression' and Hetty's wandering journey stands as a fitting assertion of gender codes that necessitate the punishment of the fallen woman.[54] But in taking Hetty across a range of rural locations between the Midlands and Windsor, the journey also serves to further examine the difficulties of women's position in the rural landscape.

The narration of Hetty's journey is notable firstly for the physically strenuous effects on her body and the mental anxiety that are centred in the text: Hetty is struck by 'the terror of wandering out into the world, of which she knew nothing', and throughout the long, arduous journey she is often described as 'weak and tired', 'very weary too with these days of new fatigue and anxiety', such that

by the end of her journey she is so overcome by weariness that she faints, losing 'her miserable consciousness and look[ing] like a beautiful corpse'.[55] The walk also subjects her to the pain of public scrutiny and social condemnation: she 'take[s] no pains to conceal' her pregnant figure and encounters the critical gaze of others who comment on the fact that she is 'not very fit for travelling'.[56]

This physical pain and social judgement is constitutive of the punishment of the journey: if 'the "wandering" woman literalises sexual transgression' then here the pain of wandering literalizes the punishment for that transgression. Yet, while symbolically subjecting her heroine to a condemnation that adheres to expected moral codes, the journey is also a key moment in subverting the discourse of the fallen woman, operating to make visible a number of elements about Hetty's narrative that are significant in how readers are asked to understand her story. Hetty cannot be straightforwardly positioned as a sympathetic figure and neither can her journey, as Parkins notes, be conceived of 'as heroic within the terms of the narrative, because it lacks the ethical agency that motivates truly purposeful action'; but it does nonetheless draw out two aspects of Hetty's experience that are otherwise silenced from the text.[57] The arduous labour of Hetty's walking body stands in place of the labour of her baby at the journey's end that is unnarratable: the long, drawn-out bodily suffering of her wandering is the closest approximation of the experience of pregnancy and birth that the text can articulate within the context of contemporary literary expectations.[58] The journey also stands in for a second journey that cannot be narrated in the terms of the text: the transportation of Hetty to Australia, undoubtedly another physically and emotionally arduous ordeal that is again beyond representation. The journey thus operates to simultaneously fulfil the discursive expectations of the treatment of the fallen woman while making visible the pain caused by the inequalities of gendered moral codes: as journey begets journey, the narrative constantly intersects mobility and sexuality in such a way that it comes to use a familiar discursive site of female sexuality – mobility – as instrumental in its critique.

In doing so, the journey also ruptures two elements of gendered rural representation. Hetty traverses a predominantly rural landscape and the focus throughout is on the countryside as the space of travail: far from being an idealized environment, rural spaces present a harsh, hostile environment that is marked by the difficulties for the struggling traveller. Walking is here conceived of in terms of labour – 'what hard work it was to find her way' – drawing out the hardship of necessary walking, and the landscape is depicted not for its picturesque qualities, only in terms of how it relates to her traversal: Hetty is 'always fixing on some tree or gate or projecting bush', but never in terms of its scenic, picturesque qualities.[59] Furthermore, the strain that the walk puts on Hetty's body – becoming 'pale and worn', 'weary' and fatigued – marks a notable break from the implicit association

between women and landscape as being in harmony with one another: far from being 'in place' or at one with nature in her rural walk, Hetty's body is worn down by movement through a difficult and hostile space.

This sense of being out of place is further obvious in the final stages of her journey. On reaching Windsor, Hetty finds that she has missed Arthur and therefore decides to retrace her route to the Midlands, drawn back by the thought of 'the grassy Warwickshire fields, with the bushy tree-studded hedgerows'.[60] On arriving in the region she has longed for, she wanders out into the fields away from habitation and finds 'a sense of escape' in isolation from the sight of others. Here the natural environment becomes figured as a protective, comforting landscape in which Hetty can find relief; noticeably this is the relief of privacy rather than any affiliation with nature, but for a moment Eliot enables Hetty to find a space of solitude in the landscape.[61] Her relief is soon ended, however, by 'an elderly man in a smock-frock' who challenges her for wandering off the road:

> But what do you do gettin' out o' the highroad ... Y'ull be getting' into mischief, if you dooant mind ... Why dooant you keep where there's finger-poasses an' folks to ax the way on ... anybody 'ud think you was a wild woman, an' look at yer.[62]

In the towns, men have 'stared at her and joked her rudely' in public houses and on the streets, reiterating a familiar discourse about women's availability in the space of the streets; but here she is challenged for being *off* the high road, for seeking out a space beyond visibility. There is, it seems, no space beyond the home in which women can exist in any positive sense: no space in which solitude or privacy can be found, for her very position alone in the rural environment situates her – just as it did the young Maggie – as a 'wild woman'.

Hetty's experience here thus serves to emphasize not only, as with Maggie, the notion of wandering women as wild women straying beyond the bounds of the home, but also, in its spatial location, the particular double bind of women who are perceived as out of place in the rural environment: as Jo Little writes, 'despite the "closeness to nature" of constructions of women's gender identities, they are not always seen as "in place" in the rural environment ... their presence there may be seen as unsettling and inappropriate', and Hetty's journey indeed reiterates that there is no place for women in rural space, no place in which a moment of solitude or restoration can be found within the rural landscape.[63]

Eliot thus utilizes mobility in the rural landscape as a narrative space in which to make visible the gendered patterns of exclusion that structure the rural landscape; in doing so, the rural environment emerges as a space of hostility and reproach to women who can find no place within it, either on or off the road. However, another possibility becomes clear: as well as critiquing the connections between sexuality, mobility and women in her writing, Eliot also offers the possibility of a rural space away from these discourses and utilizes spaces of

mobility to recast the position of women in the rural landscape. While *Adam Bede* ultimately remains caught within the restrictions of rural gender codes, *The Mill on the Floss* goes further in rewriting spaces of mobility as sites where women carve out a relationship to the rural landscape away from typical gendered expectations.

This idea is initially signalled in an early episode in the novel in which Maggie takes her first journey alone by running away 'to the gypsies', a movement marked by both the joy of escaping from what she perceives as the cruel condemnation of her family, as well as, in her walk, finding 'a delighted sense of privacy in creeping along by the hedgerows'.[64] This need for privacy comes in part as the result of a 'humiliating encounter' with two men on the road who have humoured her escapade, but it is nonetheless notable that the narrative pays heed to Maggie's sense of 'delight', suggestive of an enjoyment in privacy not just because of the escape from others (as with Hetty), but also for the sheer personal pleasure that comes in 'creeping along' the hedgerows. In a similar vein we are told that 'she was used to wandering about the fields by herself, and was less timid there than on the high-road', suggesting that the habit of 'wandering like a wild thing' so criticized by her mother is also a significant act of independence giving self-confidence to the 'less timid' Maggie.[65]

This idea becomes reiterated at a later stage in the narrative when Maggie first visits the Red Deeps in the previously discussed episode that is marked by its allusions to sexuality and the landscape; but before Philip arrives on the scene, the narrative takes a few moments to describe the pleasure that Maggie experiences in this space. A sense of privacy away from the eyes of others again comes to the forefront: Maggie's first thought, 'now she is sure of being unseen', is to remove her bonnet, thus freeing herself from the trappings of femininity in a space where she feels herself to be invisible from the eyes of others.[66] This sense of privacy is extended to explore the pleasure that comes from walking alone: the daily walk Maggie takes here is 'her one indulgence', and the Red Deeps in particular 'had [a] charm for her', providing space to sit and 'listen to the hum of insects ... or see the sunlight piercing the distant boughs'; it is a space in which she finds herself 'not uneasy', 'calmly enjoying the free air'.[67] Maggie's enjoyment of this 'indulgence' is one that she actively pursues whenever she can: she heads outdoors directly that she is 'free to wander at her will', and is 'inclined to lengthen' her daily walk.[68]

It is a brief episode, but in centring upon language of 'indulgence' and 'charm' the text indicates a deep personal pleasure in this moment, and the delight of being 'free to wander at her will' is expressed as a rare freedom. In the immersion in the positivity of Maggie's enjoyment, the text creates a moment in which it recasts rurality and mobility away from negative gendered associations: Maggie carves out here a space of her own, one in which she can move freely and

unrestrainedly, and in which she can take pleasure from the natural environment around her. This recalls the ways in which women's walking could carry positive connotations as a 'feminine pursuit', and here we see Maggie reiterate Solnit's assertion that the walk, 'both socially and spatially the widest latitude available' to women, is utilized as a space in which she finds 'a chance to exert body and imagination'.[69] As a middle-class woman, Maggie's walk offers an interesting contribution to this positive formulation of walking, extending the social reach of a trope ordinarily restricted to the more leisured ladies of country estates. Furthermore, Eliot's use of this walk not only reclaims an act of mobility as a feminine pursuit but also claims a space of rurality for women: if women are typically 'out of place' in the rural environment, then here we see an example of a woman forging a space in which she is 'in place', her presence not, as Little writes, 'unsettling and inappropriate', but rather at home in this space.

This is not altogether unproblematic: Maggie is aware that her indulgence might be too much, feeling that it is 'a pleasure she loved so well that sometimes, in her ardours of renunciation, she thought she ought to deny herself the frequent indulgence in it'.[70] Yet this recognition works not, as it might, to cast her pleasure as wrong but rather to make a bold assertion about Maggie's *right* to that pleasure as a woman. As Beer writes, Maggie is the site of multiple desires – knowledge, sexual love, freedom – that are 'unrealizable in terms of the old order and the fixed stereotypes by which she is surrounded' not because her desires are taboo per se, but because 'the claiming of them as female desires' transgresses gendered expectations.[71] This instance of Maggie walking represents one further example of this iteration of desire, simultaneously acknowledging and surpassing the barriers that cast Maggie's walk as subversive of gendered codes.

In this space of rural solitude Eliot also begins to carve out a narrative that can be situated as an emergent form of modern privacy. As Wendy Gan writes, 'by the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, the idea of access to privacy, as evidenced by the increasing representations of women desiring to be private ... had become more appealing as well as increasingly necessary to women'.[72] In her essay in this collection, Samantha Walton identifies that in the Findlater sisters' novel *Crossriggs*, the rural context is instrumental in offering a space in which a progressive woman has

> greater freedom to move unimpeded by dress or codes of behaviour, and the privacy and invisibility to retreat and reflect on her position in the world, with the ultimate reward being the space it gives her to imagine and pursue new and modern forms of selfhood and experience.[73]

I'd suggest that the rural solitude of Maggie in *The Mill on the Floss* provides a similar iteration of the private solitude of rural space, representing a version of the domestic garden that, Gan identifies, 'provided women with a spatial alter-

native, a place to escape to, and, in its privacy, a woman could affirm a self other than her domestic identity'.[74] While not having the luxury of the domestic garden at her disposal, Maggie's woodland space nonetheless provides her with this 'spatial alternative' that affords her privacy and self-identity. In doing so, Eliot recrafts a rural space away from a masculine discourse that would typically seek to restrict her access to that environment, instead articulating the potential that such spaces might offer rural women.

In both *The Mill on the Floss* and *Adam Bede*, rural mobility thus serves as a vital site of critique and a space in which to reframe typical discourses about women's position in the rural landscape. It is in the spaces of walking that the damaging effects of gendered codes come to light with most visible effect, walking operating to signal most strongly the ways in which rurality is problematized for women; far from the rural idyll, walking represents the central site through which the constrictions and constraints of women's lives are played out. Furthermore, walking becomes a key site in crafting new articulations of the relationship between women and the rural landscape, thus situating rural space as a site through which to contribute to a wider discourse about femininity and modernity. In the constraints and curtailments of Maggie's and Hetty's mobility we see the experience of those who are denied the opportunity to move freely within and beyond their limited sphere. But while Hetty's narrative ultimately remains constrained by the wider structures of association between sexuality and mobility, through Maggie Tulliver's attainment of a private rural space Eliot signals the emergence of a modern form of female independence, one in which women might begin to 'wander out into the world' on their own terms.

7 'I NEVER LIKED LONG WALKS': GENDER, NATURE AND JANE EYRE'S RURAL WANDERING

Katherine F. Montgomery

Although Jane Eyre begins by proclaiming that she 'never liked long walks', one of the most peculiar and memorable episodes of *Jane Eyre* (1847) finds the novel's heroine fleeing Thornfield to wander the English countryside, nearly perishing of exposure and hunger.[1] This episode is notable not only for its drama, or for the irony of the once-indoorsy Jane's situation, but in that Jane nearly dies in the midst of the very natural world that has been strongly and repeatedly used to characterize her as something more (or less) than human herself. Throughout the novel Jane shows an innate sensitivity to and association with the natural world, and particularly in the interviews with Rochester that immediately precede her crisis, Jane is described in terms that are far more wild and nature-based than human. Her flight from Thornfield and her subsequent wandering, however, throw this natural characterization into a deadly crisis. Jane nearly dies of exposure; the poetic language that had turned her into a creature of nature is swiftly undermined, and any romance in Rochester's characterization of Jane as a bird is undone when, starving, she eats porridge meant for a pig.

Jane's affiliation with nature is not simply a romantic fantasy imposed by Rochester: entwined throughout Jane's turn to nature and her traumatic experience in it are practical questions of her own economic status. It is Jane's vulnerable position as a dependent that first encourages her escapist natural imagination, and later drives her, ill-equipped and friendless, into the rural wild, where she enters a landscape heavily coded in terms of women's economic struggles. Within this context, Jane's realization that 'I was a human being, and had a human being's wants: I must not linger where there was nothing to supply them' becomes not simply a commentary on her hunger, but a more profound realization that she must learn to reconcile her own drive for independence with her social condition as a dependent young woman, scraping to hold on to a marginally middle-class position.[2] The similarly vulnerable positions of Mary and Diana Rivers, and the other women that Jane meets in the countryside, sug-

gest that this vulnerability is not unique to Jane, but a common condition for women. After setting up nature as Jane's imaginative escape from reality, the novel shows the danger of this romanticization: Jane loses her place in any social or economic structure, turns to nature instead, and as a direct result almost dies. Her long walk is at the heart of the novel's questions about her individual and social identity, self-creation and self-understanding; following it, she must learn to reconcile her tendency toward individualism with a realistic understanding of her situation and prospects.

Yet the novel is not simply the story of Jane's re-education about the unfeasibility of an escapist fantasy of nature. There are moments in the text where nature becomes more than a fantasy, developing an almost-supernatural, Gothic consciousness of its own, undeniable and powerful, intervening in the text at decisive moments. Nature embodied comes to Jane in the form of the celestial mother that appears to her on the night she leaves Rochester, and later in an aural hallucination of Rochester's voice calling to her just as she is on the verge of agreeing to go to India with St John Rivers. Even within a text that emphasizes Jane's fundamental inability to be free, and which shows that a fantasy of nature is an imperfect solution to the repressive conditions in which she finds herself, a sublime nature still breaks through the narrative as a powerful force. This force eventually destabilizes the very essence of Jane's work to integrate herself into society: the sublime nature at the heart of *Jane Eyre*, which is wrapped up in Jane's own individualist nature, cannot integrate or compromise for mere economic considerations, and at moments of crisis – when Jane is on the verge of making some compromise – it fights back. Even while Jane works to integrate herself into human society, the novel asks whether her effort is worth the sacrifice, or even possible.

This dynamic is the essence of what Robert B. Heilman first identified in Brontë's novels as the New Gothic, which takes the Gothic tropes of Ann Radcliffe or Monk Lewis – wild landscapes and mad, hidden wives – and while acknowledging their conventions (sometimes by undercutting them with humour), uses them to explore the effects of repressive social institutions on the individual.[3] Since Heilman, *Jane Eyre*'s Gothic elements have been the subject of much critical inquiry, from the first mention of the supernatural gytrash to Jane's double in Bertha Rochester.[4] However, Jane's engagement with and movement through the novel's sublime nature has received less attention. The novel's landscapes are classic Gothic sublimity, with a Burke-inspired understanding of the effects of striking and dangerous landscapes upon the individual's imagination: Jane's reaction to the novel's nature is powerful, individual and not quite controllable.[5] For much of the novel, Jane courts this sublime nature as a way of revelling in her individuality: her reactions to it are her own and no one else's; even the analytic Rochester is baffled by the nature paintings that she completed at Lowood, asking 'who taught you to paint wind?'.[6] This movement toward nature is

undercut, however, and what had seemed like Jane's opportunity to assert her individualism is neatly inverted, when her movement toward nature results in the near-annihilation of her physical self.

This account runs counter to other critical analyses of the power dynamics of Jane's narration. Doris Y. Kadish argues that Jane's first-person narration shows her taking control of her story through her descriptions of landscapes, with which Jane can both revolt against entrenched powers and define herself as she likes. Kadish writes that through the power of her narrative, Jane 'with nature can replace masters with a beneficent, comforting mother', and that

> not only is she free as a bird, she is free to conceive of the symbolic values of objects in nature such as birds as she chooses, regardless of whether they have been used and interpreted by others before her in different ways.[7]

While I agree that Jane's nature descriptions are a bid for psychological independence, I suggest that Jane's subsequent physical sufferings in nature do much to overturn this narrative of freedom-through-description. Although Jane goes to sleep in the arms of a beneficent natural mother, she awakes to 'pale and bare' want, and the sure knowledge that she is no bird.[8] Jane's near-death in a real, hostile landscape challenges her naturalist self-construction, suggesting that there can be no durable identity granted by a sublime landscape when one is dying of exposure to the elements.

Further complicating this landscape narrative is that the novel's sublime landscape is not simply overturned, but turned into something else: a rural economic landscape.[9] Even the sublime landscape, as it turns out, is not exempt from the powerful social institutions of wealth and gender. Jacqueline M. Labbe has written on the gendering of the sublime landscape, noting that the concept of gazing out over a landscape implies a privileged, masculine viewpoint, with some sense of ownership or control over the prospect.[10] Women, with their lack of power or proprietorship, are more likely to be part of a landscape than observers of it – more likely to be observed than observers. In *Jane Eyre*, it is Jane's very destitution that turns the landscape from a sublime one into an economic one, and her poverty is particularly gendered: her inability to find work is due to suspicions attached to her as a young, isolated woman. The sublime landscape on which she hoped to build an identity turns out to be a social, economic landscape, and the real threat to her well-being is not the icy shores or dark forests of her imagination, but something much more banal: her inability to find work in or near the rural town of Morton. Such a reading of the landscape might also usefully complicate criticism of *Jane Eyre* as Bildungsroman, another major area of critical inquiry. If the typical young man of the Bildungsroman nearly died of exposure three days after first walking out the door alone, the genre would presumably have a very different cast to it.[11] Jane's time in Whitcross and Morton moves her swiftly from

a sublime fantasy of nature to the real nature of the moors to a social, economic landscape – and in all three, Jane fails to find a place for herself. In facing her with three equally inhospitable versions of the English landscape, the novel literalizes Jane's impossible situation in trying to assert her independence.

I begin at the novel's beginning, examining how Jane's limited options as a dependent young woman cause her to search for sublimity and individuality in a sublime nature. This theme culminates in her romance with Rochester, whose repeated characterizations of Jane as an elf or bird reinforce both her affiliation with nature and her individuality, but also troublingly characterize her as inhuman. In the second part of the essay, I examine how Jane's flight from Thornfield and subsequent wanderings through a rural economic landscape undercut her affiliation with nature, and emphasize that she must find some way to compromise her instincts for the sublime with a more practical need to support herself; here, she finds a potential model in St John Rivers, who works to accommodate his own restlessness by dedicating his life to God. But while St John is free to seek the sublime in India while maintaining his independence and sense of self, Jane, as a woman, is not. Although the novel ends with Jane's happy marriage to Rochester, the traces of sublimity in the text all but drop out, leaving the reader with the uneasy sense that Jane's happy ending may have come at a cost: as she no longer seeks to assert her selfhood through the sublime, it is unclear whether she continues to assert her selfhood at all.

'Of These Death-White Realms I Formed an Idea of My Own': Sublime Nature and Jane's Individualism

The novel opens with Jane avoiding the chilly assessment of her Aunt Reed and the open physical abuse of her cousin John Reed by tucking herself into a window seat with *Bewick's History of British Birds*. But despite her position and her choice of naturalist reading material, actual British birds are not Jane's focus, nor is the 'pale blank of mist and cloud' visible through the window. Instead, she reimagines the images and descriptions of nature in the book: 'Of these death-white realms I formed an idea of my own: shadowy, like all the half-comprehended notions that float dim through children's brains, but strangely impressive'. Jane chooses the vignettes here – not of birds, but of the book's more Gothic elements, which she supplements with her imagination. Nature itself is not an escape or refuge; Jane remains cosily tucked in her window seat, skipping over the birds in her book. But as an 'idea of [her] own' or as a set of 'half-comprehended notions', *Bewick*'s nature offers a sublime escape: 'Each picture told a story; mysterious often to my undeveloped understanding and imperfect feelings, yet ever profoundly interesting'. Jane describes a mixture of partial comprehension, imagination and emotion that imbues nature with a Burkean

sublimity, with a combined sense of terror and power. At the moment of the greatest sense of inequality between Jane and her cousins, the idea of nature offers an idea greater than herself – sublime, dark, powerful – to which she can attach her imagination, and which, in turn, grants her a legitimized individuality, and something that is uniquely hers: the imagined images are '[her] own' and no one else's, while nature's 'pale blank' becomes imbued with personal meaning. The opening of the novel enacts a relationship between Jane, nature and escape that will become a motif. Jane will continually seek refuge in a reimagined, sublime nature, until the crisis of her near-death on the moor, which returns her to the all-too-real 'raw twilight' that as a child she had been so glad to avoid.[12]

As she grows, Jane continues to prefer her own imaginative, sublime visions of nature. She describes one episode in retrospect, when she shows Rochester the paintings that she completed during her last two vacations at Lowood. She tells Rochester how she 'sat at them from morning till noon, and from noon till night: the length of the midsummer days favoured my inclination to apply'. Surely this is peculiar: Jane is spending her midsummer days – the very days when Lowood is, according to her earlier descriptions, at its best – drawing indoors, reimagining nature into a sublime hypernature. Strikingly, she expresses herself with paintings that mirror the images from *Bewick's Book of Birds*, with shipwrecks and lonely arctic scenes, cormorants and crowns. The natural scenes that began as Jane's reading material have become a ciphered production of her self and proof of her individuality: Rochester says that they 'are, for a schoolgirl, peculiar'.[13]

In her first weeks at Thornfield, too, Jane turns to her imagination acting on nature as a method of psychological escape. She describes how she 'longed for a power of vision which might overpass' the limit of the horizon, and says that her 'sole relief was to ... allow my mind's eye to dwell on whatever bright visions rose before it ... to let my heart be heaved by the exultant movement'.[14] Similarly, on the evening that she first meets Rochester in the lane, she says that she 'did not like re-entering Thornfield. To pass its threshold was to return to stagnation'. This sense of limitation pushes Jane toward nature again; she paces outside of Thornfield, and describes the moon:

> Her orb seeming to look up as she left the hilltops, from behind which she had come, far and farther below her, and aspired to the zenith, midnight-dark in its fathomless depth and measureless distance: and for those trembling stars that followed her course; they made my heart tremble, my veins glow when I viewed them.[15]

As when she enshrined herself in the window seat as a child, Jane turns to her imagination acting on the natural world around her as a source for sublimity, for 'fathomless depth and measureless distance', and for a response that borders on the physical: her heart heaves and her 'veins glow'.

Jane's romance with Rochester reinforces her affiliation with nature, as he repeatedly reimagines Jane as a supernatural creature herself. He tells her that she has 'rather the look of another world ... When you came on me in Hay Lane last night, I thought unaccountably of fairy tales, and had half a mind to demand whether you had bewitched my horse'. When she tells him that she has no parents, rather than pushing for details of her human history, he returns to the idea that she is a fairy: 'And so you were waiting for your people when you sat on the stile?'[16] She is also, at intervals and repeatedly, an 'elf', 'sprite', 'changeling' and 'curious sort of bird'.[17] Part of the appeal of this characterization for Jane is that it elides her own powerlessness; if she is a fairy, sprite or bird, then she is not at the mercy or the goodwill of others. A vision of herself as an independent spirit is appealing, even as (or perhaps because) it is being envisioned by Rochester – in whose house she lives, and who pays her salary.

The problem with this characterization, however, is never clearer than at an early climax of the novel, when Jane proclaims her equality to Rochester: 'Do you think I can stay to become nothing to you? Do you think I am an automaton? – a machine without feelings? ... You think wrong! – I have as much soul as you, – and full as much heart!' Her speech is telling in that she argues for her humanity in negative terms: she is not a machine, nor is she content to be 'nothing'. She also notably avoids any natural imagery here, even while Rochester's reply attempts to reassert the trope of Jane-as-natural-creature: 'Jane, be still; don't struggle so, like a wild, frantic bird that is rending its own plumage in its desperation'. Her reply explicitly rejects this imagery: 'I am no bird; and no net ensnares me: I am a free human being with an independent will, which I now exert to leave you'.[18] Jane has long used sublime nature as an imaginative escape from her position of inequality and powerlessness, but with Rochester, she wants real human equality.

However, Rochester continues to press this natural language, producing a self-flattering fantasy of her independence rather than acknowledging his position of power. Even after the wedding debacle, Rochester's last appeal to her continues to evoke the inhuman: 'Consider that eye: consider the resolute, wild, free thing looking out of it, defying me, with more than courage – with a stern triumph. Whatever I do with its cage, I cannot get at it – the savage, beautiful creature!' Calling Jane a 'thing' and an 'it', Rochester continues to use the fantastical bird images that deny Jane her humanity: 'Of yourself, you could come with soft flight and nestle against my heart, if you would'.[19]

Ironically, it is Jane's rejection of Rochester and his natural fantasy that drives her into nature proper. In a 'trance-like dream' the evening after the revelation of Rochester's marriage, she sees the roof of Thornfield – the house that would have been hers – dissolve into clouds, leaving her with no protection. In the absence of human aid, Jane's imagination transforms the moon into a maternal spirit of nature:

> She broke forth as never moon yet burst from cloud: a hand first penetrated the sable folds and waved them away; then, not a moon, but a white human form shone in the azure, inclining a glorious brow earthward. It gazed and gazed and gazed on me. It spoke to my spirit: immeasurably distant was the tone, yet so near, it whispered in my heart – 'My daughter, flee temptation!'
>
> 'Mother, I will'.[20]

Jane's reality and fantasy intertwine, and the fantastical form in the sky, so similar to that which Jane had drawn in her youth at Lowood, now claims Jane as her daughter.

But what does it mean to be the daughter of nature? Gaining a mother should grant Jane a clearer sense of identity, but instead, Jane's sense of identity, already in a crisis, continues to fall apart. After the scene at the church, she had asked: 'where was the Jane Eyre of yesterday? – where was her life? – where were her prospects?'[21] Soon, alone on the moor, she hardly knows what it means to be human at all: 'Birds began singing in brake and copse: birds were faithful to their mates; birds were emblems of love. What was I?'[22] Jane is no longer Rochester's bird, but she has no identity with which to replace that which she lost. While the poetry of Jane-as-nature's-daughter may be lovely, this too-romantic identity swiftly crumbles in the face of real nature: Jane describes how 'Want came to me, pale and bare', followed swiftly by her realization that 'I was a human being, and had a human being's wants: I must not linger where there was nothing to supply them'.[23] The fantasy of Jane as a daughter of nature has been tested and found impossible.

'And What do the Women Do?': Gender and the Rural Economic Landscape

Jane's first re-encounter with human life is with its economic activity:

> Recalled by the rumbling of wheels to the road before me, I saw a heavily-laden waggon labouring up the hill, and not far beyond were two cows and their drover. Human life and human labour were near. I must struggle on: strive to live and bend to toil like the rest.[24]

To be human is to labour; Jane must join the rest of humanity, and she is recalled to herself by the sound of the hard labour of trade and the sight of agriculture. Humans must 'strive to live and bend to toil'; Jane, in turn, must bear her own load. But what load can Jane bear? The loaded wagon is not only a symbol of human toil, but also a literal representation of the local rural economy around Morton, where the work available is inaccessible to Jane. She cannot get work as a driver or a drover, and she is too ill-equipped and unconnected to do any labour available to women in such a place.

Ellen Jordan writes that the two main careers open to middle-class women in 1840s England were dressmaking and teaching.[25] Jane has lost her position as a governess, and her very first inquiry of the shopkeeper upon entering Morton is whether there is work available for a dressmaker (there is not). Her time in the countryside consistently demonstrates her particular economic vulnerability: as a young, middle-class woman, she simply cannot find work. Her conversation with a shopkeeper indicates her basic ignorance about rural life and work:

> 'What was the chief trade in this place? What did most of the people do?'
>
> 'Some were farm labourers; a good deal worked at Mr. Oliver's needle-factory, and at the foundry'.
>
> 'Did Mr. Oliver employ women?'
>
> 'Nay; it was men's work'.
>
> 'And what do the women do?'
>
> 'I knawn't', was the answer. 'Some does one thing, and some another. Poor folk mun get on as they can'.[26]

Although this exchange begins by showing Jane's ignorance of the local economy, it swiftly shows that she is not the only woman to struggle: 'Some does one thing, and some another. Poor folk mun get on as they can'. Jane encounters evidence of this struggle throughout her sojourn in this rural town, during which she primarily interacts with women: the shopkeeper, the young woman who tells her that they 'do not keep a servant', the housekeeper at the parsonage, a girl throwing porridge to a pig (and, more distantly, the mother who grants her permission to give it to Jane), Mary and Diana Rivers (seen through the window of their parlour), and finally their servant Hannah.[27] With the exception of the shopkeeper, all of these women are in positions of dependence, with their livings dependent on their places in a household: they are servants, wives, daughters, cousins. Jane's inability to find work is not due to a fault of her own, but because there is simply no work available for her.

Just as this situation is not unique to Jane, the text also hints that this situation is not limited to any one small town. Morton is a small hamlet, but its diverse economy includes several varieties of work: there is a rural economy of farming; a small industrial economy, with both a needle factory (small consumer goods) and a foundry (presumably indicating production on a somewhat larger scale); and a service economy of shopkeepers and servants. Later, there is some inconsistency regarding Morton's industrial and rural economies: St John describes Jane's students as 'cottagers' children – at the best, farmer's daughters'.[28] What happened to the 'good deal' of people who worked at the needle factory and the foundry? This slippage between economies suggests that Morton can be read as an amalgamation of different types of small towns in 1840s England: some more industrialized, and some less so. Morton might be any small town in England, or all of them. Tellingly, Jane can find no position in any of its trades or industries, suggesting that the entire

economy – not just of Morton, but of England – is profoundly unsupportive to women who must support themselves. Jane's movement through this landscape reflects this position: she says that she 'drew near houses; I left them, and came back again, and again I wandered away', a back-and-forth movement that reflects the limbo in which she is caught, between the need to support herself and the impossibility of doing so, as well as the more psychological tension between her propensity for independence and her need for human aid.[29]

However, the support that other women can offer is almost nonexistent: after the cold reality of nature, Jane is thrown into the equally cold reality of rural women's lives, which consist of struggle with only small margins of security. The economy in which Jane finds herself is one of survival and little comfort, without the luxury of aiding others, and the women to whom she applies have no power to admit her back into society, being relatively powerless themselves, and hampered by a patriarchy that requires them to be suspicious of a single and unattached young woman looking for work. Jane herself has internalized these strictures: of the shopwoman, she asks, 'what claim had I to importune her?' and of another young woman, she says, 'it was not her business to think for me, or to seek a place for me: besides, in her eyes, how doubtful must have appeared my character, position, tale'.[30] (After Hannah bars her from the door of Moor House and Jane collapses outside, St John tells Hannah that she has 'done [her] duty in excluding'.)[31] Jane's strength fails her swiftly, but it only requires an hour or two to establish that she cannot gain entry to this economy on her own, and other women are unable to assist her. Not only are they powerless themselves, but her wandering makes her a figure of suspicion in ways that men's wandering would not.

Charlotte Mathieson explores at greater length the moral suspicions attached to wandering women in rural areas, and writes that:

> It is in the spaces of walking that the damaging effects of gendered codes come to light with most visible effect, walking operating to signal most strongly the ways in which rurality is problematized for women; far from the rural idyll, walking represents the central site through which the constrictions and constraints of women's lives are played out.[32]

Even though Jane herself is new to the rural environment, her wander around Morton shows her encountering a series of just such gendered 'constrictions and constraints' as she attempts to re-enter society and faces suspicions about her history and respectability, her lack of connections, her uncertain class status. From start to finish, this episode particularly emphasizes how these constraints are tied up with Jane's economic condition: as she grows weaker, she says 'far better that crows and ravens … should pick my flesh from my bones, than that they should be prisoned in a workhouse coffin and moulder in a pauper's grave'.[33] The formerly romanticized birds, onetime 'emblems of love', will soon come to pick her

starved bones.[34] That this image is wrapped in the language of class – Jane would prefer this death to the 'workhouse coffin' and the 'pauper's grave' – suggests that the economic narrative of poverty and starvation has won out over the romantic or sublime one.

Jane's wandering in nature and her experience in Morton show that she must learn how to reconcile herself with what has been revealed all too clearly to be a man's world. Most pressingly, she needs a vocation, one that is not entirely dependent on the goodwill of others. In the cold light of day, Jane's imaginative agency is shown to be as unreal as the scenes which she imagined as a child, and the only agency that matters is one that she does not have: the ability to find work. Unfortunately, as Jordan and Carol Margaret Davison have both explored, the public discourse on the possibilities of respectable middle-class jobs for women was still in its early stages in the 1840s.[35] In the end, it is St John Rivers who has the power to rescue her, both by admitting her to Moor House and telling her that he will find her a position 'in [his] own time and way'.[36] (When St John eventually finds her a job, it is teaching again, working at a charity school – a position consistent with dominant 1840s discourse that doing charity work was respectable for middle-class women, while working for a salary was not.) The process of Jane's readmission into society is further confirmation of her powerlessness. If Jane is to survive, therefore, she must learn to compromise – if possible – her propensities for the sublime and the individualism she finds in it. Here, she finds a surprising potential model in St John Rivers.

'Propensities and Principles Must be Reconciled by Some Means': St John Rivers and the Gendered Sublime

St John is practical, critical and cold; while Jane is described as a bird, he is described as stone.[37] But his description of his own restlessness echoes her earlier account of pacing Thornfield's upper galleries: he tells her that he 'almost rave[s] in [his] restlessness. Well, propensities and principles must be reconciled by some means'.[38] St John and Jane both yearn for something larger and sublime to which to attach their energies, and each has an inclination to seek the sublime in a different direction: Jane in nature, and St John in Christ. Nonetheless, St John models for Jane how this propensity might be redirected into productive work, and his approach is consistent with her principles of service. Because of this, she is almost persuaded to travel to India with him, reasoning that:

> I must seek another interest in life to replace the one lost: is not the occupation he now offers me truly the most glorious man can adopt or God assign? Is it not, by its noble cares and sublime results, the one best calculated to fill the void left by uptorn affections and demolished hopes?[39]

The chief appeal of the life she is offered is its 'most glorious' and 'sublime' possibilities. For these, she would be willing to compromise some of her own propensities for independence: 'my body would be under rather a stringent yoke, but my heart and mind would be free. I should still have my unblighted self to turn to: my natural unenslaved feelings with which to communicate in moments of loneliness.'[40] The imagery of the yoke evokes her earlier realization that she must 'strive to live and bend to toil like the rest'.[41]

However, it soon becomes clear that Jane is not in the same position as St John, free to travel to India to devote herself to service. As a woman, she would have to go as his wife, give up all traces of her self, mind and body, and be 'at his side always, and always restrained, and always checked – forced to keep the fire of my nature continually low, to compel it to burn inwardly and never utter a cry … *this* would be unendurable'.[42] It is suggestive of her desperation that even this rejection is a close decision: her anxiety over it stretches out over the six-week span between St John's proposal and departure. At the last moment, when her inquiries about Rochester have received no reply, and when St John is at his most 'sublime', he can almost overcome her objections:

> I stood motionless under my hierophant's touch. My refusals were forgotten – my fears overcome – my wrestlings paralysed. The impossible – *i.e.* my marriage with St. John – was fast becoming the Possible. All was changing utterly, with a sudden sweep. Religion called – Angels beckoned – God commanded – life rolled together like a scroll – death's gates opening, showed eternity beyond: it seemed, that for safety and bliss there, all here might be sacrificed in a second. The dim room was full of visions.[43]

Jane's vision here is as overwhelmingly sublime as any that nature has provided her with, possibly even more so: her absolute paralysis indicates that she is in the sway of a sublime force greater than herself. But unlike the sublime maternal nature that guided her to leave Thornfield, this sublimity is destructive: it totally paralyses Jane, demanding total forgetfulness of her self, the opposite of the legitimizing sense of individuality that she had originally found in sublime nature.

In the face of this destructive, masculine sublimity, Jane's nature refuses to compromise: her own individuality resurfaces with a hallucination of Rochester's voice calling 'Jane! Jane! Jane!' Jane identifies the voice as 'the work of nature. She was roused, and did – no miracle – but her best'. It is striking that nature can only provide a series of uncertainties; Jane can only list the places where the voice 'did not seem' to originate, with a series of negatives:

> it did not seem in the room – nor in the house – nor in the garden: it did not come out of the air – nor from under the earth – nor from overhead. I had heard it – where, or whence, for ever impossible to know![44]

Nature's work is dark, compared to the clarity of her vision in which 'Angels beckoned – God commanded – life rolled together like a scroll – death's gates opening, showed eternity beyond'. Nonetheless, Jane's sublime nature rolls back to the surface of the text for the last time. As her body fought against starvation, now her spirit resists a similar death. Jane's nature – her own nature, the same thread that has always resonated with the sublime natural world – breaks through: 'I broke from St. John, who had followed, and would have detained me. It was *my* time to assume ascendancy. *My* powers were in play, and in force'. Jane is the strongest she has ever been, 'unscared, enlightened' and fully self-aware.[45] She has learned what she is able to compromise (her labour, her newfound family, even her life), and what she cannot: her spirit and her selfhood, both of which are tied both to Rochester and to a sublime nature.

Jane's darkly sublime aural hallucination differs from her previous encounter with a maternal vision of nature: for the first time, nature calls to her with 'the voice of a human being' – with the voice of Rochester.[46] In Rochester, it seems possible that Jane can combine her propensity for sublime nature and her need to find a place for herself; on Jane's return to him, Rochester is described in natural terms rather than human ones. Jane says that 'his hair was still raven black', and that his countenance 'reminded [her] of some wronged and fettered wild beast or bird, dangerous to approach in his sullen woe. The caged eagle, whose gold-ringed eyes cruelty has extinguished, might look as looked that sightless Samson'.[47] The bird imagery is repeated when Jane approaches, telling him that 'it is time some one undertook to rehumanise you … your hair reminds me of eagles' feathers; whether your nails are grown like birds' claws or not, I have not yet noticed'.[48] With this imagery, Rochester has become more accessible to Jane, who has finally found her own sublime British bird.

In turn, Rochester's characterizations of Jane are far less troubling than they once were; his former romantic dream that she was an unreal spirit of nature is now his nightmare. Jane's evidence that she is human reflects her recent experiences: she describes her humanity and her independence entirely in economic terms:

> 'I am an independent woman now'.
>
> 'Independent! What do you mean, Jane?'
>
> 'My uncle in Madeira is dead, and he left me five thousand pounds'.
>
> 'Ah! this is practical – this is real!' he cried: 'I should never dream that … What, Janet! Are you an independent woman? A rich woman?'
>
> 'Quite rich, sir …'
>
> 'But as you are rich, Jane, you have now, no doubt, friends who will look after you…?'
>
> 'I told you I am independent, sir, as well as rich: I am my own mistress'.[49]

Happily, not all traces of romance have dropped out: Rochester still greets Jane with 'Oh, you are indeed there, my sky-lark! Come to me'. However, this is fol-

lowed by a clarification that separates Jane from the birds: 'You are not gone: not vanished? I heard one of your kind an hour ago, singing high over the wood: but its song had no music for me.'[50] Rochester wants Jane herself, not a fantasy.

The novel's conclusion, with Jane returning to live in seclusion with Rochester, has received mixed responses from readers, who point out that Jane has become a caretaker, living in a house to which Rochester had once declined to send even Bertha.[51] Jane seldom interacts with any other society, and sees Mary and Diana only once per year. I suggest two possibilities for reading the conclusion. In the context of Jane's movement through the English rural landscape, and her former characterization as inhuman rather than human, this conclusion can be read as a small victory: her struggle was never to triumph in human society, but to partake in it at all; and by those standards, she has found a quiet success. Jane says that she is happy with Rochester, and that she loves him, and this should count for much. Her life might be read as the successful reconciliation of her 'propensities and principles', and if it is not quite everything a feminist reader might desire, it is at least in a mode of realism that is more sustainable than Jane's initial romanticism. Jane's movement toward nature, while deeply felt, often crossed into the realm of fantasy rather than reality, and when Jane found that this movement toward nature and fantasy was unsustainable, her task was to relearn what it meant to be human. In this context, her marriage with Rochester, despite their seclusion, nonetheless becomes a happy conclusion of a balance between her impulse toward the natural and her need for human society and security.

Yet I agree with Sharon Locy, who writes that there is 'something sad' in Jane's new position as Rochester's helpmate.[52] We are left with a strange taste of dissatisfaction, and I suggest that it is because the text's glimpses of sublimity have all but dropped out. The once-triumphant, transcendent insistence on Jane's individuality is gone; instead, Jane has found a quiet space between society and the natural world. But can what is sublime in her nature – her independence, her very humanity – be successfully comprised, or can it only be repressed? Can we believe that she is no longer restless, and that her former ardent wishes to see the world have simply evaporated? And even if they have – can this be read as a happy ending? In describing her new life with Rochester, Jane says that 'I described to him how brilliantly green they were; how the flowers and hedges looked refreshed; how sparklingly blue was the sky'.[53] It is hard to compare this rather generic description to her once-passionate description of 'those trembling stars that followed [the moon's] course; they made my heart tremble, my veins glow when I viewed them' without some sense of loss.[54]

That Jane so evocatively describes her restlessness in retrospect, after ten years in Ferndean, suggests that traces remain. When she describes her early days at Thornfield, much earlier in the narrative, Jane changes to an unusual use of the present tense:

> Millions are condemned to a stiller doom than mine, and millions are in silent revolt against their lot. Nobody knows how many rebellions besides political rebellions ferment in the masses of life which people earth. Women are supposed to be very calm generally: but women feel just as men feel; they need exercise for their faculties, and a field for their efforts as much as their brothers do; they suffer from too rigid a restraint, too absolute a stagnation, precisely as men would suffer.[55]

Jane links her experience to the masses of repressed, to human beings in general, and to political rebellion – but in the end, she identifies women as being particularly victimized by 'too rigid a restraint'. The older Jane is aware that these limitations on young women are not limited to herself, perhaps referring to her later experiences with Diana and Mary Rivers and the other women that she encountered. But is she also writing of herself? Is the 'stiller doom' referring only to her experience at Thornfield as a young governess, or does the switch to present tense suggest an unacknowledged restlessness breaking through the narrative? Jane's happy ending is about as happy as it could realistically be, but our sense of dissatisfaction may reflect the awareness that there can be no entirely happy ending for a young woman who – like millions of others – must compromise at least one of her basic propensities (in her case, a sense of sublimity) in order to satisfy others (love, or a need for security). That she can even attain one of these makes Jane lucky – but the simple act of acknowledging the luckiness of such a half-victory makes for an uneasy ending.

There is a one last moment of the sublime before the novel's close, and it is not Jane's. She concludes what is supposed to be her own autobiography with a sublime image of St John, zealous and uncompromising:

> his glorious sun hastens to its setting. The last letter I received from him drew from my eyes human tears, and yet filled my heart with Divine joy: he anticipated his sure reward, his incorruptible crown ... No fear of death will darken St. John's last hour: his mind will be unclouded; his heart will be undaunted; his hope will be sure; his faith steadfast. His own words are a pledge of this: – 'My Master', he says, 'has forewarned me. Daily he announces more distinctly, – "Surely I come quickly!" and hourly I more eagerly respond, – 'Amen; even so come, Lord Jesus!'[56]

There is a trace of wistfulness in Jane's description that 'No fear of death will darken St. John's last hour', and in the 'divine joy' she takes in his letter. The sublime has broken through the text for a final time – but now, the only place that this sublimity can resonate is through St John's story, not Jane's. It is with his conclusion that Jane ends her own narrative. Only by proxy, and by ending her narrative with his, can she access the sublimity that she once took so much pleasure in deriving from nature.

8 GERTRUDE JEKYLL: CULTIVATING THE GENDERED SPACE OF THE VICTORIAN GARDEN FOR PROFESSIONAL SUCCESS

Christen Ericsson-Penfold

Gertrude Jekyll, 'artist-gardener' and horticultural journalist, was a key figure in British garden design when the field was gaining credibility as an acceptable female profession at the turn of the nineteenth century.[1] Her initial training was in the respectably feminine pursuit of botanical illustration at the South Kensington School of Art. But when her failing eyesight prevented her from pursuing a painting career, Jekyll ultimately became a garden designer, which enabled her to transfer her training in colour and form from a flat sheet of paper to a three-dimensional, growing, botanical space. She used this to develop unprecedented graduated colour schemes in flower borders, for which she is still known today. Her love of flowers and gardening, which she developed early on in her life, drew her to this pursuit. She recalls that by the age of four, she 'had already made friends with the Daisies in the Berkeley Square Garden and with the Dandelions in the Green Park'.[2] Although these were socially accepted activities for women, her professional aspirations were unusual. The timeline of her career – beginning with her first article in 1881 and ending with her death in 1932 – bridges the gap between the amateur middle-class woman gardener and the wage-earning professional, demonstrating that she paved the way for women who followed in her footsteps.[3] This chapter argues that she succeeded as the female pioneer in her field because she focused on the culturally defined feminine space of the cultivated domestic flower garden. This provided her with social acceptance at a time when female professional garden designers were non-existent.[4]

Never before has Jekyll's emphasis on the feminine space of the flower garden as the central focus of her work been examined as a potential aid in her professional success. As Lynne Walker argues, 'space is not a backdrop, a neutral container of events, or only a "site" or "location" for the construction of meaning'; through cataloguing the ways in which space is occupied, it represents the social order of the people within it.[5] Thus, by examining Jekyll's use of the flower garden, we can both understand the cultural meaning of this space and how

Jekyll engaged with and redefined its boundaries. Jekyll's success demonstrates the existence of flexible boundaries between the separate spheres, problematizing the accuracy of the previously perceived rigid Victorian gender ideology whilst simultaneously acknowledging the existence of culturally appropriate spaces for women (as well as men).[6]

Through analysis of her articles, this chapter explores how Jekyll used her garden designs and horticultural writing as a platform to disseminate her ideas, express her own artistic intentions, successfully pursue a profession as a middle-class woman within the masculine field of garden design, and maintain an aesthetic and personal connection with nature. It begins by explaining the theoretical and gendered parameters of the flower garden. Examples from her writing are then explored which demonstrate how she planned, networked and carefully presented herself to her readers and male peers to achieve success, and, once established, how she promoted her own knowledge, skills and opinions with bold assertion. The final section examines how she utilized the culturally acceptable feminine space of the garden as a source of personal inspiration and reflection that ultimately provided her with topics for her articles. Thus, Jekyll's profession was based upon her own enjoyment of this feminine space but, more significantly, as this chapter concludes, her inspired and tactical moulding of it allowed her to construct a career that was simultaneously unprecedented and culturally acceptable.

Empowering the Garden

The Victorian English garden was strongly gendered. Just as the domestic environment was the idealized and culturally accepted sphere for women, so too was the domestic garden. These notions were class specific, and Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall argue that the domestic garden 'provided strong visual confirmation of the middle-class ideal'.[7] Nothing could more succinctly define the garden as woman's domain in Victorian ideology, both metaphorically and literally, than John Ruskin's lecture on the roles, duties and parameters of women: 'Of Queen's Garden's' (1858–9).[8]

> This is wonderful – oh, wonderful! – to see her, with every innocent feeling fresh within her, go out in the morning into her garden to play with the fringes of its guarded flowers, and lift their heads when they are drooping, with her happy smile upon her face, and no cloud upon her brow, because there is a little wall around her place of peace.[9]

This secluded floral sanctuary was seen as the most appropriate space for women wherein their inherent nurturing and optimistic characteristics would thrive, and their purity would remain unsoiled. Whether in the suburbs or the outskirts of a small country village, because of their deliberate separation from the increasing sprawl of urban spaces, domestic gardens were seen as pieces of untainted

countryside, distinct from the wider, unbridled landscape. They were rural environments that could be tamed and cultivated to suit one's own aesthetic tastes, thereby perfecting their natural beauty. This separation from the masculine public sphere reinforced the appropriateness of the space for women. Griselda Pollock and Linda Nochlin argue that in the mid-century, middle-class women artists venturing unaccompanied into the public sphere, be it a garden or a bar, was not considered acceptable.[10] This physical divide was, however, contested and women increasingly occupied public space for a variety of uses as the century progressed.[11] The issue of women artists, in particular, encroaching into the masculine, upper echelons of professional and high art continued to be a public debate throughout the century, coinciding with issues of gendered public and private spaces, even as more public and private schools were open to them and an increasing number of professional women exhibited their works. Nevertheless, the subjects of flowers and gardens were deemed appropriate for women throughout the century, demonstrating the cultural acceptability of the space.

The uncontested safety of acceptability encouraged women to engage with spaces such as the domestic garden and, in turn, provided an increased feeling of freedom within them. Mary Poovey and Simon Morgan argue for an element of fluidity in Victorian ideology; despite their social restrictions, women were able to advocate their prescribed activities, and the spaces within which they were deemed acceptable, in order to 'broaden their sphere of competence'.[12] It is not, therefore, coincidental that the feminine space of the garden was the location where Jekyll became successful as a professional artist-gardener and horticultural journalist.

The physical space she chose to occupy and her desire to create a place of sanctuary and independence within it contributed to her success. Steven Adams and Anna Greutzner Robins examine 'landscape [art] both as a collecting structure for the representation of inner experience and as an ideological tool shaping the way in which we envision and construct the natural world'.[13] Jekyll utilized the microcosm of the garden landscape in this way, declaring that the best purpose of the garden is to help mould one's inner self, 'to give refreshment of mind, to sooth, to refine, and to lift up the heart in a spirit of praise and thankfulness'.[14] She reinforced the garden as a continual source of inspiration for herself and her clients, and, in this way, felt its constant influence on her life.

This creative and constructive environment was not just a space for self-reflection and moulding of the natural world. Jekyll was also actively involved in moulding her environment; as the designer of her own garden, she was responsible for its tangible construction. Katie Holmes argues that gardens 'are a place where individual and cultural imaginings are planted, nurtured and take root, transforming the landscape and changing its meanings and metaphors'.[15] Flower gardening was an acceptable activity that simultaneously enabled women to loosen the restrictions of their assigned gender roles. Behind the garden walls,

women could get their hands dirty and perform physical labour without lowering their social status. As Davidoff and Hall state, women could 'even display some *aggression* against pests and weeds'.[16] As a self-proclaimed amateur flower gardener, Jekyll was able to become a respected household name for flower gardening, a professional garden designer, and a successful business manager of her own plant nursery. The garden became a space where she was able to claim responsibility for developing herself both professionally and personally.[17]

When she began pursuing garden design, there was no professional training available for women, which could have influenced her decision to study botanical illustration rather than horticulture. Female agricultural schools were founded after her career had become well established.[18] In 1895, the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, began allowing women to work as gardeners.[19] With the increasing number of women training in the field, Jekyll's work and publications became greatly influential, both in Britain and in the United States. In Massachusetts, the Lowthorpe School of Landscape Architecture for Women used Jekyll's 'Colour in the Flower Garden' as a primary text for students studying colour border plans, Jekyll's speciality.[20] By the twentieth century, an increasing number of women were becoming professional gardeners, following the lead of Victorian women such as Jekyll who were at the forefront of developing a profession for women gardeners.[21] For Jekyll, flower gardens were the growing canvas upon which she applied her aesthetic vision. She taught herself horticultural skills through years of practice but she applied her formal artistic training to garden design and referred to her work as 'painting a picture with an immensely long-handled brush'.[22] This self-created space became the key to her professional success, and through her writings she provided inspiration to countless others.

'[A]dapt[ing] the Language of Domesticity'[23]

In addition to her practical skill in garden design, Jekyll was also a prolific writer, publishing more than a thousand articles and thirteen monographs in her 51-year career.[24] Close examination of changes in her articles over time indicate traces of her subtle tactics to enter into the gardening profession as a woman without causing too much stir from the largely masculine field or from her more conservative readers. Jekyll's writing career began one year after William Robinson, key contemporary gardening journalist and editor for the *Garden*, came to view her first large-scale garden design, the flower borders at her mother's home, Munstead House. Recognizing that his good opinion could help to establish her reputation in the field, Jekyll spent years laying the groundwork for his visit, revealing a subtle but forthright act of self-promotion. She arranged to meet Robinson in his London office five years before, in 1875, and had begun planning the garden well before the family moved there in 1877.[25]

Her planned efforts were successful, bringing professional repute to her design and providing her with the opportunity to begin her long career as a writer. William Goldring, contributor to the *Garden*, claimed '[t]he brilliancy of the [Munstead House flower] border … was beyond anything we had hitherto seen in the way of hardy flowers – as different from the ordinary mixed border as day from night'.[26] In 1881, Jekyll secured her first publication in Robinson's journal.[27] Her first series, on 'Flowers and Plants in the House', began the same year, ran for two years, and included forty-nine articles.[28] Her writing and garden design made an impression on her new employer. Robinson, not known for flattery or withholding criticism, wrote an article on her gardens at Munstead House that conveys his pleasant, perhaps somewhat reluctant, surprise at the use of a flower that he had dismissed, denoting respect for his colleague with whom he would work for a further fifty years. '*Tiarella cordifolia*: this elegant little plant used to pass for a curiosity generally, and we did not think much of it till we happened to see a sparkling bunch of it last year in the gardens at Munstead'.[29]

It is not known if the subject of her first series was chosen by Jekyll or by Robinson, as editor. Considering the challenges women professionals were faced with, it is feasible that Jekyll deliberately chose the safer and more publicly accepted feminine domestic environment as the subject for her first series as a tactic for success. Although other women writers were successful in their professional pursuits, many of them gained acceptability by targeting a primarily female readership. Jane Loudon's book, *Botany for Ladies*, was successful because it was written by a woman for women. Jekyll, however, was writing for a mixed audience.[30] This topic enabled Jekyll to enter into discussions on seasonal blooms and gardening alongside her points about colour effect, aesthetics and interior design. The first article of the series begins:

> At this mid-October time, after the first sharp frosts followed by hard rain and gales, few flowers remain out-of-doors; still there are plenty for our bouquets … A walk by hedgerows and in woodlands gives many treasures for house decoration.[31]

Although her awareness of the natural world is evident, Jekyll does not discuss the practicalities of gardening. The description conveys a pleasantly acceptable, appropriately situated, feminine activity for a woman with leisure time – walking down country paths collecting flowers.

Judging from the increase in publications that followed, Jekyll's focus on domestic and feminine topics appears to have awarded her social acceptance and, as a result, the confidence to explore a wider variation of subjects. In 1882, she began a similar series for another of Robinson's journals, *Gardening Illustrated*. This one, albeit still domestic, included a less cultivated subject, and one closer to Robinson's own interest. 'Wild Flowers in the House' ran throughout the year, concurrent with 'Flowers and Plants in the House', and totalled eleven

articles.[32] In this same year, Jekyll's first article on 'Colour in the Flower Garden' was published, the subject on which she was most prolific in her writings and most passionate about in her work.[33] Thus, once she had gained favourable reception, she was able to write on topics of greater interest to her.

This was shortly thereafter followed by her entry into the more scientific realm wherein she explored more detailed horticultural matters and conveyed her vast knowledge. In the latter half of 1882 and into 1883 Jekyll wrote eight articles on specific flowers – '*Daphne indica* planted out', '*Narcissus monophyllus*', '*Anemone fulgens*', '*Ornithogalum nutans*', '*Anemone apennina*' and '*Androsace carnea*' – using their scientific rather than common names and discussing their merits both as plants and as visual elements of the garden picture.[34] Even within the acceptable space of the flower garden, a gender-delineated line was drawn between pottering with plants and articulating scientific knowledge. Loudon wrote about botany in a non-scientific way to make the subject more accessible to her female readers. She argued that botanical books were all written by men, for men, who had had the opportunity to learn Latin and engage with scientific subjects: 'even their elementary [botany] books are like the old Eton Grammar when it was written in Latin – they require a master to explain them'.[35] Jekyll, however, engaged with the scientific elements of her topic, making it accessible to a varied audience without removing the more technical aspects. Furthermore, she did this alongside her articles on domestic plants and artistic arrangements. By writing about both areas she silently declared that she could and would engage in both the female and male arenas of horticulture.

By 1899 Jekyll had proven herself to be a successful, and very busy, professional and practitioner in multiple ways: the political journalist Edward Tyas Cook and Edward Hudson, the owner of *Country Life*, made a visit to her own cultivated Eden, Munstead Wood; her first full-length work, *Wood and Garden*, was published by Longmans; she collaborated with long-term professional partner and architect, Edwin Lutyens, on three garden commissions and designed independently for three others; she wrote an article for *English Life* on 'Snapdragons'; and was given an 'Award of Merit' for her creation of a viola variety, 'Jackanapes', by the Royal Horticultural Society.[36] Jekyll's acceptance in the field was secure enough to become co-editor of the *Garden* with Cook in January 1900.[37] Their partnership provided the journal with Jekyll's knowledge of horticulture and Cook's experience in newspaper journalism. As an editor, Jekyll's name, and by extension, reputation became widespread in the gardening world. Her influence was increasingly visible as she continued to write for the *Garden* and her work became lengthier and illustrated by her own photography. In 1900, Jekyll was working on her next two full-length publications, *Lilies for English Gardens* and *Wall and Water Gardens*, both published by *Country Life* in 1901.[38] In addition to her book preparation, she wrote twelve articles for *The Garden* and *Ladies Field* and accepted a garden design commission.[39]

Jekyll's journalism career placed her in the public eye on a weekly basis. Her careful engagement with appropriately feminine topics followed by her deliberate entry into the wider field of horticultural subjects display an attempted balance between achieving social acceptability and declaring her professional abilities and autonomy. Although, as will be demonstrated in the following section, she more confidently articulated her strong opinions to her readers as her career progressed, as Sally Festing rightly asserts, Jekyll's strength as a professional 'was in wielding influence without making enemies … her tools were tact and diplomacy'.[40] As a professional woman far outnumbered by men in her field, she was mindful of the precariousness of this manoeuvrability.

Jekyll's change in subjects expressed a cautious but deliberate entry into her field. This cautiousness is also seen in her signature. Despite her bold turn from the feminine domestic flower arranging to the more masculine realm of horticultural practicalities, Jekyll signed off with the gender-neutral 'G. J'. She could have used this to reduce any readers' speculation of her ability and knowledge. Evidence from the collection of Jekyll's extant articles for the *Garden* shows that she did not use her full name for another thirty-four years, when it appears after the article 'A Self Sown Wood', published on 16 January 1915.[41] And it was only four years later that the name 'Gertrude Jekyll VMH' finally appeared in print, the Victoria Medal of Honour (VMH) having been awarded to her twenty-three years previously, in 1897.[42] By 1915 Jekyll was 71 and had established herself fully as a respected garden designer and horticultural journalist, having written, co-authored or introduced 17 books, published over 400 articles, and been commissioned for over 200 garden designs.[43] In the 1919 article mentioned above, her full title appears in large font directly under the heading. This article takes up the majority of the page, the size of which demonstrates Jekyll's popularity in the journal when compared with her two-line notes from her first year at the journal, in 1881. Her name worked as a measure of the article's worth and it was important to spell it out literally to readers, demonstrating her success at establishing a respected reputation in the gardening world to the extent that the use of her name had become a strategic marketing tool for the *Garden*.

Over the course of her career, Jekyll manoeuvred through the obstacles and challenges of becoming a Victorian professional woman. By beginning with the safe subject of flowers in the domestic setting, she established a respectable reputation as a horticultural writer. Once this foundation was laid she was able to branch out into more masculine areas of horticulture, like science, whilst maintaining a favourable reception by writing these articles alongside others on the topics with which she initially gained success. As we will see in the following section, Jekyll's success in tactically negotiating gender restrictions enabled her to wield some influence by asserting her own knowledge and advocating her female readers to apply their own.

Diplomacy and Colour Theory

Anne Helmreich argues that Jekyll's 'iron-willed conviction wrapped in a self-effacing demeanor' was a tactic not uncommon among women writers at this time, who recognized its usefulness in allowing them to succeed in their professional work whilst simultaneously maintaining a legitimate feminine air.[44] It was all the more apparent when comparing the writings of female writers to their male counterparts. Although Robinson and Jekyll were colleagues, their tone and manner of relating to their readers was largely in contrast – Robinson, often brusque and unabashedly opinionated, and Jekyll, though assertive, typically more gentle. The Robinson scholar Richard Bisgrove states that 'the tone of the journal softened noticeably as a result of her involvement'.[45] This reflects Jekyll's use of a stereotypical feminine tone that imparted trust and acceptance to her readers and to her colleagues. Robinson, in contrast, 'was a belligerent and capricious character with strongly held, sometimes (especially in later life) contradictory, views, who was not afraid to criticize his contemporaries, especially landscape architects'.[46] Although he was successful, '[s]ooner or later Robinson's proverbial tetchiness alienated almost everyone he dealt with'.[47] It is possible he recognized Jekyll's promising ability to use tact successfully, a talent he was without, which, in addition to her horticultural skill, prompted him to hire her as a writer for the *Garden*. However, examples of her employing both a softer and more forceful tone exist, which indicates a contrast between the more socially accepted gentle tones of the female voice and the assertive tones of a woman passionate about her work and eager to reinforce best practice.

Robinson's introduction to Jekyll's 'Colour in the Flower Garden' demonstrates the clear contrast between their tones, particularly on the subject about which Jekyll was most ardent: colour. Robinson writes: 'Considering so-called laws of colour, usually false, laid down by writers on "decoration", is a waste of time'.[48] The fact that colour theory was a contemporary point of contention is clear from this comment. Robinson's views on the subject were that 'nature knows best and that colour planning is therefore unnecessary'. In his introduction to Jekyll's chapter, he wrote that simple beds of flowers should be sufficient, knowing full well that the chapter was devoted to laws of colour and complex flower beds of complementing tints and shades. He continues: 'As, however, many may not be ready to follow this plan, the following notes on colour, by one who is an excellent flower gardener and has given much thought to the subject, will, I hope, be useful to them'.[49]

Robinson's backhanded compliment demonstrates his 'outspoken nature and his generally condescending attitude to the fairer sex'.[50] His strong opinions against utilizing artistic laws are the polar opposite to Jekyll, who constantly applied her artistic training to garden design and, in her writings, asserted its importance. After his introduction, she begins the chapter by stating that 'one

of the most important points in the arrangement of a garden is the placing of the flowers with regard to their colour-effect, and it is one that has been greatly neglected'.[51] Although Jekyll does not blatantly use Robinson's phrase, 'laws of colour', or 'colour-law' as she describes it in 'The Flower-Border and Pergola' chapter of *Wood and Garden*, she is clearly referring to colour theory here. Jekyll was aware that her artistic training was unusual in horticulture, yet she seemed more confident in promoting its value in garden design and the knowledge it provided to the thoughtful and artistic garden designer.[52]

This confident promotion demonstrates that Jekyll equated a large element of her design success to her art training. In the preface to Francis King's book, the founder of the Garden Club of America, Jekyll writes:

> What is needed for doing the best gardening is something of an artist's training, or at any rate the possession of such a degree of aptitude – the God-given artist's gift – as with due training may make an artist; for gardening, in its best expression, may well rank as one of the fine arts. But without the many years of labour needed for any hope of success in architecture, sculpture, or painting, there are certain simple rules, whose observance, carried out in horticulture, will make all the difference between a garden that is utterly commonplace and one that is full of beauty and absorbing interest. Of these, one of the chief is a careful consideration of colour arrangement.[53]

Amateur artistic training was a common addition to middle-class women's education. Although Jekyll received formal training from the South Kensington School of Art, her application of art to gardening connected her with her female readers, many of whom, like Jekyll, had from a young age dabbled in art and flower gardening in accordance with contemporaneous practices of middle-class female education. Her promotion of its importance is often central to Jekyll's writing and her passion for colour arrangement is, at times, conveyed in a tone equal to the boldness of Robinson's. And it is perhaps her recognition of this female identification that strengthened her voice on this topic. Not only was colour theory in garden design what ultimately gave her a lasting reputation in the field, it was also a method for Jekyll to promote women's entrance into garden design by combining two established feminine activities.

Indeed, her opinions on colour theory in gardening were so strong that she criticized those who disagreed with its importance. In an article from 1885 entitled 'Colour in Flowers; To the Editor of "The Garden"', Jekyll replies to a letter from a reader who challenged her admiration of *Chinodoxa sardensis*. Clearly sensitive about the issue, she writes: 'I think there can be no two opinions as to [its] beauty.' She continues by addressing his criticism of *Iris tuberosa*, which he calls 'a "dull-coloured" [underlined], "ugly curiosity" [doubly underlined]'.[54] Jekyll emphasizes the importance of artistic training, belittling his ability to appreciate the flower based on the likelihood that he does not share the same education she does.

> If you have a copy of Ruskin's 'The Two Paths', read appendix v. at the very end of the book, where you will find as the heading of the last paragraph, 'The finer the eye for colour the less it will require to gratify it intensely'. Probably you have given no pains (few people have) to delicate eye-training in the matter of colour, rather rejecting at once all flowers that do not come up to a certain standard of even brilliancy of positive colour.[55]

Iris tuberosa is the subject of two other articles for the *Garden* in 1885.[56] Although Jekyll does not mention it elsewhere, her passionate response to this criticism appears to be a reaction against current fashions. She states that 'curious rage' amongst the 'educated classes' is masquerading as a 'delicate perception of colour', and she has 'no sympathy whatever' for people who have not bothered training their eyes to appreciate a greater range of colour. Technological developments in the mid-century introduced aniline dyes which brought with them a taste for bright, synthetic colours that it was now possible to create. These vivid colours also appeared in the gardens of the time. However, over the course of the century, artists, craftsmen and designers who would later be known as part of the Arts and Crafts Movement steered away from these synthetics, returning to natural dyes and their comparatively subtle colouring. Jekyll was one of the first promoters and applicants of these subtle variations of colour in the flower garden. The deep purples, muted browns and pale yellow-greens of the *Iris tuberosa* are eclipsed by the vivid, almost electric red of the scarlet geranium, a popular flower in mid-century gardens. Jekyll's keen eye and her preference for soft transitions and a wide range of colour schemes correspond to her adamant promotion of and appreciation for this particular iris. In this example we can see her botanical knowledge intersecting with her artistic knowledge, with the grace of one who is wise in the ways of both and practised combining them in her art. By focusing her writing on topics from women's amateur or formal education that related to the culturally accepted gendered space of the flower garden, Jekyll was able to boldly assert her opinions, disengaging with the more acceptable passive feminine tone, and still continue to be published by her male peers.

The Space of the Flower Garden as Inspiration and Medium

The subjects of Jekyll's writing were based upon her own experiences at Munstead Wood, the bespoke rural retreat where she lived. She wished to be in a natural solace when in her own grounds, so much so that there was no drive leading up to her home, only a footpath, requiring the industrial world to remain at a distance. Jekyll created a walled paradise of seasonal colour, utilizing the inspirational environment as a source for her articles and books. She was adamant about using the space of one's garden as inspiration, recommending her ideas developed in Munstead Wood to her readers while reasserting the importance of selecting designs and plants that fit and would thrive in their own garden landscape.

Her recommendations and experimentations became such a major part of her work at Munstead that she established a nursery, which she promoted to her readers. Indeed, in a letter to one of her clients she became her own advertising agent: 'I have a splendid list of good hardy plants, and bigger plants and at lower prices than the nurseries.'[57] Jekyll continued to sell plants from the nursery for thirty-five years until her death in 1932. According to Michael Tooley, 'the success of the nursery side of Miss Jekyll's business required a knowledge of plants, particularly their cultural needs, and a ready outlet' for them, all of which she was able to provide through a lifetime of horticultural experience, sensitivity to her clients, readers and contemporary horticultural trends, and a thriving garden design business.[58]

The nursery was also where Jekyll propagated her own variations of plants. Some were brought back from her travels to the Continent and she experimented with them to adapt their needs to the British climate and soil. Many plants still exist today and are named either for Munstead or for Jekyll herself. The nursery sold plants and seeds, some to clients whose gardens she was designing, and some to seed distributors, including the French company, Vilmorin, and the English Carter's Tested Seeds.[59]

In an article from 1890 entitled 'A Useful White Primrose', Jekyll responds to another author who wrote an article in the previous week speaking of the 'want of a good white single Primrose'. She declares that she has cultivated just such a plant at Munstead:

> Such a form occurred here some years ago among some seedlings and proves so early, free, and long-enduring, that I took pains to increase it, and now have good breadth of a plant that has every merit for spring gardening.

She continues the advertisement by declaring the availability of the plant to her readers: 'I should be happy to send a plant or two by post to a limited number of amateurs (say thirty earliest applicants) who would send me an addressed label to tie on'.[60] Here she emphasizes amateurs, perhaps as a subtle indication that she was not intending to offer plants to her professional peers or competitors. It is not entirely clear if Jekyll required payment for the primroses or if she offered them freely to promote her plant nursery and the success of this particular primrose. By 1890, her nursery would have likely been fully operational. One year after this article, the Munstead Early White Primrose, likely the same primrose Jekyll recommended to her readers, was exhibited at the National Auricular and Primrose Society meeting.[61] Her nursery became essential for her career by providing plants for her garden designs, offering her an additional income through the sale of the plants and increasing her recognition for varietal development both within her readership and in the national societies where she exhibited them.

Jekyll's designs, hybridization experiments and daily garden tasks at Munstead Wood were the primary source of inspiration for her writing. Barbara T. Gates

states that Jekyll 'would pick a spot and sit there for a while, saturating herself in its sights and scents. Then she would begin an article'.[62] Examples of Jekyll drawing information and inspiration directly from the source are evident in articles such as the 'Sun and the Poppies', from June 1887. She comments on the recent bout of extremely sunny weather and the reaction she has seen in her plants.

> Certainly the flowers that love a grilling are having a 'good time'. But the high temperature and burning sun (rarely veiled by cloud) of the last week or more has shown how few flowers can bear it without showing some signs of distress. The Oriental Poppies seem least of all able to withstand it. The flowers that open in the morning are burnt white for half the depth of the petal by midday, and the next day nothing is to be seen but a little blackened rag. The variety *bracteatum* stands better, perhaps from the greater thickness of the petal. The early-flowering *Clematises* are much burnt; Tea Roses are bleached after their first hour or two – Fortune's Yellow turned to a washy pale buff, and all flowers go off as if in a hurry to get out of the world much hotter than they expected.[63]

Not only is she providing advice to her readers regarding flowers that can stand the weather and those that cannot, Jekyll is clearly demonstrating knowledge gained from keen and up-to-date observation. Gates continues by stating that '[w]hat emerged from these sittings were not just basic how-to essays but a unique kind of aestheticized nature writing'.[64] It was this willingness for complete absorption in her medium that caused her writing to speak to its reader with more clarity, and allowed her garden designs and the plants she chose for them to work closely and effectively with their natural surroundings.

Many of her aesthetic intentions are based upon her deep sense of place and appreciation for the local people, whom she saw as working in harmony with nature. Upon her family's return to west Surrey, where she lived during her childhood, Jekyll renewed her appreciation for the location and its people. She travelled through the Surrey countryside collecting items of rural daily life. In 1904 she published a book entitled *Old West Surrey: Some Notes and Memories*, which discussed and somewhat romanticized 'Surrey's vernacular traditions'.[65] Jekyll saw the countryside and nature as both her medium and her inspiration. Helmreich states that the photographs Jekyll printed in her articles as supporting illustrations for her text 'transformed common rural sites and activities into pictorial views and thus endowed the landscape with new values for her intended audience'.[66] Her use of subtly applied aesthetics to artistically enhance her natural material created a seamless combination of both natural beauty and trained artistic skill. Gates eloquently summarizes what she considered to be one of Jekyll's two primary credos, the outcome of her marriage between nature and art: 'The garden is … a place to which we can repair to restore ourselves … a site of artistic intentionality … a place where … vision c[an] find one of its finest expressions'.[67] From this acceptably feminine space she found inspiration and an artistic medium, the plants and designs which she shared with her readers and clients for fifty-one years.

Conclusion

Jekyll was a driven and talented woman who succeeded in a profession few women had previously attempted. Jekyll's focus on the feminine subjects of flowers and domestic space (the garden being an extension of this) enabled her pursuit of a profession in the masculine field of gardening. Her horticultural writing provided an outlet for disseminating her knowledge and ideas, a method of promoting her acceptance as a professional female. Jekyll's last words on the subject might be that it was her lifelong love of, and devotion to, the flower garden that ultimately provided her with the tools to succeed.

> A garden is a grand teacher. It teaches patience and careful watchfulness; it teaches industry and thrift; above all, it teaches entire trust. 'Paul planteth and Apollo watereth, but God giveth the increase'. The good gardener knows with absolute certainty that if he does his part, if he gives the labour, the love, and every aid that his knowledge of his craft, experience of the conditions of his place, and exercise of his personal wit can work together to suggest, that so surely as he does this diligently and faithfully, so surely will God give the increase. Then with the honestly-earned success comes the consciousness of encouragement to renewed effort, and, as it were, an echo of the gracious words, 'Well done, good and faithful servant'.[68]

Although this was possibly her heartfelt belief, this passage, yet again, demonstrates Jekyll's keen understanding and successful application of acceptable feminine attributes: patience, faith and humbleness. Furthermore, by claiming the gardener as male, Jekyll acknowledged her awareness of the overwhelming majority of men within her field, implying a strategic respect for these peers who held sway over her own reputation and career. As Festing writes, her 'assumed quiescence comes from a woman who well understood how to manipulate a tricky world'.[69] She used her contacts, or boldly created new ones, as she did with Robinson, to assist in the development of her career. She published articles that demonstrate her use of writing as a soapbox to propagate her ideas and as a place of advertisement for and promotion of her own income-earning business – her plant nursery at Munstead Wood. In both her writing and her designs, Jekyll was largely at the forefront of the Victorian debate on the role of the garden in art and design, indirectly promoting these feminine subjects as avenues through which women could pursue a profession. In this way, she pushed the boundaries of what were considered typical pursuits for a late-Victorian woman of comfortable means. Her professional success can be partially attributed to her tenacity, drive and insistence on independence. As a result of her ambitious aims to stake new territory as a self-proclaimed artist-gardener, she worked her way to the forefront of the field. She was a woman ahead of her time, utilizing conservative traditions to achieve her pioneering ambitions. The flower garden provided her with an acceptable medium that, as Morgan would argue, enabled her to adapt the social parameters of femininity to include the professional career she sought. By stretching the boundaries of the 'spaces of femininity', but not breaching them altogether, Jekyll established her own ideological parameters and, in so doing, ultimately cultivated her own success.[70]

9 FROM ENGLAND TO EDEN: GARDENS, GENDER AND KNOWLEDGE IN VIRGINIA WOOLF'S *THE VOYAGE OUT*[1]

Karina Jakubowicz

In 1909, Virginia Woolf wrote of her developing novel that she wanted to 'bring out a stir of live men and women, against a background', feeling that she was 'quite right to attempt it, but it is immensely difficult to do'.[2] The novel in question became *The Voyage Out* (1915), a text where the 'background' is anything but secondary to the liveliness of its characters. Woolf's emphasis on the locations and environments featured in the novel can be seen in her choice of title, which invokes the travel or adventure narrative, both of which are heavily reliant on a physical journey through space. Like Richard Hakluyt's *Voyages and Discoveries* (1582) and Charles Darwin's *Voyage of the Beagle* (1839) – two texts which are known to have exerted a direct influence on Woolf – the narrative trajectory traces a line from the known spaces of home to the unknown landscapes beyond Britain.[3] Yet what distinguishes these texts is that Woolf's protagonist is a woman, and her experience of travelling through these spaces is told in relation to the cultural politics of space and sexuality that governed Woolf and her contemporaries. The importance of the 'backgrounds' in the novel thus place the themes of physical access and visibility at the centre of Woolf's feminist subtext.

The Voyage Out approaches the themes of women's physical and social mobility through the character of Rachel Vinrace, whose intellectual awakening is rendered as a journey through physical, social and intellectual boundaries. At the beginning of the novel she is on her father's ship, accompanying him and a handful of other passengers to South America. She has previously been brought up 'with excessive care' by her aunts in Richmond, and rendered so ignorant by her restrictive surroundings that 'She really might be six years old'.[4] The ship, the *Euphrosyne*, is named after one of the three Graces, and alludes to Rachel's role as 'her father's daughter', a graceful helpmate who is required to stand in place of her deceased mother.[5] In the symbolic geography of the narrative, Rachel's 'maiden voyage' out into the world and the physical progress of the ship become synonymous. The symbiosis between the two is especially evident in one description

which embraces the metaphor of the feminized sea vessel: 'She was a bride going forward to her husband, a virgin unknown of men; in her vigour and purity she might be likened to all beautiful things'.[6] Like the ship that carries her, and the mythical being it is named after, Rachel risks being reduced to a mere category of womanhood. Yet once she arrives in South America and is placed under the tutelage of Helen Ambrose, Rachel gains in knowledge and self-awareness, a process accompanied by her continued movement into the South American landscape. It is while on a Conradian journey on the Amazonian river that Rachel becomes engaged to a fellow traveller, Terence Hewet, but on their return to the village she dies of a fever and the marriage never takes place. While *The Voyage Out* frames the multiple determinations of gender and space within the structure of a journey narrative, it does not (to borrow Rachel Bowlby's terminology) provide a single 'feminist destination' for its main protagonist.[7] Instead, different locations combine to give Rachel a broader knowledge of her surroundings, but none of these spaces liberate her from the social expectations of her peers.

While critics have often claimed that *The Voyage Out* is a failed Bildungsroman, they rarely acknowledge the extent to which Woolf complicates that traditional plot with subtle innovations in the use of space.[8] Rachel's narrative of development is as much about location as it is about action, and her independence is framed in the context of spatiality. In accordance with the sentiments that she would later express in *A Room of One's Own* (1929), Woolf not only asks what women can do, but *where* they are best able to do it. These questions had been raised by contemporary writers of fiction, but not in relation to geographical landscapes of such heterogeneity. For example, the New Woman novel was 'largely an urban phenomenon', often locating narratives of female independence within the masculine city space.[9] In contrast, Rachel's development from ignorance to experience is plotted in tandem with her movement away from urbanized civilization. Perhaps the most striking aspect of the text's topography is that it does not provide the specificity of real-world locations (indeed, the town of Santa Marina is entirely mythical). Rather, Woolf's emphasis is on the way that the space is experienced, and how it operates in the psychology of a young woman. Within this poetics of space (to use Gaston Bachelard's terminology), the idea or condition of spatiality itself, and its impact on an individual woman, is brought to the fore. The South American space, in particular, depicts a variant of Edward Said's concept of 'imaginative geography'– not used to reinforce Western values, or even to define them, but rather to interrogate the ideologies that they sustain.[10] As Karen R. Lawrence has explained:

> In *The Voyage Out*, the metaphor of the New World is played out as a kind of romance of perception; the New World is a phenomenological space where objects come into being for consciousness, as if perception and poetic image could be reinvented for the woman protagonist.[11]

The concept of a 'romance of perception' is well suited to understanding the space that forms the focus of this essay. Gardens may not appear to be central to the narrative of *The Voyage Out*, but they are found at significant points in the text and at every stage of Rachel's journey. As conceptually suspended between private and public, nature and culture, rural and urban environments, they can be read as points of mediation in the text. Not only do they provide links between different physical spaces by appearing throughout the narrative as a whole, between them they also demonstrate how these landscapes compare and are perceived. In their articulation of social, cultural and political differences between locations, they provide a lens through which to view Rachel's development, and a way of tracing her perception through a single spatial category.

Gardens feature continually in *The Voyage Out*, occurring in the descriptions of Rachel's upbringing through to Woolf's rendering of the South American landscape. They are typically enclosed and cultivated spaces, ranging from the domestic gardens of private homes to the public parks of Richmond. There are also gardens in the town of Santa Marina, and at the hotel and at the villa occupied by Rachel and Helen. These are radically different to the gardens and parks that Woolf uses to typify the English landscape. In the latter part of the text the allusions to gardens are more mythical than physical, and allude in particular to the Garden of Eden. It is in the Edenic wilderness of the Amazonian forest that Rachel becomes engaged to Terence and contracts the illness which leads to her death. Different gardens stage a series of interactions with the natural environment and provide Rachel with varying levels of access to knowledge and independence. Although gardens feature throughout Woolf's writing, this is the first and only time in her oeuvre when they are depicted across a range of geographical environments, and in tandem with a narrative of female development.

I

Images of the traditional garden or parkland space are often used in *The Voyage Out* to epitomize Rachel's life in England, and to allude to the social structures and expectations which have contributed to her state of ignorance. Gardens are central to Woolf's depiction of Rachel's adolescence, which involves 'hundreds' of walks in the same gardens and parks.[12] At one point she argues that her knowledge of Richmond Park is so detailed that she can tell Terence 'how to get from place to place, and exactly what trees you'd pass, and where you'd cross the roads'.[13] When Evelyn Murgatroyd alludes to Rachel's naivety by telling her that 'you look – well, as if you'd lived all your life in a garden' she unwittingly strikes on the fundamental condition of Rachel's unworldly and restricted life.[14] As part of the physical landscape of England and the psychological landscape of Rachel's restrictive upbringing, these garden spaces perform as locations of

origin, marking the points from which the process of voyaging begins. This is illustrated in the narrator's description of Rachel's progress in Chapter 10, where South America and the gardens of Richmond are placed on either end of a linear narrative of development: 'During the three months she had been [in South America] she had made up considerably, as Helen meant she should, for time spent in interminable walks round sheltered gardens, and the household gossip of her aunts'.[15] The gardens in Richmond are used to demonstrate Rachel's intellectual and psychological restriction, and to link these factors with physical limitation. This is reflected in Woolf's use of the word 'sheltered', which suggests both spatial and social constraint. The relationship between Rachel's psychological state and her physical surroundings is clear when Rachel considers her previous life retrospectively:

> Her mind was fixed upon the characters of her aunts, their views, and the way they lived. Indeed this was a subject which lasted her hundreds of morning walks round Richmond Park, and blotted out the trees and the people and the deer.[16]

As in the previous passage, the garden space is associated with the activity of going 'round', a motion that defines Rachel's patterns of thought. Trapped in this cycle, continuously covering the same physical and mental ground, any kind of development is rendered impracticable. Her efforts to make sense of the situation are such that she ceases to see anything clearly, and the 'trees and the people and the deer' become blotted out. In this example the garden space is implicated in Rachel's ignorance, and is consequently seen (or not seen, in this case) through her blinkered and frustrated perspective.

As the two previous quotes demonstrate, the gardens of Rachel's upbringing often function as semi-psychological spaces in the novel, and are associated with the sensation of being physically and mentally trapped. In another example the imagery is reversed, with allusions to the garden space contributing to Rachel's conception of her psychological, emotional and physical restriction. An example of this is Rachel's reaction to being told that there are prostitutes in Piccadilly Circus, a fact of which she had not previously been aware. Her response is to reflect on her upbringing with a renewed sensitivity to its spatiality and her mobility within it, initially exclaiming:

> 'So that's why I can't walk alone!'
>
> By this new light she saw her life for the first time a creeping hedged in thing, driven cautiously between high walls, here turned aside, there plunged into darkness, made dull and crippled forever.[17]

The image of high walls and the sensation of being 'hedged in' bears a relationship to the 'sheltered gardens' that Woolf links to Rachel's ignorance, and the concept of being blinded, or 'plunged into darkness', relates to her previous recol-

lections of Richmond Park. The passage also recalls the idea of being forced or 'driven' onto a particular path. This is an association that Woolf has already established with Rachel's circumambulations in the parks and gardens of Richmond, in which the 'high walls' of psychic and physical space keep her 'turned aside' and prevent her from making a straight course. In all three of these passages, Rachel's experience of garden spaces is marked by her frustrated attempts at physical and intellectual mobility. The notion of being 'hedged in' or walking around a space repeatedly not only describe the futile nature of Rachel's past circumstances, but is also at odds with the concept of 'voyaging outwards' that is proffered by the title. If Rachel's narrative is predominantly a voyage out, then the garden spaces of her past are implicit to the 'inward' space that she is voyaging from.

The Voyage Out features several other descriptions of British gardens which echo the limitations placed on Rachel in her youth, and place them in a wider context. In these passages it is possible to see how the imagery of gardens becomes a metaphorical language for conveying social and political systems. At one point in the novel, Helen's feelings towards her native country are expressed though an imaginary garden, through which she metonymically conceives the whole of Britain:

> She adopted, indeed, a condescending tone towards that poor island, which was now advancing chilly crocuses and nipped violets in nooks, in copses, in cosy corners, tended by gardeners in mufflers, who were always touching their hats and bobbing obsequiously.[18]

As with the gardens of Rachel's past, Woolf makes clear references to physical restriction, using imagery that suggests cloistered withdrawal: flowers of violets 'nipped' in tight buds, in 'nooks' and 'cosy corners'. The gardener, too, is in a state of concealment and submission, his muffler suggesting a physical restriction of the body and voice, as well as a lack of political agency which leaves him capable only of the silent and compliant act of 'bobbing obsequiously'.

While the gardener's affliction is one of class, Woolf's close association between space and social obstacle in the text overwhelmingly refers to the issue of gender. The majority of the British gardens are populated by women, and showcase different kinds of femininity while alluding to the attitudes that these women have to their social and physical surroundings. The gardens in Richmond stage Rachel's experience as a young woman with a conventional middle-class upbringing, but they also refer to the characters of her aunts who accept these conventions and live according to them. In these instances the older women enforce the status quo while the younger woman struggles with it, portraying two generational attitudes to the behaviour demanded of them. Other depictions of English gardens in the text also feature older women, such as Miss Umpleby, an elderly, spinster gardener who is mentioned in passing by Mr Flushing:

> She was a most delightful woman, I assure you. She grew roses ... She had gone through dreadful sorrows. At one time I think she would have lost her senses if it hadn't been for her garden. The soil was very much against her – a blessing in disguise; she had to be up at dawn – out in all weathers. And then there are creatures that eat roses. But she triumphed. She always did. She was a brave soul.[19]

In this case the garden is associated with labour and the ongoing struggle to maintain control over the surrounding environment. While she eventually 'triumphs' over the pests and elements, her garden is essentially a place of conflict. A similar idea is expressed in another passage. In the opening moments of the novel, as the ship moves further away from the British Isles, the narrator takes a retrospective look at the country left behind and sees 'thousands of small gardens' tended by 'old ladies':

> Great tracts of the earth lay now beneath the autumn sun ... In thousands of small gardens, millions of dark-red flowers were blooming, until the old ladies who had tended them so carefully came down the paths with their scissors snipped through their juicy stalks, and laid them upon cold stone ledges in the village church ... The people in ships, however, took an equally singular view of England. Not only did it appear to them to be an island, and a very small island, but it was a shrinking island in which people were imprisoned ... Finally, when the ship was out of sight of land, it became clear that the people of England were completely mute.[20]

As with the description of Miss Umpleby's garden, there is a tension between tragedy and triumph. The thousands of gardens at the start of the passage present an initially positive image, the millions of flowers conveying fecundity and aesthetic charm. However, the way that the flowers are utilized conveys a similar message to the obsequious bobbing of Helen's imaginary gardener; they are essentially required to serve convention. 'Snipped' from their stalks in the process of blooming, they are used to decorate the village church. The behaviour of the old ladies in tending the flowers 'so carefully' and then harvesting them appears contradictory, and what would otherwise be an ordinary act is tinged with undertones of brutality. That the flowers are picked while still 'blooming' indicates that they are at their peak, and involved in an active and ongoing process which is being cut short. Their dark red colour gives the impression of vibrancy, and combined with the act of cutting it suggests bleeding, even sacrifice. This process of cutting flowers can also be read as a metaphor for the institution of marriage, where women (like the flowers) are traditionally taken in their prime to the 'cold stone ledge', or altar, of a church. The garden in this passage feeds into Woolf's appraisal of British civilization by reflecting its larger political composition, and highlighting the aspects of it that preoccupy her narrative. As with Helen's similarly metonymic conception, they shed light on Woolf's view of England as a political space preserving an ossified social structure, as a 'shrinking island' in which its people are 'imprisoned' and 'mute'.

II

In contrast to the 'thousands' of gardens populating England, there are only two mentioned in South America. One is at the hotel occupied by English tourists, and the other is at the Villa San Gervasio. Woolf's description of the garden at the villa is worth quoting at length, as the detail provided is of particular interest:

> The villa was a roomy white house, which, as is the case with most continental houses, looked to an English eye frail, ramshackle, and absurdly frivolous, more like a pagoda in a tea garden than a place where one slept. The garden called urgently for the services of a gardener. Bushes waved their branches across the paths, and the blades of grass, with spaces of earth between them, could be counted. In the circular piece of ground in front of the verandah were two cracked vases, from which red flowers drooped, with a stone fountain between them, now parched in the sun. The circular garden led to a long garden where the gardener's shears had scarcely been, unless now and then, when he cut a bough of blossom for his beloved. A few tall trees shaded it, and round bushes with wax-like flowers mobbed their heads together in a row. A garden smoothly laid with turf, divided by thick hedges, with raised beds of bright flowers, such as we keep within walls in England, would have been out of place upon the side of this bare hill. There was no ugliness to shut out.[21]

That Woolf intends for the reader to contrast this garden with the ones in England, is made clear by her direct comparison at the end of the passage. This comparison emphasizes the distinctive structure of the spaces, using landscaping as a metaphor through which to approach social and cultural difference. English gardens are characterized by thick divisions, hedges and walls; it is designed to 'shut out' the 'ugliness' beyond. In contrast, the villa's garden grows beyond its boundaries, creating an inclusive landscape that challenges divisive concepts of interior and exterior. The house blends into the garden space, appearing like a feature of the garden (a pagoda) rather than as a distinctly domestic symbol. The description of the villa's exterior is very brief, and the building quickly becomes secondary to the natural space surrounding it. It is not just the ultimate boundaries of the garden that are unclear; the barriers within it are also ineffective. Bushes encroach on paths, the flowers droop over the edge of vases, and the vases themselves are poor containers, being 'cracked'. The boundaries that are broken down in the garden space are also reflected in the social boundaries that are dissolved between master and servant. The gardener is markedly absent though 'urgently needed', his shears having 'scarcely been' in places. He asserts his right to the space by taking entire 'bough[s] of blossom for his beloved', which contrasts with the image of the gardener as a servile figure who attends to the space without owning it. Furthermore, the flowers at the villa are cut for the purposes of courtship; unlike those in the 'thousands of small gardens', they benefit a personal relationship instead of an institutional one.

The garden at the villa also plays a role in Rachel's narrative of development, as it appears to assist her in the process of learning and thinking for herself. In the villa she has a 'large, private [room] – a room in which she could play, read, think, defy the world', and it is situated above the garden.[22] Rachel's thoughts are contained not only by the room itself but merge with the space of the garden outside of the window: 'the morning was hot, and the exercise of reading left her mind contracting and expanding like the mainspring of a clock. The sounds in the garden outside joined with the clock, and the small noises of midday.'[23] The landscape outside Rachel's window and the pattern of her thoughts are thus brought together in a way that suggests mutual enrichment. The blending of interior and exterior space lends itself to the subject of her thoughts, being the character of Nora in Henrik Ibsen's play *A Doll's House*. She 'gazed out over the furniture through the window opposite which opened on the garden. Her mind wandered away from Nora, but she went on thinking of things that the book suggested to her, of women and life'.[24] The garden here helps Rachel apply the particularities of the text in hand to the much broader reality of 'women and life', perhaps even providing an antidote to the 'house' space that governs Ibsen's text.

III

The gardens in the first half of *The Voyage Out* are featured as physical, cultivated landscapes, but in the latter part of the text they are imaginatively expanded from the material to the mythic. The many allusions to the Garden of Eden in the later chapters of the novel deepen Woolf's discussion of gender, culture and landscape, while building on the previous representations of gardens in the text. Throughout this section of the text, Rachel is attempting to reconcile her feelings of resistance with her efforts to understand the logic of social conventions and masculine culture. The Garden of Eden has an inevitable relevance to this since, as Christine Froula has argued, the Genesis myth 'effects and authorizes, indeed sacralizes, the appropriation of culture by the male'.[25] As Rachel gains insight into the workings of society she increasingly rejects its doctrines, recognizing the injustice of gender equality, renouncing Christianity and doubting the institution of marriage. As these developments unfold, several narrative themes emerge that are shared with the Eden myth. In the first instance, Woolf's plot concerns a woman who seeks out knowledge, but in doing so she struggles with masculine authority and deviates from her socially inscribed environment. This results in two forms of exile: in Eve's case, she is expelled from Eden; in Rachel's, she is exiled from life itself. Death is also a significant aspect of Eve's narrative, since an additional punishment for her actions is mortality.[26] In both narratives they are exiled because they have transgressed from the laws of a higher power. Rachel's death follows her engagement to Terence Hewet and can be read as a

punishment for her recent questioning of social convention. It can also be seen as a transgression from their own beliefs, since neither of them agreed with marriage as a concept. Further allusions to the Garden of Eden are to be found in the many conflicts that the narrative presents between desire and law, knowledge and ignorance, and in the repeated imagery of trees, fruit, snakes and lovers, in the presence of an exotic landscape.

References to the Garden of Eden can be found as early as Chapter 8, when Rachel attempts to read Edward Gibbon's *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. During this scene, Rachel walks away from civilization towards the river, among trees that bear 'large blossoms' with cream and crimson 'wax-like' petals.[27] Sitting underneath one of the trees she begins to read Gibbon, but gives up before suddenly realizing that she is in love with Terence. The motif of a woman attempting to obtain knowledge underneath a tree draws undeniably on the Eden myth, and Woolf encourages this association by emphasizing the somewhat supernatural quality of the tree in question. The tree is a sudden 'interruption' to Rachel's walk

> which, though it did not grow across her path, stopped her as effectively as if the branches had struck her in the face ... It appeared to her so strange that it might have been the only tree in the world.

The branches

> sprang here and there ... as if it had but that second risen from the ground. Having seen a sight that would last her for a lifetime, and for a lifetime would preserve that second ... she was able to seat herself in its shade.[28]

The imposition of the tree is described in terms of violence, and its dark trunk and angular lines give it a sinister, Gothic appearance. This ominous description seems informed by the underlying narrative of the Eden myth, which aligns the tree of knowledge with death.

Like Eve, Rachel attempts to gain knowledge which pertains to a patriarchal authority. Gibbon's work concerns a male version of history, and describes how civilization has been formed by the actions of those in power. This is emphasized by Woolf's choice of quote from the book, an account of how the generals of Emperor Augustus invaded Ethiopia, Arabia Felix and the countries of northern Europe, resulting in conflict between the Romans and the groups that Gibbon calls 'natives' or 'barbarians'.[29] Adding to the book's status as masculine authority is the fact that it is thrust upon Rachel by St John Hirst, a character explicitly figured as a member of the academic (and consequently masculine) elite. He claims that an appreciation of *Decline and Fall* is 'the test' of an intelligent mind', implying the need for this test when he declares that '[i]t's awfully difficult to tell about [the intelligence of] women ... how much, I mean, is due to lack of

training, and how much is native incapacity'.[30] Hirst's blatant prejudice adds a particular significance to Rachel's desire to read the text, demonstrating the attitudes which have sustained her ignorance thus far. Sitting underneath a tree, Rachel reads the first page of the text, and feels the work to be saturated with the 'possibilities of knowledge':

> Never had words been so vivid and beautiful – Arabia Felix – Aethiopia ... They seemed to drive roads back to the very beginning of the world, on either side of which the populations of all times and countries stood in avenues, and by passing down them all knowledge would be hers, and the book of the world turned back to the very first page. Such was the excitement at the possibilities of knowledge now opening before her that she ceased to read.[31]

In reading Gibbon, Rachel is attempting to penetrate and conquer a previously unknown world of masculine cultures and institutions. The significance of this knowledge is so great that it establishes the world at its 'very beginning'. In reference to the subject of Gibbon's work, this begins with the history of the civilized Old World. However, 'the book of the world' also invokes the beginning of the world as rendered in the Old Testament, and detailed in the first lines of the book of Genesis.

Rachel's own 'fall' occurs after she has given up on Gibbon and resumes her walk, but unlike that of Eve, Rachel's fall is demonstrated physically. She first stumbles on a tuft of grass, but then 'sank down to earth'. '[C]lasping her knees together, and looking blankly in front of her' she then asks, 'What is it to be in love?' Rachel's literal 'falls' are linked to her realization that she is in love with Terence.[32] The allusion to the fall of Eve can be seen in the way that she receives this news. In early drafts of the text (originally entitled *Melymbrosia*), Rachel's realization is likened to the fear of infection:

> [S]he dreaded to find her suspicion was right, much as a person coming from a sick room dreads to find the signs of infection. As she swung along between the trees she fled from the idea, welcoming a rise in the ground, a fall over a grass tuft, because thus the mind was silenced.[33]

The image of the sickroom is particularly unsettling in light of Rachel's fate. The revised passage in the published version is just as ominous, but through the use of different phrases. As the knowledge of Rachel's love dawns on her, 'a kind of melancholy replaced her excitement', and 'awed by the discovery of a terrible possibility' she comes to acknowledge her situation and then returns home, 'much as a soldier prepared for battle'.[34] At this point in the text it seems clear that Rachel is about to face a fight, one which the early draft implicates is for her life. An additional reference to her mortality can be found in Woolf's description of the tree just before Rachel sits beneath it, 'having seen a sight that would last

her for a lifetime, and for a lifetime would preserve that second … she was able to seat herself in its shade'.[35] There is a dark irony in the reference to Rachel's lifetime, which we later discover is to be cut short. Woolf seems to be suggesting that this moment is a turning point for Rachel which changes the course of her life. In many cases this moment does change her life, as it coincides with the acknowledgement of her feelings for Terence, which will eventually lead to their engagement. The pressures of civilization, represented by Gibbon's text, require Rachel to be married if she wants to conduct a serious romantic relationship, something which threatens to return her to a subservient and frustrated state.

The last section of *The Voyage Out* is dominated by a river expedition into the Amazonian jungle. It constitutes the final stage of voyaging 'outside' of civilized spaces, presenting a seemingly timeless landscape that had not been altered by anything other than natural forces:

> Since the time of Elizabeth very few people had seen the river, and nothing had been done to change its appearance … Changing only with the change of the sun and clouds, the waving green mass had stood there for century after century, and the water had run between its banks ceaselessly, sometimes washing away earth and sometimes the branches of trees, while in other parts of the world one town had risen upon the ruins of another town, and the men in the towns had become more and more articulate and unlike each other.[36]

This virgin territory, supposedly untouched by the men in their towns, appears to be located in a time and place that precedes civilization and the 'differences' it brings. As Anne McClintock argues of the imperial narrative:

> The colonial journey into the virgin interior reveals a contradiction, for the journey is figured as proceeding forward in geographical space but backward in historical time, to what is figured as a prehistoric zone of racial and gender difference.[37]

This rendering of the Amazon temporarily displaces the native inhabitants, and encourages a perceived relationship between the jungle space and narratives of origin, in particular the myth of Eden. This relationship is made quite overt by Mr Flushing in the *Melymbrosia* draft of the text, when he states that when Western colonizers first came to the country, they 'thought they'd discovered the garden of Eden'.[38] Other references to Eden in both the draft and published versions are less obvious, but they bear significant similarities to those made by Woolf previously in the text. As in the scene where Rachel realizes her love for Terence, there are numerous references to the beginning of the world and to trees. In *Melymbrosia*, the river itself is described as 'lying like the root of some enormous forest tree, massive in the middle, with lesser roots lying across the blue sand'.[39] The river, like the 'avenues' of Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*, is presented by Woolf as a route back through the various stages of civilization and into the origins of humanity:

> To find the source of the river you must first pass through the towns, then the villages, then the solitary huts of Indians; you must become the only person in your world; you must be the first to cut through the thongs of creepers; the first who has ever trodden upon the mosses by the river side, or seen trees which have stood since the beginning of the world. No longer are the sounds of men and women heard ... only birds cry, and trees come down, and the fruit can be heard slipping and dropping on the ground; and now and then some beast howls in agony or rage.
>
> As leopard and birds have been born of the forest, so have human beings.[40]

The river signifies the flow of time as it passes through the history of human development. Its substance originates in a primeval, prehistoric landscape, advancing through huts, villages and towns. As the travellers journey towards the river source they also enact a narrative of their own origins. Images of Eden overlap with a more evolutionary understanding of human history, blending the slipping fruit and the eternal trees with the primeval animalism of beasts howling. Gillian Beer has read these references to the primeval in detail, suggesting that the mythical narrative of Eden is replaced with a scientific one: 'Evolutionary theory has made a new myth of the past. Instead of the garden, the swamp. Instead of fixed perfect species, forms in flux'.[41] Yet the garden landscape is still very much present throughout, combining its cultivated form with the primitive landscape to establish what Froula has called a 'post-impressionist Genesis'.[42] Both mythical and scientific versions of history combine to blend biological conceptions of human origins, with the fictional origins that have sustained social and cultural ideologies.

The allusions to Eden become even clearer when Rachel and Terence leave their fellow travellers by the riverbank and walk into the wilderness. As they leave, Hirst tells them to '[b]eware of snakes', and the increasingly claustrophobic and sensuous atmosphere – with its 'languid puffs of scent' and 'dense creepers' – adds to the sense of foreboding. In *Melymbrosia*, Rachel's desire to pick flowers as she walks alludes to Eve's desire for the forbidden fruit: 'when a flower tempted her, Rachel pulled it'.[43] In *The Voyage Out* this is omitted, and a red fruit is mentioned in its place. Terence picks it up and 'threw it as high as he could', resolving to speak when it landed on the ground.[44] Terence and Rachel fulfil their likeness to Adam and Eve when they become lovers in the wilderness, embracing and admitting their feelings for one another. Shortly afterwards Rachel physically falls, echoing the fall she had after realizing that she was in love with Terence. When Helen is told about their engagement, her 'hand dropped abrupt as iron on Rachel's shoulder; it might have been a bolt from heaven. She fell beneath it'. Helen's response, though it is supposed to be light-hearted and jocular, is described as a punishment from God. In *Melymbrosia*, this act of 'felling' is followed by a physical fight between the two women, where Helen pins Rachel to the ground and stuffs grass into her mouth. Rachel's punishment for agreeing to be married is thus to be gagged or silenced. The fighting is edited

out of the published version, but this notion of silencing remains implicit; as Rachel falls beneath Helen's hand 'the grass whipped across her eyes and filled her mouth and ears'.[45]

Throughout the course of *The Voyage Out*, Woolf's depiction and use of space can be seen to function at the core of her narrative and its political undertones. On an elementary level, Woolf challenges the physical mobility permitted to real and fictional women by creating a heroine who engages in a vast physical journey. Of the many voyages implied by the title of the text, the most literal is in some ways the most revolutionary. Rachel's 'voyage out' thus functions as a metaphor for the increasing visibility of women in the public sphere, and is suggestive of the smaller physical and social journeys made by women like Woolf, who stepped beyond their strictly domestic environments. But Rachel does not merely travel through space, she also functions as a way of interrogating it. As Susan Stanford Friedman has argued, Rachel's 'voyage out becomes a voyage in – into the heart of the ideological configurations of empire, gender, and class that her story both acts out and resists'.[46] As I have argued, the gardens in this novel provide a specific category of space through which to view Rachel's development, as well as allowing an insight into Woolf's feminist commentary. The binaries and convergences figured by the gardens in the text – between the built and organic, private and public, interior and exterior – express the complex tensions between the socially inscribed, civilized environment and the less human, even primeval, natural world. By using the garden space as a lens through which to perceive the changing social and physical landscapes in the work, it is possible to gain a unique perspective on the novel's underlying aesthetic and political project.

10 THE TRANSNATIONAL RURAL IN ALICIA LITTLE'S *MY DIARY IN A CHINESE FARM*

Eliza S. K. Leong

Alicia Helen Neva Bewicke was an English feminist novelist and early leader of the Anti-Footbinding Movement in China. She was born in Madeira in 1845, but spent most of her life abroad. In 1887, at the age of 41, she married Archibald John Little and moved to Chongqing. Archibald Little was first a tea taster, and later a merchant and entrepreneur. As a British businessman who first reached China in the 1860s, Little had much prior experience in China. Alicia Little had little knowledge about China, though she had travelled widely before her marriage. After their marriage, the Littles spent nearly two decades in China between 1887 and 1907. They first stayed in Chongqing and later moved to Shanghai. After she reached China, Little studied Chinese and travelled extensively along the Yangtze River and interior areas. She visited Chinese families, took photographs, and began to write on China. Since her early twenties, Little had been interested in writing. She published her first novel, *Flirts and Flirts; Or, A Season at Ryde*, at the age of 23. *My Diary in a Chinese Farm* (1895) is probably her first account among several on China.[1] The account started on 6 July 1893 and ended on 3 August 1894.[2] In 1894, Little travelled to Japan for a short visit, where she met Kazumasa Ogawa, a Japanese photographer. In August of that year, her diary was accepted for publication. The book was complied with collotypes and photo-engravings that Kazumasa Ogawa printed at the Tokyo Tsukiji Type Foundry. The book included seven collotype plates with tissue guards, nineteen photo-engraved half-tone text illustrations and decorated paper over cardboard covers. All plates and illustrations were by Ogawa.

My Diary in a Chinese Farm is an unpolished account of Little's first summer spent in China. Due to the intense heat in Chongqing, the Littles spent their summer in the hills on the other side of the Yangtze River, on a Chinese farm. During her stay, Little recorded the details of life on the farm, interactions with the locals and short excursions into the surrounding countryside. Little offers a candid view of her social interactions with Chinese women living in the inland Chinese regions, which were rarely visited by British travellers. Her relationship with these women magnifies the connections between Britain and China.

Edward Said has viewed Victorian Britain's relations with China as a Western style of dominating, restructuring and having authority over the Orient.[3] Said's theory rests on a complex hegemony of domination. His work focuses on the discursive formation of the Orient as other and invests the colonial power of the West both materially and culturally. In tune with Said's approach, Little instills Western values in Chinese women. She takes all things Western as the measure of the universal, a stance which Said notes as being essential to give 'shape and meaning to the great Asiatic mystery'.[4] While recognizing Said's *Orientalism*, we also need to be aware of the limits inherent in this approach when studying Victorian relations with China and to recognize that, in the late nineteenth century, people in Britain possessed an overwhelming sense of their own national identity. In literature on British identity, rural landscapes often represent national identity; but the invention of British national identity was never just imposed from the centre, nor can it be understood solely as the result of colonization. By examining the concept of British rurality within the context of Said's theory of Orientalism we can shed light on the study of Victorian relations with China.

British Identity and Rurality

The discursive formation of the rural also rests on a complex hegemony of domination, but 'relates to the context of their supposed transgression, that is, a purified countryside'.[5] Power frames an acceptance of marginalization and exclusion of the other.[6] David Sibley provides a vision of idyllic rural life excluding others who are 'un-English'. He explains:

> The dominant image of English countryside ... touches on questions of national identity. The countryside, as it is represented by those who have privileged place within it, is the essence of Englishness, so those who are excluded from this purified space are also, in a sense, un-English. It is those parts of national territory that are pictured as stable, culturally homogenous, historically unchanging which are taken to represent nation in nationalistic discourse. These are generally rural areas which stand in opposition to cosmopolitan cities.[7]

Said and Sibley presume that subject positioning within a racialized reality is fixed and undifferentiated. Even so, Little manipulates colonial ideology and seeks to frame nineteenth-century Englishness within colonial space and difference. The colonial ideology of identity in the late nineteenth century provokes the crisis of national identity and moral panic about race in Britain.[8] Once located outside of England, Little experiences difficulties in upholding her Englishness. The vision of the rural in China is far less ideal as opposed to her image of rurality in her homeland. She constantly reminds herself that she is dwelling in a space belonging to others which is not her home. However, her English-

ness is based on nostalgic memories of the English rural. Thus her diary is tied up with multiple ironies. For example, during Little's stay at the Chinese farm, a robbery occurred. After it was reported, the Littles discovered that they had 'unwittingly set in motion the local judicial apparatus',[9] as the Chinese authorities had brought the accusation of robbery against the farm owner's son. After having confessed under torture, the son pleaded guilty to the robbery. The farm owners asked the Littles to release their son and declared that their son had nothing to do with the robbery. Eventually, the son was released, but Little believed that he was the criminal. The last paragraph of her diary describes the visit of the son with his parents to celebrate and thank the Littles for his release. She describes the son as a 'wretched looking, emaciated, red eyed, disfigured creature'.[10] Here, Alicia Little's reflections on the Chinese are significant. Little's sympathy towards the Chinese can hardly be doubted. The diary finishes with an open ending, leaving room for the readers to realize that 't[he] great Division of the Human Race, called Chinese, consists not only of China-men but of real men and women, with simple wants and wishes not after all so unlike our own'.[11] In a change of description, Little indulges in an unresolved narrative tension, ending the diary with an 'upbeat flourish'.[12] Though these ironies make her diary difficult to understand, this is what makes Little's reflection on Chinese women significant within imperial feminist studies.

Scholars of imperial feminist studies have questioned the epistemology of separation implicit in such race research.[13] Here, the relationship between the Orient and the Occident that rests on a dichotomized self/other framework obscures the subjectivities of identities internal to this framework. Such a framework overwrites the interconnections of privileged race positions with other sources of identity and power. Identities can be positioned in different times and spaces. The interrelations of space and identity occur in fluid and dynamic relations and representations.[14] Selves and others may be thought of as hybrid and need to be located in obvious domains of difference, like race and gender. Indeed, there is an 'in between' in these domains where we negotiate how selves and others are represented.[15] Little moves into this 'in between' space, where she struggles between self and other. Her travel account is central to her English rural identity based on an ideal of nostalgia. But the emphasis on the rural idyll distorts our reading of Little's travel account. This leads us further away from the inherent diversity in her text. In fact, dwelling with others allows her to discard the gender norms that she has struggled with during her life in England. This not only helps to explain the multiple ironies in Alicia Little's diary but also frames a different discursive space for feminist writers. While China experiences critical national and gender reform, Little finds difficulties in upholding a stable subjectivity for Chinese women. Her account displays the difficulties of representing rural China within the trope of European dominance and othering common to

European accounts of China. Little's interaction with Chinese women in the remote Chinese region helps her to resolve her conflicting beliefs in women's independence and domestic responsibilities. Yet it is the fluidity of her values where Chinese women are concerned that allows her to picture the possibilities of self-reflexivity that is disallowed by Western social norms, and to suggest an elusive alliance with Chinese women. Little's writing suggests that 'exposure to the Orient resulted in a reconstitution of Western values that surpassed in scope any attempt to project a unified vision of the East'.[16]

If we focus on Little's representation of rurality as being closely dependent on others, this allows us to problematize the notion of the rural idyll and complicates the polarity of race identities. I aim to sharpen critical analysis of the social construction of rurality through a reading of Little's experience with Chinese women in the discursive network and social positioning of gender. The overgeneralization in the supposed countryside hegemony results in the model of a homogenous racialized category pitted beneath the white. By extension, this chapter proposes that works about racial identity and rurality implicitly or explicitly detach racial identities from other historical oppressions such as those surrounding gender and class. This chapter not only specifies the contribution that race-based oppression makes to inequality, but also seeks to foreground the multiplicity and mobility of subject positioning. By investigating rurality, I hope to expand debates about the countryside as an imaginative resource. By thinking about rurality as an imagined cultural geography, this chapter offers perspectives on two things. The first is to reveal the boundary-making practices from colonialism's cultures that are constructed in the late nineteenth-century setting of rural China. The second is to expose the possibility of alternative feminist perspectives to racialized alliances at times of national and gender reform in China. Little's experience on the Chinese farm contradicts the idyllic view of the rural, which alienates her from her British female subjectivity, but enables her to be receptive to alternative models of womanhood. It is in this sense that feminist and colonial discourses have prompted new interest in human geography across boundaries. Thus, a focus on the social construction of English rurality and gender has emerged as a prominent transnational activity.

The Transnational Rural

As mentioned already, Little's diary is an inspiring account of an English woman learning to deal with the vicissitudes of the rural idyll. The period between 1860 and 1930 was the high point of the rural idyll.[17] This vision of rurality had a strong affinity with tranquillity, goodness, wholeness and freedom. It also maps onto cartographies of identity encapsulating norms and values which explain and shape what is valuable in a nation, a region or a locality.[18] The 'idyll' confirms

rural spaces as a home which creates an influential set of harmonious images. It is depicted as a settled landscape mapping out a social order across a picturesque terrain, especially in its construction as 'village England'.[19] So if we are to look for the rural idyll which is projected into imaginings and ideologies, we have to track it into a national identity that shores up what it means to be English. Here, the implication is that the white landscape of rurality is aligned with nativeness, the absence of evil and danger, and is protected against alien invasions.

In the nineteenth century, relating rurality to racial purity was a method of interpreting the new and emerging social relations influenced by colonialism and reinforced by the urban–rural dichotomy.[20] Scholars describe European colonialism as a form of cultural mobility that travels from a metropolitan centre to a colonial periphery. Nineteenth-century European travellers to the colonial periphery often wrote about the inequities of imperial power and stressed the differences between their experiences and the suppositions of the imperial centre, in order to proclaim the cultural rehabilitation of the periphery.[21] Little is an example of such a traveller who not only describes the Chinese as a defiled group but also presents a boundary of hybridization in which self and other are involved in an inclusive and heterogeneous unstable zone. This links the ideas of rurality, ethnicity and ethnic purity. Sibley discusses the problem of the rural idyll and refers to it as the product of moral ordering and purification.[22] Sibley maps a social space according to which some groups or people are deemed to be excluded. Minorities are portrayed as defiled and are positioned in particular social categories which define the boundaries of society. To frame this geography, the imagery characterizes both people and place, reflecting people's need to distance themselves from defiled people and defiled places.[23] If rurality infers racial purity, the idyll-disturbance prompts the need for exclusion to keep the rural pure:

> [The rural] is a place where gender and ethnic identities can be anchored in 'traditional' ways, far … from the fragmented, 'mix up' city. Within the rural domain identities are fixed, making it a white, English, family-oriented, middle-class space … [T]he rural is extolled for the virtues of peace and quiet, of community and neighbourliness, virtues deemed to be absent from the urban realm.[24]

The nineteenth century reshaped the rural as a place of purity and so designed to exclude minorities identified as having the potential to pollute that space. The separation is projected into society and produces an ordered social spatialization of margin and centre.[25]

On a global scale, rural space may be used imaginatively when discussing the geographical variations of the term 'rural' internationally.[26] David Bell poses questions about the possibilities of circulating the notion of the rural idyll globally. Most works on the rural examine rurality within the boundary of a region, but cultural constructions of idyllic ruralities also circulate across borders and geo-

graphical regions under globalization. Bell considers the scale of the rural globally, terming this the 'transnational rural'.[27] He offers a vision of rurality that is far from idyllic.[28] With others hovering at the margins, it is difficult to keep a purified national identity free from the transnational flow of people and fusions of culture produced by global capitalism. On first thought, with Bell's transnational rural it is possible to see that Sibley's purification and exclusion of the other within the rural at home can be replicated abroad. With the use of Said's *Orientalism*, this essay begins to explore a new approach for rural geography and calls for a wider understanding and interconnection with the globalizing world.

The Chinese Rural as 'Other' Rural

Little travels to the Chinese farm where she fails to recognize her own vision of the rural idyll even as she finds it contested. Throughout the nineteenth century, cheap labour and commodities moved from the periphery to play a crucial role in creating wealth in Britain. The Treaties of Nanking and Tientsin in the mid-nineteenth century encouraged an influx of merchants, missionaries and travellers to China for trade and cultural exchange. These visitors explored the country, claiming their rights after the triumph of the Opium Wars, but were anxious about China's increased hostility toward them.[29] Little, for example, was prevented from building a summer cottage on the hillside near the Yangtze River by the magistrate, 'on the pretext that the country people were so much opposed to foreigners he dared not sanction our living amongst them: [yet he] then made a great favour of having persuaded a certain Farmer to have us as tenants'.[30] Moreover, Little's writing explains the West's authorized aggression against the native. This conforms to the anti-conquest account that Mary Louise Pratt has defined as 'strategies of representation whereby European bourgeois subjects seek to secure their innocence in the same moment as they assert European hegemony'.[31] Echoing Sibley's notion of purification and defilement, Little often remarks on the dust, mud and dirt of the Chinese. She starts her diary by saying: 'I was annoyed to find the furniture in our Farm not cleaned, and a good deal of smell of dirt'.[32] Little shows that the meaning of the rural idyll is shifting. The supposed countryside hegemony is so powerful that dirt is the carrier of a particular racial identity. The Western view of Chinese culture is nothing more than Oriental despotism, which masks civility behind barbarism and duplicity. This view relates to the identity politics within Europe that distinguishes self/nation from the other. Little's neglect of Chinese people and their customs might be argued to be a self-defensive strategy that Pratt describes as aiming to 'inspire a salutary fear among the Chinese'.[33]

However, the Chinese rural environment is one which conventional English society would probably find unrecognizable. The farm, the Chinese farmer and

his family contribute to a messy rural landscape, which is full of unlikely objects and chaos. In the aforementioned robbery Little loses some domestic goods. These goods include watches, a compass, eyeglasses, spoons, forks, bed sheets, a tablecloth and some European clothes. Little comments on the robbery:

> We are beginning to wonder whether worrying the people round so much on the plea of our stolen goods is not in order to make them object to our going on building on the land we have rented near here ... [The robbery] seems too elaborate a plot. But that they should utilize the theft to make us disliked in the neighborhood would only be natural. We hear no more of having our money returned us for the piece of land we rented last year, and have not so far been allowed to build upon, nor of our being allowed to go on building, and the three months we were to spend at this farm in order to accustom the people to us et cetera, are nearly up.[34]

Little's anxieties about the Chinese authorities were undoubtedly influenced by the many late-century rebellions against foreigners throughout Chongqing.[35] Being born in Madeira and raised in England, Little settled as a middle-class woman in England and was heavily influenced by Victorian values. Subsequently,

> she was caught, along with other women of the *fin de siècle*, between respect for high Victorian domestic ideals and attraction to new possibilities for self-realization. Her early works reflect an irresolvable contention between her advocacy of women's independence on the one hand and a defense of marriage and maternal instinct on the other.[36]

Shanyn Fiske suggests that Little writes with the benefit of those with little knowledge of her country, and that she downplays her authority. Little stresses that her book does not 'aim at being a storehouse of learning and a book of reference for all time, but rather at giving a picture, for those who know nothing of [China]'.[37] Little is a homebody limiting herself to her Englishness. After the robbery, she finds much difficulty in living in the farm without the goods that she has brought to China. She says,

> I have never now any notion what o'clock it is without a watch, and our supply of Table cloths also seems sadly short. And through last year travelling to Thibet I did my hair for three months without a looking glass, yet I am vexed to miss the convenient Hand glass out of my travelling bag ... Without something of the kind it is incredible how we could have slept through so much rummaging of two baskets, and a cupboard, also a drawer, and a box opened. The latter had one of my slippers stuck in it to make it shut noiselessly.[38]

Little is a font of Victorian stability and domestic adventures in the heart of the foreign. She provides an imaginary home space in her dwelling abroad:

> I was shut up in the one Farm house sittingroom, so I started a Diary for much the same reason probably, that I have often observed people do so on a Sea Voyage. They

> generally do not keep it up till the end, neither did I; but I noted down every thing I could observe of interest, as long as I wrote in it, and here it is, recalling many simple pleasures and some painful days.[39]

A room of her own specifies her need for material space free from interruption. To experience the foreign adventure, she requires a domestic core that travels from home to abroad as a platform of stability. Here, the house of the farmer is internationalized with implications of the global. The author's freedom depends on others. Here, Little's intimacy with the farmer's family has a transnational valence. This marks abroad no longer as purely local but also as belonging to the global.[40] This brings us to position Little's account of Chinese rural femininity in a global frame, linking womanhood and domesticity with the Western notion of transnationalism. Little's metonym of the robbery inside her dwelling in the farmer's house specifies the author's space of constant interruption. This inscribes the author's liberation depending on the enclave of others. Her text occupies an intertextual space across boundaries with the lack of self-ownership in possessing a room. In this chapter, my purpose is to expand transnational knowledge about rurality on women and gender. How might our categories for thinking about women and gender shift if we internationalize feminism? How might we think about women or gender, including women and gender abroad, not just at home? How does thinking internationally change feminist thinking in general? What do home and abroad mean in the context of internationalization? I will address these questions by outlining the significance of geopolitical thinking for feminism.

Geopolitics in Transnational Feminism

Susan Stanford Friedman briefly explains the influence of geopolitical literacy on feminism. She suggests that the term geopolitics combines *geo*, which means relating to the earth, with *politics*, which means the patterns and study of power relations. She further claims that geopolitics also means transnational power relations. In this way, 'geopolitical identity refers mainly to forms of national identity or origin'.[41] She entwines the notion of the geopolitical with race and ethnicity. This triggers racist reactions based on ideologies of inferiority, alienness and exoticism within a system of white domination of Third World women. This further stresses the racial parallel between all women in the Third World and ignores the influence of geopolitical differences. I propose the need to shift the complexities of the locational movements of Third World women. To understand this complex implication, we need to focus not only on ethnocentrism but also on geocentrism. Such thinking opens up the possibility of identifying political meanings as a distinct component of identity and social systems inflected by the Western hegemonic power.

Said's notion of 'worldliness' advocates the discursive formation in a global as opposed to a purely local setting. He challenges the tendency to remain categorically fixed within a single geopolitical location.[42] Little relates her dwelling abroad to her notion of a British rural idyll at home. She writes: 'The air was so fresh, and the scene in its wildness so reminded me of Cumberland Moors I wondered why one complained of the Summer here'.[43] The way of life in China during Little's visit rests on imperial trade and 'coolies' (Chinese labourers), which has increased hostility toward foreigners in Chongqing. Little here matches abroad with her home. She sees that 'what assures the domestic tranquility [at home] and attractive harmony of one is the productivity and regulated discipline of the other'.[44] A geopolitical reading of Little's account enables the self-fashioning of home abroad as dependent upon the existence of home.[45] For instance, it allows Little to look abroad for the imprint of her home. It also redefines geography's engagement with globalization by relating perspectives on space in order to remake the rural under globalization.[46] My purpose, here, is to draw up a 'global countryside'[47] and to break the binary of global and local which enables readers to see how the global is present in the local or the local is present in the global.

Inderpal Grewal and Caren Kaplan theorize a transnational feminism to deconstruct any dominant hierarchy, which I have expanded here to incorporate urban–rural and global–local hierarchies, and a hegemonic use of gender. Parting ways with global feminism's vision of a united world of women, Grewal and Kaplan examine transnational feminism by relating gender to 'scattered hegemonies' throughout the global.[48] The authors recognize the multidimensional patterns of division everywhere and insist on the agency of people of all locations. Their study focuses on a transnational feminism that looks for the linkage and complicities in the global frame. They propose that the transnational ought to suggest local knowledge of the global. Thus, the global is present within the local and the local is present within the global. Grewal argues that contact zones are everywhere.[49] The contacts occur in a discursive space which controls the accounts of encounters with difference. People adapt to their own domestic culture with what they find abroad or in travel discourses about places abroad.[50] Within the Western Empire, Grewal suggests that culture within national boundaries can be 'located within a transnational frame that is not reduced to a narrative of centre and periphery or of globalization'.[51] She recognizes that any site can serve as a site for the transformation of cultural formations from home and abroad.[52] Her argument considers the scattered hegemonies produced by multidirectional flows of people and space, as well as transnational division. For Grewal, the politics of location explicates a 'new space' for the Western feminist questioning of geopolitics. Her work questions the concept of home that is nothing but stable and depicts home as a site of oppression, marginalization and resistance for women.

Little's ability to travel from her home and the movement within the home abroad elide the distinction between nation and state. This produces tension between the global and local, which highlights the importance of the transnational. Little embodies the ethnocentrism of the West. She, of course, does not erase the differences among women in the service of a false unitary world of women. This potentially obscures the structure of power relations between different groups of women at home and abroad. Her account reiterates a Eurocentrism that inhibits the full development of the geopolitical 'worldliness' that Said speaks for. Nonetheless, her work provides a foundation for those who go beyond it. She has not only taken issue with the binary terms that oppose the imperial West against colonization and resistance, but also informed the notion of 'interconnectedness' that is captured in the term 'glocalization', in which there is no purely local culture but the local is 'an aspect of globalization' from which global forces are at work in shaping the local.[53] In the context of Little's account and geopolitical thinking, glocalization deconstructs the equalizations of 'global feminism' by homogenizing the position of Third World women. The other vision of the rural idyll shows rurality as a part of hybridity, which discounts global distinctions depending on conventional oppositions between West and non-West, urban and rural, as well as global and local. Here, Little rewrites her home using the context of abroad. Her issue of accountability is not only between First World and Third World women, but also between women within the Third World.

Little's stay with the farmer points to the need for greater attention to be paid to intercultural contact performed through travel. This expands Grewal's implication that contact zones are everywhere, including the home abroad. I am suggesting the possibility of adding to the geopolitical aspect in and among the rural family, home and domesticity in a global frame. Little here draws attention to the differences among women and points out the power relations between different groups of women at home and abroad. It is essential to draw on transnational geopolitical thinking to suggest a 'new space' or 'third scenario' for Third World women without falling into 'militant and nationalist pretentions of certainty'.[54] In short, Little here refuses to position herself as searching for certainty. She may be explaining the multiplicity of positions and allegiances that characterize the marginal subject. Within the context of multiple positions, 'writing is travelling from one position to another, thinking one's way from one position to another'.[55] So how are geopolitics imprinted in Little's work transnationally and globally? In leaving British soil, does Little lose her right to be read in her own national context? How do we read Little's account through the distinctive lenses of gender and race?

Nationalist Discourse and Women in Rural China

Little's visit to the Chinese rural location perhaps confronts the idealized representation of British rurality with the reality of the other's presence. Here, the ambiguity of Little's attitude toward Chinese women comes into focus. The descriptions of Chinese women in the farmer's house and the house she moved to after the robbery are markedly different. Little describes a woman on the farm as 'roughed,' 'disfiguring' and 'not suckling her child'. After the robbery, she moves to another house, which obviously shows variation in class and location. She describes women in her new house in the following way:

> their elder sister of 13, a really very pretty girl in her today's toilette with bright brown eyes, and a graceful, alert step, in spite of tiniest feet ... all her hair in a twist on the top of her head stuck all over with very pretty pins, made of imitation pearls and blue Jay's wings and jewels feathers, with a cap (or bonnet) all round it, Jay's wings and jewels ornamenting this, gold pins fastening her hair at the back, three bandeaux of artificial flowers round her forehead, whirls of them at the side and a very pretty disposition of them down the back of her head and neck. She wore a lovely rose brocade over jacket with black satin collar, a mauve under jacket, which did not show, and trousers of a rather richer rose, all embroidered too.[56]

It is possible to see Little travelling from an ethnography of otherness to one that enables an agency of multiply defined others. This conscious sympathy presents an indirect discourse used to represent English characters of different classes. Little's attitude toward the whiteness of women in the new house is significant. She relates Chinese women to 'pearls', 'Jay's wings' and 'jewels', which are emblems of Victorian purity.[57] She tries to elevate the purity of women above the darkness of rural women, the darkness which is frequently associated with the other. It is suggested that 'China had always been dirty, and Chinese dirt was only the sign of a cultural vice crying out to be cured'.[58] This alien whiteness embodies the covert racial hierarchies but marks cross-cultural admiration.

This pushes the reading of Little's dairy further by turning to debates on gender and rural ideologies. I argue that women in Chinese rurality embody both desire and dread. I have outlined the constraints imposed on women's role to the hybrid, relational and fixed nature of different rural gendered identities behind women's daily lives. Poverty, ignorance, class exploitation, imperialism and patriarchal values restrict Little's observation. Little tracks the anti-idyllization into the image of China and its people:

> [the] daughter of the house immediately set to work to help her mother in getting out of a sort of nettle the fibre used for making grass cloth and worked at this pretty well all day, when not suckling her child. The breaking the stalks without breaking the outside skin made the peeling this skin off seem to require some knack, and I did not try it. But I found it easy enough to strip the fibre from the skin, when I had the

> proper implements. Taking a thing like a small iron spud with sharp edges in the right hand, and inserting the thumb of the right hand into a roll, that just about filled up the spud, when placed inside it, one then takes the skin of the tall nettle in the left hand, and draws it again and again between the sharp spud, and the thumb covering, till the fibres are quite clean.[59]

Little locates herself within the hegemonic discourse of the West which results in absolute power in framing the native. She highlights the importance of Western technology in developing agriculture, as she writes: 'it [was] easy enough to strip the fibre from the skin, when I had the proper implements'.[60] Here, her account also raises a complex process of nation-building in another world. Little relates the importance of rural gender relations to the details of Chinese women's lives in the rural. She places Chinese women at the heart of the rural family and community. Little travels from an exterior, stereotyped perception of Chinese women, to understanding the interiority of Chinese women by anticipating women's engagement in the early stage of urbanization in China.[61]

Little's account also reinforces the development of women's emancipation in the rise of nationalism in China in the late nineteenth century. The rise of nationalism in late Qing China reflects an alternative account of China and makes the Western hegemonic discourse about China ambiguous. Western hegemonic discourse asserts Chinese identity against the non-Chinese, and this discourse helped the Chinese to reinforce the native resistance movement that had contested the Manchu regime long before Western powers invaded China. From here, Western knowledge about China cannot be changed or transformed when Westerners are brought into contact with local tradition. This reminds us that the representation of China must move beyond the East–West binary. The alternative intervention allows us to look into China and cultural difference without producing a binary opposition. By implication, however, this evokes the margins of the nation-space and legitimates a politics of the state-representing-the-nation. According to this view, women occupy a place that confirms the margins of the nation-state. Chinese women's emancipation goes with a national resistance movement. It is not until the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that *funü*, the Chinese woman, appears in Chinese history and national politics. It is the struggles of Chinese women for liberation that consistently reinforce Chinese nationalism.[62]

Chinese Rural Women Engaging in Globalization

Little's account not only reminds us of Sibley's purification at work in producing a distinct and exclusive rural community, but also provides new social contact with others on a rural Chinese farm. First, this chapter has demonstrated the need to show a transnational idea of rurality. Rather than confining the idea of rurality within a region, we need to see its distinctiveness to better understand

its connections with cultural formations and identities. Second, there is a need to trace the influence of spatialized power relations by understanding that the circuits of power flow in multidirectional ways. Simply put, Little questions the formation of global feminism where gender oppression links women everywhere in a common sisterhood. She expresses the need to remove self-consciousness from 'national self-praise'.[63] She regards women as potential pioneers for building national identity. She argues that it is essential to preserve national identity by homogenizing culture to support domestic and foreign policies. Her account also provides detailed description of interactions of gender in an alternative system of division within a national context.

British imperialism, to echo Said, pervades Little's account of women in rural China. Little attacks and reinforces Western imperialism: she pulls apart the binary analysis implicit in the category of Western imperialism, but this results in an over-reliance on the models of centre/periphery and self/other, which often deny the agency of multiple others. This chapter questions the reading of Little's account as a critique of Empire, or those who critique Little as a participant in imperialism. As an English writer born at the height of the British Empire, the Empire is clearly the central, but not the whole, geopolitical story for Little. It is suggested that the significance of Said's work lies in the notion of 'uncanny ability'.[64] Said's work 'show[s] us that at the heart of what we take to be familiar, native, at home – where we think we can find our center – lurk what is unfamiliar, strange and uncanny'.[65] Here, familiar and natural belonging is often associated with home and abroad. The rurality is anti-global and the imagined home is a symbolic resource for shoring up national identity. Little's *My Diary in a Chinese Farm* stages the urban/rural dichotomy as a site of ambivalence showing that producing a rural idyll depends on others.

Third, there is a need to make visible the global woven into the local, and the urban woven into the rural as an effect of globalization. Little discloses a discourse of interpenetration between home and abroad. She deconstructs the binary of an anthropologist as viewing subjects travelling to study the static other. The intercultural encounters influence the other. Studying the other using national and transnational concepts makes possible an ethnography that examines the interaction of the dwelling and travel. Despite the foreign setting, Little's account revises the stereotypical Victorian gender plot. It also echoes transnational glocalization in identifying geopolitical dimensions of gender and class relations. For the space of dwelling, Chinese women are assumed as stationary; in the space of travel, Little is a figure of motion, moving in and out of the domestic space and having access to the inner and outer space unavailable to Chinese women. This supports the idea that home–abroad, urban–rural or global–local are interpenetrating categories.

Fourth, there is a need to examine how culture travels. As it travels, it acquires new forms and meanings that shed new light on different spaces. I have examined the connections between racial subjects, gender and national identity in a rural farm in Chongqing. My concern here has been with the uses of particular binaries – home–abroad, urban–rural and global–local – to examine how cultures are redefined within a transnational perspective. The fluid identity offers marginalized groups a series of estrangements or spaces of resistance. Identity politics shift from the centre, displaying the supposed cultural core from a position of absolute authority. It does so by setting up new political frontiers, resulting in greater distinction for the views and attitudes of others, who are struggling to create a closed conception of national culture.[66]

This chapter has aimed to tease out the boundary between urban and rural as well as global and local connections. It suggests that if we resist assimilating gendered struggles in China and Britain into an epistemic regime of race domination, we glimpse alternative political alliances and possibilities. Little adjusts her assumptions about Chinese women with the impact of globalization, blurring the boundary between home and abroad. This opens up opportunities for denial and a need to embrace difference. To quote Julia Kristeva:

> Living with the other, with the foreigner, confronts us with the possibility, or not, of being an other. It is not simply – humanistically – a matter of being able to accept the other but of being in his place, and this means to imagine and make oneself other for oneself.[67]

By confronting the conventions of the British imperial landscape and the Victorian gendered plot with Chinese women in rural China, Little reveals another vision of the rural. By recognizing multiple others, Little pictures the possibility of cross-cultural reciprocity between Europe and the Far East. Here, a transnational feminist politics of location refers us to a model of coalition or, to borrow a term from Said, to 'affiliation'. He suggests that affiliation is a dynamic concept which does not only mean to define but also to make explicit all kinds of connections.[68] As a practice of affiliation, a politics of location identifies specific differences and similarities between women in diverse and symmetrical relations, creating alternative histories, identities and possibilities for alliances. Little concludes:

> A new building site has been given us, nearly as good as the old, and thus ends all likelihood of our ever again living in a Szechuan Farm house, the homely details of whose doings may however have some interest for those who like to realize that great Division of the Human Race, called Chinese, consists not only of China-men but of real men and women, with simple wants and wishes not after all so unlike our own.[69]

While Little ends with an image of cross-cultural harmony, her optimism offers a refreshing and alternative model for understanding nineteenth-century Orientalism and re-examining relations with China in our own time, and should also encourage readers to look through the Orient glass to see themselves more clearly and less complacently.

NOTES

Goodman and Mathieson, 'Introduction: Gender and Space in Rural Britain, 1840–1920'

1. G. Eliot, 'The Natural History of German Life' (1856), in T. Pinney (ed.), *The Essays of George Eliot* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963), pp. 266–99, on pp. 268, 269; essay originally published in *Westminster Review*, 66 (July 1856).
2. Ibid., p. 269.
3. Ibid., pp. 271, 275.
4. K. Sayer, *Women of the Fields: Representations of Rural Women in the Nineteenth Century* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), p. 7.
5. A. N. Wilson, *The Victorians* (London: Arrow, 2003), p. 31.
6. Payton also explains that by the mid-nineteenth century 'mining employed one third of the working population of Cornwall, with still more working in support activities and ancillary trades'. P. Payton, *Cornwall: A History* (Fowey: Cornwall Editions, 2004), p. 196.
7. Wilson, *The Victorians*, p. 72; P. S. Bagwell, *The Transport Revolution from 1770* (London: Batsford, 1974), p. 93. As an indicator of the rate of spread, between 1838 and 1852 the railway network expanded from 500 to 7,500 miles of railway tracks across England and Wales.
8. The degree to which the state was able to exert control over peripheral areas should be qualified. For example, while the Mines and Collieries Act prohibited women and boys from working underground, this practice continued in many mines when not under inspection.
9. G. Eliot, *Middlemarch* (1871–2), ed. R. Ashton (London: Penguin, 1994), pp. 556, 553.
10. Ibid., p. 553.
11. T. Hardy, *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* (1891), ed. T. Dolin, intro. M. R. Higonnet (London: Penguin, 2003), p. 187.
12. Sayer, *Women of the Fields*, p. 8.
13. C. Thomas, '"See Your Own Country First": The Geography of a Railway Landscape', in E. Westland (ed.), *Cornwall: A Cultural Construction of Place* (Penzance: Patten Press, 1997), pp. 107–28.
14. W. J. Keith, 'The Land in Victorian Literature', in G. E. Mingay (ed.), *The Victorian Countryside*, 2 vols (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981), vol. 1, pp. 136–49, on p. 139.
15. Thomas, '"See Your Own Country First"', p. 115. While Thomas is careful to acknowledge that 'we might find in such a recognition evidence of the mythology of all golden ages' he argues that 'this was the period when social, cultural and economic conditions appeared most favourable to the railways'.
16. Ibid., p. 118.

17. P. Sacks, 'Introduction', in E. Thomas, *The Collected Poems and War Diary, 1917*, ed. R. G. Thomas (London: Faber, 2004), pp. xii–xxviii, on p. xiv. Thomas was sadly killed in France in 1917.
18. E. Thomas, 'The Owl' (1915), p. 44.iii.14–16.
19. E. Thomas, 'As the Team's Head Brass', pp. 115–6.ii.24–31.
20. Sacks, 'Introduction', p. xv.
21. Sayer, *Women of the Fields*, p. 1.
22. Ibid., p. 2.
23. B. Sloan, this volume, pp. 25–40, on p. 40.
24. See, for example, D. E. Nord, *Walking the Victorian Streets: Women, Representation, and the City* (London: Cornell University Press, 1995), and D. L. Parsons, *Streetwalking the Metropolis: Women, the City, and Modernity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).
25. Sayer, *Women of the Fields*, p. 5.
26. L. Mayers, *Balmaidens* (Penzance: Hypatia Trust, 2004), p. 11.
27. R. Williams, *The Country and the City* (1973) (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975), p. 1.
28. N. Groom, '"Lets Discuss over Country Supper Soon": Rebekah Brookes and David Cameron – Rural Realities and Rustic Representations', *Clearing*, 22 August 2013, at http://theclearingonline.org [accessed 22 August 2013].
29. L. McDowell, *Gender, Identity and Place: Understanding Feminist Geographies* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1999), p. 11.
30. Ibid., p. 12.
31. A. Blunt and G. Rose (eds), *Writing Women and Space: Colonial and Postcolonial Geographies* (London: Guildford Press, 1994), p. 3.
32. J. Little, *Gender and Rural Geography: Identity, Sexuality and Power in the Countryside* (Harlow: Pearson Education, 2002), pp. 42, 43.
33. Ibid., p. 41.
34. Ibid., p. 26.
35. G. Rose, *Feminism and Geography: The Limits of Geographical Knowledge* (Cambridge: Polity, 1993), pp. 98–9.
36. Sayer, *Women of the Fields*, p. 3.
37. 'The Farmer Wants a Wife', a Fremantle Media production, aired in the UK in 2001, and inspired similar programmes in over twenty locations around the world, becoming most popular in Australia where it ran from 2007 to 2012. See 'The Farmer Wants a Wife', Fremantle Media at http://www.fremantlemedia.com/Production/Our_brands/The_Farmer_Wants_a_Wife.aspx [accessed 30 August 2013].
38. Little, *Gender and Rural Geography*, p. 65.
39. L. McCulloch, this volume, pp. 73–85, on p. 85.
40. Little, *Gender and Rural Geography*, pp. 156–77.
41. R. Ebbatson, *An Imaginary England: Nation, Landscape and Literature, 1840–1920* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005).
42. On place, Empire and English identity, see, for example, I. *Baucom, Out of Place: Englishness, Empire and the Locations of Identity* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999).

1 Ebbatson, 'Women in the Field'

1. F. Engels, *The Condition of the Working Class in England* (1845) (London: Panther Books, 1969), p. 286.
2. Ibid., p. 287.
3. Ibid., pp. 287, 288.
4. K. Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy* (1867), trans. B. Fowkes, 2 vols (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1976), vol. 1, p. 889.
5. T. Hardy, 'We Field-Women' (1928), in *The Complete Poems*, ed. J. Gibson (London: Macmillan, 1976), p. 881.
6. K. Sayer, *Women of the Fields: Representations of Rural Women in the Nineteenth Century* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), p. 126.
7. Ibid., p. 125.
8. Ibid., p. 128.
9. Ibid., p. 129.
10. A. Armstrong, *Farmworkers: A Social and Economic History, 1770–1980* (London: Batsford, 1988), p. 123.
11. R. Jefferies, *Landscape and Labour*, ed. J. Pearson (Bradford-on-Avon: Moonraker Press, 1979), p. 168.
12. Ibid., p. 170.
13. Ibid., p. 171.
14. Ibid., p. 171.
15. R. Jefferies, *The Toilers of the Field* (1892) (London: MacDonald Futura, 1981), p. 88.
16. Ibid., p. 94.
17. R. Jefferies, *Hodge and His Masters* (1880), ed. H. Williamson (London: Methuen, 1937), p. 24.
18. Ibid., p. 25.
19. R. Jefferies, *The Open Air* (London: Dent, [n.d.]), p. 106.
20. R. Jefferies, *The Life of the Fields* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1908), p. 23.
21. Ibid., p. 25.
22. Ibid., p. 26.
23. Ibid., p. 28.
24. Ibid., p. 28.
25. Ibid., p. 29.
26. Ibid., p. 29.
27. Ibid., p. 30.
28. Ibid., p. 40.
29. Ibid., p. 42.
30. Ibid., p. 103.
31. T. Hardy, 'The Dorsetshire Labourer', in H. Orel (ed.), *Hardy: Personal Writings* (London: Macmillan, 1967), pp. 168–91, on p. 181.
32. Ibid., p. 187.
33. Ibid.
34. T. Hardy, *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* (1891), ed. S. Gatrell and J. Grindle (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), p. 315.
35. Ibid., pp. 315–16.
36. K. D. M. Snell, *Annals of the Labouring Poor: Social Change and Agrarian England, 1660–1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), p. 378.

37. P. Horn, *Labouring Life in the Victorian Countryside* (Dublin: Gill & Macmillan, 1976), p. 69.
38. Hardy, *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, p. 316.
39. Ibid., p. 277.
40. Snell, *Annals of the Labouring Poor*, p. 392.
41. Ibid., p. 392.
42. Ibid., p. 399.
43. J. Hooker, *Writers in a Landscape* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1996), p. 28.
44. Snell, *Annals of the Labouring Poor*, p. 404; Hardy, *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, p. 278.
45. For a fuller reading of this scene see R. Ebbatson, *Literature and Landscape 1830–1914* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).
46. M. Millgate (ed.), *Thomas Hardy's Public Voice: The Essays, Speeches, and Miscellaneous Prose* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2001), p. 182.
47. Ibid., p. 183.
48. Ibid., p. 183.
49. Ibid., pp. 183, 184.
50. Cited in Sayer, *Women of the Fields*, p. 104.
51. F. Thompson, *Lark Rise to Candleford* (1945) (London: Oxford University Press, 1979), p. 46.
52. Ibid.
53. L. B. Schoenfeld, *Dysfunctional Families in the Wessex Novels of Thomas Hardy* (New York: University Press of America, 2005), p. 201.
54. Marx, *Capital*, p. 301.

2 Sloan, '"Between Two Civilizations": George Sturt's Constructions of Loss and Change in Village Life'

1. G. Sturt, *Change in the Village* (1912) (London: Duckworth and Co., 1959), p. 147.
2. Ibid., p. 147.
3. Ibid., p. 148.
4. Ibid., pp. 151, 152. Sturt uses the same phrase to describe the predicament of young women, too, who have moved from agricultural work to domestic service; see p. 161.
5. G. Sturt, *The Wheelwright's Shop* (1923) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1924), pp. 54–5.
6. Sturt repeatedly admits his own sense of distance from some of the working people he finds most appealing and most deeply steeped in rural culture. For example, he comments that he was 'not man enough' to do certain tasks in the wheelwright's shop, and that his knowledge and understanding of the craft are incomplete and insubstantial compared with older workers like Will Hammond, to whom such things are second nature (see Sturt, *The Wheelwright's Shop*, p. 188). Likewise, in his introduction to *The Bettesworth Book*, Sturt indicates his own distance and difference from his subject, noting how 'in gossiping about his own life Bettesworth is *unawares* telling of the similar lives, as lived for ages, of a type of Englishmen that may perhaps be hard to meet in times to come' (G. Sturt, *The Bettesworth Book* (1901), 2nd edn (Firle, Sussex: Caliban Books, 1978), pp. 10–11, my emphasis.) Barry Reay has also observed that Sturt's claim that 'social distinctions were forgotten' in his dealings with Bettesworth is in itself evidence

to the contrary (see B. Reay, *Rural Englands* (Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), p. 6).

7. Sturt, *The Wheelwright's Shop*, pp. 65–6.
8. Sturt, *Change in the Village*, p. 205.
9. Ibid., pp. 205, 206.
10. A. Williams, *A Wiltshire Village* (London: Duckworth and Co., 1912), p. vii.
11. In 1915 Williams published *Life in a Railway Factory*, a classic account of the hardships and pressures of industrial labour.
12. Williams, *A Wiltshire Village*, p. viii.
13. Ibid., p. viii.
14. Ibid., p. ix.
15. Ibid., p. 5.
16. Ibid., p. 299.
17. Ibid., p. ix.
18. Ibid., p. 98. Williams particularly mocks the resistance of young girls to field work: 'how it would soil and blister their pretty fingers to use the hoe or paddle, and how stained and brown they would be with the milk of the dandelion and sow-thistle!' (pp. 97–8).
19. F. Thompson, *Lark Rise to Candleford* (1945) (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 2008), p. 58.
20. Williams, *A Wiltshire Village*, p. 102; R. Jefferies, 'Field-Faring Women', in *Toilers of the Field* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1894), p. 150. This originally appeared in *Fraser's Magazine* (September 1875).
21. Thompson, *Lark Rise to Candleford*, p. 58.
22. G. Sturt, *Lucy Bettesworth* (1913) (Firle: Caliban Books, 1978), pp. 1–2.
23. Ibid., pp. 3, 4, 5.
24. Ibid., p. 5.
25. G. Sturt, *The Journals of George Sturt 1890–1927*, ed. E. D. Mackerness, 2 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), vol. 2, p. 559.
26. Sturt, *Lucy Bettesworth*, p. 9.
27. Ibid., p. 10.
28. Sturt, *The Journals of George Sturt 1890–1927*, vol. 2, p. 563.
29. Ibid., vol. 1, p. 270; entry for 26 June 1898. Sturt, *Change in the Village*, p. 81.
30. G. Sturt, *William Smith Potter and Farmer 1790–1858* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1919), pp. 17–18.
31. R. Jefferies, 'Primrose Gold in Our Village', in *Field and Farm*, ed. S. J. Looker (London: Phoenix House, 1957), p. 119. This article was first published in *Pall Mall Gazette*, 8 June 1887.
32. Thompson, *Lark Rise to Candleford*, p. 529.
33. Ibid., p. 534.
34. Ibid., p. 536.
35. Ibid., p. 535.
36. Sturt, *Change in the Village*, pp. 3, 11.
37. Ibid., p. 106.
38. Ibid., p. 110.
39. G. Sturt, *Memoirs of a Surrey Labourer* (1907) (Firle: Caliban Books, 1978), p. 132.
40. *Change in the Village*, p. 160.
41. Ibid.
42. Sturt, *The Journals of George Sturt 1890–1927*, vol. 2, p. 588; entry for 26 February 1909.
43. Sturt, *Change in the Village*, p. 193.

44. Ibid., pp. 49–50.
45. Sturt, *The Journals of George Sturt 1890–1927*, vol. 2, pp. 611–12; entry for 24 October 1909.
46. Ibid., p. 730; entry for 17 September 1915.
47. Ibid.
48. Thompson, *Lark Rise to Candleford*, pp. 246, 247.
49. Williams, *A Wiltshire Village*, p. 163.
50. Sturt, *Change in the Village*, p. 80.
51. Sturt, *The Bettesworth Book*, p. 182.
52. Sturt, *Memoirs of a Surrey Labourer*, p. 182.
53. See R. Jefferies, 'The Labourer's Daily Life' in *The Toilers of the Field* (1892) (London: MacDonald Futura, 1981), pp. 93–4.
54. W. J. Keith, *The Rural Tradition: William Cobbett, Gilbert White and Other Non-Fiction Prose Writers of the English Countryside* (Hassocks: Harvester Press, 1975), p. 150.
55. Sturt, *The Wheelwright's Shop*, p. 154.
56. Sturt, *The Journals of George Sturt 1890–1927*, vol. 2, pp. 663, 669; entries for 21 March 1912; 26 February 1912 and 21 March 1912.
57. Sturt's position here may reflect the influence of H. D. Thoreau, of whom he wrote, 'to me it seems that no man, of those who leave their record in books, has known so well the value of life', and also of John Ruskin's concerns for work that disregards the well-being of the human spirit (see Sturt, *The Journals of George Sturt 1890–1927*, vol. 1, p. 54; entry for 26 October 1890).
58. Ibid., vol. 2, p. 671; entry for 26 August 1912. The Slingo family are referred to on a number of occasions over the years, and it seems somewhat ironic that Sturt makes this claim about Nipper's contentment when elsewhere he records the arduousness of his work and the inadequacy of his pay – see, for example, 12 January 1907 (p. 522); 9 March 1907 (p. 528); 25 July 1908 (pp. 567–8).
59. Sturt, *The Journals of George Sturt 1890–1927*, vol. 2, p. 672.
60. Ibid., p. 672.
61. Ibid., p. 673.
62. Ibid., p. 596; entry for 3 July 1909.
63. Keith, *The Rural Tradition*, p. 147.
64. Letter to Arnold Bennett, 27 December 1904, cited by E. D. Mackerness in his 'Introduction' to *The Journals of George Sturt*, p. 3.
65. D. Gervais, *Literary Englands*: *Versions of 'Englishness' in Modern Writing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 126.
66. Sturt, *The Journals of George Sturt 1890–1927*, vol. 2, p. 728; entry for 23 August 1915.
67. Ibid., p. 859; entry for 3 November 1924.
68. Ibid., pp. 837–8; entry for 8 May 1922. Sturt and the two sisters with whom he lived were all unmarried. His brother married but had no children, so the family died with their generation.

3 Goodman, 'At Work and at Play: Charles Lee's *Cynthia in the West*'

1. This chapter develops ideas about this novel that were initially discussed in G. Goodman, 'Rural Geographies: The Figure in the Landscape in Literature of Cornwall', in P. Payton (ed), *Cornish Studies: 20* (Exeter: University of Exeter, 2012), pp. 148–65.
2. C. Lee, *Cynthia in the West* (London: Grant Richards, 1900), p. 118.

3. Ibid., p. 31.
4. *The Stuffed Owl: An Anthology of Bad Verse*, ed. C. Lee and D. B Wyndham Lewis (New York: New York Review of Books, 2003).
5. C. Lee, *The Cornish Journal of Charles Lee*, ed. K. C. Phillipps (Padstow: Tabb House, 1995).
6. K. C. Phillipps, 'Introduction', in *The Cornish Journal of Charles Lee*, ed. K. C. Phillipps (London: Grant Richards, 1900), pp. xv–xviii, on p. xvi.
7. A. M. Kent, *The Literature of Cornwall: Continuity, Identity, Difference 1000–2000* (Bristol: Redcliffe, 2000), pp. 168–9.
8. C. Lee, *The Widow Woman* (1897) (London: J. M. Dent and Sons, 1912); C. Lee, *Paul Carah, Cornishman* (London: James Bowden, 1898); C. Lee, *Dorinda's Birthday* (London: J. M. Dent and Sons, 1911). Some of Lee's short stories can be found in: C. Lee, *Our Little Town and Other Cornish Tales and Fancies* (London: Gibbings and Co., 1909); C. Lee, *Cornish Tales* (London: J. M. Dent and Sons, 1941).
9. The exploits of artists' colonies in Cornwall has come to the fore recently with the release in 2013 of a film adaptation of Jonathan Smith's novel *Summer in February* which fictionally recreates, among others, the experiences of artists A. J. Munnings and Laura Knight in Cornwall in the Edwardian years before the outbreak of the First World War. J. Smith, *Summer in February* (London: Abacus, 1996).
10. Phillipps, 'Introduction', p. xv.
11. P. G. Barber, M. Marchand and J. Parpart, 'Preface', in B. Pini and B. Leach (eds), *Reshaping Gender and Class in Rural Spaces* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), p. xv.
12. B. Deacon, 'The Hollow Jarring of Distant Steam Engines': Images of Cornwall between West Barbary and Delectable Duchy', in E. Westland (ed.), *Cornwall: The Cultural Construction of Place* (Penzance: Patten Press, 1997), pp. 7–24, on pp. 10–11.
13. P. Payton, *Cornwall: A History* (Fowey: Cornwall Editions, 2004), p. 191; Deacon, 'Hollow Jarring', p. 11.
14. For more on the relationship between outsider- and insider-derived constructions of Cornwall and, in the second half of the nineteenth century, the collusion between those within Cornwall and those without in the creation of images of Cornwall, see: P. Payton, 'Paralysis and Revival: The Reconstruction of Celtic-Catholic Cornwall 1890–1945', in E. Westland (ed.), *Cornwall: A Cultural Construction of Place* (Penzance: Patten Press, 1997), pp. 25–39, on pp. 36–7.
15. R. Moseley, 'Women at the Edge: Encounters with the Cornish Coast in British Film and Television', *Continuum: Journal of Media and Cultural Studies Special Issue 'This is the Sea'*, 27:5 (2013), pp. 644–62, on p. 644.
16. Payton, *Cornwall*, p. 180.
17. The term 'Granite Kingdom' has been used as the title to an anthology of Cornish poetry and so is seen in some sense to be representative of the territory see: D. M. Thomas (ed.), *The Granite Kingdom: Poems of Cornwall* (Truro: D. Bradford Barton, 1970). For more on the exoticization and packaging of Cornwall see C. Thomas, '"See Your Own Country First": The Geography of a Railway Landscape', in E. Westland (ed.), *Cornwall: The Cultural Construction of Place* (Penzance: Patten Press, 1997), pp. 107–28.
18. B. Deacon, 'Imagining the Fishing: Artists and Fishermen in Late Nineteenth Century Cornwall', *Rural History*, 12:2 (2001), pp. 159–78, on p. 161.
19. Ibid., pp. 162, 164.
20. Ibid., pp. 164–5.
21. Ibid., p. 167.

22. Ibid., p. 171.
23. Moseley, 'Women at the Edge', pp. 648, 658–9.
24. Lee, 'Cynthia in the West', p. 5.
25. Goodman, 'Rural Geographies', pp. 158–9.
26. Lee, *Cynthia in the West*, pp. 6–7.
27. Ibid., p. 32.
28. Ibid., p. 96.
29. Ibid., p. 59.
30. Ibid., p. 125.
31. Ibid., p. 118.
32. Ibid., p. 15.
33. Ibid., p. 67.
34. Ibid., p. 82.
35. Ibid., p. 46.
36. Ibid., p. 55.
37. Ibid., p. 86.
38. Ibid., p. 138.
39. Ibid., p. 56.
40. Ibid., p. 30.
41. Ibid., p. 31.
42. Ibid., p. 52.
43. Ibid., p. 130.
44. Ibid., p. 130.
45. Ibid., pp. 138–9.
46. Ibid., p. 138.
47. Ibid., p. 142.
48. Ibid., p. 139.
49. Ibid., p. 142.
50. Ibid., p. 143.
51. Ibid., p. 150–1.
52. Moseley, 'Women at the Edge', p. 655.
53. Goodman, 'Rural Geographies', p. 161.
54. Ibid., p. 161–2. The references from *Cynthia in the West* in this quoted section are from pp. 156–8.
55. Lee, *Cynthia in the West*, p. 157.
56. Ibid., p. 155.
57. Ibid.
58. Ibid., p. 159.
59. Ibid., p. 156.
60. Ibid., pp. 155–6.
61. Ibid., p. 155.
62. Ibid., pp. 156–7.
63. Ibid., p. 161.
64. Payton, *Cornwall*, pp. 129–30.
65. Lee, *Cynthia in the West*, p. 154.
66. Ibid., p. 160.

4 Walton, '"Going Out, Going Alone": Modern Subjectivities in Rural Scotland, 1900–21'

1. S. Kemp, C. Mitchell and D. Trotter, *The Oxford Companion to Edwardian Fiction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 85; D. Gifford, 'Caught Between Worlds: The Fiction of Jane and Mary Findlater', in D. Gifford and D. McMillan (eds.), *A History of Scottish Women's Writing* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1997), pp. 291–308.
2. See W. Parkins, *Mobility and Modernity in Women's Novels, 1850s–1930s: Women Moving Dangerously* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), p. 17.
3. Gifford, 'Caught Between Worlds', p. 291.
4. W. Gan, *Women, Privacy and Modernity in Early Twentieth-Century British Writing* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2009), p. 1.
5. Ibid., p. 3.
6. Ibid., p. 4.
7. Ibid., p. 15.
8. Ibid., p. 9.
9. R. Irvine, 'Introduction', in R. Irvine (ed.), *Edinburgh Anthology of Scottish Literature*, 2 vols (Edinburgh: Kennedy and Boyd, 2010), vol. 2, pp. ix–xiv, on pp. x–xi.
10. Parkins, *Mobility and Modernity in Women's Novels*, p. 2.
11. Ibid.
12. Quoted in Parkins, *Mobility and Modernity in Women's Novels*, p. 12.
13. Ibid., p. 6.
14. S. de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex* (1949), trans. H. M. Parshley (London: Vintage, 1997), p. 386.
15. Ibid., p. 28.
16. Ibid., pp. 29, 385.
17. Ibid., p. 385.
18. J. H. Findlater, *Stones from a Glass House* (London: James Nisbet & Co, 1904), pp. 93–4.
19. J. Findlater and M. Findlater, *Crossriggs* (1908) (London: Virago, 1986), p. 196.
20. Ibid., p. 55.
21. Ibid.
22. Ibid., p. 56.
23. Ibid.
24. Ibid.
25. Ibid., pp. 63–6.
26. Ibid., p. 80.
27. Ibid., pp. 120–1.
28. Ibid., p. 121.
29. Ibid., pp. 329–30.
30. Ibid., p. 212.
31. Gifford, 'Caught Between Worlds', p. 293.
32. Findlater and Findlater, *Crossriggs*, p. 136.
33. Ibid., p. 137.
34. Ibid., p. 169.
35. Ibid., p. 170.
36. Ibid., p. 171.
37. Ibid., p. 173.

38. Ibid., pp. 251–2.
39. Ibid., p. 191.
40. The story was first published in *A Green Grass Widow and Other Stories* (1921) and is set in the immediate aftermath of the First World War, although contemporary allusions to the Crippen murder case of 1910 suggests it contains elements composed much earlier.
41. J. H. Findlater, 'The Pictures' (1921), in Irvine (ed.), *Edinburgh Anthology of Scottish Literature*, pp. 230–42, on p. 230.
42. Ibid., p. 233.
43. Ibid., p. 234.
44. Ibid., p. 233.
45. Ibid.
46. T. Adorno and M. Horkheimer, *The Dialectic of Enlightenment* (1944), trans. J. Cumming (London: Verso, 2008), p. 137.
47. Ibid., pp. 126–7.
48. Findlater, 'The Pictures', p. 230.
49. Ibid., p. 230.
50. Ibid., p. 231.
51. Ibid., p. 235.
52. Ibid., p. 237.
53. Ibid., p. 242.
54. Ibid., p. 230.
55. Ibid., p. 242.

5 McCulloch, '"Drowned Lands": Charles Kingsley's *Hereward the Wake* and the Masculation of the English Fens'

1. B. Jonson, *The Sad Shepherd*, ed. C. H. Herford and P. Simpson (Oxford: Clarendon, 1925–53), II.viii.26.
2. E. A. Abbott, *Flatland: A Romance of Many Dimensions* (1884) (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1998), p. 7.
3. G. Swift, *Waterland* (London: Macmillan, 1983), p. 148.
4. These sources include the *Domesday Book* (completed in 1086) and the later, twelfth-century D and E versions of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, William of Malmesbury's *Gesta Pontificum Anglorum*, the *Liber Eliensis* (or *Book of Ely*) and the *Gesta Herewardi*.
5. *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Revised Translation*, ed. and trans. D. Whitelock (London, 1961), p. 154.
6. C. Kingsley, *Hereward the Wake: Last of the English* (1866) (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1942), p. 3.
7. Ibid., p. 6.
8. J. Wylie, 'Landscape and Phenomenology', in P. Howard, I. Thompson and E. Waterton (eds), *The Routledge Companion to Landscape Studies* (London: Routledge, 2013), pp. 54–65, on pp. 55–6.
9. G. G., Lord Byron, *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, in M. H. Abrams (ed.), *The Norton Anthology of English Literature: Volume 2*, 5th edn (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1986), pp. 513–37, canto 3, 682.
10. S. Makdisi, *Romantic Imperialism: Universal Empire and the Culture of Modernity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 86.

11. In the late sixteenth century, William Camden splits the Fens into lowlands and uplands according to its inhabitants' professions rather than the actual terrain, suggesting that the region's topography has regularly served an imaginative, metaphorical function. He describes the traditional fen-dwellers as the 'kind of people according to the nature of the place where they dwell rude, uncivill, and envious to all others whom they call *Vplandmen:* who stalking on high upon stilts, apply their mindes, to grasing, fishing and fowling'. W. Camden, *Britain* (London, 1637), Text Creation Partnership digital edition. *Early English Books Online*, at http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home [accessed 31 July 2013].
12. Kingsley, *Hereward the* Wake, pp. 14, 3.
13. Ibid., p. 5.
14. N. Vance, *The Sinews of the Spirit: The Ideal of Christian Manliness in Victorian Literature and Religious Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), p. 1.
15. P. Brantlinger, 'Race and the Victorian Novel', in D. David (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to the Victorian Novel*, 2nd edn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), pp. 149–68, on p. 131.
16. M. Young, 'History as Myth: Charles Kingsley's *Hereward the Wake*', *Studies in the Novel*, 17:2 (Summer 1985), pp. 174–88.
17. D. E. Hall, 'On the Making and Unmaking of Monsters: Christian Socialism, Muscular Christianity, and the Metaphorization of Class Conflict', in D. E. Hall (ed.), *Muscular Christianity: Embodying the Victorian Age* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 45–65.
18. Kingsley, *Hereward the Wake*, p. 6.
19. Ibid., p. 5.
20. David C. Harvey charts the development of heritage in the British Isles, including the debt owed by the industry to cultural figures from Walter Scott (who 'opened up the beginnings of what may be termed a "mass market" for popular national heritage') to Charles Kingsley: 'a fashion for Saxonism was supported by a cult of Alfred the Great together with the best-selling novel *Hereward the Wake*'. See D. Harvey, 'The History of Heritage', in B. Graham and P. Howard (eds), *The Ashgate Research Companion to Heritage and Identity* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), pp. 19–36, on p. 28.
21. Kingsley, *Hereward the Wake*, p. 14.
22. H. Butterfield, *The Historical Novel: An Essay* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1924), pp. 42, 15–16.
23. I. Duncan, 'Scott and the Historical Novel: A Scottish Rise of the Novel', in G. Carruthers and L. McIlvanney (eds), *The Cambridge Companion to Scottish Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), pp. 103–6, on p. 108.
24. Butterfield, *The Historical Novel*, p. 42.
25. B. Melman, 'Claiming the Nation's Past: The Invention of an Anglo-Saxon Tradition', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 26:3 (1991), pp. 575–95, on p. 585.
26. Kingsley, *Hereward the Wake*, p. 4.
27. Ibid., p. 139.
28. Ibid., p. 154.
29. Ibid., p. 6, my italics.
30. Ibid., p. 4.
31. Ibid., p. 29.
32. Ibid., pp. 37, 31.
33. Ibid., p. 142.
34. Ibid., p. 17.

35. Ibid., p. 262, my emphasis.
36. Ibid., p. 14.
37. Melman, 'Claiming the Nation's Past', p. 585.
38. Kingsley, *Hereward the Wake*, p. 571.
39. Ibid., p. 574.
40. Herbert Enoch Hallam rightly calls into doubt the marriage of Richard and Torfrida as recorded in the history of Crowland Abbey, a text attributed to Abbot Ingulph: 'it makes Richard de Rulos, who is supposed to be a contemporary of the Conqueror, husband to the grand-daughter of Hereward, who was also a contemporary of the Conqueror'. Kingsley uses the *Historia Croylandensis* for much of the detail of Richard's life and the marriage of Torfrida, of Anglo-Danish origin, and Richard, of Norman stock, clearly suits his reconciliatory finale. See H. E. Hallam, *Settlement and Society: A Study of the Early Agrarian History of South Lincolnshire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965), p. 117.
41. Kingsley, *Hereward the Wake*, p. 575.
42. Young, 'History as Myth', p. 178.
43. G. Lukács, *The Historical Novel*, trans. S. Mitchell and H. Mitchell (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1962), pp. 54–5.
44. 'Norman and Medieval Times', *Great Fen*, at http://www.greatfen.org.uk/heritage/Norman-Medieval [accessed 15 July 2013].

6 Mathieson, '"Wandering Like a Wild Thing": Rurality, Women and Walking in George Eliot's *Adam Bede* and *The Mill on the Floss*'

1. See G. Eliot, 'The Natural History of German Life' (1856), in T. Pinney (ed.), *The Essays of George Eliot* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963), pp. 266–99; essay originally published in *Westminster Review*, 66 (July 1856).
2. Joseph Wiesenfarth's essay 'George Eliot's Notes on *Adam Bede*' details extracts from Eliot's Commonplace Book to show 'that extensive research supplemented "experience" in the creation of characters and incidents'; J. Wiesenfarth, 'George Eliot's notes on *Adam Bede*', *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, 32:2 (1977), pp. 127–65, on p. 127. Contemporary responses to *Adam Bede* particularly praise the distinctness with which Eliot captures details of rural life; see S. Hutchinson (ed.) *George Eliot: Critical Assessments*, 4 vols (Robertsbridge, East Sussex: Helm Information, 1996), vol. 1, pp. 73–109. See also H. Auster, *Local Habitations: Regionalism in the Early Novels of George Eliot* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1970).
3. Raymond Williams asserts that 'though Eliot restores the real inhabitants of rural England to their places in what had been a socially selective landscape, she does not get much further than restoring them *as a landscape*'; see R. Williams, *The Country and City* (1973) (London: Hogarth, 1993), p. 168. Other works critical of Eliot's limited social vision include: T. Eagleton, *Criticism and Ideology: A Study in Marxist Literary Theory* (London: New Left Books, 1976); S. Dentith, *George Eliot* (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1986); in the context of rurality, Karen Sayer points out that the representation of Hetty 'employs every cliché of the dairymaid myth'; see K. Sayer, *Women of the Fields: Representations of Rural Women in the Nineteenth-Century* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), p. 107. On nostalgia and the pastoral, Josephine McDonagh usefully summarizes the idealized pastoral impulses in Eliot's early work in relation to

critical responses; see J. McDonagh, 'The Early Novels', in G. Levine (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to George Eliot* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 38–56. Critical assessments of pastoralism, rurality and the past include U. C. Knoepflmacher, *George Eliot's Early Novels: the Limits of Realism* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1968); I. Adam, 'The Structure of Realism in *Adam Bede*', *Nineteenth Century Fiction*, 30:2 (1975), pp. 127–49; and H. Li, *Memory and History in George Eliot: Transfiguring the Past* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000).

4. On female sexuality and mobility in these novels, see W. Parkins, *Mobility and Modernity in Women's Novels, 1850s–1930s: Women Moving Dangerously* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009) and G. Beer, *George Eliot* (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1986).
5. Hetty has inspired sharp critical responses that vary widely in their view of Eliot's approach to the naïve and vain girl: U. C. Knoepflmacher, for example, reads her as a 'repulsive' figure whose 'charm is the perverse result of George Eliot's excessive efforts to denigrate her character'; see Knoepflmacher, *George Eliot's Early Novels*, p. 120. Feminist critics have been more responsive to the complexities of Hetty's character, recognizing that her lack of perspective or wider vision prevent her from being situated as a heroine, but that Eliot nonetheless evokes a complex form of understated sympathy for her plight: see B. Hardy, *The Novels of George Eliot: A Study in Form* (London: Athlone Press, 1959) and Beer, *George Eliot*.
6. See, for example, L. McDowell, *Gender, Identity and Place: Understanding Feminist Geographies* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1999).
7. R. Solnit, *Wanderlust: A History of Walking* (London: Verso, 2002), p. 43; Parkins, *Mobility and Modernity in Women's Novels*, p. 13.
8. A. Wallace, *Walking, Literature and English Culture: The Origins and Uses of Peripatetic in the Nineteenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993).
9. McDowell, *Gender, Identity and Place*, p. 154.
10. Sayer, *Women of the Fields*, p. 92.
11. Wallace, *Walking, Literature and English Culture*, p. 30.
12. Quoted in Solnit, *Wanderlust*, p. 97.
13. Ibid., p. 101.
14. C. Brontë, *Shirley* (1849), ed. J. Cox (London: Penguin, 2008).
15. Wallace, *Walking, Literature and English Culture*, pp. 201, 204.
16. G. Eliot, *The Mill on the Floss* (1860), ed. A. S. Byatt (London: Penguin, 2003), p. 15.
17. Ibid., p. 108.
18. Ibid., p. 310.
19. On women, rurality and nature, see J. Little, *Gender and Rural Geography: Identity, Sexuality and Power in the Countryside* (Harlow: Pearson Education, 2002), and G. Rose, *Feminism and Geography: The Limits of Geographical Knowledge* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1993). Nina Auerbach discusses this scene in the wood for its Gothic associations and allusions to witchcraft; see N. Auerbach, 'The Power of Hunger: Demonism and Maggie Tulliver', *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, 30:2 (1975), pp. 150–71.
20. The situation of Maggie as middle-class is not altogether straightforward: for a full discussion of class in both novels, see M. Homans, 'Dinah's Blush, Maggie's Arm: Class, Gender, and Sexuality in George Eliot's Early Novels', *Victorian Studies*, 36:2 (1993), pp. 155–78.
21. G. Eliot, *Adam Bede* (1859), ed. M. Reynolds (London: Penguin, 2008), pp. 94–5.
22. Ibid., p. 148.
23. Ibid., p. 142.

24. Ibid., p. 94.
25. Ibid., p. 93.
26. Ibid., p. 144.
27. Ibid., p. 324.
28. Ibid., pp. 333–4. Arthur and Hetty's meetings take place: pp. 142–5; pp. 148–50; Hetty's recollection of a meeting is given on p. 273; and Adam gives Arthur's letter, ending the relationship, to Hetty whilst 'walk[ing] out' in the garden, pp. 347–52.
29. Eliot, *The Mill on the Floss*, pp. 311–19, 344–50.
30. Ibid., p. 348.
31. Ibid., pp. 310, 312.
32. Ibid., p. 464.
33. Ibid., p. 465.
34. Ibid., p. 504, my emphasis.
35. Ibid., p. 484.
36. Ibid.
37. Ibid., p. 485.
38. Ibid.
39. Ibid., p. 311.
40. Eliot, *Adam Bede*, p. 141.
41. Eliot, *The Mill on the Floss*, pp. 504, 503.
42. Ibid., pp. 510, 511. Knoepflmacher notes that contemporary critics viewed Maggie's escape with Stephen as a 'wicked' and 'indulgent' act; see Knoepflmacher, *George Eliot's Early Novels*, p. 214.
43. Eliot, *The Mill on the Floss*, p. 511.
44. Ibid., p. 510.
45. Ibid., p. 9.
46. Ibid., pp. 33, 38.
47. Ibid., p. 348.
48. Ibid., p. 500.
49. On Dinah Morris's mobility see Beer, *George Eliot*, pp. 58–74; and Parkins, *Mobility and Modernity in Women's Novels*, pp. 33–47.
50. Eliot, *Adam Bede*, p. 403.
51. Beer, *George Eliot*, p. 63.
52. Eliot, *Adam Bede*, pp. 366–8.
53. L. Armitt, *George Eliot: Adam Bede, The Mill on the Floss, Middlemarch* (New York: Colombia University Press, 2000), p. 41.
54. Parkins, *Mobility and Modernity in Women's Novels*, p. 21.
55. Eliot, *Adam Bede*, pp. 408, 407, 409.
56. Ibid., p. 408.
57. Parkins, *Mobility and Modernity in Women's Novels*, p. 42.
58. Despite what appears to modern readers to be a restrained encoding of Hetty's pregnancy and labour, contemporary reviewers of *Adam Bede* were critical of what they saw as an explicit articulation of female physicality; see Hutchinson, *George Eliot: Critical Assessments*, pp. 73–109.
59. Eliot, *Adam Bede*, pp. 407, 404.
60. Ibid., p. 417.
61. Ibid., p. 420.
62. Ibid., pp. 421–2.

63. Little, *Gender and Rural Geography*, p. 65.
64. Eliot, *The Mill on the Floss*, p. 113.
65. Ibid., p. 113.
66. Ibid., p. 310.
67. Ibid., pp. 309, 310, 311.
68. Ibid., p. 310.
69. Solnit, *Wanderlust*, p. 101.
70. Eliot, *The Mill on the Floss*, p. 310.
71. Beer, *George Eliot*, p. 98.
72. W. Gan, *Women, Privacy and Modernity in Early Twentieth-Century British Writing* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), p. 3.
73. S. Walton, this volume, pp. 55–71, on p. 71.
74. Gan, *Women, Privacy and Modernity*, p. 8.

7 Montgomery, '"I Never Liked Long Walks": Gender, Nature and Jane Eyre's Rural Wandering'

1. C. Brontë, *Jane Eyre*, ed. R. J. Dunn, 3rd edn (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 2000), p. 5.
2. Ibid., p. 277.
3. R. B. Heilman, 'Charlotte Brontë's "New Gothic"', in I. Watt (ed.), *The Victorian Novel: Modern Essays in Criticism* (London: Oxford University Press, 1971), pp. 165–80.
4. Notable texts include: C. Alexander, '"That Kingdom of Gloom": Charlotte Brontë, the Annuals, and the Gothic', *Nineteenth-Century Literature*, 47:4 (March 1993), pp. 409–36; P. Brantlinger, 'Imperial Gothic', in A. Smith and W. Hughes (eds), *The Victorian Gothic: An Edinburgh Companion* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), pp. 202–16; C. M. Davison, 'The Victorian Gothic and Gender', in A. Smith and W. Hughes (eds), *The Victorian Gothic: An Edinburgh Companion* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), pp. 124–41; S. M. Gilbert and S. Gubar, *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1979); and A. Milbank, 'The Victorian Gothic in English Novels and Stories, 1830–1880', in J. E. Hogle (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Gothic Fiction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 146–66.
5. E. Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (1757), ed. A. Philips (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990).
6. Brontë, *Jane Eyre*, p. 108.
7. D. Y. Kadish, *The Literature of Images: Narrative Landscape from Julie to Jane Eyre* (New Brunswick, NJ, and London: Rutgers University Press, 1987), pp. 173, 179.
8. Brontë, *Jane Eyre*, p. 277.
9. *Jane Eyre*'s economics are most frequently associated with Jane's work as a governess, and her ascension from governess to Rochester's wife. See J. A. Dupras, 'Tying the Knot in the Economic Warp of *Jane Eyre*', *Victorian Literature and Culture*, 26:2 (1998), pp. 395–408; E. Godfrey, '*Jane Eyre*, from Governess to Girl Bride', *Studies in English Literature, 1500–1900*, 45:4 (Autumn 2005), pp. 853–71; N. Pell, 'Resistance, Rebellion, and Marriage: The Economics of *Jane Eyre*', *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, 31:4 (March 1977), pp. 397–420; P. Roy, 'Unaccommodated Women and the Poetics of Property in *Jane Eyre*', *Studies in English Literature, 1500–1900*, 29:4 (1989), pp. 713–27; and. L.

Schlossberg, '"The Low, Vague Hum of Numbers": The Malthusian Economies of *Jane Eyre*', *Victorian Literature and Culture*, 29:2 (2001), pp. 489–506.

10. J. M. Labbe**,** *Romantic Visualities: Landscape, Gender and Romanticism* (Hampshire and London: Macmillan Press; New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998), p. xii–xiii.
11. Critical consensus suggests that if a Victorian female Bildungsroman were possible, *Jane Eyre* would be it; as to whether it can be called a true Bildungsroman – especially given its concerns with romance and its home-going conclusion – critics differ. Sharon Locy notes that Jane's journey fits neatly into the tradition of the Bildungsroman, but that this narrative is paired with Jane's consistent movement back to Rochester, making the novel a split between masculine and feminine narratives. Melodie Monahan notes a similar split between what she identifies in the novel as a quest narrative and a romance narrative, writing that the novel's romance narrative does not call for the same agency as its quest narrative, and that the 'heading out' narrative of the quest therefore comes into conflict with the home-going narrative of the romance. S. Locy, 'Travel and Space in Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*', *Pacific Coast Philology*, 37 (2002), pp. 105–21, on p. 107; M. Monahan, 'Heading Out is Not Going Home', *Studies in English Literature, 1500–1900*, 28 (1998), pp. 589–608, on p. 605.
12. Brontë, *Jane Eyre*, pp. 5–6.
13. Ibid., p. 108.
14. Ibid., p. 93.
15. Ibid., p. 99.
16. Ibid., p. 104.
17. Ibid., pp. 208, 220, 234, 267 (she is also 'elfish': pp. 108, 222), 223; 234, 118.
18. Ibid., pp. 215–16.
19. Ibid., p. 271.
20. Ibid., p. 272.
21. Ibid., p. 252.
22. Ibid., p. 274.
23. Ibid., p. 277.
24. Ibid.
25. E. Jordan, *The Women's Movement and Women's Employment in Nineteenth Century Britain* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), p. 3.
26. Brontë, *Jane Eyre*, p. 278.
27. Ibid., p. 279.
28. Ibid., p. 303.
29. Ibid., p. 279.
30. Ibid., pp. 278–9.
31. Ibid., p. 286.
32. C. Mathieson, this volume, pp. 87–102, on p. 102.
33. Brontë, *Jane Eyre*, p. 281.
34. Ibid., p. 274.
35. Davison, 'The Victorian Gothic and Gender', p. 125; Jordan, *The Women's Movement and Women's Employment in Nineteenth Century Britain*, pp. 3–5.
36. Brontë, *Jane Eyre*, p. 297.
37. Ibid., pp. 304, 313, 316, 322, 319, 327, 334, 339, 345, 350.
38. Ibid., pp. 93, 304.
39. Ibid., p. 344.
40. Ibid., p. 347.

41. Ibid., p. 277.
42. Ibid., p. 347.
43. Ibid., pp. 356–7.
44. Ibid., pp. 357–8.
45. Ibid., p. 358.
46. Ibid., p. 357.
47. Ibid., p. 367.
48. Ibid., p. 371.
49. Ibid., p. 370.
50. Ibid., p. 374.
51. Ibid., p. 256.
52. Locy, 'Travel and Space', p. 119.
53. Brontë, *Jane Eyre*, p. 374.
54. Ibid., p. 99.
55. Ibid., p. 93.
56. Ibid., p. 385.

8 Ericsson-Penfold, 'Gertrude Jekyll: Cultivating the Gendered Space of the Victorian Garden for Professional Success'

1. G. Jekyll, *Wood and Garden: Notes and Thoughts, Practical and Critical, of a Working Amateur* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1899), p. 210. This chapter has been derived from a section of C. E. Ericsson-Penfold, 'Victorian Women and the Meaning of Flowers: An Exploration of Gender and Culture in the Work of Three Female Artists, 1869–1936' (PhD thesis, University of Southampton, 2013). I would like to thank Dr Meaghan Clarke and Dr Barry Sloan for their advice on this chapter and for recognizing its potential.
2. '"Miss Jekyll and Her Flower Garden" Paper read at a meeting of The Garden Club', *Gardening Illustrated*, 49:2529 (27 August 1927), pp. 531–4.
3. I am using the term Victorian here based upon the time of Jekyll's training and development, which occurred during the reign of Queen Victoria. This is formulated from Beverly Skeggs's notion of 'location', which she defines as the multifarious elements that constitute one's individual perspective – historical time-period, wealth and social status, nationality, political leanings, sexual orientation, gender and personal taste and opinion – and are largely formulated during the early years of one's life. B. Skeggs, *Feminist Cultural Theory: Product and Process* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1995), pp. 6–12. This theory is explored in more detail in C. E. Ericsson, 'Translating the Symbolism of Flowers: The Effect of "Location" on Historic Research', *Emergence: The Journal of the University of Southampton Humanities Postgraduate Connection*, 1 (Autumn 2009), pp. 16–22.
4. Jane Loudon (1807–58), Jekyll's predecessor, made her reputation as a horticultural writer but not as a garden designer.
5. L. Walker, 'Vistas of Pleasure: Women Consumers of Urban Space in the West End of London 1850–1900', in C. Campbell Orr (ed.), *Women in the Victorian Art World* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), pp. 70–85, on p. 71.
6. This is consistent with an increasing number of examples in nineteenth-century gender scholarship over the last twenty years. S. Morgan, *A Victorian Woman's Place: Public Cul-*

ture in the Nineteenth Century (London and New York: Tauris Academic Studies, 2007); M. Clarke, *Critical Voices: Women and Art Criticism in Britain 1880–1905* (Aldershot and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2005); L. Davidoff and C. Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class* (London: Routledge, 2002); Walker, 'Vistas of Pleasure'; M. Poovey, *Uneven Developments: The Ideological Work of Gender in Mid-Victorian England* (London: Virago Press, 1989).

7. Davidoff and Hall, *Family Fortunes*, p. 371.
8. J. Ruskin, *Sesame and Lilies: Two Lectures by John Ruskin. 1) Of King's Treasuries. 2) Of Queens Gardens* (1858–9) (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1865).
9. Ibid., p. 189.
10. See L. Nochlin, *Representing Women* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1999), especially pp. 180–215; G. Pollock, *Vision and Difference: Femininity, Feminism and Histories of Art* (London & New York: Routledge, 1988), especially pp. 50–91.
11. Walker, *Vistas of Pleasure*; A. Smith, *The Victorian Nude: Sexuality, Morality and Art* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996); D. Cherry, *Beyond the Frame: Feminism and Visual Culture, Britain 1850–1900* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000).
12. Poovey, *Uneven Developments*, especially p. 2; Morgan, *A Victorian Woman's Place*, p. 195.
13. S. Adams and A. Greutzner Robins (eds), *Gendering Landscape Art* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), p. 1.
14. Jekyll, *Wood and Garden*, pp. 1–2.
15. K. Holmes, '"I Have Built Up a Little Garden": The Vernacular Garden, National Identity and a Sense of Place', *Studies in the History of Gardens & Designed Landscapes: An International Quarterly*, 21:2 (2001), pp. 115–21, on p. 120.
16. Davidoff and Hall, *Family Fortunes*, p. 374, my italics.
17. She declares herself so in the title of her first book: *Wood and Garden*; see note 1, p. 177, above.
18. Examples are Swanley Horticultural College, offering training for women from 1891, Studley Horticultural and Agricultural College for Women, founded in 1898, and the College for Lady Gardeners begun in 1902.
19. The first women gardeners at Kew, Annie M. Gulvin and Alice Hutchins, were listed on the staff pages in *Kew Guild*, 1:4 (1896), p. 38. They began working at Kew on 1 January 1896 and were graduates of Swanley Horticultural College.
20. G. Jekyll, *Colour in the Flower Garden* (London: Country Life & George Newnes, 1908).
21. See note 3, p. 177, above, for a definition of 'Victorian'.
22. G. Jekyll, *Roses for English Gardens* (London: Country Life, 1902), p. 56.
23. Morgan, *A Victorian Woman's Place*, p. 3.
24. Margaret Hastings and Michael Tooley list 1,000 articles in their bibliography – the most complete published Jekyll bibliography. However, Sally Festing states that she wrote more than two thousand, though she provides no references to the articles. Articles not cited by Hastings and Tooley do exist, however. I therefore note Jekyll's output as more than a thousand articles. M. Hastings and M. Tooley, 'Bibliography', in M. Tooley and P. Arnander (eds), *Gertrude Jekyll: Essays on the Life of a Working Amateur* (Witton-el-Wear: Michaelmas Books, 1995), pp. 185–97; S. Festing, *Gertrude Jekyll* (London: Penguin, 1991), p. xii. Inclusive of the dates for her first and last known publications: G. Jekyll, 'An October Nosegay', *Garden*, 20: 517 (15 October 1881), p. 408; G. Jekyll, 'Recollections of Old Bramley Life', *Bramley Parish Magazine* (October 1932); referenced in Hastings and Tooley, 'Bibliography', p. 197.

25. Festing, *Gertrude Jekyll*, p. 93. In September 1877, the visitor's book lists the arrival of a wagon of fruit trees, although the first known plan of the garden was not created until 1883. M Tooley, 'Calendar', in Tooley and Arnander (eds), *Gertrude Jekyll: Essays on the Life of a Working Amateur*, pp. 206–24, on pp. 213–15. The main flower border at Munstead House was 160 by 14 feet (48.77 by 4.27 m). Festing, *Gertrude Jekyll*, p. 114.
26. W. Goldring, 'Munstead Wood', *Garden*, 22 (August 1882), p. 562.
27. G. Jekyll, 'Some Plants From Algeria', *Garden*, 19:483 (1881), p. 202.
28. G. Jekyll, 'Flowers and Plants in the House', *Garden*, 20:519–28 (1881), pp. 449, 471, 489, 510, 532–3, 554, 573, 574, 617, 637; G. Jekyll, 'Flowers and Plants in the House', *Garden*, 21:529–53; 556–8; 560–70 (1882), pp. 7, 29, 47, 65, 85, 102–3, 119, 135, 151, 167, 185, 205, 221, 241, 261, 281, 297, 317, 333, 353, 373, 391, 411, 429, 449; G. Jekyll, 'Flowers and Plants in the House', *Garden*, 22:556–8, 560–70 (1882), pp. 53, 75, 102, 150, 172, 193, 214, 236, 246, 279, 289, 319, 330, 363.
29. W. Robinson, '*Tiarella Cordifolia*', *Garden*, 22:555 (8 July 1882), p. 21.
30. J. Loudon, *Botany for Ladies* (London: John Murray, 1842).
31. Jekyll, 'Flowers and Plants in the House', *Garden*, 20:519 (29 October 1881), p. 449.
32. G. Jekyll, 'Wild Flowers in the House', *Gardening Illustrated*, 4:158; 161; 163; 167; 171; 172; 174; 176; 177; 182; 190 (1882), pp. 25, 61, 85, 133, 182, 194, 223, 241, 253, 313, 409.
33. G. Jekyll, 'Colour in the Flower Garden', *Garden*, 22:562; 575 (1882), pp. 177, 470–1; Jekyll published seventy-eight articles and books on the subject of colour throughout her life. See Ericsson-Penfold, 'Victorian Women and the Meaning of Flowers', Appendix XVII: Gertrude Jekyll's Publications on Colour.
34. G. Jekyll, '*Daphne indica* Planted Out', *Garden*, 22:576 (1882), p. 477; G. Jekyll, '*Narcissus Monophyllus*', *Garden*, 22:585 (1883), p. 115; G. Jekyll, '*Anemone Fulgens*', *Garden*, 23:591 (1883), p. 245; G. Jekyll, '*Ornithogalum Nutans*', *Garden*, 23:596 (1883), pp. 362–3; G. Jekyll, '*Anemone Spennina*', *Garden*, 23:596 (1883), pp. 362–3; G. Jekyll, '*Androsace Carnea*', *Garden*, 23:598 (1883), p. 400.
35. Loudon, *Botany for Ladies*, p. vi.
36. 11 July 1899. Tooley examines the viola in M. Tooley, 'Plants Selected and Bred by Miss Jekyll', in Tooley and Arnander (eds), *Gertrude Jekyll*: *Essays on the Life of a Working Amateur*, pp. 127–44, on p. 144.
37. Festing, *Gertrude Jekyll*, p. 219.
38. G. Jekyll, *Lilies for English Gardens: A Guide for Amateurs* (London: Country Life & George Newnes, 1901); G. Jekyll, *Wall and Water Gardens* (London: Country Life & George Newnes, 1901).
39. G. Jekyll, '*Althaea Ficifolia*', *Garden*, 57:1268 (1900), p. 3; G. Jekyll, '*Narcissus Pallidus Praecox*', *Garden*, 57:1475 (1900), p. 148; G. Jekyll, 'Hardy Vines for the South of England', *Garden*, 57:1479 (1900), p. 225; G. Jekyll, '*Narcissus Pallidus Praecox*', *Garden*, 57:1480 (1900), p. 246; G. Jekyll, '*Cosmos Bibinnatus*', *Garden*, 57:1492 (1900), p. 462; G. Jekyll, 'Formal Gardening Merging into Free', *Garden*, 58:1505 (1900), p. 223–4; G. Jekyll, 'Field Flowers in the House', *Ladies Field*, 10:118 (1900), p. 13; G. Jekyll, 'Cut Flowers in the House', *Ladies Field*, 11:131 (1900), p. 68; G. Jekyll, 'Wild Flowers in the House', *Ladies Field*, 11:140; 143 (1900), pp. 400, 546; G. Jekyll, 'Winter Window-Boxes in London', *Ladies Field*, 11:144 (1900), p. 36; Jekyll Commissioned Garden Design. Camilla Lacing, Dorking, Surrey, 1900, Reef Point Gardens Collection, Environmental Design Archives at University of California, Berkeley, file 1, fol. 18.
40. Festing, *Gertrude Jekyll*, p. 181.

41. *Garden*, 1872–1927 (incomplete), Rothschild Collection, Natural History Museum, London, 365 GAR Q; G. Jekyll, 'A Self Sown Wood', *Garden*, 79:2252 (1915), p. 34.
42. G. Jekyll, 'Colour in the Flower Border', *Garden*, 83:2496 (20 September 1919), p. 450.
43. Hastings and Tooley, 'Bibliography', pp. 185–90; Tooley, 'Jekyll's Garden Plans', in Tooley and Arnander (eds), *Gertrude Jekyll: Essays on the Life of a Working Amateur*, pp. 198–202. Most known designs are in Reef Point Gardens Collection, Environmental Design Archives at University of California, Berkeley, files 1–10, folders 1–227.
44. A. Helmreich, *The English Garden and National Identity* (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 2002), p. 172; This subject is explored more fully in D. Harris, 'Cultivating Power: The Language of Feminism in Women's Garden Literature, 1870–1920', *Landscape Journal*, 13:2 (Fall 1994), pp. 113–23.
45. R. Bisgrove, *William Robinson: The Wild Gardener* (London: Frances Lincoln, 2008), p. 189.
46. See *ODNB*.
47. Festing, *Gertrude* Jekyll, p. 181.
48. W. Robinson (ed.), *The English Flower Garden: Style, Position, and Arrangements*, 2nd edn (London: John Murray, 1889), p. 156.
49. Ibid., p. 157.
50. Bisgrove, *William Robinson,* p. 222.
51. G. Jekyll, 'Colour in the Flower Garden', in Robinson (ed.), *The English Flower Garden*, pp. 156–61, on p. 157.
52. Jekyll, *Wood and Garden*, p. 206.
53. G. Jekyll, 'Preface', in F. King (ed.), *The Well Considered Garden* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1915), pp. ix–x, on p. x.
54. G. Jekyll, 'Colour in Flowers', *Garden*, 27:698 (1885), pp. 277–8.
55. J. Ruskin, *The Two Paths: Being Lectures on Art, and its Application to Decoration and Manufacture, Delivered in 1858–9* (New York: J. Wiley, 1859); Jekyll, 'Colour in Flowers', pp. 277–8.
56. G. Jekyll, 'Iris Tuberosa', *Garden*, 27:695; 701 (1885), pp. 208, 378.
57. Jekyll/Barnes–Brand Correspondence, 29 March 1932, Royal Horticultural Society, Lindley Library, letter 37.
58. M. Tooley, 'The Plant Nursery at Munstead Wood', in Tooley and Arnander (eds), *Gertrude Jekyll*: *Essays on the Life of a Working Amateur*, pp. 114–26, on p. 114.
59. J. B. Tankard and M. A. Wood, *Gertrude Jekyll at Munstead Wood: Writing, Horticulture, Photography, Homebuilding* (Godalming: Bramley Books, 1998), p. 123; Carter's Tested Seed Limited, 1804–1968, University of Reading, Museum of English Rural Life, GB 007 TR CAR.
60. G. Jekyll, *Garden*, 37:964 (1890), p. 448.
61. 21 April 1891. Tooley, 'Calendar', p. 216.
62. A .T. Gates, *Kindred Nature: Victorian and Edwardian Women Embrace the Living World* (Chicago, IL, and London: University of Chicago Press, 1998), p. 188.
63. G. Jekyll, 'Sun and the Poppies', *Garden*, 31:814 (1887), p. 581.
64. Gates, *Kindred Nature*, p. 188.
65. G. Jekyll, *Old West Surrey: Some Notes and Memories* (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1904); M. Batey, 'The Arts & Crafts Background', in Museum of Garden History (ed.), *Gertrude Jekyll, 1843–1932: A Celebration* (London: Museum of Garden History, 1993), pp. 13–15, on p. 14.
66. Helmreich, *The English Garden and National Identity*, p. 159.

67. Gates, *Kindred Nature*, pp. 189–90.
68. Jekyll, *Wood and Garden*, p. 6.
69. Festing, *Gertrude Jekyll*, p. xii.
70. Pollock, *Vision and Difference*, especially pp. 70–126. '[S]paces of femininity' is based on the premise that the experiences and perspectives of women are somewhat moulded by the environment they are placed within as a result of the socially constructed definitions of appropriate venues for respectable women. But, as Jekyll's career proves, these spaces were manoeuvrable and the women within them were able to mould them to meet their own needs and to align with their aspirations.

9 Jakubowicz, 'From England to Eden: Gardens, Gender and Knowledge in Virginia Woolf's *The Voyage Out*'

1. I would like to thank James Emmott for his valuable feedback on this essay during its development.
2. V. Woolf, *The Letters of Virginia Woolf*, ed. N. Nicolson, 6 vols (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1975–80), vol. 1, p 383.
3. This date refers to R. Hakluyt's *Divers Voyages Touching the Discoverie of America and the Ilands Adjacent unto the Same, Made First of All by Our Englishmen and Afterwards by the Frenchmen and Britons: With Two Mappes Annexed Hereunto* (London, 1582). Alice Fox has commented on the relationship between Hakluyt's work and *The Voyage Out* in her article on the subject, where she argues that Woolf's concept of the 'voyage' was greatly influenced by this text. 'Virginia Woolf at Work; The Elizabethan *Voyage Out*', *Bulletin of Research in the Humanities*, 84 (Spring 1981), pp. 65–84. Gillian Beer draws significant links between *The Voyage of the Beagle* and *The Voyage Out* in 'Virginia Woolf and Pre-History', in E. Warner (ed.), *Virginia Woolf: A Centenary Perspective* (London: Macmillan, 1984), pp. 99–123.
4. V. Woolf, *The Voyage Out: The Definitive Edition*, ed. E. Heine (London: Vintage, 1992), pp. 28, 18.
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8. Susan Stanford Friedman, in her 'Spatialization, Narrative Theory, and Virginia Woolf's The Voyage Out', in K. Mezei (ed.), *Ambiguous Discourse: Feminist Narratology and British Women Writers* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), pp. 109–36 comes the closest to acknowledging the clear links between narrative and space. However, it does not explore how these individual landscapes reflect on the stages of Rachel's development.
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39. Ibid., p. 279.
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41. Beer, 'Virginia Woolf and Pre-History', p. 111.
42. Froula, 'Rewriting Genesis', p. 54.
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10 Leong, 'The Transnational Rural in Alicia Little's *My Diary in a Chinese Farm*'

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