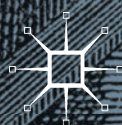


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SETTLERS, WAR, AND EMPIRE IN THE PRESS

UNSETTLING NEWS IN AUSTRALIA
AND BRITAIN, 1863-1902

SAM HUTCHINSON



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Settlers, War, and Empire in the Press

Unsettling News in Australia and Britain,
1863–1902

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macmillan

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For Tegan and Hunter

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“What a happy country this might be without newspapers!”
Sydney Morning Herald, 14 March 1885, 13.

Introduction

What happens when we look at wars of empire, not to learn about the wars themselves, but for what they tell us about the broader narratives that sustained British settler and metropolitan societies? What connections can we draw between discussions of conflict abroad, and British colonial and imperial feeling? What did settlers talk about when they talked about war?

In September 1863, a leading New South Wales newspaper, the *Sydney Morning Herald* (*SMH*), republished an article entitled ‘Natal’ from the *Yeoman*. The article praised the ability of British colonists to ‘reproduce the representative Briton’. Its writer assured those readers unable to physically travel to the colonies that they too could witness this development. Their knowledge, though, would come through ‘a somewhat easier process’. Namely, by ‘travers[ing] the seas of newspapers which reflect our brethren and cousins in all their ways and phases, their businesses and pleasures, their joys and sorrows, their downlyings and uprisings, their goings in and comings out’.

The article noted that colonists faced hardships of a particular kind in settling their lands. These difficulties notwithstanding, the ‘British colonist remains intact; and he who has taken up the leading journal of one colony and read through its pages may apply the larger portion of it, with scarcely a variety, to any other of them’. In this light, ‘it is evident that the effervescent fooleries and sparrings of mimic wars are but the spray tossed up on the crest of the advancing billow’. It told its readers

that 'Slower or faster, but everywhere deep and strong, the wave of colonial life presses on. As the white man advances the savages receded, and a mimic London is born amid the stumps of the aboriginal wilderness.'¹

Here, in pages designed for those whose livelihoods rested upon their ability to wrench economic value from the soil, was a thumbnail sketch of an epic global drama. The movement of British settlers to new lands was a revolution in world affairs, one that not only transformed the earth's terrain, but that also, as the author of this article was aware, clashed with other cultural, political, and economic systems.²

This spectacle was there for all to see through the materiality of a vast communications network, and in the relationship between the elements of the so-called British world that existed in its newspapers. As individuals around the British Empire read their daily papers, they could partake in a dynamic that drew spatial connections between vastly dispersed territories and the events occurring within them. The actions of settlers in one part of the globe were compared with similar actions elsewhere. Colonial identifications were formed and challenged across the empire and between colonies.

Yet the confidence radiating from such passages could be brittle. Beneath the surety of the prose were lingering doubts about the project that settlers around the world had embarked on. This too was encouraged by the press. The same colonists who could read accounts of themselves as producers for their empire might turn the page to read of other consequences caused by that same mode of production, and the political and legal systems that underwrote it, in a neighbouring colony. Across the Tasman, like-minded British settlers in New Zealand were engaged in a bitter struggle with local Māori. Readers could then draw further connections. If the process of settler 'advancement into the wilderness' was alike in each location, how did this violence reflect on Australian colonists? Who was in the right, and why?

The *Yeoman* article presented a prevailing view of what would soon be known as the 'expansion of England', one that gestured towards the violence of colonial expansion.³ But there were other views. 'It is in the very nature of things that settlers and natives should quarrel', wrote the *Times* in 1862.

That there is room enough for both does not affect the case in the least. The savage will hang perniciously on to the frontier of civilization, and he will provoke the settler by thefts and forays. The settler is necessarily

clamorous for land, of which, in its primitive state, he requires large tracts for his purposes, and in dealing with the native – the putative owners of the soil – for the purchase of land he is likely enough to hold strong opinions.

The *Times* concluded, ‘So the end is a war, in which the natives fight for their monopoly of territory, and the colonists for the necessary extension of their settlements, the conflict being aggravated by an infinity of small encounters at every spot where a black man’s haunt touches a white man’s farm.’⁴

Where the *Yeoman* celebrated the advance of barely distinguishable British settlers around the globe, the *Times* offered little more to the reader than solemn resignation, the euphemisms all the more arresting for their subject matter. As we will later see, the *Times* had cause for restraint. While the differences in tone between these two passages are easily registered, each shared a basic message. These quarrels belonged to the order of nature. Any number of oppositions are set up to stress the point and are familiar enough: savage and settler, primitive and civilised, haunt and farm, fragility and permanence. The *Times* painted a picture of unyielding extremes. The process it described was universal, providing infinite encounters, at every spot. Above all, it was ‘necessary’, the word twice chosen to add certitude to what was natural. If land is what settlers need, and invasion is how they got it, war would ensue.

The many conflicts fought in the name of the British Empire in the nineteenth century had in common an eager following in the British and colonial press. More often than not, this coverage doubled as a key plank in the architecture supporting colonial or British martial involvement. This book examines the kinds of narratives that attended this involvement. It looks at the interplay between material relationships underpinning settler and imperial expansion, and the kinds of feelings, impulses, and language that they stimulated. These narratives were increasingly in demand as the century wore on, as newspaper readers demanded more triumphant tales of empire, and as colonists took up arms overseas as fellow British settlers, budding nationals, and imperial partners. In other words, the newspaper press acted to console readers that though one portion of the British community might occasionally be challenged, ‘the wave of colonial life presses on’.

The following chapters consider public commentary on the participation of Australian colonists in a succession of conflicts in New Zealand

(1863–1864), the Sudan (1885), and South Africa (1899–1902). These were conflicts that reverberated around the British Empire and which the newspaper press reported at length. Martial enthusiasm had long stirred the imaginations of Britons at ‘home’ and in the colonies. Participation in war was seen as crucial to forming, and reassessing, community identities.⁵ This book views Australian colonial involvement in these conflicts not as isolated military histories, but as windows into patterns of rhetoric at crucial junctures in British colonial and imperial history. It traces the shifting circumstances that shaped the coverage of each episode—an approach that reveals a great deal about the broader moods animating imperial and colonial societies.

The Waikato, Sudan, and South African conflicts were inseparable from broader global processes linking the disparate parts of the British Empire. Each conflict had its particularities. The Waikato War, fought in the heart of New Zealand’s North Island, saw Māori *hapū* (sub-tribes) and *imi* (tribes) engage with British soldiers, colonists, and other Māori in a classic settler struggle for land and sovereignty. The Sudan crisis, by contrast, was an early phase of the ‘scramble for Africa’, and was embroiled in late Victorian imperial strategy. The South African War was a curious mix of the two. Undertaken with the geostrategic and economic impetus of African partition in mind, the South African War also saw the singular circumstance of British imperial and colonial troops fighting other non-British white settlers in a land with a largely African population. In each instance Australian colonists participated for a range of reasons. As much as each instance was unique, however, it is the recurrences in their representation that stand out.

Nineteenth-century British and Australian newspapers responded to these military crises with vigorous debates over the nature of the settler colonial project, using each occasion to rally the rationales underpinning colonial and British societies. At one level, this book explores the capricious and ambivalent process of community identification, whereby peoples come to classify themselves as belonging to certain groups in relation to, and against, others. It demonstrates the unstable ways that identities are incessantly produced, reproduced, and struggled over in public speech. What emerges during these military engagements is a complex and fascinating modulation between, at the broadest level, imperial British and settler self-consciousness.

The following chapters also offer an account of the stories settlers told themselves to circumvent the hard questions of their own histories.

Their silences and omissions spoke to historical anxieties. These anxieties were grounded in the colonial predicament, caught as they were between professed pride in social, political, and economic achievements, and a reluctance to see that these achievements derived from violent territorial appropriation. This book aims to bring a focus on settler colonial processes and sensibilities together with war narratives, and to hold them in a single conversation.

Imperial wars occasioned the forceful assertion of settler ownership of what they saw as their portion of the British Empire. Through their actions, colonists sought to repay the maternal gift of their territory and governance, and to fashion a narrative that resisted challenges to it. Reconstructing public debates in, across, and between the colonies and Britain allows us to track how public rhetoric was accepted, modified, and challenged. In doing so I hope to offer an alternative vantage point from which to respond to old questions, and to generate new ones.

I have focused on iterations of speech found in documents explicitly prepared for public consumption, and to be shared among diverse—if often select—audiences. The sorts of public texts I look at call for a particular kind of attention to language. They aimed to convey not just information, but to capture and express outward feelings, and to give those feelings form and direction, often in an attempt to arouse those same feelings in others. They aimed to persuade, and often, to manipulate.

The conflicts I examine were and remain eclipsed in the antipodean imagination by the Great War that would set the world aflame. It is not my intention to suggest any Whiggish march from the mid-nineteenth century to 25 April 1915; from gold to Gallipoli as it were. I prefer to view the elements that would subsequently constitute the so-called Anzac legend as being largely in place in these earlier occasions, awaiting only a fitting moment for their expression. I see each instance as encircling recurring historical problems rather than as stepping stones to the Dardanelles.

WAR AND PRINT

Why focus on the press? It is hard to exaggerate the central place the newspaper held in nineteenth-century British society, or the depth of its impact on the worldview of its readers. It was for most Britons their only window into other societies, and one that shed light on the preoccupations of their

own. Reading the press was, as scholars have pointed out, how the average Victorian Briton made sense of their world.⁶ In colonial Australian society too, newspapers were a ‘necessity of life’, though they have received less attention from historians.⁷ In 1903, British-born novelist Ada Cambridge, reflecting on three decades of colonial life, noted that ‘his daily newspaper is as necessary as his meals to the average citizen’.⁸ Australia, remarked journalist Richard Twopenny two years prior to the 1885 Sudan crisis, was the ‘land of newspapers’.⁹ British travellers in the colonies routinely noted the advancements of the Australian press and the culture of reading there.¹⁰ In the mid-1890s, a prominent French commentator, in a well-publicised travelogue, ‘wondered with amazement’ at the high quality and quantity of Australian newspapers.¹¹ Australian writers aiming at a British readership said much the same.

Australian settlers were forever talking about their progress and prospects for it. A self-conscious desire for improvement, and growing political awareness buoyed the significance of colonial print culture. They had cause for satisfaction. They were, by all accounts, readers. Well before the end of the century, white Australians could boast of world-leading ninety percent adult literacy rates, and by national federation in 1901 they could claim universal literacy.¹²

Those desirous of political and economic power sought it—and often found it—in the press. Throughout the second half of the nineteenth century, publications representing a range of interests and ideologies came and went. In mid-century New South Wales, the number of titles surged.¹³ By 1892 there were approximately 600 newspapers across all six Australian colonies catering to a population of just over three million.¹⁴ This was a ratio of daily and weekly publications per capita well surpassing that of Britain.¹⁵ At the outbreak of the South African War in 1899, a population of 3,726,480 was, according to contemporary statistics, represented by over 800 newspapers.¹⁶ In that year, over 37,000,000 newspapers were transmitted within New South Wales alone (population 1,356,000), another 7,500,000 between the colonies, and a further 2,000,000 internationally.¹⁷ It was said that in 1899 approximately 106,165,000 newspapers went through the postal services of all the Australasian colonies including New Zealand, or 24 per head of population.¹⁸

For some observers, the sophistication of their press system itself was enough to exhibit colonial progress.¹⁹ An 1899 statistical review claimed that ‘Few things show more plainly the social superiority of a civilized

people than a heavy correspondence and a large distribution of newspapers. In these respects all the colonies of Australasia have for many years been remarkable.²⁰

Print culture was seminal in facilitating colonisation. This could be overt, as in the process of writing legislation or drawing up maps. It could also be more mundane. Just as each conflict examined here worked to normalise and legitimise settler presence, the simple act of perusing a daily newspaper and mulling over the issues affecting them, reminded readers of their participation in their communities. It allowed them to communicate shared meanings, fears and ambitions. Alan Atkinson has noted the strange dynamic whereby paper and print confidently wrote colonial communities into being, telling colonists who they were, only for that same paper to be rendered obsolete by the day's end.²¹ So too did frequent references to the empire naturalise the idea of it.²² The movement of colonial newspapers—themselves modelled on the British format—across lands and oceans acted as connective threads for peoples living in varied locations.²³ Simon Potter has also underscored the commercial importance of the press in drawing together different levels of social groups.²⁴

Newspapers across the colonies and the empire thus allowed communities, or at least representatives of community sectors, to converse with one another, looking both inward and outward as they did so. Newspapers played their part in fostering links between communities narrower and broader than the individual colony or nation. They showed the connections between local and international news and events. For Atkinson, the press acted 'as mirrors on mirrors', such that Australian readers could see themselves in their papers, leading to a 'self-overhearing' that shaped ideas of themselves and others.²⁵

The emotional capital generated by the press, then, could match its commercial equivalent. On the whole, as Julie Codell has written, the international press system was 'the most popular and powerful determinant for bridging "home" or "mother" country and its colonial peripheries'.²⁶ For this reason, it is instructive to read Australian and British newspapers with and against one another.

The passions stirred by colonial conflicts can be attributed in large part to the greater efficiency of war reportage gained through railways, steamships (and the canals designed for them), and the crucial innovation of the telegraph. As was noted at the time, these developments 'annihilated' space and time, so that mother country and colony had 'an

intimate connexion such as was impossible in the past'.²⁷ This connection was explicit in the way that editors and journalists selected, copied, and shaped news content so as to inculcate British imperial affection in the colonies.²⁸ As British press historian Alexander Andrews wrote in 1859, 'At whatever part of the world the British flag waves, there flourishes in security beneath it the newspaper. The stout, sturdy Saxon carries with him into the backwoods and the primeval forests of the Antipodes ... his faith in the power and protection of the press'.²⁹

Editorials and letters from colony and metropole were often framed in relation to other publications. A double-page spread of an Australian paper might offer contributions from its own writers and correspondents amid a cocktail of reports from other colonial papers, side-by-side with British commentary and responding letters. Australian articles were in turn reproduced by British papers that would cut, paste and reprint these and similar reports. These could then filter back through the colonies.³⁰ This network or 'web' of knowledge throughout the so-called British world helped to shape the various ways that empire was imagined in different places.³¹

The telegraph system, that by the end of the 1860s had internally connected most of the capital cities (excepting Perth), streamlined colonial communications. The overland telegraph line from Port Augusta in South Australia up to Darwin further connected the continent. By the end of 1872 the Australian colonies were officially wired to England, meaning information could travel from London to the colonies in days or hours rather than weeks or months.³² Communities separated by vast expanses of desert could now be connected by sentiment, wire, and paper. This created a simultaneity of global news awareness in the colonies and Britain, and a heightened sense of familial belonging to the empire, a phenomenon perceived by contemporaries.³³ The press was also connected to other arenas of public discussion including popular books and parliamentary debates, long sections of which were printed in the dailies. These papers were then quoted in parliament, and, in cyclical fashion, were duly reported on the following day.

The Victorian-era press, a product of the rise of nineteenth-century commodity culture, was tailored to meet the demands of immediacy and, to varying degrees, populism.³⁴ Economic constraints compelled editors and owners to define their audience, give them what they thought they wanted, and entice new readers without alienating current ones. John Stuart Mill recognised early in the century that 'Periodical

literature depends upon immediate success', and that it 'must, therefore, patronise the opinions which are now in vogue, the opinions of those who are now in power'.³⁵ In Australia, Ada Cambridge knew that the 'Press of a country leads it, but it follows also, if only for the reason that it has its living to earn'.³⁶ Editors courting public disapproval could either dig in their heels, or succumb to the pressure to regain lost readers.

It pays to remember then, that although newspapers did not necessarily represent public sentiment, they were likely to use the rhetoric and form that their presumed readers could appreciate, or at least tolerate. We need only contrast the rugged, workaday poetics of Sydney's nationalist *Bulletin*, and the staid prose of the *SMH*. Radical, populist, conservative, even feminist papers, such as they were, had to balance their self-proclaimed duty of speaking for the public, with speaking to their concerns. And we can try to gauge some of the feelings readers had in responding or writing back to papers through the letters to the editor, or in the public reports of the reception of some dramatic news.

Commentary disseminated through the press certainly elicited a wide variety of responses. Given the high literacy rates, this should not be surprising. If the letters pages are any guide, readers engaged deeply and reflectively, even combatively, with their various papers. Many wrote to express agreement with editorial positions, others took grave exception, and hastened to offer alternatives. Though there is ultimately little telling what most readers did with the messages they were offered, newspapers helped to set the bounds of civil discussion.

While the appeals of the press frequently rested on shared, if often tacit, cultural understandings, they expressed no unanimity of feeling. Emotions were heightened on occasion, but not flattened. Though wars of empire were accompanied by rhetoric more bellicose than in times of comparative peace, the analytic value of these moments lies in the way they freeze-framed, in the relative spontaneity of daily papers, sensibilities that were likely latent at other times.

Catherine Hall and Sonya Rose have claimed that the 'extraordinary is present within the everyday, but it is only at particular moments—instances of disruption or some intense experience—that it provokes conscious awareness and the possibility of critique'.³⁷ And after all, what is more everyday than the daily newspaper? What experiences are more intense than those of war? The connection was not lost on

owners and editors who were well aware of the selling power of battle reports and daring deeds. The reflectiveness of journalists is noticeable in references to their wartime function, where they publicised not only the importance of unfolding events but the significance of the medium itself.³⁸

It remains something of a paradox that so visceral an activity as warfare entered most people's everyday lives through the perfunctory medium of mechanically produced script stamped on cheap paper. Although all three conflicts examined below were palpably real and occurred irrespective of their representation, it was the struggle over competing interpretations in public speech that determined what these conflicts meant.³⁹ Newspapers did not so much distort the reality of warfare as shape the manner in which that reality could be apprehended. This was evident even in their serial form, where each daily edition solidified the boundaries of what constituted cultural experience, the terms in which to understand society, and the elements of it that were open for debate.

READING THE VICTORIAN PRESS

Powerful media players could shape events as well as narratives. A commentator on the Australasian press was speaking specifically of the Melbourne *Age's* David Syme when he said that it was 'no exaggeration to say that the *Age* can, at its own sweet will, make and unmake Governments in the Colony of Victoria, and its influence permeates also through Australia and the adjacent colonies of ... New Zealand'.⁴⁰ The Scottish-born Syme had arrived in Victoria in 1852, aged 24 and looking for gold. Under his control, and over the period covered by this book, the *Age's* circulation soared from around 2000 to well over 100,000—becoming 'the largest circulation of any daily in the British Empire outside London'.⁴¹ For the visiting Beatrice Webb, the influence of the *Age* on members of parliament was such that Syme effectively governed Victoria.⁴²

While the political power of newspaper editors, owners and journalists is important, the more pressing task is to understand the larger structures of feeling that they operated within, and the context in which newspapers characterised certain manners of speech at particular historical moments.⁴³

To test the margins of commentary, and the diversity of influence, political position, popularity, and geographical range available to readers, it is useful to read agenda-setting metropolitan papers alongside those of other regions (and in the British case its component nations), and political persuasions. Circulation is, of course, not all. The *Times* saw its circulation halved from 71,000 in 1866 to 35,000 in 1903.⁴⁴ Yet despite being increasingly outsold by more popular, and populist, rivals, its influence in elite business and political circles—the ‘upper ten thousand’—remained high.⁴⁵ For papers such as the *Times*, it mattered less how many people were reading it, than whom. The same might be said in Australia of the *Age*’s conservative Melbourne competitor the *Argus*, christened by William Westgarth ‘the Times of the Southern Hemisphere’.⁴⁶

The formal qualities of the newspaper affected contemporary culture in ways still underappreciated. Newspapers were and remain structured on modern ideas of linear time that aligned with a belief in steady progress. The regular unfolding of events, day after day, gave a semblance of order to the unpredictability of lived experience. C. John Sommerville argues that newspapers were designed only to stimulate consumers to dispose of a prior edition and to purchase the following one.⁴⁷ Obvious as it may seem, the basic fact that each issue depended on the one preceding it, while anticipating the one to follow, conformed to and confirmed ‘the rhythm of modernity ... establishing the patterns of everyday life’.⁴⁸ For Benedict Anderson, famously, it was the scheduled progression of daily editions rather than the continuance of specific content that assisted readers in imagining themselves as members of a broad community.⁴⁹

The historical study of newspapers is left dealing with an irony. As documents of the past, newspapers are archived for posterity. Yet for their producers and their readers, they were typically defined by their ephemerality, deliberately fleeting in a way that many public texts were not. Unlike the novel, individual papers were less intended for repeated contemplation than for extracting information. For those interested in recovering the cultural flavour of the past, it is the urgency with which editors and commentators were forced to commit their thoughts to print, the fact that time constraints worked against careful deliberation, that gives newspapers their value.

Equally distinctive is the newspaper's narrative style, devoid of any grand conclusion, offering only a ceaseless succession of subplots and micro-resolutions. Or, in Anderson's memorable phrasing, 'Reading a newspaper is like reading a novel whose author has abandoned any thought of a coherent plot'.⁵⁰ Whereas a novel's plotting normally concludes by revealing an internal logic after a careful pacing of events, press reports typically do not prolong mystery, but eliminate it in an instant revelatory moment. Newspapers organise incidental and disparate happenings into a form deemed newsworthy (marketable), coherent, and conforming to accessible and mutually reinforcing codes and conventions. Readers must consider their content, by definition, new. But each paper must also fit this novelty within the existing presuppositions of their readers, to draw from an accessible patchwork of references close to hand.

All studies of Victorian-era newspapers must reckon with their plenitude, and make sense of their diversity. Given their contradictory presentation as both self-contained documents and a miscellany of parts and (often anonymous) voices, there is an analogy between newspapers and the idea of community given in the following chapters. By gathering unrelated fragments, and presenting them as unified, newspapers parallel the fictional cohesion of, say, a nation or an empire. Both offer the comforting illusion of solidity. So too is the corporate identity and institutional weight of an individual publication (say, the *Times*), as with the symbolic community (Australia, empire, etc.), a prerequisite for allowing its internal disorder and profusion of voices to be contained.

SETTLER COLONIALISM, EMPIRE, AND FANTASY

Scholars of social identity argue that all societies strive in vain for a full and cohesive community, and any appearance of wholeness is illusory.⁵¹ Ernesto Laclau reminds us that public proclamations of social unity are never free of ambiguity and are better read as competing interpretations of society. Yet for Laclau, the impossibility of attaining this unity only compels its assertion.⁵² Perpetuating an illusion of social harmony demands impressive feats of rhetorical maintenance. It calls for ways to allow people to perceive and tolerate reality.

Jacqueline Rose has thus argued that understanding the workings of 'fantasy', far from applying only to private individuals, is essential to understanding collective political identities.⁵³ This is a view that can

supplement materialist approaches to questions of social motivation. In short, the role of fantasy is to render social antagonisms bearable.⁵⁴ ‘Fantasy’, for Joan Wallach Scott, ‘is at play in the articulation of both individual and collective identity; it extracts coherence from confusion, reduces multiplicity to singularity, and reconciles illicit desire with the law. It enables individuals and groups to give themselves histories’.⁵⁵ A fantasy narrative aims to surmount adversity, not escape it altogether.⁵⁶ It masks an array of class, gender, religious and ethnic differences and divisions—often by supplying an alternative, common point of reference that can contain and subsume this difference.⁵⁷ We see this dynamic play out in the following chapters.

Processes of community identification are also not easily separable from material matters of communal loyalty. Can we really suppose that citizens of self-governing Australian colonies so enthusiastically sacrificed their lives and treasure to the imperial cause only out of rational self-interest rather than devotion to the empire? A fundamental lesson the North American colonies demonstrated at the end of the eighteenth century, a lesson only too well known to London’s elites, was that trade and consanguinity alone were insufficient to prevent a severing of the imperial cord. As Barbara Penny contended back in her 1967 study of Australian reactions to the South African War: ‘Imperialism is a belief as well as a political phenomenon, and one can often come closer to understanding it by exploring the emotions underlying significant events than by describing the events themselves’.⁵⁸

The ways people find consolation in ideas about their communities are profoundly subject to historical context; they shift and fluctuate according to circumstance.⁵⁹ Emotional responses to events are, moreover, not simply attributes of atomised individuals, but are, according to Derek Hook, shaped by a ‘backdrop of historical values, meanings, roles and similar symbolic designations’.⁶⁰ Lived social experience is formed by shared and instinctive understandings that guide behaviour and action in everyday life.⁶¹ This process is productive, dynamic and, in the pages of the press, performative.

Colonial Australian society, and its habits of custom, language, law, and shared history, fashioned how its citizens imagined and identified with one another, their various ‘others’, and the different collectives of colony, nation and empire. This was so even if the actors themselves were unaware of their affective baggage. As they appeared in public writing, colonial responses to their historical situation could be earnest and

tender, at other times overwrought, anxious, or spiteful. The language could be ornate, but it could also be disarmingly demotic. It touched on the different traditions, pasts, and geographies of a culture straining to define itself.

Recent imperial histories have stressed the wide-ranging, emotive, and tenaciously linked nature of the white societies formed by British colonial expansion, as well as the mutual formation and circulation of colonial and imperial knowledge.⁶² The best of this work complements an economic and political focus with close attention to issues of language, identity, race, gender and culture.⁶³ It stresses the conflicted and contingent nature of empire.⁶⁴ Indeed, the spectacle of settler societies fighting overseas to 'defend', consolidate or swell portions of Britain's territories was notable for the ways in which different modalities of empire allied with and challenged one another.⁶⁵

Settler colonialism is now recognised as a distinct mode of colonial expansion. Patrick Wolfe's influential formulation captures the essence of this analytical shift. As opposed to colonial regimes based primarily on conquest, trade, labour exploitation, and resource extraction, the settler colonist 'come[s] to stay—invasion is a structure not an event'.⁶⁶ That is, given the primary desire of settlers for land over the use of 'native' labour, settler colonies were, and remain, premised on eliminating Indigenous social, political and economic orders through a range of shifting and adaptable strategies.⁶⁷ As Wolfe's phrasing suggests, the category of 'settlers' broadly designates the constituents of an enduring process that structures social, legal, political and economic institutions, as well as the feelings of individuals. The enduring process in this case being the establishment of the nominally white British colonies on Aboriginal territory, and the replacement of an Aboriginal connection to their land with the alternative conceptions of the newcomers.

Drawing on this work, much of what follows takes its cue firstly from the suggestion that 'the Indigenous presence [is] an absent centre that structures settler discourse even in contexts that do not manifestly concern things Indigenous'.⁶⁸ Secondly, it draws on the 'mutuality' that binds global imperial and economic structures to local expressions of affect. That is, the ways that history shapes how people feel and experience events.⁶⁹

Lorenzo Veracini has also paid close attention to characteristic narrative themes in settler texts, the ambivalent relationship of settlers to their histories and historiographies, and their affective dispositions and anxieties.⁷⁰ In his critique of this approach, Tim Rowse says he is troubled

by the ‘attribution of affect to the settler colonial mentality’ as it ‘preserves the idea of a singular collective settler agency, as if settler colonies are persons’.⁷¹ Rowse argues that a ‘more impersonal analysis enables us to move from anxious agents to contending structures’. The call for nuanced readings of multiple and geographically diverse structures is welcome. Yet there is no need for a strict division between an account of affect and the more impersonal social account ‘in terms of structures and tendencies to which agencies get recruited’.⁷² Reading the responses of settlers to specific events might well reveal that they displayed certain affective traits. If these are a common and recurring feature we can, by paying careful attention to their historical and cultural context, try to understand why this might be.⁷³

Though the language examined in the following chapters shares some consistency, it cannot represent the feelings of every individual. Little is gained by mass denunciations of, or sweeping apologies for, these extraordinarily complex societies. Many, of course, were vocally critical of the colonial enterprise. However, even grudging or unwitting successors of settler colonial processes could perpetuate and benefit from them.⁷⁴ Any reference to Indigenous peoples likewise risks homogenising divergent groups and kinships. As a white, non-Indigenous citizen of Australia and New Zealand myself, I am ill-equipped to speak for the experience of Indigenous peoples. Instead, I look at how they were occasionally spoken of and alluded to in colonial and British newspapers, often at the margins of quotidian textual samplings.

OVERVIEW

The core of this book is a detailed look at public responses to the three conflicts I have introduced, with each conflict the subject of two complementary chapters. The following chapter places the Waikato, Sudan and South African conflicts in their colonial and imperial context. It outlines the differing ways that colonial Australians identified themselves, and how this created both attachment and tension in their relationship with Britain, and with Britons. The chapter is premised on the idea that the three conflicts, read together, reveal an underlying set of concerns characteristic of settler societies, not least the knowledge of the violent dispossession on which these societies were (are) grounded. War provided one means of fashioning a new story of colonial origin, and one that could be performed for an international audience. Conversely, it also

shows the changing response to the settler colonies in Britain as their geopolitical position shifted over the second half of the century. Here, the settler colonies came to play an increasingly important role in imperial narratives.

Chapters 3 and 4 address the Australian and British newspaper commentary attending the approximately 3000 men that left the Australian colonies to engage in the Waikato War (1863–1864). Chapter 3 introduces the context in which Australian colonists came to participate in the war in New Zealand. It argues that the war presented Australian newspapers with a chance to assert the purpose and validity of the settler project. They did this primarily through appeals to the language of British rights, the necessity of British investment in colonial material production, and assumptions about land ownership denied to Indigenous peoples. They also emphasised the trans-settler interests and patriotism of antipodean colonists. The question of whether Britain should invest in the colonies, or whether they were more trouble than they were worth was fervently debated in the British press. This debate was anxiously read by Australian colonists wanting assurance that they would receive Britain's protection and funding in future conflicts of their own.

Chapter 4 continues from Chapter 3 to note that the discussion held in British and Australian newspapers also drew on ideas of racial thought, particularly the perceived fate of Indigenous peoples in the settler colonies. The chapter argues that the war was an occasion for Australian commentators to petition against humanitarian meddling in colonial affairs while urging British military defence of the Tasman region. This moved beyond matters of fiscal expense and material production. Rather, settlers were validating the moral basis of their societies, and responding to external critiques of their behaviour towards the 'natives' whose territory they had acquired. The colonial response to critics of settler society elicited a defensive posture best understood by looking at expressions of settler feeling. Australian newspapers were compelled to reject or deflect criticisms that the global settler colonial project was incompatible with Indigenous welfare. Often they employed 'humanitarian' rhetoric of their own. The chapter argues that settler sensitivity to criticism was grounded in emotional bonds relating to their particular 'way of life'.

Chapters 5 and 6 examine the response to the 1885 Sudan crisis. Chapter 5 shows how the New South Wales offer of troops to assist the British campaign in North Africa sparked heated discussions in the Australian press over Australia's imperial role. The crisis occurred in

the context of Australian fears of German encroachment in the Pacific region, and followed Queensland's abortive annexation of south-eastern New Guinea. The New South Wales contingent became a symbol through which the press could make claims about imperial unity. The desire to be noticed by Britain exposed the pressures of a society seeking to declare its own importance. In Britain, the contingent affirmed the white colonies as flag bearers for the empire's future, seemingly returning the investment in them that was debated during the Waikato War. It also advertised to the wider world the global interconnections of 'Britishness' and the loyalty of the white settlers. At the same time, the colonies were seen to be strong precisely because they bucked the trend of 'unmanly' progressive political fashions.

Chapter 6 argues that assertions of imperial unity during the Sudan crisis were troubled by the difficulties of demarcating a colonial identity within white Britishness. Australians were compared favourably to the 'Arabs' of the Sudan in their ruggedness, but could not risk straying far from the Britishness that defined them. Colonial writers wondered whether Britons at 'home' would confuse their 'native' military contingent of white settlers with Aboriginal Australians. Justifications for involvement in the war also ran into awkward associations with Australian history. The diversity of the press left room for radical challenges to the mainstream, but even these challenges could be contradicted by the assumed morality of colonial expansion. The chapter argues that much of the rhetoric surrounding the contingent can be better grasped by understanding the need to vindicate colonial history and repay the mother country for the gift of land and self-governance. As such, the Sudan crisis allowed for the creation of new historical memories.

Chapters 7 and 8 build on the analysis of the Sudan coverage to comprehend the discussions around the South African War. Chapter 7 introduces the significance of the war in imperial and colonial narratives, and the importance of the media and journalists at this time. It discusses attempts to secure an Australian identity at a time of imperial alarm. It describes the opportunity this panic provided for the Australian colonies, fighting together overseas on the verge of national federation, to make a further case for their imperial value. By contrast to the coverage of the Waikato War, British papers largely complemented the colonial view. Here, the colonies had progressed from being imperial dependents to proven partners. Following the disastrous defeats of 'Black Week', the

efforts of the colonies were seen to console British readers. However, the same transnational press system that circulated this joyous news equally allowed for dissenting ideas to be read by British readers, and overheard by colonial observers.

Chapter 8 looks at the peculiarly Australian anxieties over racial and cultural decay in relation to the South African War. Attempts to relieve these anxieties saw recourse to tropes of superior Australian land productivity and territorial inheritance. Local newspapers compared settler Australians to their Chinese, Boer, African, and Aboriginal others. But this rhetoric became ensnared in contradictions of racial origin and territorial possession. These comparisons also exemplified the shifting nature of race in both sustaining and weakening historical narratives. The chapter shows how narratives of British racial superiority and land productivity were related to ideas of the manly colonial soldier and gendered concerns over the maternal bearers of white Britishness.

Symptoms of Empire

IN THE COLONIES

What, then, were the circumstances informing the discussion of conflicts in New Zealand, the Sudan and South Africa? By the 1860s, British colonists in Australia—the continent's overwhelming demographic majority—were to varying degrees imbued with feelings of local and regional belonging, colonial and imperial loyalty, transnational settler solidarity, and an embryonic national awareness.¹ These layers of identification were subsumed under a pervasive belief in British racial progress. Though they wavered in relative importance, affinities within and between different groups were interwoven rather than independent. Seeing oneself as, say, British, Australian, and Tasmanian—whatever these terms meant to those claiming them—were not mutually exclusive decisions. They worked through one another. This fluidity is reflected in press reports where, depending on the situation, Australia is referred to in terms of its individual colonies, together as a nation, in tandem with New Zealand as Australasia, or collectively with all the white British settler colonies.²

Although colonists often retained their English, Scottish, Welsh, and, more problematically, Irish, identities, they could also be incorporated under a broader British identity. Migrant Britons might even feel their 'British' ties more acutely on the margins of empire, such that Australians, New Zealanders and Canadians extolled their exemplary Britishness. The farther away from their traditional homes they got, the stronger the need

to cling to their heritage, and to assert and preserve their sense of themselves.³ The often dire circumstances compelling Britons to emigrate saw a marked divergence between often doubtful colonial loyalty to the British Government on the one hand, and an avid attachment to being British on the other.⁴ Beyond the vagaries of imperial politics and legislative contest, a communal sense of Britishness was, as Russell McGregor has argued, the ground on which Australian-ness could be cultivated.⁵

Similarly, British settlers held a resolute belief in the idea of empire. When dispute came it usually did so from a position of allegiance to the broader British community, enhancing a sense of participation in it. It was, in other words, an understanding of their imperial lineage that permitted colonists to critique specific imperial actions and actors.⁶ At all times these moves were discussed, challenged, and publicised in newsprint.

Tensions between the settler colonies and London were frequent, and evident in debates over matters of imperial military funding and defence, interference in immigration laws, and sub-imperialism in the South Pacific. These tensions framed debates during the Waikato, Sudan and South African conflicts. During the second half of the nineteenth century the Imperial Government weighed often bothersome colonial demands against broader strategic imperatives. Throughout the century the Australian colonies were seldom the top priority of British officials. Though Australian colonists could conceive of themselves as unique, when viewed from London they existed amid a welter of other, frequently more pressing concerns.

Grasping the ideological purchase of Britishness also requires understanding the ways that racial thought conditioned ideas of colonial, national, and imperial belonging. There is a clear difference between those—including Aboriginal people—who could theoretically claim the rights of British subjecthood, and those who proclaimed their innate Britishness.⁷ A requisite whiteness marked (and continues to mark) a sense of advantage in Australian society.

As the nineteenth century progressed, this racial coding—whether applied to Britons or the broader category of Anglo-Saxons (including Americans or even other Europeans)—acquired greater potency. Contrary to ideas of its silent presence, British settlers bombastically—if anxiously—pronounced their whiteness as they defined themselves against a range of ‘others’.⁸ This accompanied an observable tendency to link race with stories of origin. Often this meant a strict policing of

colour categories, especially where nativeness could not be presumed. In 1872, the visiting future MP, George Smyth Baden-Powell, brother of South African War hero and Boy Scout founder Robert Baden-Powell, felt compelled to note that ‘It is a common crime with “new chums” to call the blacks “natives”, thereby insulting many a true native within hearing: for be it known that blacks are “blacks,” or more politely aboriginals, whereas “natives” are of good English stock, doing full justice to their ancestors; and they are moreover proud of their title of *Natives*.’⁹

Bill Schwarz has argued that ideas of the embattled white man on the colonial frontier shaped how whiteness was imagined and culturally produced in the metropole.¹⁰ Whiteness was conceptualised, sustained, and tested as the needs of the moment demanded, and these needs differed by location. Whiteness could take on altered meanings when discussed with reference to Australians in different parts of Australia, or in New Zealand, South Africa or the Sudan. Though frequently inconsistent and illogical, the language of race could also be pragmatic. It was deeply and dynamically entangled with material acquisition, migration flows, and the maintenance of political and cultural power.

By constructing hierarchies of people, racial thought rationalised in advance the seizure of land and the subjugation of peoples, and vindicated these acts in retrospect. Its rhetoric of exclusion solidified internal social bonds, guarded against threats to organised labour, and provided psychological comfort. Increasingly, supposedly scientific theories were seen to give credence to racial ideas. One’s biology came to naturalise—rendering indisputable—disparate access to wealth and authority. For such reasons, Marilyn Lake and Henry Reynolds suggest that settlers were passionately attached to, and defensive of, the whiteness that ‘at once global in its power and personal in its meaning’, bequeathed to them their privilege.¹¹

The global diaspora of British emigrants, many of whom landed on Australian shores in great waves between 1850 and 1890, was such that by the turn of the century, Melbourne, Sydney, and Adelaide had quadrupled their populations from the 1860s.¹² By 1890 there were more than three million Europeans living in Australia. In the period of this study alone the Australian colonies received some 1.2 million British immigrants.¹³ This demographic surge bolstered emotive connections between ‘mother country’ and colony. The Australian colonies could,

however, be internally fractious, and intercolonial competition was notorious. The 1850s brought Victoria (1851) and Queensland (1859) political separation from New South Wales. The opposing economic ideologies of protectionist Victoria and free market New South Wales reflected an intense rivalry amounting to distinct visions of the continent's future.¹⁴ This rivalry was largely conducted in the pages of the press, with David Syme's brazenly proselytising *Age* the platform for his pro-tariff convictions.¹⁵

Newspapers could echo *intra* as well as intercolonial rivalry, exemplified in bitter feuds between the liberal *Age* and the conservative *Argus* in Victoria, or South Australia's *Advertiser* and *Register*.¹⁶ Rival papers would stake their ideological territory and define themselves against one another.¹⁷ Alliances were also evident in the cable news cartels such that, during the 1885 Sudan crisis, the *SMH*, *Argus*, and *Adelaide Register* aligned with Reuters, while the *Age*, the *Daily Telegraph* and the *Adelaide Advertiser* formed a rival grouping. By the time of the South African War these competing factions had merged their operations.¹⁸

LAND AND PROGRESS

The communal bonds of race and ethnicity competed with social and historical tensions. Colonial society was, throughout the nineteenth century, riven by historical animosity between its Protestant English and Catholic Irish immigrants, and by class, gender, and sectarian disputes. It was also stubbornly unable to shake the remaining ignominy of the convict stain. Most fundamentally, there was the ongoing and violent dispossession of the continent's original population to make way for its new one. Mass immigration and land usurpation were in this sense component parts of a broader imperial process.

In the decades after 1788, convict labour stocks in New South Wales and Tasmania rose dramatically to lay the foundation for the colonial economy and its infrastructure. With the dismantling of systematic convict transportation, beginning in the eastern colonies from 1840 (lasting in labour-scarce Western Australia until 1868), many who had served their time joined others seeking land on which to build a new life. Later, large numbers of Chinese, Pacific Island, and Indian labourers, among others, replaced convicts as the cheap labour source of choice. They provided much of the man and woman power of the colonies, adding to the atmosphere of racial antagonism in those areas where they worked

among whites. As settlement spread, demand for land pushed against Aboriginal resistance.

Though Aboriginal labour holds a still under-recognised place in Australian history, it was, excepting the continent's northern regions, ultimately Aboriginal land rather than their backs that settler society was built on. The resulting dispossession and violence was a defining feature of colonial society, touching even the upper reaches of urban centres.¹⁹ The innovations of political freedoms and hard-fought victories for workers and women that colonists would rightly celebrate were grounded in a prosperity derived from the territory of Aboriginal British subjects, whose own political rights were severely curtailed.²⁰

Migrant Britons brought with them material innovations forged in Europe over preceding generations. Access to technologies of warfare, when combined with sheer weight of numbers could devastate less equipped societies. Exported commodity goods were produced according to imported economic philosophies. The capacity—and the disposition—to produce material wealth led Europeans to see potential prosperity wherever they looked; above the ground, on coastal pastures, and in the resources beneath it. This was a prospective, preordained vision that saw in the fertile Port Phillip region 'grassy parks ... prepared by nature, as it were, for sheep'.²¹ It was also a vision blind to Aboriginal land management practices that had created much of these same grasslands. Rapid wealth and population increases after the mid-century gold rush, when added to extensive wool production, seemed to prove the inherent worth of the settler project. The colonies could now be seen as a source of self-perpetuating material abundance. This view of the colonies was used to promote to Briton's their potential 'new homes'.²²

Development, improvement, and progress were ideals endlessly recited by colonists and overseas visitors alike, and were crucial in justifying possession of the continent. Commentators included those intimately connected to events covered in the following chapters. Howard Willoughby was a 24-year-old *Argus* war correspondent in the Waikato in 1863, a leading journalist and champion of Victoria's General Gordon statue at the time of the Sudan crisis, and editor of the *Argus* during the South African War.²³ In 1886 Willoughby wrote of the steady succession of pastoral stations that ensured that 'settlement creeps on' and 'Progress, though slow and unsensational, is sure'.²⁴ The importance of pastoralism exceeded economic concerns. It sustained the self-belief in what settlers were predisposed to do. Land itself could be an object of

passion. Settlers envisaged that this new terrain, if properly developed, could replicate their ancestral homeland, creating a tangible connection to Home. Willoughby impressed on his readers 'the vast new world where Saxons and Celts are peacefully building up another Britain'.²⁵ Yet this animating drive to production was troubled by descriptions of Aboriginal violence towards settlers.

The flipside to the obsession with progress was the abhorrence of stagnation, embodied in the stereotype of the idle native. Later, a not-unsympathetic Willoughby wrote that though the 'European had a right to conceive that the land was not in an occupation that need be respected ... more consideration for the original tenants might have been and ought to have been shown'.²⁶ Ultimately, 'So soon as the black has been dispossessed, and has ceased to be dangerous, the heart of the white man relents towards him'.²⁷ As it would. By the late-1850s, there had been a catastrophic drop in Victoria's Aboriginal population, from between 10,000-15,000 in 1835, to some 2000 fifteen years later.²⁸ This was accompanied by the explosive growth in the numbers of sheep grazing the lands that the rapidly rising population of settlers and squatters called their own.

Settler-Indigenous violence was hardly unknown in nineteenth-century Australia. Press reports often documented, however euphemistically, the occurrence of frontier conflict.²⁹ Popular books could be brutally candid. Future South African War correspondent for the *Sydney Morning Herald* (SMH) and the *Argus*, Donald MacDonald, in a widely purchased 1887 volume on Australian nature and rural living, wrote, 'The reason we know so little about these aborigines is, that instead of studying we shot them.' MacDonald oversimplified but his message was clear; the settler invasion and their violence towards Aboriginal groups was the cause of their calamitous population decline. This sorrowful situation, he wrote, was 'surely our handiwork'.³⁰

George Rusden's 1883 *History of Australia* similarly contained long and harrowing accounts of settler-Aboriginal violence. For Rusden, the colonial propensity to ignore the Aboriginal matter was something of a necessity, especially when courting external spectators. It also conformed to more personal inclinations. 'It may', he wrote, 'have been thought prudent to be silent on a subject on which praise was impossible; or silence may have been caused by sympathy with the general neglect.'³¹ He spoke of a collective conscience of the colony of Queensland, haunted by the shrouding of 'dark deeds' in secrecy.³² This haunting would emerge in settler narratives in various ways, intruding into even the most celebratory

events. As Rusden's site-specific reference suggests, the different histories and political frameworks of the colonies conditioned local responses to settler-Indigenous violence.³³ Wholesale frontier conflict in Tasmania was by the 1860s a troublesome memory, while in Queensland it was, if anything, on the rise.³⁴ The pattern varied around the continent over time.

As might be expected, the stories colonists told (and tell) themselves tended to pardon the negative consequences of their settlement. Historians have long understood the need to fashion a consolatory relationship with a society's past. In 1973, Charles Rowley, on the back of a trilogy of pioneering books on settler-Indigenous relations, claimed that colonists, as 'usurpers', could not 'rest easy while the original occupier survives and refuses to concede and recognize his superior claim'.³⁵ Rowley suggested that this 'consciousness of usurpation by both parties has far more lasting effects ... than even the most extreme violence'.³⁶ The resulting interplay between a determined amnesia and an unabating memory ensnared settler histories in a process where traumatic acts were simultaneously acknowledged and absolved.³⁷

Everyday life in settler societies entailed what Mark Rifkin, drawing on the work of Maurice Merleau-Ponty, has called 'perceptual editing', that tolerated Indigenous dispossession in ways that normalised settler presence.³⁸ The issue was not whether hostilities had occurred, but the problematic place they occupied in settler narratives. This was more complex than simply easing guilt. It was learning how to assimilate the brute facts of colonisation into the need to take pride in one's society.

Resolving this problem called on a variety of claims about Aboriginal people: their inefficient land use, their mandatory redemption by Europeans, and predictions of their impending demise. The latter rationale was particularly insidious. The only substantial differences in the common belief that Indigenous peoples were destined for extinction were whether this was a result of colonisation, or of something more mysterious. That it was a global view mitigated feelings of local responsibility. The position held on the matter would decide whether Aboriginal disappearance was to be regretted, celebrated, or quietly accepted.³⁹

In the colonies, however, pseudoscientific racial thought also raised disturbing implications. Tom Griffiths has written that the 'same Darwinism that comforted colonists about the destruction of the Aborigines created dark suggestions in their minds about the consequences of their own convict beginnings'.⁴⁰ The sensitivity of

Australian settlers to their history compromised tales of progress. This led to a paradox. Given the need to skirt around the more discomforting aspects of Australian colonial origins, history was a source of anxiety. Yet incorporating these origins into the grander cause of British expansion meant historical narratives could also help evade contemplation of unpleasant local chapters.⁴¹ We can understand much of the commentary on the Waikato, Sudan, and South African conflicts as attempts to resolve these tensions.

The often rapturous public reception of overseas military campaigns in the Victorian age contrasted with the response afforded to contemporaneous Aboriginal resistance to settler invasion⁴². The poet and journalist for several prominent Sydney publications, John Farrell, writing in the late-nineteenth century, captured the ambivalence of colonial involvement in domestic and foreign conflict. On the one hand Farrell wrote evocatively of the violence between squatters and 'blacks' over the land and the lingering anxiety over the destructive cycle of assault and revenge. On the other, he could give a starry-eyed account of his country: 'We have no records of a bygone shame, / No red-writ histories of woe to weep.' Rather God had 'hid her where the rage of Old World wars / Might never break upon her virgin feet.' Importantly, the material payoff was to come. For the almighty had also 'decked her with His bounties manifold / Of teeming mine and yearning unsown field, / And left her dreaming, till the years should yield / Their splendid dower of corn and wine and gold'.⁴³

Awareness of violence on the frontier also announced problems of legitimacy in Britain. In the mid-1850s the Colonial Office granted self-government of internal matters to settler governments in New South Wales, Tasmania, Victoria and South Australia, while Britain retained control of defence and foreign policy. Queensland was unique in being born into self-government upon separation from New South Wales in 1859 (though Western Australia would wait until 1890). The empire-wide trend of white, land-owning, male colonists gaining self-government had its genesis in the 1839 Durham Report that aimed to prevent another North American-style colonial rupture in Canada through the transfer of representative, then responsible government (while mollifying British taxpayers at home).⁴⁴ This development could equally appear to licence the seizure of Aboriginal land as colonists saw fit.

Land reform followed self-government in Selection Acts in Victoria (1860) and New South Wales (1861). These acts facilitated the official passing of Crown land, still used by Aboriginal people, into settler hands. As Mark McKenna has shown, the same legislation, empowered by talk of British birthrights, both authorised the seemingly progressive measures of breaking up squatter monopolies, while legitimising Aboriginal dispossession and legal invisibility.⁴⁵

In Australia, then, control over land law and Aboriginal affairs was transferred to colonial authorities despite frontier violence being widely publicised in local and metropolitan reports, and in the face of clear conflicts of interest between settlers and Aboriginal people.⁴⁶ Travelogues such as Charles Dilke's widely read *Greater Britain* told British readers, if they chose to listen, of the violence still occurring in Queensland, and of unnerving attitudes towards Aboriginal people in the decade after the colonies gained responsible government.⁴⁷

This problem exercised the minds of commentators in Britain and the colonies. Dilke himself, in a remarkable passage in his 1890 follow-up to *Greater Britain*, tried to soothe consciences about 'the treatment of [Queensland's] aboriginal Australian blacks' by running through the gamut of narrative strategies. He denigrated Aboriginal people as 'extraordinarily backward' and practically beyond help, claimed they were dying out, suggested their shooting might not have been unjustified while noting that whites were also killed by blacks, stated that violence was now 'a matter of the past' and, finally, informed readers that colonists themselves despised and regretted these acts.⁴⁸ Anthony Trollope, writing of his travels to Australia and New Zealand in the early 1870s simplified the matter, concluding that in the question of colonist versus Aboriginal in Queensland, 'the Australian black man ... has to go'.⁴⁹ Even philanthropists who quite sincerely argued for humane modes of settlement preferred not to realise they often benefitted from the same processes they decried.⁵⁰

Despite often disingenuous metropolitan finger-wagging, this was not simply a case of a benevolent metropole staring down malevolent settlers. Zoë Laidlaw notes in a different context that 'metropolitan elites had an interest in distancing themselves and the imperial state from their colonial counterparts, even whilst implicitly endorsing their actions'.⁵¹ The push of private interests, metropolitan investors, and settler lobbyists to expand their commercial and political horizons entailed the pacification

of those who would threaten this expansion. The options for imperial elites in Britain were acquiescence (often in the face of humanitarian protest), asserting imperial control through force, or funding colonial defence.

Ultimately, humanitarian influence notwithstanding, the desire to salvage Indigenous bodies and souls could not outweigh the need for their land and resources. For historian Tony Barta, the fundamental issue was that while most honest policymakers in London could well have anticipated the consequences for Australia's Aboriginal people of colonisation and large-scale immigration, they could not bring themselves to halt this process.⁵² In this sense, frontier conflict was less a regrettable deviation from imperial attempts to spread civilisation, than it was a symptom of empire.⁵³

Blaming specific circumstances was more comforting than coming to terms with the essential question of how the colonial economic system precipitated settler-Indigenous conflict. As they appeared in the press, these oversights enacted a basic ideological habit of news reportage: the discounting of systemic social features in favour of anomalies. That is, seeing the singular over the structural.

THE COLONIAL PERFORMANCE

Just as communities experience collective pride in celebratory stories of the past, they can also be bound by shared feelings of a more troubling kind. The relations between settlers and Indigenous populations played an important part in collective identifications throughout the British settler world.⁵⁴ A bond rooted in this process of solidarity—the emotional investment of being *in it together*—was something these communities were likely to feel intensely.⁵⁵ For these reasons we cannot dismiss affective language as mere rhetorical embellishment. Sentiment mattered.⁵⁶

This was especially so when colonists felt judged by the observers that mattered most. Alan Lester has argued that, from the first, settler colonies saw the press as a site of contest over what it meant to be British.⁵⁷ Besides being used to defend the principles of capitalist expansion, settler newspapers defended their societies from condemnation. Buoyed by their successes in undoing slavery, humanitarians turned to protecting the Indigenous populations in sites of British settlement, initiating a campaign that reached its apogee with the 1837 *Report of the Parliamentary Select Committee on Aborigines*. Settlers on the ground saw this as a direct threat, and humanitarian critiques clashed with their

idea of Britishness. Any challenge to the Britishness of settlers jeopardised their access to the British martial and economic support they required.⁵⁸

Settler papers spoke on behalf of wealthy and free white settler men across and between the colonies, and often against governing classes and imperial elites in Britain. They also seized on contentious moments to present a particular version of colonial identity.⁵⁹ Rebecca Wood shows how the *Sydney Herald's* editorials on the hanging of seven white men following the 1838 Myall Creek massacre sought to smooth over divisions between squatters and the New South Wales governing class. An idealised Australian settler was depicted as beset by naïve humanitarians who critiqued settlers for defending themselves, their families, and their property from violent Aboriginal raids.⁶⁰ In 1902, Queensland-born novelist Rosa Praed recalled an elderly visitor who had been in Myall Creek at the time of the massacre, and who, giving the 'squatters' side of the question, spoke of 'the evils of humanitarianism'.⁶¹ Particularly galling was the betrayal that settlers felt over the lack of protection offered to them as they toiled to produce the empire's commodities.⁶² Kenton Storey has also shown how in Canada and New Zealand in the 1850s–1860s, humanitarian discourse persisted after its supposed peak in the 1840s in the hands of often cynical newspaper editors who put its lofty language to use in wartime.⁶³

In light of their global identifications, and the influence of imperial elites in London, it is little wonder that colonists were fixated on their image.⁶⁴ The mother country's approval was especially necessary. That the Australian 'passion' for England, as Robert William Dale put it in 1889, made 'them extraordinarily sensitive to the criticisms of the English press' was well understood by contemporary visitors.⁶⁵ So too was the resulting tendency to overcompensate for a 'dread of inferiority' by the incessant boasting memorably observed by Anthony Trollope.⁶⁶ When directed at colonial misdemeanours, metropolitan scrutiny was wholly uncomfortable. It had to be refocused on features less detrimental to settler reputations. The performative role of newspapers was crucial. In the pages of the press the colonies presented themselves for observation, a dynamic facilitated by local stories being shipped to other parts of the empire for their information and entertainment.

It is worth stressing that much Australian press rhetoric was motivated by how colonists perceived themselves from Britain's point of view. Though settlers looked inwards to their own social features to assess

their value, it was only through external endorsement that this value could be fully registered. Howard Willoughby recognised that, as an Australian resident, his praise of the colonies required the verification of 'some traveller of repute'.⁶⁷

The military involvements in New Zealand, the Sudan, and South Africa can in this light be understood not only as axes around which meaning coalesced, but as moments when the position of the Australian colonies vis-à-vis Britain could be more clearly ascertained. This helps to explain the insistent questions Australian newspapers seemed to be asking, even if obliquely, in their commentaries: what did Australia mean to Britain? Where did they fit into the imperial scheme of things? What did Britain want from them? The answers to these questions had significant implications for how Australian newspapers reacted to British commentary on colonial affairs, and how British papers responded in kind.

IN BRITAIN

What could not be doubted was that the Australian colonies were part of a momentous broadening of British power and influence. The conditions for the British Empire's vast global expansion lay in a precarious geopolitical balancing act where considerations of prestige rivalled those of economics.⁶⁸ Of prime concern was India, described by Ronald Hyam as the 'piece of genuine imperial real-estate' held by Britain that 'validated her claims to be a world power'.⁶⁹ Although France and Russia would persist as Britain's chief imperial rivals, the naval menace posed by the French had, since the end of the Napoleonic wars, ceased to tie-up British resources, manpower, and finances. After 1815, the configuration of European power politics had shifted, leaving Britain in the prime seat.

Other mid-century geopolitical factors stood in Britain's favour in protecting its material interests.⁷⁰ Chinese disorder and Ottoman weakness, though concerning to imperial strategists, sidelined two potential contenders for global supremacy.⁷¹ An expansionist post-Civil War United States, ever-threatening in the minds of British elites, was, like Japan, not considered an overt rival to British power until the end of the century.⁷² It was the internal state of Europe, however, with its existing imperial powers locked in diplomatic stalemates or preoccupied with local matters, which had created the conditions for Britain to take advantage of its massive industrial might, its naval power, its financial,

communications and migration networks, and the vast colonial labour and military forces at its disposal.⁷³

This situation was already changing by the time of the Waikato War in 1863. The mid-century period saw several crises of empire; in India, Morant Bay, New Zealand, and Southern Africa, among others. Back at home, reform movements culminating in the 1867 and 1884 Reform Acts, built on the 1832 Reform Act to further amend the social order. Reform challenged the received wisdom over the kinds of people who could have a say in political affairs. These questions were themselves bound up with issues of imperial power and British citizenship rights.⁷⁴ Later, related questions of imperial federation arose: should 'Greater Britain' be formally federated? Were the ties of sentiment enough? Or, were colonial nationalists to have the day?⁷⁵ Partly in response to ideas that the colonies might conceivably separate, the Imperial Federation League was founded in London in 1884, and its Australian branch in 1885. These issues gained prominence through a series of highly influential texts including Charles Dilke's *Greater Britain* (1868), John Seeley's *The Expansion of England* (1883), James Froude's *Oceana, or, England and Her Colonies* (1886), and Dilke's, sequel, *The Problems of Greater Britain* (1890). All these works to some degree intuited, and promoted, the emotive and racialised connections across the so-called British world.⁷⁶ Their ideas were debated in colonial and British parliaments, and reviewed and discussed at length in the press.

Yet what was happening outside of Britain's Empire was at least as important as what was happening within it. The realignment of European power relations would accelerate following the Prussian victory over France in 1870. Britain could now add Italy and, more significantly, Bismarck's Germany (both unified in the early 1870s), to its list of potential imperial adversaries.⁷⁷ By the 1890s, Britain's relative dominance was in decline.⁷⁸ The mid-Victorian period has for this reason been considered the high point of British imperial (relative) self-confidence, if not reaching the militaristic fervour of the century's end.

As John Gallagher and Ronald Robinson famously argued many decades ago, the gulf between the mid-Victorian and late-Victorian periods can be exaggerated.⁷⁹ Severe crises of confidence certainly occurred in the former period, most notably after the devastating Indian rebellion that erupted in 1857. And just as there were many who maintained a sense of assurance in the empire throughout the latter period, territorial expansion was not confined to the high imperial moment. We need only

note the 1840 annexation of New Zealand, among Queen Victoria's first major territorial acquisitions, and the aggressive internal expansion in the south-eastern Australian colonies.⁸⁰

The geopolitical situation that initially allowed for the preferred system of 'informal empire' had altered by the late-nineteenth century. Increased imperial competition hastened measures to secure and consolidate existing territory. This led to the fitful and defensive taking of new territory.⁸¹ It was this phase, the acceleration of an existing pattern, which was famously accompanied by a more vocally aggressive aspect in public communications, a show of self-confidence that masked deeper unease.⁸²

British anxieties throughout the second half of the nineteenth century frequently found expression in discussions over the empire's role in the world. The idea of empire gave a sense of permanence to a shifting arrangement of divergent enterprises, relationships, and processes that could be both dominant and frail. There was no single view of what empire meant, or should mean. Attitudes towards it were diverse and keenly debated among a wide variety of interest groups, religious activists, political and military opponents, businessmen, and outspoken ideologues. If something like consensus was to be found, it was in the ostensibly natural fact of its existence, and a vague faith that the progress it entailed might just redeem past sins. Imperial proponents proclaimed its virtues, and critics raised questions of the morally corrosive effects of imperialism in the British metropolitan 'home'. But, for most Britons, most of the time, empire 'was simply part of life'.⁸³

Understandably, nothing could better draw attention to debates over the empire than challenges to it, perceived or real. These challenges were of increasing concern as the century proceeded, and were not the sole preserve of the bureaucratic elite. The British public had increasingly come to equate imperial health with that of the nation, usually through reports supplied by the press. If British news was eagerly received by readers in the colonies, however, colonial news in Britain often amounted to intermittent background noise, relevant mostly for practical and commercial matters (the latest information on markets and prices, for instance), or for news of migrated family members.⁸⁴ Yet the manner in which the colonies were seen to fit into the empire's fortunes also shifted according to the geopolitical situation.

Despite increasing awareness of the benefits the colonies offered, and notwithstanding the promotional literature aimed at potential emigrants,

prominent mid-century British commentators commonly deplored British settlers for their costly demands and their treatment of ‘natives’.⁸⁵ By the 1880s, the colonies had undergone something of a recovery in British public commentary.⁸⁶ This was attended by a developing constellation of metaphors. From seeing the colonies as embarrassing and expensive children who were undermining claims to British liberality, by the end of the century Britons could increasingly read of maturing sons and daughters, and later of sisters and brothers sharing a more equitable family relationship.⁸⁷

Colonists in turn claimed that the territories they were ‘settling’ were the solution to emasculating metropolitan industrialism.⁸⁸ The period from the 1860s to the late Victorian era thus saw the Australian colonies become a crucial element in imagining white British supremacy. By the century’s end commentators saw the emergence, as Oxford historian Hugh Edward Egerton put it in 1897, of a ‘new spirit’ in the relations between the mother country and the colonies, one based on a shared sense of responsibility, unity, and mutual value.⁸⁹ This new spirit gained momentum as perceived threats to racial purity gathered force.⁹⁰

Still, until the end of the century, the colonies largely existed in British newspapers as they existed in imperial geography: peripherally. In 1869, John Martineau could assert that, ‘It seldom happens that English newspapers find space to notice Australia, or that English people care to make themselves acquainted with Australian affairs.’⁹¹ The point, though, I am suggesting, was that the colonies came to be invested with recuperative qualities in times of need.

The Waikato War (1863–1864) occurred during a moment of relative imperial optimism, the Irish question aside. The concurrent American Civil War claimed page space from events in New Zealand and, even when Australia was given attention, this usually concerned other affairs, most notably the transportation of convicts to Western Australia.⁹² A characteristic two-sentence snippet from the *Blackburn Standard* in 1863 could merely note: ‘The intelligence from the Australian colonies is of little interest beyond the fact that the colonists still continued zealous [sic] in sending volunteers to New Zealand. The working of the gold fields has been much interrupted by floods.’⁹³ Put simply, the threats to the empire that would occasion anxious assertions of imperial and racial solidarity at the end of the century were more manageable in its middle decades. The result was that the Australian colonies were less required to bolster British confidence than they would become.⁹⁴

Though Gary Magee and Andrew Thompson suggest that little news from the colonies would have been 'deemed worthy of telegraphic transmission', it is perhaps more precise to say that this news was muted until such moments when the colonies became 'worthy'.⁹⁵ When the colonies offered positive stories they allowed British newspapers not only to avert their gaze from internal troubles or external threats, but also to discuss the function of settler societies, a discussion eagerly overheard in the colonies.

As it happens, the historical timeframe of this book also marks in Britain what Aled Jones has described as the 'transformation of the popular newspaper from a fugitive literature which prowled the margins of social consciousness, to a professional and pervasive form of communication'.⁹⁶ Through their dispersal in reading rooms, cafes, libraries, and public houses, newspapers were increasingly accessible to all classes and levels of literacy.⁹⁷ The development of the press over this period followed the extension of education, reduced outlays after the removal of newspaper taxes, and decreasing costs in newsprint. More disconcertingly for middle and upper-class contemporaries, it also entailed the growing public participation of hitherto marginalised sectors of society, now targeted by sensationalist, radical, and feminist publications.⁹⁸

This dilation of the public sphere expanded the scope of what newspapers could offer. By the time of the South African War, populist papers such as the *Daily Mail* embodied a format, style and tone that simply did not exist during the time of the Waikato War. These papers aimed for a more popular readership and were boosted by an increasingly jingoistic atmosphere encouraged by war reportage.⁹⁹

By the late nineteenth century, the generally accepted civil function of newspaper journalism had changed. The conceptions of the ideological role of the press had shifted since mid-century from being a didactic 'improver' of the public to being its democratic mouthpiece.¹⁰⁰ This change came in three main waves. Firstly, the democratic 'free exchange of ideas' in the 1860s followed the successive abolition of the advertisement duty (1853), the stamp duty (1855), and the paper duty (1861). Secondly, the transitional period in the 1880s saw increasingly concentrated ownership, dependence on advertising revenue, and a mass, though diversified, readership. Lastly, by the century's end there was the populist content and more accessible format of 'New Journalism', itself both influencing and influenced by the social upheavals of the time.¹⁰¹

Consequently, the idea that publications such as the *Times*, the *Daily News*, and *Reynolds's Weekly Newspaper* all spoke to, let alone represented, a homogenous public is clearly erroneous. Different papers appealed to different sections of society. They did so not only by way of political sympathies (conservative papers such as the London *Daily Telegraph* & Melbourne *Argus*; liberal papers such as the *Manchester Guardian* & Melbourne *Age*, and labour/radical papers such as *Reynolds's Weekly* and the *The Worker*), but increasingly through variations in format and price. Coverage of the British Empire within these papers differed in quantity, which generally increased from the 1880s, as well as in subject matter and tone.

Globally too, the cross-border exchanges facilitated by the press offer a salient example of an 'imperial commons'.¹⁰² We should nonetheless be cautious in celebrating reader agency. Despite providing avenues for contestation, newspapers remained largely elite vehicles rather than neutral mediums of exchange.¹⁰³ White middle and upper-class males were vastly overrepresented. The working classes, women, and, perhaps most of all, Indigenous peoples, were all spoken about far more than they were able to speak.¹⁰⁴ The following chapters necessarily, if unfashionably, focus on the voices of elites over radicals, men over women, colonisers over colonised.

The Waikato War: Settler Rights and Production

In 1863–1864 up to 3000 men, including some 2500 military recruits, left the Australian colonies for New Zealand to assist the war effort in, and thus the colonisation of, New Zealand's North Island.¹ The Waikato War was the largest of the New Zealand Wars that took place between 1845 and 1872. It was fought between local Māori and British soldiers, settlers from New Zealand and Australia, and other Māori who, for reasons of strategic self-interest, tribal affiliation, or loyalty to the Crown, participated alongside British forces.

The 10-month contest in the Waikato was marked by the tenacity of Māori resistance. For some time, the outcome was startlingly uncertain for British and settler forces expecting swift success. The eventual British and settler victory, culminating in the infamous Battle of Ōrākau in April 1864, had more to do with troop numbers and supply than with their unique martial talent.² Conflict then spread elsewhere in the North Island, before morphing into a cycle of guerrilla warfare and vicious retaliation that would fester in the collective memories of Māori and Pākehā (New Zealanders of European descent).

Retrospectively, the war can be seen to mark the decisive shift in the balance of demography, territory, and authority of settler society over Māori.³ Colonists from Australia played a role in this. It has even been argued that the New Zealand Wars might be better characterised as Australasian wars.⁴ Jeff Hopkins-Weise has detailed the role of Australian colonists in readily providing finance, transport, logistical support and

supplies, as well the men to survey, subdivide, populate and 'settle' the lands being cleared of Māori resistance.⁵

More to the point of this book, conflict in New Zealand also presented a chance for prominent colonial and imperial voices to negotiate the relationship between metropolitan Britons, settlers, and the place of the 'native'. It is not the purpose of this and the following chapter to chronicle the events of the war itself, but to discuss the larger questions raised over the course of 1863–1864. Though the focus is on the Waikato War, the discussion ranges from coverage of New Zealand in the months leading to the war, to its aftermath when hostilities spread elsewhere, and when proposals for punishing Māori 'rebels' were being hotly debated in Britain and the colonies. This timespan is partly due to the months-long interval between events occurring in New Zealand and knowledge of them in Britain. The same delay was repeated as colonists waited to learn of, and respond to, what the metropole was saying about them. In any case, in Australian and British papers, the essential ideas were often not contained by precise geographic locations or the timing of battles. Rather, war gave colonial newspapers an opportunity to assert the purpose and legitimacy of the settler project.

The vast majority of men who left the Australian colonies for the Waikato were part of an official military force recruited by the New Zealand Government. Many were drawn by a military settlement scheme designed to persuade colonists from Australia and parts of New Zealand to serve in exchange for promised plots of confiscated Māori land. At the end of July 1863, New Zealand Premier Alfred Domett composed a memorandum to Governor George Grey regarding the plan to 'introduce an armed population, to be located on land taken from the enemy'. For Domett, the Australian and Otago goldfields now held precisely the type of men required, namely, those who were 'hardy, self-reliant and accustomed to a bush life'.⁶ Families of soldiers from across the Tasman would follow to form enduring settler communities in the mid-North Island.⁷ The scheme, in short, highlighted connections between settler mobility and sympathies, the primacy of land for settlers and for Māori, and the military protection required to safeguard this land and the British sovereignty claimed over it.⁸

Colonial officials justified the proposal to confiscate Māori land as the salvation of 'the Maori race', while offering the security required for 'colonization to go on' and to maintain New Zealand as 'a British possession'.⁹ It is also likely the promotion of confiscation had something to do with the speculative real estate investments of leading colonial politicians and settlers themselves.¹⁰ Rhetoric notwithstanding, the

eventual outcome of the punitive—if innocuously titled—*New Zealand Settlements Act 1863* was the taking of some 3.2 million acres of ‘rebel’ Māori territory in various parts of the North Island as punishment.¹¹ In theory, the colonial government could take the land not set aside for military settlers and sell it at a high return, recouping war costs. The British Government balked at the proposal but were ultimately more concerned with the efficient removal of imperial troops.

The idea of trading martial service for land was appealing to many in Australia. However, there were also less materially-minded motivations for involvement. These included the potential for imperial adventure, fraternal loyalty, and concerns over the consequences of neighbouring British settlers being defeated by ‘natives’.¹² Early local excitement over the troops to New Zealand soon waned. Prominent colonial newspapers, after initial enthusiasm, opposed further troop deployment, fearing a demographic drain that would compromise the defence and settlement of the Australian colonies.¹³ As we will see, similar fears recurred later in the century.

Though the availability of Australian troops could occasionally act as a rhetorical palliative to fretful reports of Māori violence, we rarely encounter the narrative pathos that would accompany events in the Sudan in 1885 and South Africa from 1899.¹⁴ The *Sydney Morning Herald* (SMH) estimated that on 27 August 1863, Sydney’s Patent Slip Wharf overflowed with some 5000 spectators waiting to see off 80 volunteers to Auckland. For many this was a moving event in itself. Still, it was a far cry from the reported 200,000 that assembled twenty-two years later to bid farewell to the New South Wales contingent to the Sudan.¹⁵

It was the war’s rationale that retained a strong emotional hold in the colonies. Australian newspapers became heavily invested in the competing narratives that accompanied the war’s progression. Historical attention paid to Australian involvement in the New Zealand Wars has generally been of a military or nationalist persuasion.¹⁶ We should, however, read the Waikato War in its broader colonial context to understand the debates that attended it.

While newspaper accounts seldom questioned the British Empire as such, the reasoning and methods of settler colonists were frequently discussed.¹⁷ Australian press commentary on the war in New Zealand allowed comparisons to be drawn, seeing mutual settler affinities based on common histories. Threats to one were potential threats to another. It is perhaps for this reason that Australian papers seldom directly compared the nature of events in New Zealand with Australian frontier conflict. This was, it would seem, an increasingly discomforting parallel.

BACKGROUND

To understand the coverage of the war requires understanding the circumstances leading to Lieutenant-General Duncan Cameron's crossing of the Mangatāwhiri River to invade the Waikato on 12 July 1863. With its verdant pastures and proximity to the growing Auckland settlement, the Waikato region was a valuable prize for settlers whose livelihoods relied on access to productive land.¹⁸ Yet the oft-noted clash between the settler craving for land and the Māori desire to retain it had been a source of growing animosity and occasional conflict well before the Waikato War.¹⁹

The wars of the 1860s were, fundamentally, a violent extension of the disputes over the principles of land possession, sovereignty, and governance so problematically expressed in the 1840 Treaty of Waitangi between Māori *rangatira* (chiefs) and Crown representatives.²⁰ The very existence of the Treaty (as with the treaties in other settler colonies) is an obvious point of difference between the founding and subsequent histories of British settlement in Australia and New Zealand. Aboriginal peoples in Australia, unlike Māori, were offered neither formal recognition of their land rights, nor any semblance of consent for the imposition of British sovereignty. But these differences were accompanied by similarities in the mode of settler colonisation.

Since the early 1800s, Europeans, many from neighbouring Sydney, had come to New Zealand to exploit its resources. In the decades that followed, European and Māori saw mutual advantage in trading goods, and exchanging services and knowledge. Māori engagement with Europeans had a long history, and different groups engaged with settlers, sealers, whalers, sawyers, and traders for a host of reasons. Māori and European intermarriage was increasingly common. Religious missions built a strong presence, especially in the north, and would come to have a crucial influence on the manner of settler-Māori interactions there. In the years leading up to 1840 (and in parts of the country long after), relations between Māori and Pākehā occurred in circumstances where Māori asserted their authority, and had the ability to enforce it.

Yet by the late 1830s land-hungry Britons increasingly saw opportunities for settlement and speculation in New Zealand, in part due to regulations that increased the costs of purchasing land in New South Wales. The British Crown, at the height of humanitarian influence, saw a need to curtail—or at least be seen to be curtailing—some of the

worst excesses of this speculation. It also needed to maintain a show of authority and order by responding to reports of conflict.

The British government at this time preferred to avoid the unnecessary expense and responsibilities of formal empire. However, increasingly agitated reports from Crown officials and missionaries of growing disorder in New Zealand, together with concerns over French ambitions, humanitarian lobbying, and the New Zealand Company's determination to purchase land to finance its settlement scheme, forced the Crown's hand. The British Government, accepting the 'fatal necessity' of colonisation, resolved to formally acquire sovereignty over New Zealand through a Treaty of 'cession'.²¹

From the British perspective, the Treaty, first signed at Waitangi on 6 February 1840, guaranteed Māori the possession of their land, forests and fisheries so long as they wished to keep them, in exchange for the cession of their sovereignty to the Queen. Māori were to be 'protected' and afforded the rights of British subjects. The Crown kept for itself the sole right to purchase Māori land ('pre-emption'), allowing it to onsell land to settlers at a profit. In this way, the Crown could shore up, in theory if not in practice, its claims to exclusive and centralised sovereignty in the new colony, while generating revenue to defray the costs of establishing further settlement and colonial infrastructure.

The Māori perspective of the Māori-language copy they actually signed—*Te Tiriti o Waitangi*—differed significantly.²² Here, Māori conceded the power of *kāwanatanga* (loosely 'governance') to the Queen, but retained their '*tino rangatiratanga*', or their full tribal authority over their people and lands. As historians have noted, the idea that Māori willingly surrendered their sovereignty is improbable at best, particularly in a context where they vastly outnumbered the British in New Zealand.²³ Māori often encouraged the arrival of European settlers in order to secure economic and political advantages. The more credible view is that Māori saw the Treaty as a pragmatic power-sharing arrangement, one where their rights to, and autonomy over, their land was secured.²⁴

Contradictory wording and inadequate oral explanations of the Treaty(s) aside, subsequent years of unscrupulous government and settler land purchasing activities had by mid-century hugely diminished Māori landholdings in many regions. They had also severely eroded the *tino rangatiratanga* that Māori saw as personally guaranteed by Queen Victoria. To many Māori, the lofty rhetoric of the Queen's 'protection' had—as some had long predicted—proven hollow. The conflict between

British endorsement of land acquisition on the cheap, while purporting to respect and protect Māori rights and interests, was increasingly evident.

Though initial assertions of imperial authority were largely focused on forestalling the claims of other imperial powers, the ability to exercise real authority over Māori on the ground accrued gradually over time and place. Concessions to Māori authority were necessary when and where demographic and military imbalances demanded, or in areas where European settlement was not prioritised. When put to the test—as in the ‘Northern War’ in the upper North Island just five years after the signing of the Treaty—the Crown jealously enforced the sovereignty it proclaimed. Mutual resentment between Māori and settlers swelled and became the catalyst for Māori to take a new approach to the rapidly changing situation they found themselves in.

In the 1850s, relentless government and settler pressure to part Māori from their land, and the escalating immigration of settlers into the North Island, led to the formation of the Māori King Movement, or the Kingitanga. The Kingitanga arose out of a growing sense of pan-tribal affiliation in response to the European presence, and was created to offer a more united Māori voice. A principal aim was to check European land purchasing activities.²⁵ To this end, the Waikato chief Potatau Te Wherowhero was proclaimed the first Māori King in 1858.

For settlers, the Kingitanga threatened the region’s stability and their supply of cheap land, as well as the immigration and trade on which their nascent societies depended. These threats were borne out in the Taranaki War of 1860–1861, sparked when Governor Thomas Gore Browne enforced the surveying and purchase of a disputed block of land in the face of firm opposition from senior Māori right-holders. The unresolved nature of the Taranaki War helped to trigger its reprisal in the Waikato two years later.²⁶

The Taranaki War was seen by many in Britain as a needless fiasco and Governor Browne was soon recalled to London. The Imperial Government selected George Grey to serve for the second time as Governor (his first tenure was in 1845–1853) to resolve the New Zealand trouble. Grey was previously Governor of South Australia (1841–1845), and returned to New Zealand on the back of a stint at the Cape Colony (1854–1861) that toughened his view on how to deal with ‘natives’. Grey’s long career came to personify the tensions of Victorian imperialism, with its expansionist impulses and humanitarian

inclinations and rationales.²⁷ According to Keith Sinclair, it was the King Movement's refusal to 'bow to his prestige' that Grey was determined to subdue.²⁸

Grey had long seen the Waikato as key to forcing Māori submission and had planned for invasion since the beginning of 1862. The Governor was adept at exploiting his position as a conduit between the British and colonial governments. In a series of despatches to the Colonial Office suggesting impending Māori attacks on Auckland, he convinced the Imperial Government to supply ships and troops. In this way he provided a pretext for his authorisation of ostensibly pre-emptive British incursions.²⁹ Days before the invasion in July 1863, Grey delivered a proclamation calling on local Māori to swear allegiance to the British Crown.³⁰ When British troops crossed the threshold of Kingitanga territory, war had begun.

In his seminal study, James Belich said the causes of the Waikato War cannot be reduced to settler land grabs, important as these were. Rather, the wars were 'a series of British attempts to impose substantive, as against nominal, sovereignty' on Māori.³¹ It was, he argued, the ideological affront to British authority manifested in the King Movement's power to withhold land, rather than simply the yearning for land itself, that was unbearable. The King Movement hardened pre-existing declarations of Māori independence and 'raise[d] its profile to a point the myths of empire could not tolerate'.³² For Belich, 'the persistent stereotype of the fat and greedy settler has always been a scapegoat for less tangible factors'.³³ Rather, 'British expectations arose, less from individual greed, than from the racial and national attitudes that were part of the Victorian ethos'.³⁴

As Belich has it, British belief in the inevitability of Māori defeat often distorted understandings of actions on the ground. When events contradicted British assumptions, they were explained away in a manner tolerable to British or settler consciousness. This resulted in 'a traumatic shock' when Māori military achievements, and British inferiority, could no longer be ignored.³⁵ For Belich, 'The tension between expectation and reality was, perhaps, the most fundamental cause of the New Zealand Wars'.³⁶

This is an appealing illustration of the ideological context of the wars, and Belich rightly disputes the influence of 'individual greed' in causing the Waikato War. When reading the justifications for war from an Australian perspective though, it is worth paying closer attention to the

collective settler impulse for procuring and securing land—greedily or otherwise. Settler desire for land was, as it remains, a structural affair, prevailing over the whims of singular actors, or even single locations.

In seeing motives beyond mere ‘land hunger’, Belich included Australian newspapers among those who championed the wars despite having ‘no interests in Māori land’.³⁷ But as the following two chapters argue, the fellow-feeling expressed between colonists either side of the Tasman had a great deal to do with their affective investments in their assumed right to land, and in sustaining a shared ideology of territorial belonging.³⁸ This was an ‘intangible factor’ felt with particular intensity at the margins of empire. Australian papers might not have been especially invested in specific blocks of Waikato territory. They were very much invested in seeing the material and ethical bases of British settler land possession upheld across the empire, and in jointly repudiating rival ‘native’ systems of land tenure. And they needed to make a clear statement of their imperial value.

Reading the war’s presentation in Australia and Britain highlights further connections between ideas of sovereignty, race, trans-settler and imperial ideologies, and land ownership. Understandably, the assertion of imperial sovereignty and the settler push for land were priorities held differently, though not exclusively, in British and settler papers. In the British press, the need to affirm imperial power clashed with frustrations over the local handling of affairs. In the settler press, acquiring authority and territory were complementary goals, informed by local histories. Material and ideological factors—economic and emotional attachments of settlers to land and their way of life—were deeply entwined with the rights they saw as guaranteed by British sovereignty.

WHO CAN PRODUCE A BETTER TITLE THAN OURS?

Colonial responses to the war were often provoked by disputes over whether the Imperial Government could justify funding colonial defence. The wars in New Zealand were costly and, with growing commitments in India, were gaining increasingly negative publicity as British taxpayers were asked to foot the bills for naval and military support.³⁹ The Governor held charge of British forces, and the New Zealand Government did not accept substantial ‘self-reliance’ for its own defence until the end of 1864 (though the last imperial troops remained until 1870). British parsimony also likely reflected the lack of urgency during

a relatively optimistic geopolitical moment.⁴⁰ Despite persistent fears of lingering European hostilities following the Crimean War of 1853–1856, and notwithstanding the brutal shock of the Indian rebellion and other conflicts, imperial elites could, as John Darwin notes, remain confident that, ‘As long as Europe was “quiet” ... they could deal with the threats to their imperial authority posed by local resistance.’⁴¹

The growing tension between the colonies and the metropole was exacerbated by the uncertainty over just who was responsible for what. Although New Zealand formally exercised responsible government from 1856, Britain retained hold of Native Affairs there—marking a further distinction from the Australian colonies, which were granted control of Aboriginal affairs in the same decade. While the Governor was increasingly to act under advice from his Ministers, control of Native Affairs only passed to the New Zealand Government in stages between 1861 and 1865. This delay was partly due to British concerns over the consequences of settler government for Māori. Responsibilities were in this way divided between the Colonial Office, the Governor, and colonial ministers.⁴²

Frustrations grew. The Imperial Government said that settlers wanted the spoils of war in the form of land and autonomy, without the expense or the fallout. They started the war and, the argument ran, it was for them to fund it and to end it. Leading Britons were caught between publicly desiring to protect Māori from settlers, while wanting to be rid of the problem by letting settlers learn the hard way what responsible government entailed. Settlers, by contrast, said the Imperial Government sought to avoid its responsibilities. They said they were trying to colonise the land for the good of the empire and the Imperial Government was obliged to guard them in doing so. Leading New Zealand colonists felt sure that London’s prioritising of ‘that omnipotent penny’ over both its ‘philanthropical ideas’ and its obligations to her ‘progeny’, would harmfully affect their fellow colonists in Australia.⁴³

For their part, the Australian colonies, less than a decade after achieving responsible government (Western Australia aside), were in an ambivalent mood towards the mother country. They were eager to assert their political independence but reluctant to forego the benefits of their defence being a British responsibility. They wished to maintain access to martial aid, while avoiding the reproach of metropolitan onlookers. Colonial solidarity conflicted with imperial fidelity.

Australian newspapers needed to show the worth of the settler colonies. To do so they invoked the primacy of British population growth and pastoral enterprise.⁴⁴ The role of the press was critical. When the chance arose to defend settlers in New Zealand, Australian papers voiced their frustration at how London placed its own interests above those of their fellow colonists. This regularly came in the form of a justificatory rhetoric of settler industry and production. Australian papers refuted denunciations and deflected criticisms by emphasising the invaluable contribution of colonists to the expansion, production and profitability of the British Empire. This was a rhetorical move that framed self-regard as moral imperative.⁴⁵

A May 1863 *Brisbane Courier* article, reproduced from the *Australian and New Zealand Gazette* (a paper summarising colonial news for the metropole), exemplified this critique of imperial policy. It excoriated what it saw as the undermining of racial loyalty. New Zealand's settlers were congratulated for opening new markets for British manufacturing and developing new supplies of the raw materials for British industry. Yet in spite of this service to the empire, settlers were caught between the dual threat of the 'native' and the betrayal of the Imperial Government:

the British government, finding it expensive and somewhat difficult to repair the blunders of the Colonial Office, coolly [sic] propose to withdraw their forces, and leave the protestation of the lives and property against infuriated savages entirely to the small handful of Englishmen, who relying on the performance of its duties by the home government, have embarked their fortunes in this colony. We can conceive of nothing more unjust, and, we had almost said, cruel and unprincipled, than this mode of treating British subjects.⁴⁶

This line of argument—common at the time—relied on the assumption that colonists, as both English and as British subjects, had inherent rights to imperial defence as they went about being productive settlers. More fundamentally, it also assumed inherent rights to the land on which their production was based.

Over a year later, a *South Australian Register* article compared the New Zealand situation with Australia, saying the mere thought of Indigenous land title was enough to invite ridicule. 'It would be absurd', asserted the *Register*, 'to say that the founders of South Australia had

no right to take possession of the millions of acres of land forming the colony without permission being first obtained from the handful of aboriginal inhabitants scattered over some portions of it.⁴⁷ As a statement of what Mark Rifkin has labelled 'settler common sense', this passage is characteristic.⁴⁸ That British settlers—wherever they happened to be—should acquire land without 'native' consent was of such mundane normality that any attempt to question it was necessarily ridiculous. Any challenge to this assumption compelled repeated assertions of the colonial 'right' to be on, if not of, the land.⁴⁹

A September 1863 *Argus* editorial captured the tensions embedded within Australian press critique and merits extended quotation:

As to the sentimental side of the question, involving the abstract question of whether one nation has a right to invade another and to settle on its lands, it is useless and absurd to raise it at this stage of the struggle between the Maori and the Englishmen. The right of a civilized race to colonize a barbarous country is not worth disputing about. If necessary, it might be justified upon the very highest grounds. The earth was given to man at large, to use and to cultivate. It was not portioned out among various tribes or races, in separate lots and for eternal possession. Our right to New Zealand is precisely what our right was to New Holland, or to the continent of North America.⁵⁰

For something as apparently self-evident as the right of colonial settlement, there is a restless need to itemise just why it was beyond dispute. The *Argus* reasoned that with fighting underway, dissent had to be avoided and minds concentrated on the task at hand. This was clearly more than a local undertaking. Coming from a Melbourne publication, the collective designation of 'our rights' was defined not by colonial borders or incipient ideas of nationhood, but a shared sense of British settler feeling.

The binary distinction of 'English settler' and 'Maories' collapsed specific Australasian colonial histories into a generic narrative of land annexation from undeserving occupants. The *Argus* continued:

Who can produce a better title than ours? By what right do the Maories themselves occupy the Northern Island of New Zealand? They are only colonists like ourselves, although of older date. Their title does not go further back than some two hundred and fifty or three hundred years, by their own admission. And it is absurd to pretend that is a sort of title which

gives them the right of excluding for ever all other races. They cannot pretend that the lands which they own they are able to occupy or make any use of. That land was of no appreciable value to them before the English colonization, and it has only been considered worth quarrelling about since the English settlers arrived. It is we, in fact, who have given a value to the lands of the Maori, by our presence in the island, by the introduction of the arts of civilization, by the institution of British law and order, and the establishment of the British sovereignty.⁵¹

Cloaked in the language of the rule of law and private property rights, prior Indigenous presence was here simply re-narrated as preparing the way for imminent European arrival. Australian papers did not have to dig deep for such arguments. The bringing of British civilisation to savage and idle lands had long justified the dominant position of settlers in the Australian colonies, and the lowly Aboriginal one. The debates around self-government were grounded in just this kind of language.⁵² Viewed as a collective settler concern, we can see that while the timing and location had changed in this case, the reasoning remained strikingly similar.

Yet an Australian publication arguing for the primacy of origins to justify the settler legal order faced obvious hurdles. The implication that exclusive Māori title should be denied on the basis that they were neither the original owners of the land, nor had carried out some requisite term of occupation placed Australian settlers in an invidious position. Aboriginal people would by the same reasoning qualify for land 'title' on both counts.

In essence, the *Argus* sought to defend the legitimacy of the British settler presence in New Zealand and in Australia. And it did this by conflating the very different histories of Australia and New Zealand, explicitly or implicitly. The point was not historical precision, but narrative consistency. As Bain Attwood argues, when communities tell themselves stories to make sense of their world, 'A good deal of story-telling ... concerns the origins of things, among the most important of which are property.'⁵³ For the *Argus*, it was not only Australia, New Zealand, or North America that was the property of 'Englishmen' but, expanding the Lockean rationale, any part of the earth not being properly used. It was the effort to normalise claims of possession that, in the well-worn myth of settler historiography, drew Māori into the dual position of colonisers, yet the wrong kind of colonisers. The *Argus* first drew a likeness between an abstracted morality of colonisation. Then, by signalling

British settler distinction, it affirmed the natural way in which an original model of colonisation was superseded by a more efficient one.

The seizure of territory needed for material production ignited the conflict from which settlers had to be protected. Settler rhetoric thus strained to displace the reasons for necessitating imperial protection (invasive territorial expansion) onto the process by which it justified its protection (capitalist wealth production). That British settlers should make the land productive was essentially tautological. If they could not prove their productive capacity, and demonstrate the sacrifice that came with it, they risked forfeiting their rights to the land and their status as bona fide settlers.⁵⁴

For settlers to continue in their role, they required—so they claimed—imperial assistance. Settler aims consequently conformed to an understanding of the harmony between the component parts of empire: the metropolitan need for territory driven by global finance and markets, and the settler desire for vacant land to inhabit, cultivate, and transform. The outcome was that any concern for Māori as a people was secondary to New Zealand as a productive territorial entity. Any impediment to progress could therefore be framed as a reversion to barbarism and grounds for expulsion.

The local context of these debates is important. The *Argus* certainly knew its subject well. Melbourne's own violent foundation in 1835 was justified through quite similar public rhetoric, a pointed reminder that colonial language had physical consequences.⁵⁵ Though it would soon be overtaken in circulation and, arguably, influence, in the early 1860s the *Argus* was still Victoria's most important paper. It was the *Argus* that in the early 1850s under Edward Wilson's ownership, before its conservative turn, made its name in crusades against the lieutenant-governor Charles La Trobe to 'unlock the lands' and break open squatter monopolies.⁵⁶ The elitist stance later taken by the *Argus* would create space for Syme's *Age* to become the paper of choice for 'the masses'.⁵⁷ Whatever their politics, matters of land ownership and use remained an abiding concern for both papers.⁵⁸ In the aftermath of the free selection movement, the source of lively debate in the colonial press over settler territorial governance and ownership, the idea of extending these rights to Aboriginal people was never likely to be taken seriously.⁵⁹

By September 1864, the *Argus* found itself defending New Zealand's settlers against the *Times*, then edited by John Thadeus Delane. It had to tread carefully. It distanced itself from the *Times* while allying itself

with New Zealand on the grounds of its more intimate knowledge of its neighbour's trying circumstances. Yet it affirmed its British loyalty by framing settler interests as a collective, racial concern. The *Times*' 'allegations', the *Argus* wrote, 'from first to last, are a libel not only upon the colony of New Zealand, but upon our common Anglo-Saxon race'.⁶⁰

It defended settlers against the 'odious accusation' of greed by claiming that the hostilities were begun by Māori, and the only alternative settlers had to fighting was to relinquish British sovereignty and possession of New Zealand. In any case, the Imperial Government themselves had selected Governor Grey to quell hostilities. Talk of settler 'selfishness' was annulled by casting settlers as mere participants in broader imperial designs. 'Is it "selfishness",' the *Argus* asked, 'for a colony to ask for defence against a foreign enemy, which disputes its very existence?' In the last instance, 'the quarrel is one which the colony owes to the fact of its being a portion of the empire'.⁶¹ The negotiation between subject positions here is impressive, shifting between incorporation within an imperial collective, yet existing apart by virtue of an empathetic defence of a fellow settler society.

In a similar gesture, the Hobart *Mercury* had earlier rejected the need to comply with Māori assertions of sovereignty.⁶² Framing the problem as an ultimatum, the *Mercury* warned that if British authority was not affirmed:

the work of colonisation in New Zealand must be undone; the field must be evacuated; the British flag lowered; and as fine a piece of territory as GOD has created be once more given over to barbarism, after having been planted with seeds that promised the richest fruits of civilisation and christianity. A fatal slur would thus be cast upon what we have deemed our special glory as a people exulting in the strength of peace – our aptitude for reclaiming and settling the waste places of the earth.⁶³

It is again difficult not to read this as a displaced conversation about the Australian colonies, and one aimed as much at readers in Britain as in the colonies. This account saw the justification for initial invasion as continuing to justify permanent settlement. As James Boyce has observed in the context of the 1835 settler invasion of the Port Philip district; the prevailing logic was that colonisation 'could not be stopped because it *should not be*'.⁶⁴ The *Mercury*'s use of the future tense is doubly revealing. The reader with one eye to the future could see not only the

imperial potential of the colonies, but the dystopian consequences of not dealing with barbarism.

Though the *Mercury* acknowledged the more magnanimous treatment that New Zealand had settlers afforded Māori compared to the Australian case, Māori had squandered this generosity. The corollary was that if even racially superior New Zealand ‘natives’ in the best of circumstances had failed, there could be no remorse for seizing unused Aboriginal Australian land. Yet the concern underwriting this position was implicit in the *Mercury*’s declaration that the ‘question at issue is one of more than local interest’. ‘It would be a humiliation’, it continued, ‘to the whole of the colonies if, in the great north island of New Zealand, the enterprize [sic] of colonisation itself were defeated.’⁶⁵

To strengthen their position, colonial achievements in remaking their lands were crucial. Yet it was insufficient for these achievements to merely occur. They had to be recognised externally. This led to the uneasy dynamic of colonists presuming what London wanted from them. To the extent that these presumptions went unanswered, Australian press rhetoric was riddled with self-doubt.

What is more, the colonial desire to be seen by Britain as integral to the empire’s growth meant the colonies’ productive value threatened an emotional distancing from the mother country. To a certain extent, colonial collaboration in the expansion of British capital sustained the image of unity between the colonies and Britain. However, this was a relationship dependent on material gain and utilitarian production rather than on a relationship of unconditional and spontaneous affection. As we will see, this differed markedly from rhetoric heard during the Sudan crisis and the South African War, where there was noticeable public fervour for campaigns in which Australia could prove its intrinsic imperial partnership.

BRETHREN IN ARMS

If the settler-imperial relationship was being tested at this time, what of trans-settler affection? Here it can be hard to disentangle the material and immaterial incentives of settlers. Certainly, in public narratives, themes of family ties prevailed. If public reports can be believed, settlers in Australia often did not differentiate between themselves and their New Zealand neighbours. At least in the war’s initial stages, the emphasis was on British settler allegiance rather than any individual colonial

competition. Jeff Hopkins-Weise has even argued, somewhat tenuously, that men from the Australian colonies provided a precedent for the future Anzac relationship between Australia and New Zealand.⁶⁶

There was undoubtedly a need to announce the mutual sympathy between the colonies. The *SMH* saw the Australian and New Zealand settlers as one 'community of feeling'. 'They who are bound together in a time of trial', it said, 'are united by a stronger bond than any law could create'. Importantly, for the *SMH* this instinctive reaction relied on the understanding that New Zealand's settlers had 'been forced into this war by powers over which they had no control'. Consequently, there was now only a stark choice between 'the surrender of colonisation', and 'the thorough assertion and vindication of her Majesty's supremacy'. The *SMH* saw the need for 'a strong hand', and promoted the idea that Australian recruits be secured through the promise of land grants.⁶⁷

For the *SMH*, the contribution of troops from the Australian colonies made it 'the first time in our history when the common interest of the Southern world has made Australians brethren in arms'.⁶⁸ This editorial, as with others of its kind, was reproduced in New Zealand papers, indicating the material circulation of this feeling.⁶⁹ Likewise, for the *Argus*, the 'war in New Zealand brings home to us very forcibly the vitality of that common bond of interest and of race which connects the Australian system'.⁷⁰ Shared feeling thus supplemented shared trade. As the colonial commentator and politician William Westgarth noted in 1864 in the context of New South Wales and Victorian aid to New Zealand, commercial ties between New Zealand and Australia were 'happily not incompatible with those personal dangers and sacrifices that are sometimes necessary in order to acquire and to maintain our common civilization'.⁷¹

British press reports discussed Australia alongside its neighbouring settler colony as dual representatives of the Tasman branch of the British world. The *Times* conceded that New South Wales had reason for direct interest in New Zealand and 'sympathy for the perplexities of its inhabitants'. Since so many settlers had migrated from Australia to take up farmland in New Zealand, 'it is to Australia that they would return if their pasturages should fall permanently into the hands of the Maories'. After noting the prompt Australian military aid to New Zealand, the *Times* recognised that the 'intimate relations between the two groups of colonies extend to the press', and the fulsome coverage of New Zealand affairs in Australian papers.⁷²

Yet ideas of trans-settler solidarity were not always so straightforward. In the recently concluded Taranaki War, similar expressions of colonial sympathy abounded and the Waikato War had seemingly renewed this feeling. As the war dragged on, and as new hostilities began outside of the Waikato, these ties were tested. Indeed, for certain New Zealand papers, the Australian press could give British readers a false impression. The *Canterbury Press*, for example, reproduced an *Argus* editorial that argued for British defence of a besieged New Zealand. The *Press* objected, faulting the *Argus* and other New Zealand papers on matters of logic, practicality, and historical fact.

The *Press* advocated autonomy over local affairs, but saw no sense in infuriating Britain to the point that it would remove its forces and withdraw its funding completely. The *Press* acknowledged that Britain should pay some of the costs for New Zealand's defence. But the idea that settlers could not defend their own societies without British military help was, it said, erroneous and bound to backfire. For 'England can only be thoroughly ashamed of a child which one moment blusters for self-government and the next whines for protection.'⁷³ The *Press* noted the *Argus*' 'ultra-colonial view', but worried about the effect when such articles, purportedly representing the settler cause, were read in England. Evidently, there were strategic and tactical differences in the messages that settlers wished to convey to the mother country. For the *Press*, the support of the *Argus*, when publicised abroad, was doing more harm than good.

Nor was trans-settler loyalty unconditional. Offers of land to Australian military settlers could be challenged by New Zealanders questioning why confiscated land should go to other colonists before themselves.⁷⁴ The *Brisbane Courier* also expressed the limits of trans-settler solidarity, stressing its own colonial interests and, more subtly, the need to keep a clean conscience. By February 1864, with New Zealand colonists supposedly no longer in grave danger, it said the time had come to halt military recruitment. The *Brisbane Courier* now perceived the aim of the war as only 'the extermination of the Maories as landed proprietors, and the forfeiture of their lands to the Crown'. It continued: 'however this may appear expedient as a part of Imperial policy, and as an act of justice to settlers whose territorial rights had been guaranteed, we cannot regret that no more Australian settlers are to be called upon to share the spoil'.⁷⁵

Other Australian papers drew a clear difference between aiding New Zealand settlers, and continuing the colonising work in their own back-yard. In early 1864 the *Argus* was also growing concerned about recruitment drives for further volunteers to New Zealand. Though it wished New Zealand settlers success against 'the Maories', it urged limitations to colonial generosity. It continued, 'We may supply soldiers, but it is surely a little too much that we should be asked to contribute colonists', as 'this is precisely the one article which we want ourselves.'⁷⁶

Opinion was changing with the times. And yet, from a broader view, such statements show that though local settler interests were not undivided, their broader motivations were essentially like-minded. As a rule, the antipodean colonies wanted settlers to fill the land, while needing to suppress Indigenous violence in order to facilitate land procurement. Disputes arose when one colony was seen to advance towards this goal at the expense of another. Rivalry was therefore ever-present. Depending on the circumstance, individual colonies appealed at different times to their colonial, British, or imperial solidarities. Generally, though, Australian newspapers felt compelled to answer critiques of New Zealand's settlers, showing the affinities between colonists who saw themselves, and their land, as under siege.⁷⁷ In this they found supporters and adversaries alike in the papers at 'Home'.

WHAT IS THE USE OF THE COLONIES?⁷⁸

The following chapter further explores colonial sensitivity to external criticism of their societies, and other ways that Australian newspapers sought to defend colonial reputations. To understand the feeling generated in Australia over British discussions of settler societies requires a reading of the British position during the war. What kind of commentary could have so raised colonial ire? Examples are not difficult to come by. Take the assessment of the *Illustrated London News* (*ILN*) in mid-1864, which expresses British frustration towards the colonies, embodied as troublesome children. Here we see the reluctant accommodations made in London to colonial demands. The *ILN* would have none of the argument that Māori 'savagery' caused the wars. On the contrary, to the *ILN* it was 'impossible to talk away the fact that the real or the occult cause of the war is to be found in the coveting of their neighbours' land by the English settlers'. The *ILN* complained that parliament was asked to supply a large loan to colonists to fund a war that was 'unrighteous, at least,

in its objects and origins', and 'which is being carried on for the benefit of settlers who find the ordinary process of money-making which a new country affords too slow'.⁷⁹

It is clear why British colonists might find this attitude perturbing. Colonists were charged with offering 'specious inducements' and of having 'curious audacity' in their requests. Then, relinquishing all responsibility for the conflict, the *ILN* stated: 'As to the argument that this country cannot in justice allow the colonists to bear the whole weight of the burden which this war entails, the simple answer is that it is purely a colonists' war, originating in a purely colonial policy.'⁸⁰ Read against an Australian press narrative, the *ILN's* shifting of responsibility for the war to colonists was the inverse of claims that colonists were merely fulfilling the imperial will. The *ILN* concluded ominously that, 'the time is not far distant when Parliament will have to decide whether we in this country are not paying too dearly for those bright gems in the Crown of England, as our self-governing and generally half-rebellious colonies are fancifully termed'.⁸¹

For the *ILN*, however, it was not always thus. Nine months prior, it had in a less exasperated state argued for the protection of Britain's colonial investment in New Zealand: 'Obeying, as it would seem, an inevitable law of their existence, the English race still pushes on, and its ramifications continue to extend.' Indeed, it considered that 'matters have at length arrived in that settlement at a point when the interests of 40,000 British men, women and children, firmly and ineradicably established in the provinces of that section of the Australasian territory, must be the first consideration'.⁸²

This earlier position was framed as an ultimatum unbettered in its all-or-nothing defence of settler colonialism: 'We have to choose between two interests ... the very existence of a large body of our fellow-countrymen, and the more or less doubtful rights of a race which seems to have relapsed into its primitive savagery.'⁸³ In the last instance, 'it is impossible for Englishmen to have two opinions with regard to [the war's] nature and extent'. With volunteers now 'going over from all parts of Australia ... the colonists seem determined to take the matter into their own hands, and to carry on a war which will determine, once and for ever, the question of English supremacy in New Zealand'.⁸⁴ As such, it concluded: 'Let such steps be taken as will secure now and for ever the safety of a large, industrious, and well-conducted British population from murder and spoliation.'⁸⁵ This shift of opinion between 1863 and 1864

indicates the growing impatience felt as renewed conflict arose elsewhere, and as the question of land confiscation took centre stage. But frustrations with settler attitudes and actions in New Zealand existed in other British papers before and during the war, as in the Taranaki War before it.⁸⁶ The point is that Australian commentators who had followed British coverage of New Zealand over the last few years were familiar with the tone of critique captured by the *ILN* in 1864. They could then draw equivalences that relied as much on their common identification and experiences as settlers of the South Pacific than as separate colonies or nascent nations.

Similar concerns would recur later that decade. Charles Dilke, in *Greater Britain* (1868), discerned the 'one-sided nature of the partnership which exists between the mother and the daughter lands'. Dilke complained that 'we at present tax our humblest classes, we weaken our defences, we scatter our troops and fleets, and lay ourselves open to panics ... in order to protect against imaginary dangers the Australian gold-digger and Canadian farmer'.⁸⁷ Dilke concluded that 'the colonies are a source of military weakness to us, and our "protection" of them is a source of danger to the colonists'.⁸⁸ As we will see, this rhetoric, if not its economic rationale, would shift dramatically later in the century.

British commentary was also, however, far from unanimous. Opposing those who argued that the colonies should finance their own conflicts were voices advocating imperial expenditure to defend New Zealand's settlers. This tension was apparent in the conflicting editorial positions in mid-1864 of two illustrious publications: the *Standard* and the *Times*. A June 1864 *Times* editorial, echoing the later *ILN* passage, rejected the significance of the fiscal link between the colonies and Britain. The *Times* distinguished between the two, complaining that 'whenever a set of land-jobbers in New Zealand find it convenient to appropriate a new tract of land the people of Middlesex are ... called upon to pay for the vicarious luxury the colonists are thus allowing themselves at the antipodes', and in their defence against 'recalcitrant savages'.⁸⁹

This position would harden. Some months later, the *Times* compared itself to 'a parent with a number of grown-up children', wishing to split from his 'impetuous' and 'petulant' 'youngsters' before finally regaining a sense of 'natural affection'.⁹⁰ The *Times* pleaded to devote capital and men to developing land already held by antipodean settlers instead of paying to fight over new land. It bemoaned that 'Our blood and our

treasure are expended not at our own will, but under the direction of colonists whose interests have nothing in accordance with our own.⁹¹ Such claims served further notice to colonists reading on that imperial unity had its limits.

The *Standard*, by contrast, could not abide objections to imperial assistance to the colonies. It rebuked those such as the *Times* who ‘coolly weigh[ed] the blood of their women and children against the gold which helps to protect them from a savage massacre’.⁹² ‘Cold, indeed, is the philosophy’, scowled the *Standard*, ‘and wretched the statecraft which can deal grudgingly with those stems of the parent tree which have taken root on distant shores.’⁹³ It asserted that there ‘is an affinity among nations as well as among persons. The transfer of a Cockney to Wellington, Otago, or Auckland, does not forthwith make him an alien and a foreigner’. ‘Fiscal purposes’, the *Standard* explained, ‘are not the only ties which can bind England to her colonies. It may be that the Englishman in Middlesex has kith and kin on the borders of the Waikato district.’⁹⁴

Though impassioned, this exchange over the responsibilities for colonial defence took place within a common set of assumptions regarding the naturalness of empire. Up for dispute was only the course it should take to maintain the supremacy and the right to rule that both publications accepted in advance. Where the *Times* saw the costs of footing the bill as prohibitive, the *Standard* saw it as the requisite long-term investment for the benefits the colonies provided. More to the point, this debate both influenced and relied on similar discussions in Australia. Australian papers appropriated editorials such as those of the *Standard* to further their own cases, while influential voices in the British press seized upon and lifted arguments made in the settler press to give authenticity to their accounts.⁹⁵ To Australian editors reading British accounts the issue was clear cut—the colonisation project, which all agreed was necessary for the expansion of global capital, required the pastures owned by natives, from whose inevitable aggression colonists required protection in turn. Though this was a debate over funding, it called upon the broader justifications and anxieties of settler societies.

The *Standard* sustained its defence of imperial assistance to colonists in global terms, seeing the settler colonial project as a worldwide, rather than provincial, development. It chastised those who argued against funding the conflict: ‘It is a narrow policy which reckons up the money value of every Imperial bayonet that defends New Zealand civilisation

against aboriginal barbarism, and declare it to be all loss.' It reasoned that 'The home country has been rendered great by her colonial empire. Wherever the English colonist has been able to find a resting-place for the sole of his foot thither has he summoned the manufactures of Manchester and Birmingham.'

The conversion of wilderness into profit, the building of towns and manufacturing districts, the creation of booming commercial enterprises, were all 'elements of material grandeur for which we are indebted to the hardy pioneers who have gone forth from our shores and transferred the habits and requirements of civilisation to the prairie, the savannah, the jungle, and the bush'. And they were the factors 'to be borne in mind whenever the cost of defending our colonies comes under discussion. We owe a debt of gratitude to our distant relatives—the advanced guard of the civilised world—the outposts of trade and commerce'.⁹⁶ Presented for the reader was no less than an outline of the 'settler revolution', with its productive urges and spatial expansion transplanting civilisation to whole swathes of the earth's surface.⁹⁷ As we have seen, this was a view to complement the colonists' own.

Crucially, the vindication of settler land acquisition rested on analogous illustrations of it. Sympathetic British papers thus evoked the example of Australia. In another editorial, the *Standard* reduced New Zealand's colonisation to a fundamental and familiar query: 'The problem is, in fact, whether we have or have not a right to colonise the waste or sparsely-peopled spaces of the earth.'⁹⁸ To resolve this problem the *Standard*, mirroring Australian editorial reasoning, pointed to a comparison: 'Technically Australia was the property of the aborigines, not one jot the less indubitably than the lands of New Zealand belong to the Maori nation.'⁹⁹ The application of the past tense here rhetorically stripped Aboriginal Australians of land ownership, seeing their property rights as an abstraction that need not be taken seriously. According to the *Standard*, if Māori sovereignty over their land was to act as a precedent, it followed that 'all America was the hunting-ground of the Red Indian, and New Guinea is the inheritance of the woolly-headed Papuan'.¹⁰⁰

The *Standard* drew an equivalence that reduced Indigenous diversity to the essential element of their sovereign land claims, or lack thereof, thereby undermining Māori rights. Yet, reversing this rationale led to a more uncomfortable conclusion. If New Zealand's colonisation was unlawful, so too might previous acts of colonisation be retroactively

discredited. For this reason, as in Australian papers, such suggestions required swift dismissal and anxious disputation in the same breath.

For both the *Times* and the *Standard*, affective rhetoric was not absent so much as secondary to material concerns. The praise for the colonies strengthened the idea that, despite platitudes evoking ‘kith and kin’, the benefit of the colonies was more economic than filial. The *Standard* recognised that the search for wealth that compelled colonial expansion was buoyed by the recent discovery of the gold that ‘has been immensely augmented by the “diggings” of our embryo empires’. This was a teleology that positioned the white colonies as not only members of the current empire but as incubators of a future one. But it did so primarily in a functional sense. Even racial differences between colonists and Indigenous populations were presented in financial terms, with different subgroups assessed for their monetary value and as markets for English goods. ‘An English colonist’, it continued:

is a very different customer from a naked savage. Even the polished Hindoo is a poor purchaser. The native inhabitants of India are only worth about sixpence a head to the home market, while the colonists of Australia and New Zealand may be calculated as good for four or five pounds a-piece.¹⁰¹

So too did the *Standard* praise the ability of the colonies to provide space for Britain’s surplus population. Sentimental as it may have been in opposing the *Times*, the *Standard* could not overlook the utility of the colonies which ‘have served to draught off our superabundant population’. This population had, moreover, been put to good use: ‘It is far better’, observed the *Standard*, ‘to have customers abroad than paupers at home.’¹⁰²

The tendency to contrast the colonies’ positive attributes with the metropole ran up against other problems. Namely, a moral panic over the prevention of British decay accompanied the demographic and economic gains of the colonies. ‘Would to Heaven’, the *Standard* beseeched, ‘we could transform more of our starving seamstresses into emigrant housewives, rearing hearty young families of Anglo-Saxons in Canada, Australia, or South Africa, instead of tottering on the verge of prostitution at home.’¹⁰³ It would be difficult to locate a more summary statement of the interconnections between the global reach of colonialism, and questions of class, gender, and domesticity than this Wakefieldian plea. The *Standard* presented the colonies as locations of exported whiteness,

wealth production, and domestic reproduction in perpetuity, thereby redeeming the threat of metropolitan degeneracy.

The white settler woman was here doubly sexualised. The replacement of the original population with the settler one, if settlers were to claim themselves as 'native', was primarily a project of energetic biological reproduction.¹⁰⁴ Yet metropolitan prostitution stressed the darker shadow of industrial capitalism and signalled the potential for white racial degeneration if it did not expand. In the Australian case at least, the strict division between metropolitan sexual excess and colonial domesticity, with its class connotations, was clearly strained. Not only did Australia's colonial population largely derive from the surplus of Britain's metropolitan labour force. The fantasy that contrasted the debauched metropolitan figure with a pure, white colonial one was also undercut by rumours of miscegenation (a term coined in 1863) in the colonies, and the general depravity said to be inherited from the convict stain.

Metaphorically, given that the ownership of property required the addition of labour to land, the gendered nature of settler colonialism took on a distinctly aggressive aspect. If Indigenous inhabitants' passive existence on the land nullified their rights to it, European land claims were upheld in proportion to their territorial penetration.¹⁰⁵ As Beenash Jafri has suggested, settler colonialism is naturalised through a set of 'settling down' practices. The presentation of normative Victorian family relations in the colonies sanitised the violence of settler colonialism 'such that the calls to own property or start a (nuclear) family become delinked from their historical contexts and reconfigured as natural, innate, ahistorical desires'.¹⁰⁶

In this sense, the ephemeral, detached exploitation of metropolitan prostitution stood in for the alienating forces of capitalism that warranted colonial expansion. The wholesome 'family rearing' of the colonies, by contrast, offered a pleasing alternative to the squalor of British cities. The irony was that the illicit economy of metropolitan prostitution at least implied paid labour while the 'legitimate' economy of labourious marital family relations was, it would seem, to be voluntary.¹⁰⁷ There was thus an uneasy editorial balance between seeing the colonies as central to the imperial economic system, and imagining them as innocent of its adverse effects. Invisible here was the removal from the land of its original inhabitants, with the resulting rupture of their social and familial relations, to make way for this new idealised settler family.¹⁰⁸ For British observers, the Indigenous presence elicited an altogether more conflicted response.

The Waikato War: Philanthropy and the Settler Fantasy

The Australian colonies retained a presence in the British press at this time partly because they allowed certain racial comparisons to be made. The primacy of land and production provided ample rationale for this. In purely practical terms, this makes sense. The crucial point was that Māori claims to their land, or their presence on it, would not halt the productive transformation and incorporation of this land into the settler economy. Enlisted as part of this process, the language of race rationalised and resolved the contradictions between settlement and sentiment. It also fed into critiques of settler attitudes and behaviours towards Indigenous populations, and, in turn, settler defences of their societies. This chapter builds on the last, but alters the focus from matters of material gain and utility, to the way that settler papers engaged with and responded to arguments that challenged the moral basis of their existence.

The Waikato War occurred during a moment of ideological contest, as meanings of race multiplied. Besides race as a synonym of national and cultural descent, with subjects capable of progressive change, stood an idea of a rigid hierarchy of innate biological differences, with related behavioural and moral traits.¹ This change has been attributed to frustrations over evidence of ‘native savagery’ discerned in a confluence of imperial crises, including the New Zealand Wars and the Indian rebellion.² Yet there was always a large degree of ambiguity between various schools of racial thought. The slippage in conceptions of race

characterised much Victorian writing.³ This had implications for the kind of language heard in settler societies, where ideas of inborn racial essences were particularly convenient.

The exchange of racial ideas between the colonies and Britain could be fluid.⁴ British readers browsing a range of newspapers in the early 1860s met an array of racial categories in which to understand stories of empire. These could be extreme, as in the venom of one letter writer for whom the inability of Māori to adapt to British culture and language meant 'if every one was removed from the face of the earth, [it] would be a boon inestimable to the human race'.⁵ Portrayals elsewhere were usually more ambivalent.⁶ Some descriptions even went the other way. An article in London's conservative *Morning Post* saw Māori physical and moral qualities overall as potentially 'equal if not superior to the white man'.⁷ The *Dundee Courier & Argus* described Māori as 'savages', yet at the same time, 'a race of men who are the equals of the Europeans in natural faculties, whether physical or mental'.⁸ Such claims complicate James Belich's contention that the 'European monopoly of the higher mental facilities was the inner tabernacle of Victorian racial attitudes', and that 'To question it was to question a whole world view'.⁹ Further muddying any binary racial division, this same article saw the real danger to New Zealand's composition less in Māori than in the admission of 'strange, wild-looking' Australian volunteers. The true question, one that surely made any Australian readers wince, was whether it was 'desirable to introduce such a class into one of our more reputable colonies'.¹⁰

When Māori resistance clashed with notions of British supremacy, readers could be offered more optimistic appraisals of the settler colonies. Here, New Zealand and Australia's rhetorical association might refocus on monitoring the racial purity of the colonies, an obsession that continued later in the century. New Zealand in particular had apparently achieved a level of Anglo-Saxonness unmatched even by other white colonies, Irishness remaining the disqualifying trait. The *Bristol Mercury* recorded that: 'No other colonies, so far as we are aware, have a population so homogenous and so purely Anglo-Saxon as those of New Zealand.' It then clarified, 'The Irish race abounds in Canada and Australia, and the German element is largely visible both in the American settlements and at the Cape of Good Hope'.¹¹ Such statements existed in a time of anxiety over the make-up of a unified British polity and the growing number of 'internal others', a category itself created by empire.¹²

More often, though, racial thought aided the ideological heavy lifting of empire. Managing the tensions of colonial expansion often meant disavowing the reasons for Indigenous resistance. This could entail the wilful elision of history itself. Reviewing the year 1863, the *Daily Telegraph* declared that the ‘Maori War in New Zealand is absolutely devoid of Imperial significance’.¹³ More bluntly, a *Times* editorial of the same day offered the following summary: ‘The colonies have for the most part happily avoided any contribution to contemporary history.’¹⁴ To clarify, the *Times* observed that the ‘Australians of New South Wales and of Victoria are highly prosperous, and they have neither an aristocracy to envy nor even an aboriginal race to fear or to exterminate’.¹⁵ However illusory this historical account actually was—and counterexamples were only too easy to come by—the point was to emphasise Australia’s role as a prospective utopia for British readers.¹⁶

In the same editorial the *Times* contrasted the Australian situation to that of New Zealand where, unless Māori submitted to their defeat at the hands of New Zealand’s settlers, that ‘savage race ... will probably within a few years have ceased to exist’.¹⁷ Australian settlers, by contrast, were silently productive, necessitating no external military commitments. Though the comparison was outwardly complimentary, for colonial readers this depiction could reinforce the view that London was disinclined to fund their military protection.

Other British accounts drew on the Australian experience. In a morose register, references to settler violence towards Australia’s Aboriginal population could frame the rhetoric of Māori subjugation. In August 1863, the *Standard* predicted that the ‘blacks of Australia, and the grand Maories of New Zealand, will be alluded to by the next generation as beings of the past’.¹⁸ In its confusion of historical tenses, a sense of hope tempered regret. The *Standard* peered into the future to predict the past, anticipating history from the view of the predicted victors of racial conflict.¹⁹

The rhetorical purchase of this idea was considerable. If the fate of Māori was sealed in advance and their disappearance inevitable, the white man’s march, unjust though it may be, could not be countered.²⁰ Regret and anticipation were codependent. To regret Indigenous demise in the face of sustained resistance to British force, one first had to fantasise the demise to be regretted. Through this ‘proleptic elegy’, to use Patrick Brantlinger’s phrase, mourning for Indigenous peoples could

proceed concurrently with the taking of their land. The 'native' could appear in settler narratives without subverting them.²¹

And yet colonisation was also widely recognised as the cause of this lamentable fate. Both Australian and British newspapers grappled with this same dilemma. Given the impossibility of relinquishing settler territory, but faced with anticipated Indigenous 'disappearance', it is little wonder that opposing rationalisations were forthcoming. It is little wonder too that these matters generated intense dispute as papers passed between Britain and the colonies.

In much British public rhetoric, Māori were routinely perceived as being higher up the evolutionary order than Aboriginal people. Commentators might cite Māori racial distinction and the singularity of the Treaty of Waitangi, but they could equally empty the New Zealand conflicts of their specificity to draw lessons outside of the circumstances of that colony. The interplay between the global and the parochial recontextualised historical moments.²² For the *Huddersfield Chronicle and West Yorkshire Advertiser*, the 'trial of might' in the Waikato was predetermined on the grounds of British racial supremacy. To prevent any protracted suffering, Māori subjugation should be merciless. 'In Tasmania', the article reminded its readers, 'the aboriginals have wholly disappeared ... extirpated by the European settlers as so much vermin'.²³ It was this 'same fate, by a slower and less reprehensible process, [that was] befalling the native Australian'.²⁴ Despite apparent Māori racial advantages over 'the nude savage of Van Diemen's Land', it was this end that was being cautioned against.²⁵

However, the same article summoned Australia again to authorise the acquisition of Māori land. For if the '*principle*' of the Treaty of Waitangi was to hold, it might as well be 'that the few black natives ought to have been allowed, if they chose, to forbid the formation of a single British settlement in the vast Island-continent of Australia. Such doctrine is manifestly absurd'.²⁶ This position, as discussed in the previous chapter, was commonly expressed. The point to note here is that this single article had twice appealed to Australian settlement, the first to warrant Māori suppression so as to avoid the Tasmanian experience, the second to equate the 'absurdity' of permitting Indigenous resistance to British colonisation in either Australia or New Zealand.

Sections of the British press could, then, call on the Australian case to present a message that, though bleak, could be tolerated by colonists reading these same messages. Other accounts gave no such comfort.

According to the prominent analyst of the war, John Eldon Gorst, Australian colonists had provided an instructive warning to Māori of the nefarious intentions of British settlers. This was a British commentator who did have experience in dealing with Māori. A future member of the House of Commons (including in 1885 during debates over the Sudan crisis), Gorst was closely involved in local New Zealand politics as a resident magistrate, then civil commissioner. In his twenties he had spent the opening years of the 1860s in the Waikato, drawing on his experiences to pen a still-respected history of events there.²⁷ For a short time before he was expelled from the Waikato by the Kingitanga in April 1863, Gorst also edited a Māori newspaper, *Tē Pihohoi Mokemoke*, to rival the pro-Kingite *Tē Hokioi*. After his expulsion, and the removal of his printing press, Gorst reluctantly accompanied the Minister of Native Affairs, Francis Dillon Bell, to Australia to recruit military settlers for the Waikato.

In a widely circulated letter to the *Times*, Gorst asserted that the ‘fate of the Tasmanian and Australian black is well known to [Māori]’, such that they ‘say that as the English dog and rat have entirely exterminated the native dog and rat, so the Englishmen will destroy them’.²⁸ Gorst himself wanted to see the back of the Kingitanga, but he also deplored the violence settlers were seemingly intent on. His letter sparked a swift response in the New Zealand press, eager to guard against Gorst’s ‘treasonous wish ... to enforce an erroneous impression of the colonists in the English mind’.²⁹ In turn, Australian colonists sent letters with New Zealand press cuttings to Australian papers.³⁰ Yet Gorst himself was aware of the ‘care’ taken by the colonial press in vetting, altering or suppressing, information sent to England from the colonies ‘for fear of the effect which those letters and facts, if copied into English newspapers, would produce’. For this reason, Gorst argued that ‘the Maori story can only be got in full from the Maoris themselves’.³¹ Unsurprisingly, then, ideas of race were intimately connected with the contestation of humanitarianism, and to debates over settler violence towards ‘native’ populations in the colonies.

THEIR DELICATE PHILANTHROPIC SENSIBILITIES

We saw in the previous chapter the need for Australian newspapers to find allies in the British press, and to defend the colonies against detractors. This was one thing when weighing up issues of fiscal expense and

material production; it was another when dealing with fundamental criticism of how settlers dealt with those whose territory they had taken. The ensuing response of colonial papers to critics of settler society elicited a defensive posture best understood by looking further at collective settler feeling.

It is clear that settlers had long faced regular opposition from certain humanitarian and elite quarters of Britain on the subject of land and relations with Indigenous peoples.³² British dailies accommodated this opposition. What is now receiving growing examination is the response of the settler press in writing back to these charges and in doing so formulating and ratifying collective identities.³³

Alan Lester and Fae Dussart argue that British Government officials could not permit explicit settler violence towards Indigenous societies, publicly at least, for several reasons. These included an ingrained mythology of moral exceptionalism, and the 'modern state's imperative to control, regulate and as far as possible monopolize the violence of colonization'. In addition, British officials felt it necessary to avoid the pressure of humanitarian lobbying.³⁴

As observed, the British humanitarian movement, and the connections it built across time and place, rose to prominence on the back of successes in combating slavery. The movement aimed to extend these successes to ameliorating the plight of Indigenous peoples in the colonies.³⁵ This was part of an expansive project of disseminating the civilising properties of Britishness, one consequence of which was supposedly to soften the nefarious tendencies of settlers.³⁶ Yet the perceived humanitarian interference in settler societies was the cause of much opprobrium in the 1840s. Settlers loathed humanitarian defiance of their land grabs and their moral authority. This feeling was sharpened by the evident failure of the movement to redeem Māori.³⁷ These well-publicised failings formed the basis of a settler press campaign to equate 'resistance to the British civilising mission with resistance to civilisation per se'.³⁸

At this time, humanitarians appeared in public rhetoric more often as 'philanthropists', or pejoratively as 'sentimentalists'. These were blanket terms used for a range of actors including mission workers, Aborigines' Protection Society affiliates in Britain, and various lobbying groups. These labels and others ('philo-Maori' in New Zealand), could describe individuals or groups purporting to promote a measure of Aboriginal protection or rights. They were also used, more loosely, as shorthand for anyone expressing conscientious discontent with settler activities.

‘Humanitarianism’, then, had a capacious meaning, but it represented a set of beliefs that many influential Britons, and colonists, at least paid lip-service to, even after its heyday in the 1830s–1840s.³⁹ Though the 1860s are seen as an era of decline in the history of humanitarian criticism of settlers, this period saw no scarcity of critique, or of colonial response to it.⁴⁰ The following discussion looks at the perceptions that settlers held, rather than analysing humanitarian policy or doctrine.⁴¹ Here, the figure of the humanitarian focused settler rhetoric by condensing a host of deeply felt colonial concerns. This holds true for the Australian press.

Clearly, the newspaper press was a fractious system, where interests and identities were constantly negotiated across vast distances. This allowed something of a dialogue, in which Australian newspapers tried to moderate impressions of the colonies for British readers, and correct misinformed metropolitan sources.⁴² Australian papers like the *Sydney Morning Herald* (*SMH*), for example, sought to counter the ‘calumnious diatribe’ and ‘the audacious and heartless attack’ on New Zealand settlers coming from the editors of British papers such as the *Times* in the months leading up to the Waikato War.⁴³

The most disconcerting aspect of this was the potential spread of British caricatures of the colonies.⁴⁴ Local newspapers needed to control what the colonies meant in Britain and, via the global circulation of wire and print, what colonists could overhear about themselves. That this control was never absolute was a source of frustration. Martial contests were ideal opportunities to negotiate these meanings in moments when the mother country was known to be looking on. Papers like the *SMH* knew they were speaking to foreign as well as national audiences, while the information shared between Britain and her colonies prevented a strict demarcation of their press networks.⁴⁵

In the previous chapter we saw the *Argus* campaigning in early September 1863 on behalf of New Zealand’s colonists for the validity of British settler ‘title’. This editorial was initially provoked by a critical letter composed by ‘Victorian Colonist’, which offered a powerful moral critique of the *Argus*’ position. The letter reasoned that the New Zealand conflicts could be described as ‘unjust’ and ‘tyrannical’. A peculiar parallel also hinted at a more localised anxiety. Considering the moral justification ‘in taking possession of a savage land and enforcing our laws’, ‘Victorian Colonist’ asked: ‘how would we meet an attempt by the Chinese to come here in force—where we have comparatively a weak

title—and, as a people considering us outer barbarians, to improve us off the face of the earth?’⁴⁶ This ‘Chinese question’ was particularly acute in the aftermath of anti-Chinese riots (the extreme violence of the Lambing riots were barely two years past), and heated debates over anti-immigration laws. As we will see, concerns over the weakness of this title would surface at other moments in the century.

The *Argus*, however, saw this sort of talk as exemplifying the ‘spirit of perverse and morbid philanthropy’, typical of an ‘enemy of the nation’.⁴⁷ This editorial response prompted an impassioned second letter from ‘Victorian Colonist’ that closely evaluated the terms of Māori ‘sovereignty’ and agency. Sharply countering the *Argus*’ assertion that Māori happily gave up their land rights, ‘Victorian Colonist’ observed that the ‘best proof that the Maori never understood what he parted with, or rather assented to, is that upon practical experience he rejects it, whether rightly or not’.⁴⁸ In other words, the obvious fact that Māori were taking up arms made nonsense of the suggestion that they accepted the terms of colonial authority and law. Moving on to graver implications, ‘Victorian Colonist’ reminded the *Argus* that the responsibility for the ‘passing’ of the native lay solely with British colonists: ‘we can only lament that wherever the white man plants himself, those of a duskier colour pass away, forgetting that the white man is the cause, and therefore responsible for that passing away’.⁴⁹

For the *Argus*, however, ‘natives’ required no motive for violence. Their savagery was inherent, while the settler was by contrast dutifully defending his imperial contribution. Letters such as those of ‘Victorian Colonist’ reversed this narrative by granting ‘natives’ rationality and agency, and attributing to settlers the capacity for brute violence and rapacity. Unsurprisingly, the debate between the *Argus* and ‘Victorian Colonist’ circulated beyond Victoria. The *South Australian Advertiser* drew on it to conclude that the overthrow of the Queen’s authority was not an option.⁵⁰

The settler defence against humanitarian protestation was, as observed, often informed by racial animosities. As impatience and anxiety over Māori resistance grew, racial thought hardened, often into outright hostility, in the Australian colonies as in New Zealand. In an extreme example, the liberal Sydney *Empire* (onetime soapbox of Henry Parkes, whom we will encounter later), let go a stream of invective after reports of settlers being murdered by Māori. In a breathless polemic it

exclaimed: 'It is high time that the romantic halo thrown by pious missionaries and enthusiastic philanthropists around these bloodthirsty irclaimable savages was dispelled, and the last rag which covers the hideous nakedness of the Maori character stripped off.' For the *Empire*, 'the leaders of missionary and philanthropic movements' care more for the 'dirty, degraded, and nearly naked cannibals, who infest New Zealand' than the starving millions in Britain.⁵¹

More often, the to-and-fro between the newspapers of the colonies and Britain was more subtle. In countering humanitarian critiques, the *South Australian Register*, in one of the more common tactics of the settler press, discredited distant critics who misunderstood the motives for land confiscation:

It is easy enough for gentlemen 'who live at home at ease' to lay down the law which ought to govern the conduct of the colonists towards the aborigines, and to denounce their fellow-countrymen for their alleged injustice and cruelty towards a helpless race. But perhaps a closer contact with the Maories might alter their views.⁵²

The *Brisbane Courier*, by contrast, had some months earlier belittled the humanitarian narrative as merely one of several possible, ultimately rejected, alternatives. Upon noting how the 'New Zealand war has become a stock subject with journalists', the *Brisbane Courier* summarised numerous plots available to newspaper readers to make sense of events in New Zealand. These plots ranged from discussions of native rights, to sympathising with Exeter Hall philanthropists such as Bishop Selwyn, to criticising General Cameron's tactics.⁵³ Each plot held out possibilities for alternative interpretations, showing the gap between reported facts and their exposition. The *Brisbane Courier* concluded instead by simply affirming that 'Once and for all, they [Māori] must be conquered and be made to feel their inferior position.'⁵⁴ Similarly, Hobart's *Mercury*, in the lead up to the war, endowed itself with impartiality by citing the unanimity of 'leading journals' of other colonies. It asserted that 'no discussion of the merits of the quarrel between the aboriginals and the colonists of New Zealand is now pertinent. The whole question resolves itself into one of supremacy. It is a war of races.'⁵⁵

Others strove to uphold the reputations of settlers against a range of critics. 'Australasian' wrote to the *SMH* on the subject of land confiscation. They objected to what they described as the 'outcry raised by the

English Press, Parliament, and philo-Maori defamers of the much-injured and long-suffering colonists of Northern New Zealand'.⁵⁶ Similarly, the Melbourne *Age* had earlier declared that 'If New Zealand is to become a seat of British colonisation, there must be an end to this maudlin sympathy with "noble savages".' Māori 'nobility', only created 'the greatest impediment to their sinking into that inferior position which is alone compatible with the pretensions of the white man'. For the *Age*, 'The Maories, like the North American Indians [Australia's Aboriginal population went unmentioned], will die out before the advance of civilisation.'⁵⁷ The following month the same paper, reflecting on the mistaken policy of philanthropy and the need for 'speedy colonisation', concluded that 'The Maories must atone with their lives for the trouble they have given, and their broad lands will be seized to indemnify their conquerors.'⁵⁸

The *Age's* position altered as conflict continued and land confiscation became the key question. 'We cannot refuse to the Maories pity', it wrote in September 1863, 'even when we urge their subjugation, or, if it must be so, extermination.' It said 'The interests of our race and of mankind forbid that we should abandon the northern island of New Zealand to its aboriginal owners', but it hoped 'their inevitable lot may be accomplished mercifully and speedily'.⁵⁹ By late 1864, the *Age* still saw English attacks on settlers as 'both ignorant and unfair', as blame sat ultimately with the Colonial Office. But it also warned against confiscation of more land than was necessary, and urged consideration of 'the natives'.⁶⁰ The *Age*, in essence, struggled to square the necessity and logic of settler colonisation with the declared wish to act humanely.

It is worth noting that commentators in Melbourne around this time often voiced concerns over of the visible effects that colonisation had on local Aboriginal people—even as they urged Māori defeat.⁶¹ There is no necessary contradiction here. The Aboriginal population of Melbourne was no longer considered an overt physical threat to settler society.⁶² This was in contrast to much of Australia's northern regions where the European population was sparse, and conflict endemic. The situation in New Zealand similarly required an altogether different response. Security of British settlement was the first priority; mourning Indigenous lives could come later.

Quite often, humanitarian language was turned against itself. South Australia's *Border Watch* berated a policy that goes 'under the specious names of humane, enlightened and christian [that] is the most cruel that can be imagined'.⁶³ This paper compared events in New Zealand with the Indian rebellion, a regular refrain at the time. Like the Sepoys, Māori

had been ‘pampered and petted’.⁶⁴ A missed opportunity of ‘breaking the back bone of the Maori power’ and thereby preventing prolonged bloodshed, had been ‘lost through the maudlin sentimentality and officious intermeddling of Bishop Selwyn and the missionaries’.⁶⁵ The Māori racial disposition saw them taking advantage of ‘British forbearance’ and had precipitated ‘a war of vengeance’. It noted that even ‘philanthropists’ admitted the lawfulness of initial colonisation, so there was ‘nothing for it but to treat [Māori] with what some would call unchristian harshness’.⁶⁶

The *Argus*, in a show of solidarity, described how a ‘perfect storm of abuse is showered on the unfortunate colonists, both in the Press and in the Parliament’.⁶⁷ Listing the alleged crimes attributed to New Zealand colonists, the *Argus* deconstructed a *Times* editorial, accusing the *Times* of giving incompatible reasons for advocating New Zealand’s independence. The *Times*, it was implied, cynically exploited the rhetoric of both humanitarianism and economic dependency to curtail imperial involvement in New Zealand. ‘It is difficult to know what it is that *The Times* wants’, the *Argus* complained. ‘Between its feeling for the “noble savage”, and its regard for the pockets of the British public, it is unable to give us any coherent idea of what our policy should be.’⁶⁸ It then reformulated the *Times*’ position as an ultimatum. ‘Let us know precisely what it is that *The Times* desires—whether economy or philanthropy. The two luxuries cannot be enjoyed together by the British people.’ The *Argus* then upped the stakes, cautioning: ‘If [Britain] will not pay for having the war conducted regularly and humanely, they must be prepared to see the colonists taking it in hand in a manner which will somewhat startle their delicate philanthropic sensibilities.’⁶⁹

The *Argus* was on to something. Two years earlier, in 1862, the *Times* recognised that the British position was fraught. The British public were anxious about the increased taxation that colonial dependence entailed. Yet, ‘if the colony were left entirely to its own governance’, the *Times* argued, the ‘logical consequence ... [would] amount to the extermination of the brown man and the occupation of his place by the white’.⁷⁰ In essence, the *Times* understood that the choice was between giving settlers free rein and allowing Māori to succumb to the ‘natural law’ of colonisation, or permitting colonial dependence on British forces at taxpayer expense. A choice, that is, between the imperial ideal and the imperial treasury.

Cut to December 1864 and the *Times* was drawing connections between Australia and New Zealand. It pondered the 'destruction of the race in Tasmania', and conceded: 'The truth is that, at any rate in pastoral countries, there is a never ceasing war between the settler and the native.' Though this war had been evident in Tasmania, the New Zealand example had shown that this method was not how 'aboriginal races can be exterminated'. Rather, 'the settler finds means surer and more inglorious. He imbibes a hatred for the whole native, and learns to treat them as wild beasts, to be hunted down wherever found—as vermin to be exterminated without mercy whenever caught.'⁷¹ As with the colonial papers, the *Times* was torn between the seeming inexorability of settler colonisation and its consequences.⁷² Depending on one's perspective, readers in the Australian colonies and Britain could see a three-sided struggle between needy settlers, a metropole seemingly more concerned with its purse than with the lives and safety of its white subjects, and a Māori population stubbornly refusing to submit to their fate.

Further illustrating the logic driving the refutation of 'humanitarianism', the *Argus* had earlier commented on New Zealand's land confiscation policy. It conceded that the 'notion of punishing a rebellion among savages by the forcible confiscation of their lands, is not altogether reconcilable with the principles of abstract justice'.⁷³ However, it continued, 'no one pretends that abstract justice ever is, or ever can be, the rule of public life'. Rather, 'We live in a world in which we are compelled to do evil that good may come.'⁷⁴ The *Argus*, for the greater good of the settler project, conjured a moral code that superseded ordinary principles. For such reasons, the *Argus* declared: 'We ... deprecate the intervention of the sentimentalists at this particularly critical juncture.'⁷⁵

The *Argus*' 'sentimentalists' included New Zealand's influential Anglican Bishop George Augustus Selwyn. Selwyn, who counted William Gladstone as a personal friend, had long maintained that it went against Christian principles to elect for war (though his view shifted to accept the inevitability of the Waikato War).⁷⁶ The *Argus* challenged humanitarians like Selwyn on their own terms: 'On the abstract ground of humanity, to pause in the career of conquest, to stop short of utter and complete subjection, would be inhuman', both 'to the native, whose hopes it would excite to a fresh struggle, to be followed by another defeat; and to the settler, who has suffered so much that it would be cruelty to ask him to suffer more.'⁷⁷ The *Argus* presented the following prognosis: 'How far we can arrest them in their progress to self-extinction, and regenerate

them in character as well as in numbers, will depend upon the solution of the present crisis.’⁷⁸ The best hope of averting this predestined Māori ‘vanishing’ was thus their immediate subjugation. This much was clear. For the *Argus*, the Māori had only ‘been chastened for his own benefit, and he has been subjected to the chances of partial annihilation that he might be rescued from total annihilation’.⁷⁹

The inconsistencies of this editorial are apparently resolved through the imminence of Māori defeat assigned to them in the same passage. Humanitarians were framed as well intentioned but ultimately harmful, as the deficiencies in Māori culture and civilisation required sterner correction.⁸⁰ The editorial concluded with one last ‘consideration’. The *Argus* knew that the war’s termination would only result in net gains for New Zealand, observing that the ‘war will be to her only a rougher mode of colonization. The lands she has conquered, the telegram tells us, have all the requisites for settlement.’⁸¹ The *Argus* was quick to remind its readers that New Zealand remained indebted to those Victorian volunteers who had assisted her and who aimed to collect their plot of land.

Through the rhetoric of humanitarianism and ‘abstract justice’, the editorial returned to land possession as the core aim for both New Zealand and Australian colonists. By embracing the language and lessons of the humanitarian to achieve antithetical ends, the *Argus* co-opted the challenges of its opponents. This was a manoeuvre likely undertaken, as Kenton Storey has perceived, to allay ‘anxieties related to metropolitan surveillance and the understanding that colonial executives operated with an implicit humanitarian mandate’.⁸² Rather than denying the value of acting with ‘humanity’, the *Argus* simply reorganised its meaning through an alternative rationale. Those readers identifying themselves as humanitarians, as many did, now had to contend with (or perhaps be comforted by) an opposing idea of what this entailed. Drawing on a time-honoured rhetorical device, to *not* conquer and subjugate Māori was to be lacking in humanity.

This reasoning was, of course, hardly confined to New Zealand, and it had a long history in the Australian colonies.⁸³ In this case it is instructive to look at what the *Argus*’ influential owner Edward Wilson wrote publicly on Aboriginal matters. Wilson himself had in earlier years been considered a political radical, a disposition that would later place him in conflict with his conservative editors. He famously promoted Aboriginal policy reform and would continue to criticise British conduct

towards Aboriginal populations into the 1870s.⁸⁴ In his 1859 travelogue *Rambles at the Antipodes*, Wilson struggled to justify settler use of the land he had earlier campaigned to 'unlock' from squatter leases, while also advocating Aboriginal protection. 'Acknowledging that we have the right to take their lands from these people', Wilson wrote, 'I have never been able to see anything to justify our *stealing* them, and virtually murdering their original possessors.'⁸⁵

Wilson thought the land would be gladly sold by Aboriginal people at high prices if the 'blacks' were 'as powerful and intelligent as the British'. Alternatively, he thought they would trade the land for goods if they could equal Māori in intellect and power. Yet, since Aboriginal people were but 'helpless as children ... we stoop to steal what we would otherwise be glad to purchase', thereby consigning 'the entire race to a miserable and degraded extermination as the natural consequence of an inevitable law,—cowards, tyrants, swindlers that we are!'⁸⁶ These were clearly not the statements of a man whose social conscience was fully at ease. In the final analysis, Wilson acknowledged that settlers may be 'an instrument in the hand of Providence for the extermination of this race'. But, 'if the Australian native is to perish irretrievably before us, let us take steps to enable him, like Caesar, to gather his robes about him, and to fall with decency'.⁸⁷

When attention turned to New Zealand a few years later, Wilson's editors were in no mood for such delicate composure. The emotion of the press debate could see editorials framing threats posed by humanitarian interference in settler affairs as an existential crisis. In an editorial devoted to defending New Zealand's settlers, the *Argus* warned:

The speeches of Mr. Mills, Mr. Buxton, and Mr. Selwyn ... on the war policy of the New Zealand Government, are a capital illustration of the kind of obstacles which beset colonists at a distance from the mother country in simply solving the problem of their existence.⁸⁸

The *Argus* again petitioned against external moral prohibitions, laying the blame for settler actions at the feet of the imperial, rather than the colonial, government. In defence of colonial 'existence', the *Argus* noted that New Zealand was only the premeditated acquisition of the Imperial Government that both 'founded the colony, and invited settlers', and which had 'occupied the islands, purely for Imperial purposes'.⁸⁹ The 'colonists of New Zealand may fairly complain both of their assailants

and their defender'.⁹⁰ As 'to the theory that this is a war got up merely out of lust of territory, or from vindictiveness, it can only exist in the minds of that morbid race of philanthropists in whose eyes the white man is always wrong and the dark man is always right'.⁹¹ Variations on this theme found their way back to New Zealand so that papers on either side of the Tasman could support one another in colonial aims as white British settlers.⁹²

This worked both ways. Just as settlers shifted the blame from the frontier to London, so did London, however disingenuously, see settlers as acting against official sanction to instigate the destruction of Indigenous populations. Each case suggested an unspoken, perhaps unconscious, agreement that, though distasteful, these acts offered the only alternative to abandoning the British settler enterprise.⁹³

The writings of one of the more conspicuous irritants to the colonial press, British liberal historian and polemicist Goldwin Smith, illustrate the complexities of this dynamic. Smith was, according to Duncan Bell, thought by his contemporaries to be an opponent of empire, 'a man renowned and reviled in equal measure for his clarion call to "emancipate" the colonies'.⁹⁴ For this reason Smith was described, imprecisely, as a 'Little Englander of the Little Englanders'.⁹⁵ This label became synonymous with a brand of anti-imperialism, and it led Smith to openly clash with the *Times*. In fact, Smith was anxious about the fate of Britain and its global dominance. While Smith later said he saw the loss of the colonies as 'happily impossible', he grew frustrated with their political and economic dependence on Britain.⁹⁶ Smith saw a formalised imperial system as an unnecessary burden when informal sentiment and Anglo-Saxon racial ties were sufficient to keep the relationship between the white settler colonies and the empire secure.⁹⁷

Fame came to Smith through the publication of a series of provocative letters on the British Empire to London's liberal *Daily News* between 1862 and 1863, later revised and published as a book.⁹⁸ In his letters, Smith ruminated on the situation in New Zealand and voiced his criticisms of official policy. He argued for colonial independence for the good of both the colonies and Britain.⁹⁹ He also saw a missed opportunity in dealing with New Zealanders whom he considered 'the very flower of our Colonists, tainted by no convict ancestry'.¹⁰⁰ 'If we have reason to expect just and liberal treatment from any Colonists', Smith wrote, 'it is from them'.¹⁰¹ These letters predictably generated lively discussion in Australia.

In early November 1863, the *Mercury* published a lengthy editorial response to a letter Smith had written on the New Zealand Wars. Smith's letter was itself a reply to an article in the *Quarterly Review*.¹⁰² He backed himself with examples, including New Zealand's *Canterbury Press* which, as we saw earlier, opposed the editorial position of other New Zealand and Australian papers. Through a carefully selective reading, Smith drew on the opinion of the *Press* to critique British imperial policy. He took the *Times* to task for urging the military participation of those 'loose adventurers in Australia'.¹⁰³ Beside the polemical punches landed by Smith, the key point was his dependence on, and the oscillation between, New Zealand and British newspapers as his twin points of reference.

The *Mercury* would have none of it. It belittled Smith's argument as ignorant and illogical. Moreover, it resented the fact that Smith, so far from New Zealand, was trying to make the British public sympathise with the 'natives'. 'No one here', it said, 'looks upon the New Zealand natives as at all entitled to sympathy'. It was, after all, 'the Maories [who] have been the aggressors'.¹⁰⁴

The *Argus* also took aim at Smith's letters. In one hostile editorial, it claimed authority through its authenticity and its pragmatism. 'It is not very easy', grumbled the *Argus*, 'to grapple with a gentleman who writes out of a sentiment so purely abstract, and so little connected with matter [sic] of fact, as Professor Goldwin Smith, the advocate at once of the British tax-payer and the "noble savage"'.¹⁰⁵ Yet the true insult to the *Argus* was the apparent wholesale questioning of settler society:

The great object with Mr. Goldwin Smith seems to be, to prove that the founding of colonies is in itself both a crime and a blunder in an old country; that the distribution of the British name and the British race over the world is detrimental both to the countries colonized and to the parent nation – that the colonial system is equally injurious to the mother country, the colonists, and the aboriginals, who are displaced to make room for the settlers.¹⁰⁶

The defensiveness of the *Argus*' rhetoric was not based exclusively on events in New Zealand, but on the threat that these ideas presented to settler colonial legitimacy. The *Argus* accused Smith of exploiting the 'ignorance and prejudices' of 'the British tax-payer ... who is also an attendant at the Exeter-hall meetings, and a member of the Aborigines' Protection Society', and 'is perhaps about the worst possible referee on

any question connected with the British Imperial management of the colonies'.¹⁰⁷ For these people, 'every native is a dark man, and every dark man is a slave, who ought to be a brother'.¹⁰⁸

The *Argus* sought to distance itself from disreputable colonists on the frontier, yet it also realised the necessity of imperial defence for the colonies. Since the *Argus* considered any notion of calling off the British settler project as self-evidently 'absurd', settlement had to be undertaken in a manner that was secure, efficient, and less scandalous. In this light we can read the conflicted movement whereby colonial commentators could at once champion settler interests, pay lip service to humanitarian rhetoric, and denigrate perceived detractors such as Smith. The point was that despite their seemingly different aims, 'humanitarians' and figures such as Smith each represented a threat to the colonial project as the *Argus* understood it. Each position threatened to undermine the rationales underpinning settler society. And it was this implied abuse that goes some way to explaining the tone of much Australian press rhetoric at that time.

THE SETTLER WAY OF LIFE

Editorials warning of threats to colonial 'existence' evidently saw commercial and physical hazards to the survival of settler societies, hence their appeals to British protection.¹⁰⁹ Fear had long accompanied stories of violence on the Australian frontier, fear that seeped into town and city life.¹¹⁰ This could have lasting effects. Responses to the war in New Zealand came only a few years after a sequence of high-profile station massacres in Queensland, at Horner Bank (1857) and Cullinlaringo (1861), where attacks on settlers by local Aboriginal parties triggered vicious reprisals and rancorous responses in the press. These events were publicised elsewhere in the continent by the *SMH* editorials of John West, whose earlier history of Tasmania had been harshly critical of the behaviour towards that island's Aboriginal population.¹¹¹

By mid-century, most densely populated urban areas of settlement were free of the threat of Aboriginal attack. Yet incidents such as those in Queensland inflamed feelings among the settler population and bred anxiety of future bouts of violence. Rumours persisted. That these often turned out to be based on imaginings rather than reality did little to ease apprehensions at the time. Some undoubtedly held reasonable fears that this violence might threaten their economies, their property

and possessions, and the lives of themselves and their families. This was undoubtedly the case in New Zealand. Some sixteen years after the end of the Waikato War, John Featon, in a highly partisan account, could still say that had Governor Grey not initiated the war, the settlers would have needed to, with 'their very existence as a body being menaced'.¹¹² This statement no doubt contained a good dose of retrospective justification for measures taken to crush Māori resistance. But such statements were also symptomatic of the fears that, so to speak, came with the territory for settlers on the frontier.

Fears of physical threats were understandable in 1860s New Zealand. And Australian settlers expressed concerns about Australian security and British prestige if parts of New Zealand were lost to 'the natives'. To understand the sympathy felt by neighbouring Australians—some distance from the dangers they were discussing—requires attention to other less material features of colonial society. As we have seen, the distance between colony and metropole was often used by commentators as a way to highlight sympathetic connections between the shared understandings of settlers and the ignorance of those in Britain. The proximity of Australia and New Zealand bred associations between experiences that only settlers really knew how to deal with.

Dirk Moses has argued that the 'deep structure of settler colonialism becomes incarnated in settler consciousness when security fears are triggered by the inevitable indigenous resistance'.¹¹³ Any impression that outsiders sympathised with this resistance would have been deeply unnerving. Yet, in the cities where much press rhetoric originated, this was also likely to have been a performance for an intended audience. Settlers wanted their interests known, and their complaints aired. They wanted British protection and approval, not humanitarian interference from those who knew nothing of what they were up against. The feeling that major British newspapers showed little sympathy to similar threats faced by settlers elsewhere no doubt contributed to the acrimony of Australian press reactions.

In his examination of transnational settler press discourse in the 1830s and 1840s, Alan Lester argues that by threatening to disregard settler demands, humanitarians also threatened settler colonists' 'political and military dependence on metropolitan support'.¹¹⁴ For this reason, Lester suggests, 'settlers struggle[d] to avoid such marginalization by establishing and promoting their own ideas of legitimate British colonial intervention'.¹¹⁵ Lester hints at the affective bonds roused by humanitarians.

He observes that 'the sense of outrage occasioned by such humanitarian accusations was perhaps one of the most emotive and powerful of reactions binding settlers at a number of sites'.¹¹⁶ Yet this was more than just a 'war of representation'.¹¹⁷

I think Lester's claims can be pushed further, even if speculatively. The figure of the humanitarian, along with other critics of settler society, endangered more than merely the discursive positioning of settlers. Indigenous resistance to colonial invasion disturbed settler narratives and called for their societies to be simultaneously, and repeatedly, defended and justified. As such, a more fundamental motivation underscored the conflicted positions taken by settlers towards external critique. They elicited affective responses to the potential dissolution of the sustaining fantasy of settler societies.¹¹⁸

Recent accounts of nationalism have used theories of affect to explain the tone of political and nationalist language that cannot be accounted for by material motivations alone.¹¹⁹ This work proposes that nationalist fantasies of social harmony rely on an imputation that an outsider threatens the unconscious, affective bonds of a community. These bonds are discernible in the unique elements understood as a group's 'way of life', and which supply it with 'plenitude and vivacity'.¹²⁰ The common identification with these emotional elements of national social practices constitutes the deep attachments of nationhood, without which the community might disintegrate.¹²¹

If this proposition can be extended to settler communities more broadly, as I am suggesting, we can better understand the objections aired by Australian commentators against those who through ignorance, neglect, or naïvety, disrupted British settlers' conceptions of their societies as exceptional and legitimate.¹²² As Anthony Moran has claimed, if group formations are a defensive mechanism for its constituents to allay or displace their anxieties, any perceived attack on them is 'likely to unleash anger, fear, and despair as the particular fusing of individual and social form breaks down'.¹²³

Defensive settler rhetoric might be seen as stemming in part from an ambivalent relationship to the mother country. That is, an Imperial Government that encouraged settler endeavours while condemning how these were undertaken, and then equivocated over protecting settlers from the resistance their actions provoked.¹²⁴ But this defensiveness pertained to emotional as well as somatic threats. If critics challenged the moral basis of settler livelihoods, if they prompted collective guilt rather

than pride, settler self-identification was weakened. Rather than positive representations being the endpoint of settler aims, these representations were only the textual inscription of deeper feelings. In the case of settler societies, these feelings did not relate simply to the way settlers used their land, but also to their relationship to the country they claimed as their home, and to their means of acquiring it. The messages in the press varied considerably—accommodating a great deal of ambivalence. This is not surprising given the conflicts inherent in securing settlement at all costs, while defending the humanity and ‘Britishness’ of settlers themselves.

Settlers positioned themselves as contributing to more than the material production of the British Empire. They often believed—or wished to believe—that they were obeying a moral imperative, even a Biblical injunction. This was a position to which even the laws of nature seemed to comply.¹²⁵ The necessity of this undertaking meant that any harm inflicted could be pardoned. That is, they might ‘do evil that good may come’. These were undoubtedly materially self-serving beliefs. At the same time, they could also be deeply felt values, ingrained in the identities of those holding them. They could not be given up without suffering major loss.

While settlers disdained moral or overly restrictive external interference, they also lobbied for state-directed martial aid to assist them in colonial conflicts (‘protecting them from savages’). The latter was needed, they claimed, for the colonial process to continue efficiently and, less convincingly, humanely. This was true of New Zealand and the Australian colonies at different times. If Australian colonists sympathised with the pleas of New Zealand’s settlers, it was partly because many had sought (and often had not found) government backing on the frontier in the past, and in some cases the very recent past.¹²⁶ Settlers could defend their participation in these conflicts by saying they were only implementing a London-directed colonisation process.¹²⁷ Yet the colonial request for government aid also came with the condition that broader settler aims be achievable without external obstruction or stricture.¹²⁸ They sought an ideal balance of autonomy when able and external intervention when necessary.

The antagonist to colonial society existed in the form of those who, like the *Times*, or Goldwin Smith, or vaguely defined ‘philanthropists’, were seen to thwart settler wishes through economic, political, or humanitarian agendas. In their turn, settler newspapers could use these same reasons to suit themselves. Where critics claimed the colonies to

be overly expensive, counterarguments demonstrated that they were in fact the productive basis for global British prosperity. Where they were accused of harming ‘natives’, it was rebutted that the immediate suppression of Māori was the more humane option. With circular logic, settler claims about their inherent British rights and land tenure were necessarily true because the validity of their societies depended on their truth. Once the naturalness of colonial occupation of foreign land was taken for granted, it remained only to ensure that the settler project continue uninhibited.

It was the idea, however illusory, of realising a morally vindicated, idealised British settler community that led colonial commentators to assert stronger ties to Britishness, while emphasising the distinctive characteristics of colonial societies. These were questions of community feeling facilitated by the global circulation of commentary between the colonies and Britain. They would take on new inflections when the Australian colonies got their next chance to fight overseas.

The Sudan Crisis: Displays of Unity

The embarkation of some 770 colonial troops from Sydney on 3 March 1885 to aid the British military campaign in the Sudan is, as with the volunteers to the Waikato, seldom commemorated.¹ This is unsurprising given the retroactive muting of Australian military history prior to 1915. Australian military historiography acknowledges the New South Wales contingent's (NSW contingent) achievement of being the first self-raised, self-funded, and self-equipped infantry force sent overseas by an Australian colonial government in a British imperial war.² However, as these historians also customarily remind us, the NSW contingent saw minimal 'action' in the Sudan.³ What is more, though several Australasian colonies would offer troops, London accepted only the initial New South Wales offer, lending the story to more localised accounts. In other words, if mentioned at all, historians generally assign Australian involvement in the Sudan the status of a peculiar historical footnote.

It is productive to see the NSW contingent as more than a curiosity. When a reported 200,000 spectators, some two-thirds of Sydney's population, witnessed the troops on the day of their embarkation, ebullient newspaper evocations of heaving crowds portrayed a society that had reproduced a thriving British community half a world away.⁴ Meanwhile, running descriptions of troop preparations confirmed colonial administrative and technological advancements for both local and foreign readers. We might well conclude that the emotion on display demonstrated a fondness for spectacle, government manipulation, or a carnivalesque

release from Victorian formality.⁵ Yet newspaper rhetoric on the eve of the troop's embarkation reached such fever pitch that it should be further explored, not dismissed.

Ann Laura Stoler has in another context cautioned against the temptation to disregard affective language as mere 'distractions from both the "real" workings of colonial authority, its underlying agenda, and its true plot'.⁶ Rather, sentimental language in nineteenth-century sources, properly contextualised, can be carefully read on its own terms to better grasp colonial compulsions. In doing so, we can also mark a shift in register from the commentary attached to the Waikato War.

Taking sentimental rhetoric seriously, if critically, is not to suggest a lack of hyperbole. The overblown tenor of the rhetoric was criticised in print and in parliamentary speeches at the time. All the same, there is ample evidence to suggest that people at the time believed in the unprecedented and epochal nature of this moment. The Sudan episode was a highly emotive affair, but the emotion was largely focused at the community level, abstracted from the corporeality of the soldier himself. It was also emotion shared through and between different layers of community, and assisted by the newspaper press. This created a common feeling of participation that seemed to turn a local issue into one of global moment.

One must remain cautious when extrapolating mass sentiment from the purple prose of late Victorian press reports. The subjectivity of the reading experience precludes any final judgement of how individual readers engaged with their papers. Writers too could use sentimental language for varying reasons, including to affirm allegiances, or consolidate community ties. Yet it can be safely assumed that the rhetorical zeal of Australian newspapers in the early months of 1885 at least partially characterised a general public mood, if only because economic imperatives meant appealing to a sympathetic readership. In Australia's case this meant a recurrent refrain of displaying the worth of the colonies as both imperial partners and as self-governing entities. This, however, came with complications.

The mid-1880s are a tantalising period in which to examine ambiguities in ideas of community belonging. Whereas the Waikato War saw clear antagonisms between commentary in Britain and in the settler colonies, new crises in relations in the 1880s were met with a different response. Three years prior to the centenary of the landing of the First Fleet, and two years before Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee, the Sudan crisis would anticipate emotions roused by both events.

The flowering of so-called colonial nationalism within a period of high imperialism—captured in increasing talk of continental federation of the colonies on the one hand, and the burgeoning idea of imperial federation on the other—meant that community feeling was a balancing act. This dynamic was more subtle than ‘a clash of imperialism and nationalism’.⁷ By reading about the NSW contingent, Australians could reflect more broadly on the idea of their societies and their relationship to the empire, its history, and their own.

THE ANXIOUSNESS WHICH YOUNG COMMUNITIES FEEL ABOUT THEIR POSITION

From the outset, press rhetoric and community identification merged in the coverage of General Charles George Gordon, whose death prompted, at least superficially, the New South Wales offer of troops.⁸ Yet the events subsequently seen to have led to General Gordon’s death were, in their genesis, complex. The Sudan held a curious geopolitical position. It was under Egyptian administration, and while Egypt had colonial ambitions of its own, it remained, technically at least, part of the Ottoman empire. However, Egypt was also from the 1870s increasingly subject to British and French political and economic influence through their strategic investments in the Suez Canal.

What would appear as Sudanese religious and nationalist resistance against Ottoman-Egyptian control, must be seen in the geopolitical context of Britain’s protection of its routes to India. In 1882, an Egyptian nationalist revolt led by Arabi Pasha erupted, at least partly to counter the European sway over Egyptian affairs. As a result, many believed Britain’s *de facto* authority in Egypt to be threatened. William Gladstone’s Liberal Government, heavily pressured, made the reluctant and diplomatically delicate decision to ‘temporarily’ occupy Egypt through military force. This was done to protect the Suez Canal, shield British investors and bondholders, and prevent foreign competitors gaining a foothold in this region of strategic necessity.⁹

Meanwhile, the extended Egyptian subjugation of the Sudan had led to a growing sense of injustice there, and helped to spark a series of uprisings under the leadership of the mystical figure of Muhammad Ahmad, the self-appointed ‘Mahdi’ (guided one). The Mahdi wanted to purify an Islam that he perceived as being corrupted. He and his

followers embarked on something of a Holy War. For Western powers, the growing influence of this insurgency in the Sudan 'threatened to destabilise Egypt's politics still further and spread rebellion in its upper provinces'.¹⁰ A flagging Gladstone, wanting nothing to do with the unfolding chaos, argued against further intervention. He prevented Egyptian reprisals, saying the Sudanese were only 'struggling rightly to be free'. Instead, he organised a plan for the Egyptians to evacuate the territory.¹¹

The *Pall Mall Gazette*'s famed editor W.T. Stead led a successful campaign to have his personal friend, General Gordon, implement the evacuation.¹² Characteristically exceeding his mandate, Gordon ill-advisedly tried to crush the rebellion.¹³ Massive media attention followed. Winston Churchill would later recount how, following Gladstone's submission to the 'intense agitation' for the campaign drummed up by the conservative press, the 'dramatic character of the enterprise and its picturesque and original features fascinated the nation, and the advance was watched with breathless interest'.¹⁴

Newspapers presented readers around the empire with increasingly dramatic reports of Gordon's predicament. A frustrated Gladstone had delayed sending a relief force for months. When he finally did, the belated distribution of British reinforcements, led by General Garnet Wolseley, saw their arrival just days too late. After ten months withstanding the Mahdi's siege, British and Egyptian forces folded. On 26 January 1885, when white Australians could commemorate ninety-seven years of European colonisation, Gordon, surrounded in Khartoum, was killed and decapitated. The Madhi had taken Khartoum.

Near-unanimous Australian and British press portrayals of Gordon's imperial martyrdom called for a scapegoat. One was found in the Prime Minister's dithering response. Gladstone's political stock plummeted, receiving even the Queen's personal reproach. Gladstone initially bowed to the only option available to save his political skin. He reversed his position, licensing Wolseley to crush the Mahdi, with an aim to restore British prestige. When the Russian threat reared its head in central Asia, attention turned from the Sudan to that other gateway to India, Afghanistan. Gladstone then changed tack again, gladly returning to his policy of withdrawal from the Sudan.¹⁵ But the damage had been done. The 'Grand Old Man' would resign in June, replaced by Lord Salisbury's Conservatives.

When news of Gordon's death reached Australia, the acting Premier of New South Wales, William Bede Dalley, seized a rare opportunity. Dalley suggested that his friend, the retired British army officer (and 1860s New Zealand War veteran) Edward Strickland, float an offer of a military contingent to the *Sydney Morning Herald's* (SMH) editor. The editor happened to be the London-born 'unabashed imperialist', Andrew Garran.¹⁶ This was a stellar act of media relations. As Ken Inglis tells it, 'any scheme to preserve or extend the empire had a good chance of attracting Garran's enthusiasm', while at the same time gaining public support prior to the official offer.¹⁷ Garran had Strickland compose a letter that he published in his paper the following day.¹⁸ In this way Strickland's idea reached 'perhaps one in five of the breakfast tables of New South Wales, including practically all of those occupied by the men who composed the colony's political public'.¹⁹ The next day, 13 February, Garran printed an editorial approving of Strickland's suggestion, coinciding with Dalley's offer of troops.

The spontaneity of Dalley's offer meant it bypassed the required process of parliamentary approval, a fact that opponents sought to leverage. For its majority of supporters, the illegal haste of the offer made it all the more patriotic. After all, they said, many of history's most momentous acts had been impulsive, unconstitutional, and unprecedented. For a short time, New South Wales parliamentary members seemed to want to discuss almost nothing but the contingent. For other colonies this was a lesser matter, though still attended by rhetorical heights and vigorous debate.

Victoria, Queensland, and South Australia followed Dalley's offer of troops, but only the New South Wales offer was accepted.²⁰ While outwardly celebrating the apparent proof of colonial loyalty, London had accepted the offer partly out of imperial etiquette. The diplomatic, if awkward, decline of subsequent colonial offers spurred a brief surge in intercolonial rivalry.²¹ Telegraphs flowed between Britain, and the Australian, Canadian and New Zealand colonies, urging acceptance of troops, competing for praise and congratulating one another on offers of service as cooperative sons and daughters of the empire. British officials in turn offered polite and tactical responses.²²

Several months after its embarkation, and after 'much sweat but little glory', the NSW contingent returned to a rainy Sydney and markedly less fanfare than had seen them off. As if to justify their original fervour, Australian newspapers around the continent did their best to imbue the

whole episode with lasting meaning.²³ Attention then duly turned back to the old threat of Russia on the Afghanistan frontier.

To grasp the significance of the media response to the Sudan crisis, however, we must view it alongside the events with which it shared page space. The date of 26 February 1885 marked the close of the three-month-long Berlin Conference that apportioned influence in the African continent among the European powers. The Berlin agreements that hastened this so-called scramble for Africa, saw 1885 become a watershed in the unabashed assertion of the European right to conquer. These events deeply embedded the NSW contingent within the high imperial moment.²⁴

A series of invasion panics also amplified imperialist and nationalist feelings within the Australian colonies. Prevalent 'Russian scares' kept in mind the Great Game between Britain and its great rival. Indeed, it was popularly believed that Russia was to use Britain's distraction in the Sudan to invade Afghanistan.²⁵ These fears coexisted with Australian agitation for British control of nearby islands in the Pacific.

Following press reports in 1883 of the imminent German annexation of north-eastern New Guinea, Queensland Premier Thomas McIlwraith, broadly supported by the other Australian colonies, unilaterally claimed for his colony—and thus for the British Empire—south-eastern New Guinea. To the dismay of the Australian colonies, this move was overruled in London where New Guinea was viewed as a key geopolitical 'bargaining chip' to trade with Germany.²⁶ The New Guinea predicament revealed a clear tension between Australian ambitions, interests, and 'perceived strategic vulnerability' in the Pacific on the one hand, and high imperial strategy on the other.²⁷ It was also a sharp reminder of colonial subordination to British control over their foreign affairs.²⁸

This global view illuminates the connection between events in Africa and the South Pacific.²⁹ Gladstone's intervention in Egypt forced him to weigh the embarrassment of withdrawal against risking war with Britain's European rivals.³⁰ These strategic concerns influenced British compliance with German designs in New Guinea.³¹ This did not prevent many in Australia seeing London's acquiescence to Germany as British neglect of colonial security.³² Further, colonists in Victoria harboured suspicions over French intentions in the New Hebrides and New Caledonia where it was understood that French criminals would be stationed too close to Australian shores and, perhaps, closer still to colonial sensitivities over their own ancestry.³³

Crucially, and by contrast with news transmission between Australia and Britain during the Waikato War, improved communication technology in the mid-1880s meant Australian colonists could engage almost simultaneously with events, and emotions, felt in Britain.³⁴ This effect was perceived to usher in historical precedents. Melbourne's *Argus* recognised that the separation of the American colonies from Britain a century prior was based on 'the constant and often unconscious assumption that the native-born colonist was inferior in grade to the Englishman'.³⁵ However, the chief reason that the Australian colonies would not follow this revolutionary route was that 'easy communication, rendering constant intercourse possible, has quite done away with jealousies and suspicions and assumption [sic] of superiority'.³⁶ 'Ignorance breeds misunderstandings', it claimed, 'But the electric telegraph, the steamship, and the printing press have well-nigh abolished the disadvantages of distance, and men in all parts of the Empire now read the same news and discuss the same ideas at the same time.'³⁷

In such ways the 'proof' of 'colonial merit' seen in British publicity of the NSW contingent had 'allay[ed] the anxiousness which young communities, as well as young people, are apt to feel about their position'.³⁸ Yet as this last sentence implied, it was just this uncertainty over their publicised position in the eyes of the mother country that engendered these anxieties in the first place.

THE UNITY OF NATIONAL FEELING AT BOTH ENDS OF THE EARTH

And if the World, with scoffing smile,
Say, 'Why thy handful fighting here—
Is not thy home Australia's Isle?'
Then answer with defiant cheer,
'We are the Empire's children! – not
Mere stepsons of the 'Southern Cros [sic]
And with our parent cast our lot,
To manful share her gain or loss.
What though a world-wide ocean flood
Divide us? – we in soul are one!
And warm as ever, British blood
Beats in our veins, from sire to son!'³⁹

Of all the tropes read in Australian newspapers at this moment, none were more pervasive than the incantations of national and imperial unity. General Gordon here symbolised a truly transnational identity. Even before his assignment to the Sudan, Gordon was a Victorian cult figure. In the late 1870s, as Governor-General of the Sudan, he famously endeavoured to suppress the slave trade. In the early 1860s 'Chinese Gordon' assisted the Chinese government in subduing the Taiping Rebellion. Beyond his celebrity, Gordon, according to John Mackenzie, personified a heroic myth of empire, carrying a 'psychic power ... through the collective consciousness of its citizens'.⁴⁰ Denoting the peak of an idealised Britishness, Gordon was an emblem of muscular Christianity.

Figures like Gordon offered ordinary readers the kind of imaginative investment in the idea of empire that political-economic affairs simply could not provide. Positioned beside financial tables and agricultural reports were adventure stories seemingly recounted in real-time. Each incoming report 'of that all engrossing topic', brought with it the exhilaration of following an underdog warrior enlightening the dark continent, and his subsequent betrayal by ineffectual politicians.⁴¹ His death, Ken Inglis writes, 'was mourned more intensely than any other Englishman in the whole of the nineteenth century'.⁴² Expressions of grief following Gordon's death were intensely emotional. Insofar as public expressions of this grief dominated, they were also largely male, tying 'manly' martial heroism with masculine sentimentality.

The pervasiveness of Gordon's exploits was further assisted by their fit within the 'one-day best sellers' of the newspaper press.⁴³ Narrative function was inseparable from market forces. The activity of daily newspaper reading transformed Gordon's death into a public mourning ceremony shared between the colonies and Britain. An Australian correspondent for the *Times* typified this procedure:

It is impossible to give your readers even the slightest notion of the thrill of pain, and heart-felt sorrow with which the news of the death of the late General Gordon was received throughout the length and breadth of this island continent ... it is no exaggeration to say that every morning for weeks before the final catastrophe the first thing looked for and with hourly increasing anxiety, was some telegraphic intelligence that Gordon at any rate was safe.⁴⁴

In Australia, a typical memorial column in the liberal Melbourne *Age* described Gordon's death as a 'national calamity', before noting that 'It is when we are as it were gathered round a grave like this, and can in imagination gaze into the faces of so many different peoples, gathered from all climes, and from every quarter of the world, that we are able to realise the vastness of England's possessions.'⁴⁵ A letter to the same paper two days later understood Gordon's demise as a chance to admire the joint belonging and grand scope of their cooperative empire.⁴⁶ Not to be outdone, the *Age's* conservative competitor, the *Argus*, claimed Gordon on behalf of the Australian colonies as 'the great hero of all English speaking people throughout the world'.⁴⁷ In New South Wales, the *SMH* painted Gordon as Christlike in life and death, uniting the British imperial family through a shared religious heritage and reminding readers that Australia identified itself *for* Christian civilisation and *against* the 'Saracens'.⁴⁸

Predictably, Dalley's subsequent offer of troops saw a further outpouring of comment in newspapers throughout Australia.⁴⁹ The *SMH* saw Dalley's offer as dissolving the geographical distance between Britain and the Australian colonies inasmuch as 'the unity of national feeling at both ends of the earth has been displayed in the most natural and unmistakable way'.⁵⁰ For Sydney's *Evening News* the response to the offer 'prove[d] as nothing else could so well prove how deeply seated the love for England ... [is] in this far away Dominion of the Empire'.⁵¹ The effect of this love was to ensure that among 'all Australians ... petty differences are forgotten; and from the highest to the lowest one spirit of volunteering animates the whole community'.⁵²

Similar rhetoric could be read in the initially more equivocal coverage of the offer in other colonies. The *South Australian Advertiser* felt that 'In the mind of every Australian will be the recognition ... of the practical share of these colonies in the duty and privilege of representing and contributing to the unity of the Empire, and of forwarding its enterprises'.⁵³ Despite stating its 'practical' application, it was the suggestion that *every* Australian held these ideas that tactfully presented a national harmony for Australian and British readers alike. Such declarations limited the range of responses to the contingent, rendering dissent unpatriotic.

This language extended to metaphors of 'home' and 'family' that pervaded official and public language. In an increasingly familiar mode, a *SMH* editorial the morning after the contingent's embarkation

announced that New South Wales, 'not yet a hundred years old, put forth its claims to be recognised as an integral portion of the British Empire, just as much as if it had been situated in the county of Middlesex, instead of being at the very opposite side of the globe'.⁵⁴

Imagining New South Wales as innately British had the advantage of binding its subjects together with a comforting sense of pride, while familial metaphors sourced colonial maturity to maternal descent. This choice was understandable. If imperial theorists and colonists were seeking an affective model for the Greater British relationship the obvious candidate was the collection of Victorian family ideals centred on maturation and bequest.⁵⁵ As Catherine Hall and Sonya Rose have argued, familial images of empire were clearly marked by gender roles that reinforced a naturalised and harmonious hierarchy where each member played their allotted part, either in subservience or authority.⁵⁶ Through the mutual association of blood relations, the ideas of nation and family rendered each other ahistorical. And it was the recourse to familial blood that justified and sanctified the emotional impulses that drove men to kill and be killed.⁵⁷

Still, locating the proper place for the colonies within this hierarchy depended on whether they were seen vertically as subordinate to Britain or, horizontally, as equal partners.⁵⁸ As Australia's future inaugural Prime Minister Edmund Barton put it to a cheering crowd at a Patriotic Meeting in support of the contingent: 'I want to ask you whether we regard ourselves as a portion of the English nation or as mere hewers of wood and drawers of water?'⁵⁹ The *Argus* claimed of the troop's embarkation: 'Without a great stretch of the imagination it might be said that today Australia comes of age'. But it could not stop itself from slipping between images of proven maturation and filial dependence.⁶⁰

Comparable statements proliferated and need not be compiled. Beyond platitudes of imperial and national union, however, it pays to recognise the performativity of declarations that fervently affirmed what was ostensibly natural. More than mirroring self-evident facts of imperial relations, editorials strained to make it so. This was no side effect. The symbolic opportunity for colonial newspapers to promote Australia's relative position within the empire was its core function. This helps to explain why comparatively little mention was made of the Sudanese people themselves who, if discussed at all, were typically embodied in the metonymic figure of the Mahdi, or through their historical casting as

‘brave Saracens’.⁶¹ The Mahdi and Gordon were two sides of the same coin. Just as the Mahdi stood in for what was not British civilisation, Gordon stood in for what was.

Where individual colonies sat in the imperial order was informed by whom they were measured against. The intercolonial rivalry of the time can be gauged by the observation of a Melbourne correspondent in the *Brisbane Courier* who claimed: ‘Never more than during the past week have the people of Victoria been set seriously thinking of its *relative* position as one of the Australian colonies.’⁶² Colonial enmities, chiefly between New South Wales and Victoria, could elsewhere be looked upon by other Australia colonies, such as South Australia, with ‘amusement’ and as undermining high talk of colonial federation.⁶³

And yet when set against Canada, this rhetoric could shift to that of Australia as a national whole. Competitive national gestures were made following a mistaken *Times* report that the Canadian Government had offered troops for the Sudan.⁶⁴ It had in fact done no such thing.⁶⁵ As the date of the NSW contingent’s embarkation crept closer, this pattern continued. When a threat was presented to the empire as a whole, the rhetoric shifted to an abstracted Britishness (or ‘Englishness’) that transcended national borders.

Often these layers of feeling were codependent. When a letter-writer to the *Age* announced that Gordon’s name was ‘not more dear to the heart of the millions who teem in the mother country than it is to the lonely dwellers in the far west of Canada, or the but yet sparsely populated plains of Australia’, he drew attention to colonial distinction while also—with the pregnant disclaimer ‘yet’—locating the Australian colonies in a teleology of British expansion.⁶⁶ Even in New Zealand, MP George Fisher could describe the NSW contingent as unprecedented in the history of the British Empire in ‘rais[ing] the status of the colonies in the estimation of the British people’.⁶⁷ Sir George Grey, now a New Zealand MP, saw the New South Wales offer as ‘one of the very greatest movements which have taken place in modern times’.⁶⁸ The reasons why this movement was seen to be so great becomes clearer when we look at who its intended audience was.

TO ADVERTISE THESE COLONIES

As with the Australian colonial contribution to the Waikato War before it, the NSW contingent to the Sudan prompted local newspapers to speak to a British readership. Rather than explicitly defending the settler enterprise as in the early 1860s, coverage of the Sudan episode saw the initiation of a more harmonious and mutually advantageous collaboration. Examples of this were frequent and diverse. In the lead up to the contingent's embarkation an *Argus* editorial declared:

The effect of the offers of troops for the Soudan cannot fail to have a strong effect on the popular imagination in England, and to 'advertise' these colonies – a difficult and costly process – in the metropolis itself ... The most hopeful sign of the day is that Australia has been 'discovered', and that her local ambition and her Imperial sympathies are at last being understood.⁶⁹

Leaving aside the historical resonance of Britain's 'discovery' of Australia, an imperial appreciation of the colonies was here understood as a key achievement of the contingent. Days earlier, the *Argus* had hoped Dalley's offer would end Britain's 'chilling indifference' to colonial interests, and would acquaint Britain 'with the real sentiment of these colonies'.⁷⁰ In Queensland, the *Brisbane Courier* recognised the opportunity to present Australian loyalty to the mother country: 'Nothing would make our fellow-countrymen in England understand us better, or enable them to appreciate at once the genuine attachment of Australia to the Empire, and its claim to be treated as an important section of that Empire' as the sending of troops.⁷¹ Likewise, upon learning of Dalley's offer, the *SMH* assured its readers that not only did they now have a captive English audience, but that the emotional response was reciprocal: 'If the news of the Egyptian difficulties created a deep impression here', wrote the *SMH*, 'the news of our offer of assistance has created a deep impression there.'⁷² Even Sydney's radical nationalist *Bulletin*, for all its criticism of the contingent, had to concede that 'as an advertisement its value is probably incalculable'.⁷³

This was not merely publicity for its own sake, but the expression of a vital message. Three months later, deflecting criticism of the contingent's financial cost, the *SMH* noted: 'It has been common to remark that the colony has been advertised, and there is a vulgar sense in which

that word is used to which no one would desire to attach any great importance.'⁷⁴ 'But', it continued, 'it has been important to bring closely home to the British mind the political weight which these great and growing colonies are destined to exercise.'⁷⁵ Beyond self-promotion, the press coverage of the contingent responded to how the colonies could see themselves from Britain's perspective. It was through acts of warfare that colonists believed they could surpass previous efforts to prove their worth. While reminding its readers that colonial sporting exploits had provided some evidence 'that the Australian climate was not ruinous to the English physique', the *SMH* knew that nothing had yet satisfied the British imagination as had the export of colonial troops.⁷⁶

Evidence of this satisfaction lay in scrupulous monitoring of British newspapers. 'It is impossible', the *SMH* continued, 'to read the notices in the English press without becoming aware that the English mind has wakened up on the subject', and 'that the history of the British Empire has entered on a new phase'.⁷⁷ Eager colonists could in turn see a thoroughly agreeable reflection of their importance. Superlative accounts of the troops from, among others, the *St James's Gazette*, London's *Daily Telegraph*, and the *Pall Mall Gazette*, were reproduced with consecutive passages praising the colonists' masculinity, their unified patriotism, their progress, and the moral and racial boost they offered the empire.⁷⁸ Even the widely reproduced speech of the Governor of New South Wales, Lord Augustus Loftus, reminded the troops that: 'The eyes of your gracious Queen will be bent upon your exertions, and in every part of the world where your flag floats, men, women, and children will eagerly read of your exploits.'⁷⁹

Individual colonists were in this way invited to imagine British readers appreciating a united Australian feeling, and comprehend their emerging nationhood through British eyes. That is to say, only through its endorsement by the mother country could this colonial gesture achieve its aim. For communal identity to be beholden to external approval, however, also meant vigilantly guarding against external reproach. Colonial unease over British condescension was widespread and notorious.⁸⁰ Positive commentary on the contingent became all the more necessary if colonists were to overcome this irksome sensitivity.

This was no simple task. A May 1885 *Argus* editorial attempted to manage these concerns, but ended up producing its own tensions. It began by stating with outward relief that 'England is apparently a great deal happier than it was because of the Australian contingent to the

Soudan'. It then offered a densely figurative sketch of the contingent's British reception:

This is the last military baby of the nation, or perhaps it should be said the first grandchild. The child is a fine one. That we all know. And quite the usual course has been followed of calling in the experts to pinch the little arms and feel the little weight, and to extol the merits of the interesting stranger.⁸¹

This oddly triumphant infantilising of the contingent can be contrasted to other depictions of colonial maturation, a disparity again capturing the dual ideas of colonial dependence and independence.

The complexities of this illustration are better understood by refocusing on how the contingent united the sparring colonies under British inspection. Speaking of acting-Premier Dalley, the *Argus* wrote: 'We trust that it is not a fly in his ointment that no one in England ever seems to refer to his corps as other than the "Australian Contingent", its identification with New South Wales being either quite forgotten or completely ignored.'⁸² It is the variation in tone here from an earlier editorial that is striking. In February of that year, the *Argus* had indignantly rejected British accounts charged with 'ignoring' Victoria. The thought of New South Wales being singled out for praise due to Britain's sole acceptance of their troops had at that time bordered on the incomprehensible.⁸³ 'The messages from England', the *Argus* wrote:

...speak of a desire to 'compliment the colony'. The use of the singular form of the word is, we may presume, accidental, as it would be felt by many to be somewhat of a rebuff if, while New South Wales is favoured, Victoria, which was really the first to show the way with her gunboats, should meet with another refusal.⁸⁴

Returning to the *Argus'* May editorial, this tension was now seemingly resolved. However, the key point is that this resolution occurred at the rhetorical level through 'English' reference to the contingent as 'Australian' rather than belonging to New South Wales alone.⁸⁵

The *Argus* understood that acceptance of colonial unity by readers in Britain demonstrated not just the success of the contingent but also metropolitan ignorance. 'England deals with us broadly', it continued,

it 'knows little or nothing of our local distinctions, and this is one of the great lessons taught by the contingent.'⁸⁶ Acting Premier Dalley's alleged original motivation—for NSW to get one over her more prosperous southern neighbour—is acknowledged only to be superseded by the meaning accorded to the contingent in Britain: 'We do not know whether Mr. Dalley merely meant to do good for New South Wales, but the fact is that in sending the contingent he achieved greatness for Australia.'⁸⁷ The *Argus* conceded that the contingent's real significance lay not in its performance on the battlefield, which would indeed prove to be negligible, but the continued satisfaction of the mother country.⁸⁸ Crucially, this satisfaction was not the result of events on the ground, but rather the result of British misrecognition of the intricacy of colonial affairs.

Still, the heterogeneous nature of the colonial press thwarted any conclusive statement on the matter. An editorial in Tasmania's *Mercury* took a more pragmatic stance. It granted that the contingent had 'caused an outburst in the London Press', and that the British view of the colonies had greatly improved from being that of a 'nuisance'. Belying the same evidence the *Argus* had drawn on, the *Mercury* found this praise excessive. Of the contingent's importance the *Mercury* felt that 'the London Press has said a great deal more than has been heard in the Colonies'.⁸⁹ It quoted the London *Daily Telegraph's* excited proclamation praising the emergence of Australia as a world power, before adding that this bore little resemblance to fact. It cited instead colonial disunity:

If the contingent had been an Australasian one, if the Colonies had joined together to send a force to help the Mother-Country in the hour of her need, the fine writing would have also been true writing, but as it is, the fact remains that New South Wales stands alone, and appears to be resolved to so stand.⁹⁰

The *Mercury* said that though the New South Wales action was to be praised, 'very much more remains to be done before the Empire will be consolidated as a whole'. Such passages demonstrate the competing claims that limited narrative cohesion in the newspaper press. However, the *Mercury* still foresaw the potential for this unity to be realised, glimpsing its possibility through the global system of telegraph communications: 'The whole earth now vibrates with messages of moment from one portion of the British Empire to the other ... Surely, when

such things exist, it is folly to declare that no new national organisation is possible.⁹¹ But if this was the colonial take on their own achievements, it remains to see how their great advertisement was received by the mother country.

THEIR FIRST WARLIKE OPERATION

Long I have dreamt of them, growing greatly,
The lads I love, getting big and bright;
And the way they have shot up and strengthened lately
Must fill a father with fond delight.

'My Boys' (A Carol for Our Colonies), *Punch*,
28 February 1885, 102.

The Sudan question was of much greater practical consequence in Britain than it was, or needed to be, in the Australian colonies. The potential damage to Britain's prestige as a result of events in Egypt and the Sudan prompted major political debate in the first half the 1880s. It was partly for such reasons that there arose a noticeable change in British attitudes towards the colonies.

Whereas British newspaper commentary on Australian troops in New Zealand reflected wider debates over the costs and benefits of the settler colonies, British press responses to Australian involvement in the Sudan almost unanimously praised colonial loyalty to the empire. Put simply, British commentary on the NSW contingent served to reassure readers that all was well with the empire, while giving a timely reminder of global British solidarity to imperial challengers. This was an idea bolstered by communications networks. In 1885, a New South Wales correspondent for the *Times* told his readers that far from the colonies being 'cut off from the old world', the 'daily telegrams announcing the progress of the expedition up the Nile were looked for with eagerness'.⁹² As Simon Potter has noted, a key function of the press system connecting the white colonies to Britain at this time was to encourage the reader to 'think imperially'.⁹³ The *Times* thus somewhat superfluously reminded its readers: 'Just now hardly a day passes without the colonies being brought before our notice in some prominent way.'⁹⁴

The issue of imperial expenditure was an obvious difference between responses to the Waikato and Sudan conflicts. So too was the nature of the conflict itself. In New Zealand in the 1860s, the reluctance of imperial elites to fund what they saw as the unnecessary conflicts of avaricious

colonists meant that colonists needed to frame these conflicts as necessary, and as ultimately beneficial to the empire.

In 1885 the circumstances were ripe for a reappraisal of the colonial-metropolitan defence relationship. The last of the British regiments had left Australian shores in 1870, a development that distressed many in the colonies. The fact that a settler colony had now offered a fully self-funded contingent that was to aid an imperial-directed foreign conflict meant the offer was welcomed in Britain almost entirely without reservation. Compared with the lengthy and animated debates in Australian colonial parliaments, there was little discussion in the British parliament of the NSW contingent beyond its happy reception.

The imagined thrills of empire certainly aided public interest in the conflict. Accompanying the latest phase of imperial aggression was a renewed enthusiasm for the excitement that war and travel were thought to offer. In the pages of the press the exotic existed in the everyday. If adventure tales were, in Martin Green's words, 'collectively, the story England told itself as it went to sleep at night', newspaper reports of empire were what greeted it each morning upon waking.⁹⁵

More than this, though, a mounting set of social anxieties within Britain provided an opportune moment in which to welcome the offer of colonial support.⁹⁶ The soothing reiterations of the empire's unity coincided with a set of concerns that had grown since mid-century—concerns over perceived threats to British supremacy from rival powers, democratic ideas 'infecting' the public, and racial contamination from colonised peoples. As these ideas intensified, so had the need to consolidate white Britishness.⁹⁷

These apprehensions were, again, rooted in history. What was emphatically not allowed to happen was another splintering of the empire as had occurred during the American Revolution. In a speech reproduced widely in British and colonial newspapers in early 1885, Gladstone, himself often denigrated by rivals as a little Englander and an opponent of imperial federation, spoke to this fear. The Prime Minister saw in the contingent 'a most gratifying contrast' to 'the shock of a great dismemberment of the Empire', that had accompanied the loss of the North American colonies.⁹⁸ As we have seen, compounding memories of this division was the recent New Guinea crisis where Britain's equivocal response to Australian lobbying efforts and German aggression generated concern that the perceived disloyalty to Australia had weakened the imperial bond.⁹⁹

For advocates of imperial federation, the colonial offers of troops to the Sudan were events of momentous historical importance, undermined only by the missed opportunity of accepting only the New South Wales offer.¹⁰⁰ Others hoped in vain that, even after London's blundering rebuff over New Guinea, the 'triumph of loyalty over exasperation' represented by the NSW contingent would hold true in years to come. But they could not be sure. Again, the spectre of the American Revolution loomed large.¹⁰¹ One English visitor to Melbourne perceived that imperial loyalty could only withstand so many 'snubs'—further showing the divide between a precarious loyalty to the British Government and an unbending devotion to Britishness.¹⁰²

The irony was that both Australian and British papers articulated the same anxieties over how to maintain colonial ties to Britain.¹⁰³ And yet, following fiery remonstrations in the Australian press after the New Guinea incident, there was soon felt a boom in patriotic sentiment towards the empire. To the *Times*' Australian correspondent, the reasons for this volte-face were clear: 'A week ago we were all grumbling at the mother country; to-day we are fired with enthusiasm to help her. It is General Gordon's death which has effected the transformation.'¹⁰⁴

The value of the NSW contingent for both Australian and British newspapers, was to enact a two-way gesture of reassurance, to publicise a mutual understanding that tensions had been resolved, and to return a sense of wholeness to a state of rupture. The crises in the South Pacific had alerted the colonies to their complicated standing within the imperial hierarchy. The contingent gave Australian newspapers a chance to assert a fundamental loyalty unshaken by colonial complaints, while the British response allowed this sentiment to be publicly accepted.

Rather than seeing the colonies as a burden, as had often been the case, or feeling the need to justify expenditure upon them, British editorials could now fit the settler colonies into a new and triumphant imperial narrative.¹⁰⁵ Australians could also bask in the admiration of their British spectators. Just as Australian newspapers saw colonial progress as growing from strong imperial roots, prominent British papers saw the martial enthusiasm of its young colony as a statement of lasting tradition. The British reading public could then identify an improved version of British society in the colonies whose loyalty was untainted by political expediency. In each case the press acted as a site on which to imagine a particular vision of social stability.

THE POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF IT MARKS AN ERA IN HISTORY

The potential of the colonies to distract from problems besetting Britain was evident in the days leading up to the news of the New South Wales offer. Referencing imperial federation in the context of the Sudan crisis, the liberal *Daily News* in February 1885 recognised that: ‘The importance of the colonies meets the modern politician at every turn. The manner in which they have settled or are settling the relations of the land and the people is worthy of the most attentive study.’¹⁰⁶ More than locations of bemused curiosity, disdain or encumbrance, the colonies were now a place where encouraging lessons could be learnt. These ideas increasingly located the settler colonies as an ever-more central component of the empire. They emphasised the virtues of emigration, and the benefits of territorial expansion. Doubts were suggested only by the hesitancy over whether the colonists had finally ‘settled’ the relations of the land and its people.

What was undoubted was that the diffusion of Britishness should benefit not only its recipient localities, but the empire as a whole. The colonies established by British migrants verified the empire’s forward-looking, progressive elements while negating its dishonourable ones. Rather than demonstrating the aggressive logic of settler colonial expansion, the forceful taking of Indigenous territory could be understood as a mere side effect of the grand project of circulating the British race. This assignment required thinking of the empire as an organic and unified body in which each part performed a specified role. If a narrative of imperial improvement was to be convincing, it was critical that it be seen as natural, inevitable, and immanent.¹⁰⁷ Newspapers and periodicals served a pivotal role in this. Regular potted histories, editorials and letters reinforced the idea of a British imperial community and reminded readers of the vast interconnected scope of the empire of which they were a part.¹⁰⁸ Often this entailed a revised narration of past events and the New South Wales offer of troops to the Sudan provided an opportune occasion for this.

A London *Daily Telegraph* editorial dedicated to the NSW contingent (reprinted in Australian newspapers), spotted a chance to write a parallel story to that of losing the American colonies. It saw the arrival in the Sudan of the *Iberia* and its military cargo of Australian ‘bearded white men’, as a historical moment echoing that of the arrival of the Mayflower. The arrival of the contingent, wrote the *Telegraph*, ‘speaks to our

imagination as few recent events have done'. Such was 'the birth of a new power in the world – the debut of Australasia on the stage where nations play their part', that 'Never in history had the like been witnessed'.¹⁰⁹

If Australians needed proof that their martial gesture had secured the correct response they were to receive it here in an emotional torch-passing, marking a distinct break with the kind of assessments made in the 1860s. The *Telegraph* noted of Australia that although 'She had counted for little before; she has ever to be reckoned with in future'. The extravagance of this rhetoric was tied to its familial aspect. Thus, 'With almost paternal interest the home-staying Briton dwells upon the apparition of the new Australian force side by side with the historic regiments of the old land'. This interest was in large part owing to their 'admirable physique, and of the fact that they are men, not boys'. This was a depiction supplemented by a collective display that characterised the 'enthusiasm, and almost recklessness, of national youth'.¹¹⁰

The signs offered by the contingent had, for the *Telegraph*, global significance. 'The great drama now in progress', it declared:

may have in reserve far more momentous acts than any yet played. Its stage may widen indefinitely, and its scenes be shifted from African deserts to Asiatic steppes; but in proportion to the urgency of the case will be the assurance that the British Empire ... is one, indivisible and invincible.

Now that the colonies had established their worth, their participation in the empire would prove decisive in its expansion and defence. Implicitly conceding the symbolic limits of the daily press, the *Telegraph* even anticipated artistic representations of the empire's unity, seeing in the contingent 'a theme for the poets and painters of the future such as those of the present might envy from their hearts'.¹¹¹

Such views were not uncommon. The *Leicester Chronicle and the Leicestershire Mercury* also marked the NSW contingent's embarkation as a day 'memorable in the history of the Australian colonies'.¹¹² What made this particular account interesting was its view from the future. In a hopeful prophecy the article foretold: 'When, a century hence, the rise of the great Southern Empire shall be matter [sic] of history, foremost amongst the deeds of its founders will be their first warlike operation.'¹¹³ These mixed tenses, whereby readers could comprehend actions of the present read in the future as a great moment of the past, again spoke to a wish to control a particular teleology. The NSW contingent could clear

from the British imagination escalating imperial worries, with bygone troubles recast as the necessary means to an end.

Much British commentary was, as Australian commentators were well aware, made without direct experience of the local situation. But there were notable exceptions. James Froude, the eminent Oxford historian was visiting Australia at the time of the Sudan crisis, and was urged to give his thoughts on the colonies.¹¹⁴ In his famous account, Froude reflected on the reasons for the offer of the contingent: 'The New South Wales colonists cared nothing about the Soudan. They were making a demonstration in favour of national identity.'¹¹⁵ He was equally sure that the imperial spirit burned brightly in the colonies, noting, without contradiction, that the contingent was a 'practical demonstration in favour of Imperial unity'.¹¹⁶

Froude visited a Sydney overcome with 'the Soudan business' and eagerly awaiting London's reception of their offer.¹¹⁷ As a recent member of the Imperial Federation League, he saw the contingent as the colonists' answer to the scepticism of Goldwin Smith and his ilk.¹¹⁸ Despite being impressed by the colonists' emotive display, Froude could not help but wonder whether it was only a fleeting excitement which the realities of conflict would soon dissipate.¹¹⁹ For Froude, the question was whether the events surrounding the contingent were 'a mere ridiculous outburst of vanity and sentiment ... or a wise and generous act, good in itself, and promising to lead in future to greater good?'¹²⁰

Froude's book and lectures caused a splash in the colonies and in England. Reviews discussing Froude's comments on the excitement felt in the colonies over the Sudan episode were printed in the British press, then reprinted in the colonies.¹²¹ Other articles censured Froude.¹²² Later commentators produced books to correct his supposed inaccuracies or fawning embellishments, and the Australian press commented on him at length.¹²³ What could not be disputed was that the contingent marked a moment when British eyes were on the colonies, and the colonies were doing all they could to ensure the right messages were received.

THE WHOLE WORLD WILL UNDERSTAND

As far as Britain was concerned the NSW contingent fulfilled its function in the very immediacy and publicity of William Dalley's offer. In fact, the understanding that the contingent's impact rested not on its martial

utility but on its 'moral value' only magnified its meaning.¹²⁴ Precisely because it was not required for practical purposes, the contingent showcased for British readers the instinctive familial spirit of the white colonies. This much was conceded by the British papers that understood that the significance of the contingent lay not in numbers alone, but the 'community of interest' it represented.¹²⁵

Crucially, this idea advertised the global nature of British imperial defence to would-be challengers. As a letter to the *Pall Mall Gazette* expressed it:

We are not exulting so much over the colonial offers of aid because colonial soldiers are actually wanted in the Soudan, but because the spirit shown in such offers may come in the light of a much-needed revelation to the European Bears, Eagles, and other insects of prey, which have for some time past been casting greedy glances on Mother England's little domicile.¹²⁶

The contingent, in other words, was political theatre for a European audience.

The assignment to better promote this progressive view of the colonies was taken up by articles such as those in the series titled 'A Tour in Australia', published in *The Essex Standard*. The author, W.H.P. Arden, described the articles as part of a mission to educate British readers. Shrewdly capturing the concerns of Australian commentators, Arden observed that the 'dark ignorance existing among the British public of anything pertaining to Australia is lamentable and amusing'.¹²⁷ This was primarily 'because it causes indignation amongst the Colonists, and tends to show them that they and their country are not appreciated as they have a right to be, forming, as they do, an integral portion of our Empire'.¹²⁸ Arden showered the Australians with praise. He also pronounced their difference, revising proclamations of racial homogeneity for Britons around the globe: 'For they *are* distinctly a race by themselves.'¹²⁹

Again, these distinctions were complicated by the Irish question in the colonies. Reflecting the ongoing Home Rule political crisis within Britain, which reached a crossroads in this period, British newspapers took up and disputed the Irish racial composition of the New South Wales population. When the *Pall Mall Gazette* described New South Wales as: 'the most English and most thriving of the States that have

sprung from [England's] loins', a correspondent wrote in to say that New South Wales was, in fact, the 'most Irish of the great colonies, a third of the population being Celts and Catholics'. The letter even cited William Dalley's own Catholicism and Irish heritage. Although, out of ignorance or courtesy, the fact that Dalley's parents were also convicts went unmentioned.¹³⁰

The exchange was not lost on the Irish nationalist press. The following day *Freeman's Journal* accused Dalley of being ashamed of his Irish-Catholic background, 'Judging by the Anglicised edition of his name'.¹³¹ From this evidence the article deduced that: 'If the rest of the Irish in the colony are of the same stamp it is easy to understand these effusive professions of loyalty to England.'¹³² It is here that, perhaps in spite of itself, *Freeman's Journal* got to the heart of the matter. Despite the tone of condescension, the implication was clear—the NSW contingent and the gushing patriotism of the colonies derived, in part, from their historical embarrassment.

Returning to Arden's 'Tour in Australia', we see that the distinction of the colonies only increased their importance to the empire. A shaken metropolitan society looked to celebrate an exceptional offshoot untouched by the problems beleaguering Britain. The colonies acted as a space in which British readers could imagine a virile and rehabilitated idle. But Arden's presentation of Australia's uniqueness was made within the confines of Western racial categories. As such, Australia remained a secure object of knowledge. Arden balanced colonial idiosyncrasies with the shared British concepts of commodified pastoral production and ideas of private property, ideas that marked Australian colonists off from an Aboriginal population representing a more radical distinction. Arden commented on colonial difference, but only as a subcategory of white Britishness.¹³³

To truly demonstrate the strength that would appear revivifying to a British readership, Australian enthusiasm for empire had to appear autonomous. The unspoken clause was that this spontaneity was useful only if the colonies remained at Britain's bidding should the need arise. Arden's key concerns were again the New Guinea affair and the delicate matter of the rejection of offers of troops from other Australian colonies. He warned of the urgency with which 'Englishmen belonging to all grades of society must take a deep interest in this great southern Continent, and they should exert themselves to maintain the connection between it and

the mother country.’¹³⁴ Reversing fears heard in the Australian colonies, Arden obliquely referenced the traumatic moment of American separation from the empire to claim that it would be England that would lose most ‘if that connection were severed’, while ‘Australia being isolated from the civilized world, would lose little’.¹³⁵

We need not labour the point to notice a shift in rhetoric from the 1860s to the 1880s.¹³⁶ Ubiquitous familial metaphors took on new significance, symbolising the growing prominence of the colonies in the imperial imagination.¹³⁷ The ground these metaphors were expected to cover, however, saw them frequently lapse into ambiguity.¹³⁸ The colonies provided some solace to metropolitan anxiety. Yet this solace came only with the knowledge that the colonies were complying with British expectations. For the comforting image of the colonies to have its effect, they had to occupy the dual position of independent, martially equipped saviours, but also that of deferential children. Premonitions of imperial decline meant that where Britain embodied the worst aspects of youth and of aging, the colonies represented the best of both.

The instability of familial roles was evident also in the gendered images attributed to the NSW contingent.¹³⁹ A *Standard* editorial from 7 March saw the NSW contingent as ‘compensation’ for the ‘period of stress and storm through which this country is passing’. As such, it could ‘gratify the patriotic imagination with a vision of the remote but related resources’ of the empire.¹⁴⁰ Any hint of retreating from military threats was variously ‘unmanly’, ‘feminine’ and ‘womanish’.¹⁴¹ With its editorial focus on colonial progress and masculinity, the *Standard’s* readers could see in colonists an exemplification of the imperial ideal. Yet British depictions of NSW as, by turns, the mother of the Australian colonies, a maturing son, a young daughter, and all the while remaining eminently manly, epitomised the flexibility, and the uncertainty, of the metaphors that colonists embodied.

Inseparable from much of this rhetoric was more overtly politicised language praising the Australian colonies for their so-called traditional values. The same *Standard* editorial cited above suggested that Englishmen should be proud to belong to the same ‘kith and kin’ as the Australians. This was credited to their proving that ‘the old traditions still survive’, with Australians retaining belief in their ‘Imperial duties’.¹⁴² More specifically, colonists had ‘formed their ideas ... before the wave of modern Liberalism, with its shallow humanitarianism and feminine

ideals, had obtained vogue'. This was timely: 'for they speak at a moment when the theorists who would fain have destroyed the British Empire in the name of imaginary blessings to mankind are shamed into silence'. But, crucially for the *Standard*, 'our flesh and blood in the Colonies are not content with speaking. They likewise act'. Precisely because of Australian colonists' spontaneous patriotism, the *Standard* could confidently record that colonists had not 'degenerated' from their forebears, but had improved on them. Lest the reader be in any doubt as to the *Standard's* allegiance, it concluded: 'In times of difficulty there is only one motto for an Englishman who loves his country. It is "One Empire, one People".'¹⁴³

Resembling a pattern demonstrated in coverage of the Waikato War, the *Standard* took umbrage at humanitarian interference into imperial affairs. The colonies represented everything that the *Standard* understood to be dissipating in the metropole. The colonist, previously held as an inferior figure against whom metropolitan Britons could assert their superiority, was now at the forefront of the empire, establishing manly virtues due to *his* lack of humanitarian qualms. This representation caught an irony found in varying degrees in conservative British newspapers and their coverage of the NSW contingent. The Australian colonies represented progress via tradition.

The *Standard* viewed the Australian colonies as having improved upon their British forebears in a tale of racial progress. In doing so, they had halted fears of colonial degeneration. But the *Standard*, in its conservatism, could do this only by claiming the colonies had maintained the traditional British temperament and had not succumbed to what it saw as philanthropic and liberal trends. It was just this difficulty of squaring liberalism with settler morality that had caused headaches in the past.¹⁴⁴ In other words, Australian imperial principles were of the past, and thus offered direction for the future.¹⁴⁵

This idea was not confined to England. On 5 March, shortly after the embarkation of Australian troops, an article in the Welsh *Western Mail* sung the praises of the contingent and noted the Australians' apparent lack of moral concern over events in the Sudan. 'It is', the *Western Mail* affirmed:

instructive to observe that the Colonists of New South Wales are tortured by none of those misgivings as to the righteousness of making war upon

the people of the Soudan which vex the souls of those English electors who are chiefly distinguished by their idolatry of the Divine Gladstone.

The reasons offered by the *Western Mail* are telling:

Whether it is that they have not yet been educated up to the pitch of understanding the rights of man, or that the Imperial spirit burns more brightly in young and vigorous communities, whose circulation has not yet been enfeebled by old age, the Australians certainly seem to have had their imaginations fired in an extraordinary degree by the prospect of fighting side by side with English soldiers.¹⁴⁶

The deficit of history in the colonies, read in Australia as a source of anxiety, was for the *Western Mail* a source of virtue and vigour. Their youthful imperial passion had overwhelmed liberal fashions. The writer regretted the lack of imperial feeling elsewhere and urged Britain to absorb the salutary lessons offered, with some irony, by Australian colonists not yet fully educated in such things. It was the political innocence of the colonies that remained most significant. Of the reasons given for New South Wales' celebrated act of 'imperial spirit', youthfulness sat alongside an ignorance of the sarcastically-branded 'rights of man'. In a passage of impressive doublespeak, Australia had proved itself an exemplar of British racial progress precisely by remaining loyal and pragmatic traditionalists.

IT PICTURES TO THE IMAGINATION OUR VAST EXTENT OF EMPIRE

A letter published in the *Manchester Times* neatly expressed some of the meanings captured by the NSW contingent in the British press. The correspondent was Verax (truth teller), a pseudonym of one Henry Dunckley. Dunckley was the editor of another Manchester newspaper, the *Manchester Examiner and Times*, under the same publisher and manager, Alexander Ireland. That he wrote letters and editorials in related publications ostensibly allowed Dunckley to employ different 'voices', and to corroborate his own views.

For Verax, the evident centrality of threats to British supremacy necessitated a forthright assertion of power and intent. He used the latter half of his long letter to rationalise the presence of other empires in

the Pacific. He based this on the confidence created by the actions of the Australians. 'Why should we make ourselves uncomfortable over a few thousand acres of African sand', Verax inquired, 'when the best part of the world is filled with our rising commonwealths?' In a nod to the recent New Guinea crisis, he asked, 'why should these same commonwealths grow uneasy if Germany or France settles down upon some uninhabited island in their neighbourhood and hoists its flag?'¹⁴⁷

Verax evoked both the inexorable march of British imperialism and the rejuvenation of the empire by granting the young colonies the responsibilities of consolidating their influence in the region. In any case, he declared, in an extravagant imperial fantasy, the 'die of empire is now cast, and the Australian and New Zealander are the future lords of the Pacific'.¹⁴⁸

Verax saw the colonists as willing offspring who 'take our conclusions on trust'. He claimed this innocent fidelity to the empire as the culmination of a linear progression from the 'horror' and 'terrors' of 'penal settlement', through to the building of the city of Sydney. From here, 'Verax', like Charles Dilke and Goldwin Smith before him, viewed the mechanics of imperial federation as superfluous given the sentimental links between the colonies and Britain demonstrated by the contingent. Yet he claimed the troops' impact came from their impulsive display of independent affection. As such, he assured his readers, it was something 'we' can be proud of. Indeed, 'there has been nothing like it in the history of the world'.¹⁴⁹

Aware of his rhetorical flourishes, 'Verax' had earlier acknowledged that:

I have perhaps worked up this picture a little too elaborately, but I have done so for a useful purpose, and in small matters of rhetoric the end may be held to justify the means.¹⁵⁰

Even so, why the hyperbolic claim that: 'No grander incident in its way has occurred in the long annals of England'? At one level the answer lay in the need for a radical break with history, to assert the encouraging novelty of the colonies and the distinctive emotive connections of Greater Britain. The following sentence offered yet another explanation: the contingent 'pictures to the imagination, and almost to the eye, our vast extent of empire'.¹⁵¹ Verax saw the NSW contingent as signalling such a momentous event not because of the military aid it offered, nor of

any tangible consequences, but the effect it had on the imperial 'imagination'. Precisely because its composition was imagined rather than physical, its potential meaning was unlimited.

The point of framing the colonies in this way was to grant them a more historically laudable position. During the Waikato War, the violence of antipodean colonists on home soil had been cause for condemnation, their imperial ambitions an irritation. By the time of the Sudan crisis, British papers were increasingly framing the colonies as expedient and worthy partners in a new era of British expansion.¹⁵² The colonies lent a hand in imperial conflicts rather than instigating embarrassing predicaments on their own frontiers. This repositioning of the colonies, however, also highlighted a contradiction at the heart of the British Empire. This was the coexistence of the empire's proud promotion of progressive political ideals domestically with the necessary violence of consolidating foreign territorial gains.¹⁵³ The settler colonies, far from London, were key sites in which this contradiction played out.

Read as part of the British response to Australian involvement in the Sudan, the broader point was that the NSW contingent worked as a symbol rather than a 'fact'.¹⁵⁴ The contingent represented colonies at once manly and feminine, childlike but strong. They were bereft of education and knowledge, yet well aware of their imperial duties. They apparently exuded conservative tradition by eschewing progress, yet represented the way forward for the empire. They acted independently so as to prove the empire's strength, while demonstrating its unity by being at Britain's beck and call. Not least, they showed that the colonies were of one blood with the mother country, but remained a race apart.

The Sudan Crisis: Creating Historical Memories

If there was a sense in Britain that the NSW contingent went some way towards realising a predestined history, there was also an evident need in the colonies to fashion a history where one did not yet exist. Local papers and parliamentarians fell over themselves estimating the significance of the event in future historical reckonings.¹ Parliamentarian Philip Gidley King, grandson of the prominent first fletcher and NSW Governor of the same name, said of the contingent: ‘I have called this event an epoch in our history. It is more, it is an epoch in the history of Great Britain. It is still more, it is an epoch in the history of the world.’² He concluded: ‘We have leaped from infancy to national manhood at a bound.’ Notably, he also said this event followed the last important ‘epoch’, when colonists were entrusted with the governance of their ‘vast Crown estate’.³ Lawyer and legislator Louis Francis Heydon also saw in the contingent the moment when ‘our history may be truly said to begin. We are making history’. This was, for Heydon, the creation of historical memory. He prophesised that ‘when we have 200,000,000 people in this island, the historian in tracing our history will point to this act of the Government, and this debate, as the turning point in the career of the country’.⁴

There is something quaintly parochial in such statements, as if sending a small military contingent from a single British colony could have worldwide historical ramifications. But it is worth asking what ideological work this language was undertaking.

Public commentary shaped and consolidated the mainstream consensus of the meaning of the NSW contingent. It allowed the Australian colonies to resituate themselves out of an encumbered past, into to a celebratory fulfilment of collective destiny. This called for a judicious retelling, and forgetting, of history.⁵ But there is no inconsistency in this. Two conceptions of history confronted settlers. The first was 'History' as the undeclared trauma of a society born of violent usurpation of Aboriginal land and the brutality of convictism.⁶ The second was the triumphant narrative that attempted to work around these origins. These were mutually dependent ideas. The resilience of a disturbing past spurred repeated attempts to overcome it.

This was a project to create a ground zero for the colonial story, the summoning of a 'new era'—one that could displace other rejected or suppressed accounts of the past.⁷ As we have seen, there was certainly no absence of recognition of violence in colonial history, but this was not the kind of violence that could offer strong narrative foundations. For the *Maitland Mercury*, New South Wales' engagement in warfare before this time had been 'mimic', its 'sword is maiden. It has not as yet drunk blood'. Australians needed 'to create memories of military daring'.⁸

This process of memory-creation was a delicate one, and it called for daring measures. It was to represent both a culmination of steady progression, and a radical historical rebirth. The Melbourne *Age* held out grandiose visions of historical renewal:

In the histories and schoolbooks of the future, the preliminary chapters will tell of the early voyages of Dampier and Cook, of convict settlements and explorations, of deeds of violence from the old scum of the English gaols, of the discovery of gold, the vast fortunes of pastoralists, of the rise of manufactures, and the framing of Constitutionalists for separate colonies, and of the preliminary steps for the federation of these into one federal state. The remainder of the history will start from the 3rd March, 1885.⁹

The attempt to reset the colonial narrative from the sending of the contingent was neatly progressive. It was, however, not enough to skirt frontier conflict and Aboriginal dispossession, with muted references to 'deeds of violence' attributed to 'old scum'. The new take on colonial origins had to be more explicit.

It continued:

It has been the duty of the historian to trace the successive steps which led a plundering race to the founding of great cities, and the consolidation of great empires, the rise, decline and fall of which constitutes the whole of what is called history – that is to say, every great nation with a history has arisen with the accompaniment of military oppression and slavery. Australia has never known either.

Rather, ‘she has pursued her way undisturbed by the squabbles of the old world. Her prizes of gold and merchandise have been wrung by sturdy arms, not from the hoardings of a vanquished people, but from mother earth. But now the trumpet has sounded’.¹⁰

This version of history was echoed in sections of the British press. The London *Telegraph* granted that while ‘we have conquered as much as we have colonised’, this admission pertained only to certain locations. Though the empire had ‘picked the glittering diadem of India from the trampled soil of hard-fought fields’, the *Telegraph* breezily claimed it owed its hold on ‘Australia to the arts of peace’.¹¹

A similar overlooking of Aboriginal resistance to frontier expansion can be read in the contrast with New Zealand described by the New South Wales *Times* correspondent. He noted—in a passage recalling that of the *Times* in 1863—that: ‘Hitherto this has been the peaceful portion of the world; New Zealand has had its native wars, but Australia has not even had that trouble.’¹² Here, despite ample evidence to the contrary, the textual removal of Aboriginal ‘trouble’ allowed a proud settler history to be slipped into the venerable story of British martial glory.¹³ The contingent functioned to replace a disturbing ‘first warlike operation’ with a more tolerable one.

What was called for then, was an explicit rewriting of imperial history for colonial purposes. In this we can see the connections between settler colonial violence, material production, and the vindication offered by imperial war. Those charged with producing colonial narratives could sense in the NSW contingent the act that enabled them to feel confident in moving on from a history they wished to suppress.

MEN FULLY EQUAL TO THE ARABS

The previous chapter noted the sense of rivalry between British colonists in expressing their imperial loyalty. But any differences between or within white settler societies were surmountable in ways unavailable to their racial 'others'.¹⁴ The structural relationships of empire were reflected in the racial categorisation that remained of irresistible psychic support for British colonists. However, even this racial divide could be blurred when colonial papers cast their gaze inward.

Part of the historical assignment of Australian colonists was to sustain the purity of the British race in a new land, even as they expressed a budding nationalism. Articulating colonial difference within a homogenous Britishness meant converting old ideas of colonial inferiority into illustrations of settler advantage. We can read descriptions of the physical fitness and manly appearance of colonial troops in this light, inverting the common association of Australian uniqueness and negative environmental effects on 'Englishmen'.¹⁵ This shift in thinking could raise new questions about the composition of the Australian soldier.

Queensland's *Brisbane Courier*, anticipating the South African War's 'bushman' soldier, emphasised that were the Australian colonial governments to 'raise and discipline a corps of bushmen':

they would, no doubt, succeed in producing a body of men who would be specially fitted for a campaign in such a country as the Soudan; men fully equal to the Arabs in power of endurance and withstanding the fervid heat of the country, and able to fight as coolly and as well as the best of the unacclimatised Englishmen, who fill the ranks of the British army.¹⁶

This editorial was answered three days later by a letter describing the physical superiority of men from select Australian regions, transforming the issue of climate into one of potent racial feeling and competition:

How much better could they stand it than the South Staffordshire boys, who had never left England before! A Victorian, Tasmanian, or New Zealand contingent might not be so suitable, but the men of Western Queensland, Western New South Wales, and South Australian territory, are as sundried and hardy as any Soudan Arab can be, as inured to severe heat as any Sepoy or Sikh troops, while imbued with that white bulldog 'devil' that is ever lacking in black troops of any kind.¹⁷

The ideal soldiers for Africa were colonists who could mix a toughness gained from harsh environmental conditions, but who remained within the fold of an exclusively white Britishness. As if his description edged colonists too close to racial difference, the correspondent amended his categories, concluding that General Gordon's mistake was to "trust the niggers", as no Australian bushman would do; for all niggers from yellow to black, are treacherous once you get away from the white skins'.¹⁸ The true dichotomy was only white and non-white.

Colonial Australians therefore required a distinct identity while simultaneously needing a sanctifying 'white' component to avoid racial degeneration.¹⁹ The evocation of the bushman could occupy this middle ground. This could be a precarious balance. Colonial difference could neither abate, nor swing too far towards the pejorative connotations of being a mere colonial. The problem was, according to Beverley Kingston: 'The more assertive their Australianness, the more colonial they seemed.'²⁰ More troubling still, the options to replace the 'English' element in colonial narratives were either a historical focus—which would mean confronting convictism and Aboriginal dispossession—or the unhappy alternative of Australian identity being defined by a historical void.²¹ It was in ameliorating this problem that war, when coupled with a reaffirmation of Australia's white racial heritage, offered a prime opportunity.

Concerns that Australian troops might be understood by Britons as something other than members of an uncontaminated racial family were repeated more explicitly on several occasions. In a blunt statement of the racial sensitivity attending the contingent, a letter reproduced in the *Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate* (owned by radical NSW Legislative Assembly member James Fletcher), and apparently received from an Australian in Sudan, said: 'They are very glad to see us. Many of the British soldiers expected to see us all blackfellows, and were very much surprised to find us white.'²² Another local paper seemed to confirm this idea, informing its readers that: 'the English troops at Suakim [sic] were delighted to find that the New South Wales men were not "niggers", and they congratulated them on the colour of their skin, and the comparative civilisation of their manners'.²³ One need only note the apparent relief of even this qualified praise to sense the concern that was felt. Was simply being not-black sufficient acclaim? How civilised were they exactly? Compared to whom?

A banquet speaker was similarly reported by the *Sydney Morning Herald* (SMH) to have described the common British belief only fifteen years ago, 'that Australia was peopled entirely by blackfellows', but, thanks to Dalley's offer, the 'people of England, in future would not require to look upon their chart to discover where Australia was, or to study a book to see what Australians really were'.²⁴ Needless to add, what they were was 'British to the backbone'.²⁵ Given the wealth of migrant letters, travelogues, press accounts and other communications between the colonies and Britain for decades before the 1870s, it is hard to credit this speaker's depiction of British beliefs. Though this kind of talk cannot be taken too literally, it does point to an evident need for colonists to remind one another of their racial progression in British eyes.

Similar expressions were found elsewhere—often with more than a dash of irony. A wit in Sydney's Catholic *Freeman's Journal*, almost certainly the *Bulletin's* John Ignatius Hunt, saw the offer of the contingent as quashing the 'notion that we are a lot of gohanna-chewing [sic] blackfellows'. Rather, in an inimitable gesture of settler historicism, the writer claimed: 'Australia has been discovered for the second time, so to speak.'²⁶ One sardonic letter to South Australia's *Advertiser*, reproduced in a local Victorian paper, expressed satisfaction (perhaps too great a satisfaction) that other Australian colonies had not succumbed to New South Wales' unthinking donation of men. The letter-writer delighted in the thought that Britain had likely accepted the offer only by misunderstanding "[t]he Australian Troops" to mean the aboriginal natives', seeing entertainment value in 'the spectacular effect of 700 New South Wales blackfellows dressed up in their war paint'.²⁷ The writer illustrated the predicted British shock when Australian troops were found to be white after all.

These thoughts were seldom expressed so brazenly. But that they were mentioned at all hints at the uncertainty colonists evidently saw in themselves when, one hundred years after Arthur Phillip unloaded his unsightly cargo on Eora country on Port Jackson's shores, there remained little confidence in what outsiders made of them. They were faced with an unsettling, atavistic vision that publicly equated them with the very people they had measured their progress against. Whether spoken out of fear, jest, or derision, the idea that Australians could be misperceived by Britons continued during the South African War, as we will see.

The colonial replacement of the Aboriginal population, in other words, had lingering effects on the settler imagination. It is this language that demands a consideration of foreign and frontier conflicts side by side—the emotional celebration of the former, the muted response to the latter. Aboriginal people were largely absent from the imperial stories that settlers aimed to embed themselves within. But history stubbornly intruded. The original violence that allowed settlers to claim continental authority could now be validated through participation in foreign warfare.

CONQUER ME IF NECESSARY

Whereas the subject of commentary on the Waikato War was a corresponding settler colony, the Sudan crisis provoked responses to a different mode of empire building. Though structurally distinct, the justifications for imperial intervention in the Sudan could be invoked to vindicate settler histories.

In one such editorial, the *SMH's* stated reasons for intervention in the Sudan conveniently exonerated the history of its own colony. Taking it on itself to justify colonialism through 'broad principles', the *SMH* conceded that 'We have no right anywhere if the claim of prior occupation is to hold—no right in India, Australia, South Africa, or New Guinea unless we found our right upon a broad conception of our mission.'²⁸ Having set up the problem, the *SMH's* solution is telling. 'And what higher mission is there ahead of Anglo-Saxondom, as represented by the British Empire', it asks, 'than to answer the cry of the savagedom of the world—Take me, conquer me if necessary, but govern and instruct me?' The *SMH* then drew the requisite link with the current campaign: 'And where is the cry more loud and more urgent than at present from all the wild tribes of the Soudan?'²⁹

Lorenzo Veracini has discerned in this kind of rhetoric a logic whereby 'Prior occupancy becomes ... a mere historical accident, and while indigenous peoples *have* arrived earlier they have no qualitatively better claims than those of later arrivals.'³⁰ The *SMH's* reasoning here reveals little that is new. What should be stressed is the tension between what it saw as requiring justification and its rationale in providing it. The *SMH* offered a moral grounding for what it accepted in advance was otherwise immoral. The crucial move was less in finding the solution to its problem, than the statement of the problem itself. For the *SMH*, the

act of justifying the 'rights' of invading and occupying foreign territory assumed these rights pre-existed and simply required elaboration.

This strained attempt to reconcile forceful military incursions with ideals of English liberalism and freedom from tyranny again showed the expediency of racial thought. One of the more cynical ways of pardoning acts of conquest was, as above, to first construct invaded peoples as 'savage' and then impute to them the desire to be aggressively possessed. Needless to add, if 'wild tribes' were fully alert to, and pleading for, their need to be governed and instructed, they were unlikely to necessitate 'conquering'. Yet it was this expansionist impulse that had to be rewritten into a story that invited the reader to experience their nation, or colony, as participating in a noble quest, an onerous duty that would find its classic expression in Kipling's *White Man's Burden*.

The emotionally weighted language the *SMH* used—the sampling of conquered lands, the talk of rights, prior occupation, mission, savagedom, the need for government and so forth—carried an affective, if implicit, charge, gained over time through accreted historical connotations.³¹ The curse of 'Savagedom' was a condition to be expelled by *us* in a historically benevolent mission to implant civilisation and governance for *them*. It was the communal identification with these histories that gave them their power.

Pairing race and colonial warfare came with other complications for public commentary. This commentary included that of the *Brisbane Courier*, edited at this time by Carl Feilberg, whose ironically-titled 1880 pamphlet 'The Way We Civilise', was one of the more confronting and forthright critiques of settler treatment of the Aboriginal population.³² Regions of Queensland, especially in its sparse north, were sites of the most malicious Australian frontier engagements of this period, arguably peaking in the mid-1880s.³³ This much was widely accepted. As George Rusden put it at the time: 'If there be any pre-eminence in evil, Queensland must bear the stigma of deserving it.'³⁴ It was therefore not uncommon for Aboriginal-settler conflicts there to be acknowledged in the local press, even if implications for settler legitimacy were downplayed.³⁵ As ever, the question was one of framing. Frontier conflicts were more socially acceptable when dismissed, alternately, as the result of provocations by aberrant troublemakers, vindicated as necessary (if unfortunate) measures of self-defence, or as demonstrating the inevitabilities inscribed in racial doctrine. These justifications were likely to be especially necessary when colonial editors had their British readers in

mind. More problematic were comparisons between frontier conflict and overseas wars of empire.

A *Brisbane Courier* editorial two weeks prior to the NSW contingent's embarkation made reference to its historical lineage. The intention was to excise any niggling doubts over Australia's racial heritage. The editorial invoked Australian military involvement in New Zealand. After their participation in 'warfare between the whites and Maories', Australian colonists could put paid to the charge that they were only 'degenerate descendants of the grand old fighting races from which the colonists and the Britisher are alike descended'.³⁶ It connected Australians with other white settlers from New Zealand and America who had also forcefully colonised their territories. Five days later, the same paper more forthrightly affirmed that because of the NSW contingent there 'is no breach of race unity yet, no dimming of the sentiment which makes us regard England still as a country for which a man should leave home and children and go forth without a murmur to die'.³⁷

However, readers could encounter a diversity of messages in their daily papers. In this case, attempts to rescue colonists from racial erosion through their martial pedigree can be read alongside a later report published in the *Brisbane Courier* comparing Aboriginal Australians with the Sudanese: 'Our native blacks were just as difficult (in a small way) to deal with as the savage hordes on the Soudan'.³⁸ The writer concluded that 'War should be declared against them until they were entirely subdued'.³⁹ The exterminatory rhetoric underlined not only the contemporaneous violence within Queensland. The native 'difficulties' also suggested a resistance equivalent to that occurring in the Sudan, a resistance credited elsewhere as entirely legitimate.⁴⁰

Elsewhere, the contingent could offset the more offensive features of colonial life. The middle chapters of a memoir by 'the very oldest native Queenslander', John Zillmann, brim with tales of frontier violence and highly-charged racial depictions of every aspect of Aboriginal life. These passages are at the core of Zillman's book. And yet, for the benefit of his English readers, Zillmann prefaces his comments with a gushing note on the wonderful progress of the colonies he had recently visited for the first time. Here Zillmann recognised the symbolic effect of the 'spontaneous outburst of Australian loyalty to the Empire' that was the NSW contingent.⁴¹

Similar connections could be made elsewhere. A correspondent for Sydney's *Evening News* reported around the same time that 'the cost of the expedition is considered too great by some, while others sympathise

with the Arabs as an oppressed race, and compare them with our own aboriginals'.⁴² The intimation of 'native wars' of resistance contradicted references noted elsewhere, including in the British press, to a peaceful Australian history. At a time when mutual exchanges of press reports between Britain and Australia were already common, and when martial sacrifice denoted national birth, the foundational warfare occurring concurrently on Australian soil offered a more incompatible case.

Just as there was a discrepancy between the celebratory accounts of Australians in foreign wars and the commentary afforded to settler-Indigenous conflicts, there was also a tension in the relationship between territorial inheritance and martial sacrifice.⁴³ The nexus existed in the pervasive image of blood as a justification for Australian involvement in the Sudan.⁴⁴ In one particularly excessive example, a special supplement in Sydney's *Echo* commemorating the embarkation of the troops warned that national maturity did not come through peace, but rather:

Principles are rained in blood; virtues are nourished by blood; and baptised in blood we do become regenerate, born anew to a consciousness of a duty in ourselves, and a recognition on the part of others of our willingness to perform that duty, which at once purifies and elevates, broadens and illuminates, makes us more to ourselves and for the first time much to all neighbours and beholders.⁴⁵

Such statements, elaborate as they were, were premised on a basic omission. Deborah Bird Rose has written of the connection of blood with kinship and with sacrifice. She argues that 'the linking of British blood with sacrifice in warfare could enlist a different notion of blood and still exclude the Aboriginal people whose blood was massively shed in the conquest of the continent'.⁴⁶ Although the *Echo* credits the contingent with attaining 'national distinction', it stresses that Australia should be seen by outside observers to 'suffer no severance from the patria' felt towards England. 'Closer to our mother's side', it continued, 'as clearer in the eyes of the world; closer in incorporation as prouder in distinctiveness'.⁴⁷

Though the *Echo* claimed that 'We had lived almost a century thus in one monotonous routine of peaceful prosperity', this absence of a martial tradition had created a gap in the national story which the NSW contingent could now fill. And yet, the *Echo's* baroque moralising notwithstanding, it was not the lack of bloodshed in colonial Australian

history that called for ‘baptism’ and ‘purification’ ‘to all beholders’, but the excess of it.⁴⁸ Attempts to articulate Australian distinction within the imperial family were again burdened by history. If blood spilt ‘defending’ one’s community retroactively granted that community’s legitimacy, where did that leave Aboriginal Australians?

References to blood summoned not only feelings of kinship but, more subtly, the history underlying the geographical distribution of that kinship, and the relationship of blood ties and land rights. The blood ties of settler rhetoric called forth the recognition of biological ancestry while disavowing that this bloodline was predicated on the replacement of an original one. White Australians’ increasingly assertive claims to nativeness clashed with the affirmation of bloodlines deriving from the British on the other side of the world.⁴⁹ The relationship between a racial Britishness, warfare, and territorial acquisition was framed in terms of inheritance. A gendered bequest of blood—‘from sire to son’—was now accompanied, as we will see, by the bequest of soil and the authority to rule over the land.

THIS MAGNIFICENT ESTATE

In the days and weeks following Dalley’s offer, members of parliament rose to voice their feelings regarding the NSW contingent. Most defended Dalley’s decision, but a vocal minority did not. Among the views expressed was the overt reasoning that colonists, having inherited their homeland at little or no expense, were beholden to offer recompense.

When the ageing conservative William Adams Brodribb praised the sending of the contingent, against opponents such as Henry Parkes, he hardly cut against the grain. Yet his reasons for support were striking. Brodribb first ran through a list of figures on the Australian population and land acreage for each colony. After recounting these figures, and impressing upon his fellow members the grandeur of the country they shared, he declared: ‘The mother country has handed over to us without any charge this magnificent estate, with responsible government, to do as we like with this valuable property. Surely, under all these circumstances, we are bound in honor to assist old England out of her troubles.’⁵⁰

The convergence of self-governance and a distinctly territorial basis of rule are clear. What is more notable is a colonial mentality that saw

the necessary repayment in assisting colonisation elsewhere. This, to be sure, consolidated a sense of joint participation in the empire among Australian colonists. It also likely reflected the gratitude of those such as Brodribb whose own shift from successful pastoralist to colonial legislator mirrored a broader pattern whereby squatters' claims to vast runs were retroactively legalised by acts of parliament. It was this conversion of Aboriginal land to private property that, for Brodribb, provided the necessary context for the offer of colonial help to the mother country.

As it happened, two years prior to the Sudan expedition the London-born Brodribb had published an account of his own experiences as a younger man transforming the land in his *Recollections of an Australian Squatter*. Brodribb's recollections were mainly concerned with offering his conservative views on the ever-pressing subjects of emigration, land legislation, and the difficulties encountered in making the land productive. He recalled the '*millions and millions of acres situated north of the Murray unoccupied*, capable of feeding and fattening sheep and cattle to any extent'.⁵¹ Though Brodribb and his party benefitted greatly from the help of an Aboriginal guide on a journey to Gippsland at the start of the 1840s, he also considered it apt to recall his experiences warding off the attacks of 'natives'. In doing so he gave ample evidence of the regular resistance given to settler incursions and displays of manly authority, and the anxiety this provoked.⁵²

Brodribb recalled the need to be 'always well armed with rifle and ball, so as to be prepared for any attack by the natives'.⁵³ He knew that 'From old experience ... it was necessary to keep the Australian savages at a distance', and they had to be kept 100 yards from the hut Brodribb's party had recently built. He said that, at one point, when a man from a local tribe reached for the pipe in Brodribb's pocket: 'I pushed him back, and held my fist in his face'.⁵⁴ Embarking on his journey after a recent attack, Brodribb advised a 'well armed' overseer that in the event of another such attack, it was necessary not to shoot over the heads of 'natives', but at their legs and 'if hard pressed, to kill one'. 'My experience tells me', he continued, 'under such circumstances, half measures will not do. Show them you are determined not to trifle with them, and above all, keep them at a distance. They are never to be trusted in a new and unexplored country'.⁵⁵ It was this country that Brodribb would continue to assert and defend his rights to, in one way or another. And he was grateful for the opportunity.

That one could profit from colonial land legislation was, of course, no guarantee of support for the contingent. But it did colour the debate in other ways. A reply to Brodribb was forthcoming from Italian-born pastoralist Leopold Fane De Salis, who opposed the contingent. De Salis countered that though Brodribb was correct in saying the English Government had gifted colonists land, this did not entail repayment. Rather, it was England who should be grateful to colonists. De Salis's reasoning pitted colonial productivity against Aboriginal idleness. For, he continued, 'if England had not given us the land, what would it have been now? It would have been a barren wilderness, and the abode of the blackfellow. We, the squatters and settlers have made it what it is, and England has something to thanks us for.'⁵⁶ Creating value from land was the common reference point. The only dispute was over who could be credited with enacting this progress, and what should be exchanged in return.

It was Brodribb's position, not De Salis', which prevailed. In a similar rhetorical gesture, Ezekiel Alexander Baker, addressing the proposed costs of the contingent, said: 'I am not one of those who can forget the magnificent gift made by Great Britain to the people of these colonies when she surrendered to them the whole of the Crown lands, with their vast mineral riches.' Though not feeling pressured to say so, Mr Baker nonetheless freely suggested that the costs of the contingent should be borne by the colony.⁵⁷ Baker's specific mention of the land's mineral wealth was, again, unlikely to have been a coincidence. He had arrived in New South Wales in 1853 as a mineralogist before becoming a figure of note among diggers and prospectors on the goldfields. He publicly spoke up for the rights of miners after the anti-Chinese Lambing Flat riots (Baker himself had no appetite for anti-Chinese violence). Baker continued his mining career throughout his life.⁵⁸

A selective historical memory was called on to similar ends. Here colonial conflicts of the past were directly connected to vindicate participation in other colonial conflicts in the present. In a reversal of the kinds of rhetoric the Australian press provided readers with during the Waikato War, John Macintosh spoke pensively of the debts owed to the Mother Country and her nurturing and protection when earlier sending soldiers to New Zealand. That colony, he said 'would have had to be abandoned by *our* people if it had not been for the blood and treasure which Great Britain gave to support them'. In New Zealand, Macintosh continued, British soldiers 'repressed the insurgent natives, among whom our people

had been encouraged to settle down'.⁵⁹ Clearly, attitudes had changed since the 1860s.

Perhaps the most instructive statement of this position came from another prominent gold miner and mine owner, Henry Copeland. Copeland spoke fondly of his British patriotism, as he would do again during the South African War. He said his colonial forebears '*came into* possession of an estate larger than any known since the discovery of America', and then 'took possession of the land' before 'the British Government gave them absolute right in fee-simple to this glorious territory'. For Copeland, the 'possession of the country by a generous parent government' required reimbursement.⁶⁰

As Mark McKenna has shown, claiming the right to colonial (male) self-government relied heavily on assertions of white (male) British progress of the kind defined in contradistinction to what settlers saw as Aboriginal stasis.⁶¹ When earlier campaigners invoked their right to responsible government they were in large part asserting their right to do as they wished with their land. Indeed, the 'gift' of territory and governance was founded on the use of force to clear the land of Aboriginal claims to it. Insofar as self-government was cited as a rationale for sending the NSW contingent, we can draw connections between martial rhetoric supporting colonial defence of the empire in overseas conflicts, and forceful Indigenous dispossession internal to the Australian colonies. Yet Copeland went further, erasing settler-Aboriginal violence completely. Rather, his forebears had acquired the land:

without shedding a drop of blood; it did not cost them a sixpence; they had no difficulty; they had not to fight for the territory at sword's length with a foreign enemy. The colony was handed over to them in a full, free, generous spirit, as part of the British Empire, with a view that it should be held for Britain and the children of Britons.⁶²

Similarly, in a speech approving of the contingent, Mr Heydon compiled a long list of reasons why colonists were indebted to the mother country. These reasons included 'the common natural tie of kinship', the institutions which were 'a direct gift to us' and for which colonists are 'indebted', the ending of convict transportation after colonial requests, and the fighting of costly wars to protect the empire and its members.⁶³ Heydon's speech was, in substance, unremarkable. Others were saying much the same. Yet at the moment he noted the acquisition of the

Australian continent ‘freely, and without any conditions’, the radical John McElphone, vocal supporter of the New South Wales Aboriginal population, loudly objected. For McElphone, this acquisition was ‘At the expense of the aboriginals!’⁶⁴

The key question was this: if the colony was indeed the endowment of the mother country, was the colonists’ inheritance legitimate? Though the narratives supporting the debate over the Sudan did much, consciously or not, to support the settler social order, McElphon’s interjection serves as a jolting reminder that this legitimacy was still occasionally open to dispute. There remained those ready to unsettle the story being written. Yet these reminders could also haunt public discussion in less overt ways.

WHO ARE THE PATRIOTS?

It is generally accepted that genuine dissent towards the offer of the NSW contingent was rare in Australian newspapers.⁶⁵ While reading even a few days’ worth of papers will uncover enough evidence to complicate this view, it is true that editorials around the country were largely in agreement. They were, moreover, quick to curtail oppositional responses. This foreclosing of debate was exemplified by a *Brisbane Courier* editorial that had a different take on colonial unity:

Now the time is past for differences of opinion; the offer having been accepted it is our business – the business of all Australians – to make it evident that our proffered help was worth accepting ... no ebullitions of local feeling should be allowed to interfere with its success.⁶⁶

Though narrative options for discussing events in the Sudan in the major dailies were slim, dissenting voices can be found there, particularly in the letters pages. The most famous example came from the pen of New South Wales elder political statesman Henry Parkes who, while dying five years prior to continental federation, would be memorialised as its father. After the offer of the NSW contingent, the *SMH* published a series of letters by the ever-provocative Parkes. These letters were hailed as the chief nonconformist presence in the major dailies, not least by Parkes himself. As he explained: ‘from the first moment [of the acceptance of Dalley’s offer] all my faculties of common-sense and discernment, all my feelings of patriotism and loyalty to the Empire, were opposed to this

movement, which I looked upon as uncalled-for, unjustifiable, and quixotic'.⁶⁷ And though Parkes' position had the sympathies of a substantial subsection of New South Wales society, he also faced a barrage of condemnation from the press. In Parkes' recollection, his opinions led to 'all the papers published in Sydney set[ting] upon me like ravenous wolves'.⁶⁸

Parkes' letters were undeniably significant for the correspondence and commentary they provoked.⁶⁹ They also revealed much about the privileged access to the public sphere for those with the standing and name recognition of the (then) three-time Premier of New South Wales.⁷⁰ Newspaper letters, as opposed to private epistolary engagements, were explicitly intended as public performances. Parkes, who turned 70 in that year, used the press as a political stage to oppose Alexander Stuart's Government. Dalley's offer provided a chance for Parkes to return to the political arena after his voluntary retirement the previous year for financial and political reasons. Dalley's grand gesture notwithstanding, Parkes would soon leapfrog his long-time rival in contemporary assessments of their relative historical importance.⁷¹ Even Froude, after his travels, wondered if those sympathetic to Parkes' opposition to the contingent would overtake those in favour of the contingent.⁷² Yet Parkes' accusations, grounded chiefly in practicality and legislative legality (not to mention cynical politicking), inadvertently captured the complexities of appealing to both colonial nationalism and imperial patriotism.⁷³

Parkes declared that there 'can be no greater folly than to foster a spurious spirit of military ardour in a country like ours, where every man is wanted to take his part, in some form or other, in colonising work'.⁷⁴ Parkes, seemingly oblivious to the Australian historical referent, portrayed the Egyptian war as one of invasion against 'barbarous tribes who, in comparison with us, are fighting on their own soil'. He then argued, in a much-quoted passage, that: 'With the right hand we are expending our revenues to import able-bodied men to subjugate the soil, while with the left hand we propose to squander our revenues to deport men to subjugate Sir Edward Strickland's "Saracens"'.⁷⁵ Yet looking at the relationship between local settler colonialism and imperial adventures overseas tends to complicate the view that Parkes was rejecting British imperialism.⁷⁶ The 'subjugation of the soil' and the establishment of vast numbers of white British immigrants were constitutive settler colonial acts. Though a budding nationalist movement was increasingly

contrasted to a tub-thumping imperialist idiom, the two cannot be extricated from the broader project of British global expansion. As we have seen, they were connected in more ways than one, as was well recognised by supporters of the contingent.

To prevent the reader mistaking Parkes' loyalties, he concluded that he 'yield[s] to no man in attachment to the throne and institutions of England. But my notion of loyalty is a steady and consistent performance of duty as citizens of the Empire'. If war should come, Parkes said 'our first duty will be to hold inviolate the part of the Empire where our lot is cast; and, this sacred trust secured, to give life and fortune freely, if we have them to spare, beyond our own shores'.⁷⁷ Indeed, the previous year Parkes had urged in a major metropolitan periodical for British recognition of the colonies as imperial partners in a united expansion of Britishness. He was eager for Britain not to dismiss the Australian colonies as inferior and subordinate.⁷⁸ Parkes was more concerned with consolidating colonisation than with opposing imperialism. He wanted to get back to the fundamental British values he saw as being undermined by actions in Africa.

In desiring to protect Australia first in the event of war, Parkes less challenged loyalties than negotiated between them. In the emotional aftermath of Gordon's death, any sane political figure would have been highly alert to accusations of being anti-empire. Hence Parkes could tell his readers that, through his dissent, he was in fact more pro-empire, even if his idea of loyalty needed qualification. To understand Parkes' position, we have also to appreciate that Dalley's offer took place within a particular field of social relations. This was a commonsense patriotic militarism befitting good imperial citizens. It was the force of this consensus that made Dalley's offer so logical. To this extent at least, Parkes, ever the politician, was restricted in his opposition.

Dissenters were more readily accommodated in the radical press.⁷⁹ James Fletcher, radical coalminer and owner of the *Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate* (cited above), also opposed the contingent and admonished Britain's claims to moral authority. He recalled not only Britain's relationship to the slave trade but also their sanctioning of the law permitting the 'slavery' of the black labour trade in Queensland.⁸⁰ Yet, even after pointing to a raft of contradictions and ethical infelicities in British and colonial actions, Fletcher continued:

If we wanted to show our undying loyalty to the mother country the better way would have been to publish to the world the fact that while living in peace with the nations of the earth ... we value this territory of New South Wales so dearly that if any one were to attempt to take one inch of it they would have to take it over the dead bodies of every man in the country.⁸¹

Even this perceptive critic seems to have missed the connection with the foundations of his own country.

The *Bulletin*, perhaps the most singular and irreverent periodical in Australian history, was under no illusion as to the power of its mainstream rivals in defining the terms of debate. As Sylvia Lawson understood, the hostility that papers such as the *Bulletin* showed to the major dailies was a concession to the 'potency' of the latter.⁸²

Perhaps no other publication was so vocally and openly reflective of the respective positions of itself and its competitors in colonial society. This alone did much to subvert the tone of authority of the *SMH* and its ilk. This was more than moral outrage. The *Bulletin*, raucous, pugnacious, and proudly colonial from its inception, revelled in its hostility to the stately and respectable publications of urban Sydney and Melbourne. The bushman's bible, as it became known (despite also being published in Sydney), attempted to give voice to marginalised rural and working-class concerns over an elitist mainstream. The *Argus*, the *Age*, the *Daily Telegraph*, and especially the *SMH* would all come under fire from the *Bulletin's* editorials, poems, cartoons, satirical prose, and letters.

Its imprudent acknowledgment of, among other things, cruelty towards the Chinese, and the enduring legacy of Australia's convict origins also made the *Bulletin* a particularly discomfiting presence in polite society.⁸³ In 1885, when the mainstream papers were rhapsodising over the Sudan expedition and the virtues of fighting and dying for the empire, the *Bulletin* attacked this position at its core.⁸⁴ Perhaps more than any other publication, the *Bulletin* hacked at the NSW contingent's moral roots.⁸⁵ Unforgiving in its iconoclasm, it delighted in subverting what it saw as an obsequious consensus in order to test the boundaries of public speech. Where the medieval Crusades were evoked by the *SMH* to stress a shared and sacred heritage of Christian Anglo-Saxonness, the *Bulletin* insisted the Crusades belonged to the 'barbaric age'.⁸⁶ Where many saw the donation of the meagre savings of 'A little boy at Manly' as poignantly symbolising colonial patriotism, the *Bulletin* saw a metaphor for a naïve and reckless jingoism.⁸⁷

The story of the *Bulletin's* paradoxes has been well told.⁸⁸ Yet one particular editorial on the power of press language to frame debate merits further attention. It asked 'Who are the Patriots?' It opened by noting that supporters of Dalley's 'martial *coup* have enjoyed a very distinct advantage over their opponents', namely, 'their audacious assumption that to be excited by a warlike fervour is patriotic, whereas a deliberative and judicial ... attitude is unpatriotic, if not actually treasonable'.⁸⁹ It explained: 'Jingo partizans ... have appropriated such terms as patriotism, national honour, prestige, valour, and glory, to themselves, and have taunted the dissentients from their craze with being meanly pitifully deficient in these splendid attributes and emotions.'⁹⁰ In other words, these terms, in the hands of the mainstream press, attained specific meanings only through placement in their imperial context, and their relationship to British loyalty.

Having drawn out the ideology of conventional press reportage, the *Bulletin* offered its redefinition of these terms. That is, patriotism for the *Bulletin* meant *not* showing blind allegiance to the empire. The *Bulletin* understood that by attacking this rhetoric it had to first unfix the connotations they had acquired before replacing these with its own. With new meanings secured, its argument could proceed. As the mainstream press retained a firm grip over these words, however, the *Bulletin* was left to snipe from the sidelines, defining itself in opposition to the *SMH*. It seemed to recognise that the position of the major dailies gave them a particular kind of influence—the kind that worked best when noticed least. These papers, as conceded by the *Bulletin's* position, could present their own interests as those shared by society as a whole, turning its specific values into collective ones.

What the *Bulletin* missed in offering its counter-definitions was that even if successful in redefining the language, it simply substituted one set of conditional terms for another. As the *Bulletin's* argument itself implied, there was nothing preventing other meanings arising in different circumstances. Any consensus had to be maintained and reasserted. The *Bulletin* overlooked this in seeing the play of meaning ceasing once the truth of these words, hitherto obscured, was ascertained. It struggled to square its implicit concession to the slipperiness of language with the maintenance of its own definitions. The real issue was not of fixing forever the true meaning of these terms—patriotism, glory, honour, etc.—but the more limited aim of combating the way their meaning had come to be naturalised in public speech.⁹¹ This semantic contest reveals

the different truths granted to these terms by the *SMH* and *Bulletin*, each sustained by opposing ideologies. The *SMH* and the *Bulletin* existed in contending discursive communities, competing for dominance.

Yet perhaps this portrays their differences too strongly. Even in its seemingly radical dissent the *Bulletin's* rhetoric of national loyalty was redefined only within strict limits. The fundamental idea of patriotic virtue itself remained unchallenged, perhaps unchallengeable. The object of patriotism was simply shifted from the empire to the nation, and its nobility refurbished. Nor was the anti-empire line quite as self-evident as it appeared. The *Bulletin* remained caught between opposing imperialism and championing its legacy of exclusive white settler control of the land and its first inhabitants. The *Bulletin's* definition of Australia itself was by turns confidently asserted and conflicted.⁹² Its conception of national unity was just as internally fragmented, just as dependent on marginalisation, as its mainstream rivals. Just as the mainstream press found unity in excluding aberrant 'radicals', the *Bulletin* saw unity in restrictive white working-class nationalism.

Excoriating as it could be with reference to Australia's convict heritage, the *Bulletin's* position shared a key characteristic with its adversaries. Two weeks after the embarkation of troops from Sydney, a member of the New South Wales legislative assembly claimed that through the imperial acceptance of the contingent, 'his country was glorified, and that the disgrace of Botany Bay was being washed out in the waters of the Nile'.⁹³ This was precisely the kind of penitence the *Bulletin* poked fun at. The *Bulletin* drew upon the lurid history of convictism and its victims to score its own anti-imperial points.⁹⁴ As Terra Walston Joseph has suggested, however, 'the figure of the convict does not serve as a criticism of the ideology of imperialism ... it whitewashes settler colonialism'.⁹⁵ The focus 'on dispossessed and disenfranchised *white* immigrants ... rewrite[s] Australian history as a white story'.⁹⁶ What resisted either atonement or easy ridicule was the struggle on and over Australian soil between Aboriginal people and settlers, including early convicts. The acknowledgement of one sordid past worked to elide another.

Such blind spots can even be seen in the *Bulletin's* basic position regarding the Sudan crisis. Condensed in an editorial line at once strikingly logical and conspicuously absent from the mainstream editorials, it asked:

If it be noble and elevating for Britons in Australia to offer their lives and their fortunes (nobody has yet done the latter) for their mother country's sake, is it not noble and elevating also for the Arabs of the Soudan to lay down their lives and fortunes for the love of *their* mother country?⁹⁷

By directly questioning British and Australian moral authority, the *Bulletin* challenged a core premise of imperial ideology. Nonetheless, historical echoes can be heard. The *Bulletin's* critique of the NSW contingent did not openly explore the parallels between the Sudan expedition and the origins of invasion and Aboriginal resistance in Australia, even though these were subjects later tentatively broached in its pages.⁹⁸ As Sylvia Lawson concludes on the matter, 'very often', for the *Bulletin*, 'unlike the Chinese, the first Australians were editorially invisible, out-of-print'.⁹⁹ Yet its logic remains clear, though displaced. The illegitimacy at the root of settler society is sharply articulated by the *Bulletin*, only removed to the safety of a different setting.

The South African War: Trying Again

Of all the foreign conflicts during the long reign of Victoria, the South African War (1899–1902) had perhaps the deepest resonance in the settler colonies and in Britain. Events in the Sudan in 1885 and other comparable small wars gave little warning of the unprecedented scale of the challenge that would confront the empire in South Africa. All told, approximately 440,000 troops were raised by Britain, including some 20,000 Australians from all six colonies, more than 7000 from an initially hesitant Canada, and over 6000 in ten New Zealand contingents.¹ It would be the deadliest of the Victorian wars, in which claims of heroism were tempered by military blunder and moral embarrassment. By the war's belated end, marked by the Treaty of Vereeniging in May 1902, tens of thousands of lives—African, British, Boer, Australian, Canadian and New Zealand among them—were lost. It was costly in other ways too, with British taxpayers alone put out of pocket upwards of 200 million pounds.²

The war occupies a unique position in imperial historiography. It concluded the century of unquestioned British dominance and ushered in the era of its gradual eclipse by emergent powers.³ On the eve of the war, itself the capstone of the 'scramble for Africa', the territorial sweep of the British Empire had never been greater. Yet unease was pervasive. The jingoism the war famously occasioned was, in its own way, a slightly frantic signal of the growing lack of confidence in Britain's imperial project. As if to symbolise the transition, the aged Queen herself died during the war. Her death occurred only weeks after the federation of the Australian

colonies on the first day of 1901, an event that itself appeared to mark a more forthright proclamation of an individual Australian character even as it bombastically announced its imperial loyalties.⁴

The Australian contribution to the war came in waves. Prior to the war, as tensions grew, the individual Australian colonies equivocated over offering troops. On 10 July 1899, three months before the outbreak of war, the Queensland Government offered an initial contingent of troops as a show of imperial loyalty. The first colonial contingents were sent to South Africa in October 1899. A second wave of troops from the various colonies were sent, with a greater sense of urgency, after a sequence of British losses in December 1899. The second contingents built on the first and allowed the colonies to credibly claim to be giving practical rather than symbolic assistance. In subsequent months, 'Bushmen' troops were raised. Imperial Bushmen contingents – financed by the imperial government – followed. Other contingents were sent as the war dragged on, including, from 1901, the first contingent raised by the Australian federal government.

THE ORIGINS OF THE WAR

The pretext for British military intervention in South Africa was the need to secure political and civil rights for *uitlanders* (foreigners), the appellation applied to the mostly British (with a large colonial component) migrant workers in the Transvaal goldfields.⁵ Here, settler self-government again raised thorny questions for imperial elites. In reality, though, the *uitlander* issue was seen by the Governor of the Cape Colony, Alfred Milner, and Colonial Secretary Joseph Chamberlain, as an effective way to drum up British support to finally tackle more fundamental issues.

The underlying origins of the South African War remain intensely debated.⁶ Beyond the *uitlander* issue, the war was undertaken with the immediate aims of safeguarding African territory to achieve three main goals: fortifying buffer regions against internal threats; acquiring territory for markets, trade and resources (including the world's largest known goldfields); and pre-emptively capturing these territories before other European powers could.⁷

Controlling the Cape and the sea route to India was strategically crucial, not least for protecting the Indian military reserves on which the empire, including the Australasian colonies, potentially depended.⁸ Indeed, the war's deeper origins can be traced to British determination to forestall French control of the Cape during the Napoleonic

Wars. In 1795 and again in 1806 the British seized the Cape from the Dutch for this purpose, later declaring it a permanent British colony. In this way Britain came to control a great territory peopled by a large and diverse African population, and a minority population of Afrikaans-speaking descendants of Dutch settlers—the Boers. From the 1820s, British settlers began to arrive *en masse* to territory taken from its Xhosa owners. Yet the British remained outnumbered by Afrikaners as the white population in southern Africa.⁹

In the 1830s around 15,000 Boers, disgruntled at the importation of British rule and British subjects, began their Great Trek into the north and north-east, violently clashing with and dispossessing Indigenous Africans in the process. The so-called Voortrekkers first established themselves in Natal. Following the British taking of Natal in 1843, trekkers continued to the central regions that would become, in the early 1850s, the Transvaal Republic and the Orange Free State. Bitter resentment over British annexation of the Transvaal in 1877 spurred the leaders of the Transvaal Republic, headed by Paul Kruger, to declare war on the British, beginning the so-called ‘First Anglo-Boer War’ of 1880–1881. The war reached its climax with the Boers’ stunning defeat of the British at Majuba Hill in February 1881, after which the Republic asserted its independence.

By the late 1880s the discovery of the Rand goldfields, when added to the discovery of diamonds in the late 1860s, had transformed the South African economy. Along with vast gains in wealth and power came the means to set a dangerous precedent of independence from Britain. Yet the very wealth that granted this power attracted enough British and colonial speculators to potentially overwhelm the Boers, threatening their claims to sovereignty, and generating racial animosity between the country’s two principal white minorities. This ‘sudden conjuncture of ethnic, economic and geopolitical tensions’, according to John Darwin, soon ‘turned South Africa, almost overnight, from a colonial backwater into the most volatile quarter of the Victorian empire’.¹⁰

Humiliating memories of Majuba Hill were stirred fourteen years later by the farcical Jameson Raid in late December 1895 to early January 1896. This was a botched attempt by Cecil Rhodes’ acolyte Leander Starr Jameson to foment an *uitlander* rebellion to encourage British annexation. The British needed to showcase their dominance. For Prime Minister Salisbury, ‘the real point to be made good to South Africa is that we not the Dutch are Boss’.¹¹ In New South Wales the *Sydney Morning Herald* (SMH) grasped this same point, with its own

racial inflections, in an editorial at the war's outset. The *uitlander* issue, it claimed, was surpassed in import by the 'main question', that is, 'whether British rule is to be paramount and unquestioned in South Africa or not, and if the divided counsels of a divided race are to be superseded by a governing force which will not be Uitland, nor colonial, nor Afrikander, but simply British'.¹² On the one hand, the Boers claimed to be defending their homeland against political, economic and cultural intrusion. On the other, the British, according to two leading imperial historians, resented Boer nationalists because they 'disputed the rules of the game' being drawn by 'gentlemanly capitalists in London' for Britain's economic and political gain.¹³

Ultimately, as Shula Marks has argued, although the South African War was to an extent a war of colonial autonomy, 'it was also a war for the survival of a settler society, and about the credibility and international reputation of the British Empire, raising major moral issues of global importance'.¹⁴ From a longer historical view, Stanley Trapido has said the war that commenced on 11 October 1899 'was the culmination—if not an inevitable one—of a hundred years of British domination of the region'.¹⁵

At the time of the war, South Africa consisted of two Boer-controlled republics—the landlocked Transvaal and Orange Free State—and the coastal British colonies of Natal and Cape Colony, amid African territorial fragments. British observers had long recognised the rule of a dominant white minority over an overwhelming black majority was potentially explosive. And yet Africans were generally of secondary consideration to Boers, imperial politicians, British *uitlanders*, and British settler colonists alike. Rather, the racial problem defining the South African War for British contemporaries was that existing between the two major white Christian populations. The approximately 100,000 Africans involved in different capacities on either side, however, belied the official line that this was a 'white man's war'.¹⁶ South Africa's demographic imbalance between its white and black populations also troubled British imperial narratives in ways that other white settler colonies did not. South Africa, unlike Australia, New Zealand and Canada, resisted easy incorporation into an imagined Greater Britain.¹⁷

The war is conventionally divided into three stages. Calamity struck early for the British when the Boers inflicted on them a series of startling reverses. The most shocking occurred during December 10–15, 1899, 'Black Week', when British forces sustained three routs at Stormberg, Magersfontein, and Colenso at the cost of some 3000 British soldiers.

Contemporaries sensed that perhaps the sun could set on their empire after all. The extended Boer sieges of Ladysmith, Mafeking, and Kimberley seemed to confirm as much. Throughout 1900, however, British imperial forces, under Lord Roberts, regrouped and relieved highly publicised Boer sieges, while capturing enough Boer towns and cities to claim the conventional war won. But from September 1900 to May 1902, a protracted and brutal guerrilla conflict took place between the Boers and imperial troops, now under Kitchener's command. This conflict spiralled into the depths of scorched earth policies and concentration camps at previously unthinkable cost to civilian lives. This was clearly not another passing African military undertaking for British and colonial troops. And yet the war was also a crisis that, from a certain perspective, came with an opportunity.

MEN OF THE PEN

The disasters and triumphs of the war penetrated British and colonial imaginations as deeply as they did through ubiquitous media coverage. Though modern media had influenced the direction and representation of conflict since at least the mid-century Crimean War, events in South Africa were mediated to an unprecedented extent. The South African War was thus arguably the first 'media war'.¹⁸ This created obstacles and openings for the war's promoters and detractors alike, giving a second life to news reports recycled in interviews, poems, visual imagery, and theatrical and music hall translations.¹⁹ The rise of the celebrity journalist saw such figures as Arthur Conan Doyle, Winston Churchill, J. A. Hobson, Kipling, and Mark Twain giving the war, and themselves, greater global publicity.²⁰ From Australia, Harry 'Breaker' Morant and Banjo Paterson, among others, reported or commented on the war.²¹

Journalists themselves were prone to vocational introspection, acutely conscious of their own importance. They recognised and promoted the significance of the media to the public understanding of what was happening in South Africa. Newspapers not only represented events, but detailed how they did so. Conveying the element of danger gave a taste of battleground realism, provided journalists lived to tell the tale. William Reay, correspondent for Melbourne's *Herald* and the South Australian *Register*, recalled with a healthy dash of machismo that on leaving for South Africa his superiors reminded him to 'not get shot' as 'dead men furnish no copy'.²²

Australian war correspondent A.G. Hales was a case in point. The Adelaide born Hales' experiences as a war reporter would later inspire his fictional work. His 1900 memoir is written with a rough swagger dripping with casual racism towards 'the niggers' and an often condescending camaraderie regarding the Boers.²³ In contemporary press accounts, Hales was noted for his 'colonial' critiques of Britain's military conduct. His criticism of the British army was the subject of debate in Britain, earning him the rebuke of a young Winston Churchill who was gaining prominence as a reporter in South Africa for London's *Morning Post*.²⁴

An interview with the *Daily News* on Hales' return from South Africa illustrated the interplay between media and politics. The interviewer described Hales' controversial writings as 'quoted far and wide; they have furnished the text for more than one angry half-hour in the House'.²⁵ His texts were said to possess a realism that substituted for participation in the war itself, hailing readers as vicarious actors in the events. This earned him fame and notoriety in Britain. One letter to London's *Daily News* praised the corporeal quality of Hales' reports: 'They palpitate with life, they are alive. To have read them is to have been to battle ... to have smelt the hot blood, the dust, and the sweat of the poor horses.'²⁶ Hales certainly knew the dangers of the front, witnessing firsthand the death of his friend W.J. Lambie.²⁷ Lambie had been injured before when accompanying the NSW contingent in 1885 for the *SMH*. He went on to become a correspondent for the *Age*, the *Advertiser* and the *Daily Telegraph* in South Africa. There, following a Boer ambush, Lambie became the first Australian journalist to die on duty in a foreign conflict.²⁸ Hales himself was also wounded and imprisoned by the Boers, further adding to his reputation for audacity and pluck. Such incidents lent an authenticity and pathos to his accounts that met a growing demand for adventure tales.

It is not incidental that the press regularly invoked 'theatre' and 'drama' to describe the war.²⁹ Theatrical performance was, after all, central to sustaining a consistent readership. The *SMH* applauded the reports of correspondents: 'it is clear that the men of the pen are taking a very active share in the thrilling events that are being enacted, and so direct is the narrative that we can vividly follow all that is taking place'.³⁰ It catalogued a series of comparable events where correspondents took the place of the traditional war hero. The mediation of war had seemingly reached a tipping point. Journalists *were* the action.

More prosaic, if ultimately of greater influence, was the role of the wire telegraph. The key advantage of the telegraph, especially for those far from Britain, was its speed. For example, the major British anti-war organ was the *Manchester Guardian*, and it was this publication that informed like-minded colonial dissenters. Yet, while Australian colonists had to wait up to seven weeks to receive each edition by mail, they were the recipients of the Colonial Office's pro-war telegrams within hours. We can only speculate as to how this contributed to Australian attitudes to the war, but given the appetite for the freshest news available, outdated opinion would likely have registered only with partisan devotees.³¹

Moreover, the telegraph and the papers it informed tended to offer a unified view of events and impart a feeling of community consensus. If we can believe certain official voices, the war was an obsession for Australian colonists in its early months, cutting across social divisions. In March 1900, the Tasmanian Governor claimed: 'Each morning the newspaper offices are surrounded by crowds of people anxious to learn the latest news from the seat of the war, and the telegrams daily posted outside these offices are eagerly read by all classes.'³² Chris Connolly has, however, questioned the extent of support for the war, arguing that though most New South Wales papers supported the war, these reflected one portion of colonial society only.³³

As we will see, support for the war and its rationales was never complete, either in Britain or the colonies. Irrespective of dissent on the ground, press narratives generally purported to speak for the social whole. This was an ideological role that aimed to smooth over disagreements and present a united response on behalf of the empire and its subjects. Paula Krebs has, in the British context, similarly described the reporting of the riotous celebrations of the relief of the Boer siege on the otherwise unremarkable town of Mafeking.³⁴ The seven-month Mafeking siege was the subject of restless coverage in Britain and Australia.³⁵ It seems that earlier British military catastrophes had prompted a catharsis in the revelries that spontaneously broke out (begetting even its own verb: 'mafficking') following this minor success. Papers in Britain and the colonies captured an outpouring of emotion. As Krebs points out, British reporting on Mafeking muddled the division between a respectable middle-class patriotism and a crude working-class jingoism to construct a broader notional 'public'.³⁶

In Australia too, the imperial mood was said to even surpass that evident during the Crimean War. This was due to the shared 'community of feeling' created by the news that 'circles the world' through the telegraph. This news, 'as it passes gives to each British community the same feelings, a common joy, a common sorrow, but no common doubt, no common fear, as to what the end will be'.³⁷ The idea that press and telegraph systems had shrunk the British world was by this time commonplace. As were the perceived implications of this. 'If community of sentiment is not enough to make a nation without consciousness of that community', Leo Amery wrote in his 1905 *Times* history of the war, 'then indeed the electric telegraph and the Press have been no small factors in revealing the British Empire as a living whole to the consciousness of the individuals that compose it.'³⁸ Still, Amery also knew that imperial sentiment coexisted with a burgeoning colonial nationalism.

The imperial press system was, moreover, deeply inter-reliant. Australian newspapers depended on their British counterparts for reports from South Africa, while the British press itself relied on South African organisations. Australian readers gained the bulk of their information on the war itself from the reports of a select few British journalists.³⁹ The result was a discernible standardisation of coverage of events, with a distinctly British bias.⁴⁰

Contemporary opponents of the war such as Victorian liberal and future Attorney General Henry Bournes Higgins, said that propagandistic press machinations distorted information and censored letters to favour a narrow, elite pro-war perspective. Speaking in parliament, Higgins saw 'information which comes exclusively from one source' as giving a limited portrayal of events and placed members of parliament in a 'false position'—a position he tried to counter in his speeches.⁴¹ In the same session John Murray similarly felt that 'The press here is doing ... all it can, to arouse a military craze in this country on behalf of the South African war, and I am glad to say that their efforts are attended with only a very small measure of success.'⁴² In fact both the 'efforts' and the relative 'success' of the press in this regard were, and remain, disputed. And, as we will see, the narratives crafted by Australian papers drew on a more complex store of cultural and historical references than is implied by looking at pro or anti-war arguments alone.

In any case, the prominence of the press was undeniable. Throughout colonial parliamentary debates members cited passages from their favoured papers at one another without regard for national boundaries.

Exemplifying the worldwide circulation of the press system, papers from South Africa, Britain, and the colonies alike were quoted and debated in the House; the *Cape Times* alongside the London *Times*.⁴³ It was in these chambers of public debate—in impassioned speeches, in column after column of reportage and commentary across a range of publications, and in books from polemicists, politicians, and journalists—that the meaning of the war played out. And the mediation of the war provided chances to consolidate ideas of national and imperial identity. But the same system of communication also allowed more unsettling themes to surface. These too were circulated far and wide.

TO TRY AGAIN

Australian historiography has often noted the South African War's coincidence with Australian federation.⁴⁴ At the time, the expectation that war would forge their new nation suffused the colonies.⁴⁵ In his 'Song of the Federation', Banjo Paterson saw the youthful Australia's martial involvement as her key to entry into national 'sisterhood'.⁴⁶ John Hirst has since argued that the gratification felt in British praise for Australian troops, and the effect this had on national self-perception, made federating the colonies a less urgent matter.⁴⁷ On the other hand, dissidents cautioned that the war's timing would stain 'our hitherto peaceful and bloodless hands by participating in an unjust war', and was 'a very bad omen indeed for the federation of Australia'.⁴⁸ Both perspectives perceived the importance of this latest imperial episode in recasting national origins.

As during the Sudan crisis, a premium was placed on the emotional value of the colonial war effort. In the Victorian parliament, immediately before the outbreak of war, James Moloney saw the question of sending colonial troops to South Africa as a sentimental one, immeasurable in financial terms: 'I say that if you wipe sentiment out of British history, if you wipe sentiment out of the history of any nation that has achieved great things, you will leave but a very small part of history indeed.'⁴⁹ Erstwhile pastoralist Donald McLeod made a similar appeal against those claiming that support for the war was 'mere' sentiment. He argued that though 'A good deal has been said about this being only a matter of sentiment ... what great deed has ever been done in the world without sentiment? On what is filial affection founded but sentiment?

What is religion but sentiment? What is love for our mother country but sentiment?'⁵⁰

This type of language signalled a depth of feeling commonly derided, then as now. But its prevalence in public rhetoric also indicates its widespread appeal and social acceptance. Henry Reynolds, in his treatment of debates leading to the war, sees probable harm in the language of imperial sentiment, which he contrasts with the solidity of reason. For Reynolds, talk of sentimental ties 'cloaked the real basis of colonial dependence' and therefore 'served the interests of Britain rather than those of the dominions'. Here, 'Hard thought was softened by sentiment. Loyalty existed in a realm out of the reach of reason.'⁵¹ In this analysis colonists are little more than dupes, blind to their national interests through the fog of unthinking imperial devotion.⁵² But imperial sentiment cannot be considered only 'martial grooming' devised by imperialists to mislead colonists and undermine colonial nationalism.⁵³

Perhaps, for these colonists, sentimental connections were stronger than those of finance, trade, and defence alone.⁵⁴ They were after all born into, raised, and educated in a society where they absorbed dispositions and inclinations that appeared part of the very nature of things.⁵⁵ This was a kind of spontaneous, instinctive mode of thinking and feeling that, if shaken, shook an entire system of belief. Obviously not all Australian colonists shared the same perspective, but this sensibility did shape how many spoke publicly. As Reynolds acknowledges, the force of the idea of Greater Britain in the colonies clearly cannot be attributed to external imposition.⁵⁶

A discussion of colonial interests should further engage with, rather than dismiss, the fundamental need for colonists to see in their British heritage a secure identity, one whose origins could not be easily questioned. Reynolds, like many at the time, tends to see hard-headed republicans pitted against naïve and sentimental imperialists.⁵⁷ But things were, as he notes at other points, more complex.⁵⁸ These feelings were interdependent. Imperial loyalty and a faith in the shared blood and heredity of white Britishness created the foundations for national thought to develop.

Reynolds further notes the 'adhesive power' of empire and race, asking if imperial loyalty had 'been worth it?' That is, 'Had it been a good investment in blood, treasure, emotional commitment and intellectual energy?'⁵⁹ Questions such as these assume—even advocate—a rational cost-benefit analysis, as if at some point Australians made a considered,

and mutually exclusive, decision to choose empire over nation.⁶⁰ But we can more profitably see emotion and reason working together in such a way that complicates a division between dangerous sentiment and constructive rationality.⁶¹ The question then becomes why public declarations of emotion and shared feeling were deemed necessary, rather than how they blocked the road to reason.

The affective nature of the war in the colonies extended beyond rhetoric. As in Sydney in March 1885, the huge crowds flocking to bid farewell to their troops hinted at Australian public enthusiasm for the war. Between 250,000 and 300,000 of Sydney's citizens were said to have lined rain-soaked streets for two miles leading to Circular Quay, singing imperial anthems, waving ribbons, and shouting patriotic slogans.⁶² Unlike in 1885, each colony now supplied their own troops, encouraging the replication of similar scenes throughout the country's main city centres.⁶³

Yet within Australia, as in Britain, anxiety was widespread. New social movements tested the social fabric. Feminists and suffragettes contested patriarchal politics. More startling still, the financial depression of the early 1890s created often extreme poverty and signalled the end of Australia's 'long boom' beginning in mid-century.⁶⁴ The 1890s saw the first labour parties arise out of organised strikes and union agitation among shearers, wharfies, and miners. These developments, forcefully articulated in working-class newspapers, alarmed the middle and upper classes.⁶⁵ Radicals and reformists alike began to seek political office, unnerving elites who saw their rightful social position as endangered. Each side of the class divide was unwavering in their cause. A calamitous drought followed the depression and further sank the colonial mood, underscoring the ambivalence toward the environment that had long marked Australia's distinction from Britain. What the soil had given in grassland, it had taken away as it sucked the moisture from crops and livestock.

By the turn of the century, the majority of the population were white Australian-born 'natives', as they had taken to calling themselves.⁶⁶ This demographic consolidation strengthened the movement to formalise the racial purity of white Britishness on which Australia's future cultural and economic progress was thought to depend. Commonwealth laws were drawn up to build on existing colonial legislation. The *Pacific Island Labourers Act 1901* and the *Immigration Restriction Act 1901*, cornerstones of the so-called White Australia policy, were among the first pieces

of federal legislation passed. The first was designed to deport Pacific Island labourers, the other to prevent the importation of non-British (and particularly Chinese) immigrants. The Imperial Government, eager not to unduly aggravate relations with important non-European subjects and allies, opposed explicitly race-based immigration laws.

In this context it is unsurprising that the South African War presented another chance to demarcate a coherent Australian identity within the empire, compounding existing invasion anxieties and complicating notions of white supremacy and imperial belonging.⁶⁷ Given the inability of the Sudan crisis to generate any lasting martial mythology, events in South Africa allowed Australians, in *Times* correspondent Leo Amery's words, to 'try again'.⁶⁸ The imminence of the war prompted the Australian press to reaffirm beneficial ties between the colonies and Britain. This was to be expected. With Australia's own sense of superiority resting on British ascendancy elsewhere, Australian newspapers saw the paramount importance of maintaining this supremacy. The prevalence of this view led to official British war policy being, for the most part, safe from editorial scrutiny. Australian editorials also saw that British revitalisation could best be secured with colonial assistance.

Attempts to promote Australianness alongside Britishness drew from history. In late October an *Argus* article described the march of troops through Melbourne. It opened with the emotional reminiscence of an elderly woman who as a child had watched with her mother the imperial troops' return from Waterloo with 'the same spirit which animates the young community just awakened by the call to arms'.⁶⁹ The value of seeing this 'young community' as part of a glorious historical lineage lay in replacing an ignoble past with one grounded in Britain's martial tradition. The *Argus* grasped this point well: 'the feeling that the event is a historic one animates all, and parents who are linked in memory with some outstanding event of the past wish to give their children a landmark of national importance on which to fix their backward gaze'.⁷⁰ The *Argus*, on the eve of continental federation, celebrated the building of a national memory for future generations.

With their backward gaze secured, colonists could turn to tales of improvement in the here and now. In a manner similar to any number of travelogues and booster literature of this and earlier periods, newspaper articles detailed the colonies' material contribution to the empire with imposing statistics. Lengthy compilations of the empire's acreage, population, revenues, exports and imports were offered to readers. The point

of these statistics was mostly to reiterate what was generally known.⁷¹ Readers in the colonies, thumbing through their morning newspaper, could casually absorb the confidence and satisfaction that came with belonging to the empire. The exactitude of these figures was less important than the force of the impression left on readers' minds. The *West Australian*, upon one such stocktaking, suggested: 'In the first place it is well to be occasionally reminded of what the Empire exactly is.' Displaying a daunting array of numbers, it contended: 'These figures are particularly worthy of remembrance at a time when there is a tendency in some quarters to take a pessimistic view of Australasian progress and prospects.'⁷² Lest the reader misunderstand the implications of such a remembrance, the article later framed the figures in the rhetoric of white racial 'responsibilities' and explicit reference to Rudyard Kipling's 'latest poem' on the white man's burden.⁷³

Literary allusions were not uncommon. A *SMH* article aiming to slot Australia into Britain's martial ancestry through nods to figures from Shakespeare to Kipling recognised the force that literature had in forging transnational ties. On seeing the patriotic celebration of Australian troops leaving Circular Quay, the *SMH* reasoned: 'Probably, if that enthusiasm were analysed it would be found to have been largely fed by the battle-literature of our race, and particularly by what the poets have said and sung in all ages in celebration of British prowess.'⁷⁴ In a passage suggesting the 'banal nationalism' analysed by Michael Billig, the *SMH* asserted that these

war-notes have insensibly entered into the national mind and influenced it, perhaps only to be awakened into recollection in times like the present, but always in readiness at the back of the national consciousness to inspire and inform the patriotic ardour of the race.⁷⁵

It saw the influence of poets such as Kipling forming the 'traditions of the race to which it is our boast to belong'. The emergence of war and its widespread mediation here allowed the reader

to comprehend what a nation-making force they have exerted, and how masterfully they have welded and shaped that national sentiment which makes so powerful an appeal at a time like this, when we wait hour by hour for news of the progress of our soldiers in the field.⁷⁶

It is unsurprising that a popular newspaper would suggest that the national sentiment accompanying the war relied on textual representation. Thinking historically, the collection of canonical images sustaining a community's culture was presented as an inventory compiled over time, a well of sentiment from which 'national consciousness' was drawn. Though the press delivered news in the present, comprehending this news required knowing the literature of the past. This was more so given the growing fluidity between 'lowbrow' popular news and so-called serious literature. The images and memories of the nation were there to be picked up and deployed in a symbolic grammar to hail readers as belonging to that heritage. The *SMH* strained to place Australia within this order but was undermined by the knowledge that the colonies had yet to earn their own martial story.

Ideas of temporal progression had other benefits. Seeing colonial progress as British racial development meant that previous events could be understood as forming the end of an epoch. As the *SMH* asserted in a later editorial, the 'old order of things is changing and giving place to new', while the 'events of the past few years form a sufficiently eloquent prelude to the probable revelations of the future'.⁷⁷ The reasons for this renewal were rarely far from the surface: 'The momentous uprising of the British race in all parts of the world', it continued, 'called forth by the war now in progress in South Africa is an event which we may take for granted will have already struck the key-note of the future so far as concerns the part to be played by our own race and kin in its development'.⁷⁸

This identification with the British race then shifted to a localised nationalism: 'This year 1900 should not close before Australia is federated, so that we may look to enter on the new century equipped and ready at all points for the responsibilities of our national life'.⁷⁹ Others combined the distinction between nations with the racial heritage that united them in their future endeavours. In his account of Australian war experiences, journalist and author J.H.M. Abbott described walking around Pretoria where he noticed that 'always forcing itself upon one's mind ... was the consciousness of Empire, the vague realisation that we, the English, and the Canadians, and the Australians, were a race that overran the globe, and that its inheritance was ours'.⁸⁰ Whether imperial, national, or trans-colonial, temporality was evoked to grant inevitability and order to chaos. The colonies could now be cast in this imperial drama not only as a repository of the 'British race', but its vanguard.

Just as during the Waikato and Sudan episodes, Australian commentary on the South African War demonstrated the desperation for a British audience to notice and approve of Australian actions. This could be expressed in ideas of sacrifice and martial display, most notably during the embarkation of troops. In its 'Farewell to the Contingent', the *Brisbane Courier* recognised that the 'knowledge that the Empire is looking on makes us desire to show that the willingness to help the mother-country has genuine grit and ability behind it'.⁸¹ Such feelings emphasised the requirement to perform on the battlefield for their imagined spectators. Yet desire could get you only so far. What colonial newspapers required was more first-hand proof that Australia weighed heavily on British minds.

In December 1899, the *Advertiser* afforded a chance for Australian readers to overhear what Britons were saying about them through an interview—itself a recent journalistic innovation—with the proud imperial loyalist William Henry Fitchett.⁸² Fitchett, the eminent English-born Australian writer and editor of the *Australian Review of Reviews*, had recently returned from a trip to London where he was highly regarded. In 1896 the *Argus* had commissioned him to pen a series of patriotic accounts of famous British military adventures later compiled as the international publishing sensation *Deeds that Won the Empire*. That book was written, Fitchett said, 'not to glorify war, but to nourish patriotism'. His concern was to educate imperial subjects on their martial history, and 'to renew in popular memory the great traditions of the Imperial race to which we belong'.⁸³ Through the colonial press, he now had the chance to inform Australian readers how highly those in Britain regarded them.

He confirmed that in London he witnessed how:

The British people are proud of Australia, and, of course, they have reason to be. 'Australia' in English ears just now has a magic sound. While England does not need the troops we are sending, the fact of our offer thrills the public mind with delight. Although England is very prosperous, I don't think Australia has reason to envy her or any other part of the Empire. The social opportunities for freedom of environment and everything that makes civilised life worth having are greater in Australia.⁸⁴

The recognition that colonial troops were in fact unnecessary only stressed their performative element. The *Advertiser* itself was intended

primarily for South Australian eyes, yet the appeal of this article lay in the idea that Australians could witness the approval given to them and their land by British observers. The important point, in other words, was not simply the message, but the respective locations of its utterance and its reception.

A report from the *SMH*'s London correspondent similarly testified to the significance of colonial activity for British readers. The correspondent ventriloquised London opinion to situate Australian and Canadian colonists as imperial partners. It reported: "What are they thinking, and what are they doing in Australia and in Canada, in this supreme moment in the fortunes of the Empire?" is a question asked in effect often enough and with genuine concern.⁸⁵ Later, the correspondent claimed that an English 'man in the street' knew the 'signs of the unity of spirit throughout the Empire which anyone can read'.⁸⁶ Australian readers were thus treated to an account of their uniqueness in the eyes of Londoners who knew 'that in a war which requires sharp-shooting and knowledge of bush-fighting, the Australian troops will be "just the chaps for the Boers"'.⁸⁷ This enactment of British observation presented Australian readers with a self-generating fantasy image of themselves as bush-trained martial forces from their most important observers. The reasons why exactly they were assumed to have experience in sharpshooting and bushfighting was not elaborated on.

Dissent towards the war was still common if one knew where to look, but the narrative of unity ultimately carried the day in Australian newspapers.⁸⁸ To better understand these feelings we can examine the role of the colonies in British narratives. That is, if the colonies were so eager to overhear conversations in which they were discussed, what were British commentators actually saying?

THE BRITISH VIEW: COLONIAL CONSOLATIONS

Where the 1885 NSW contingent was ideally timed to soothe British readers shaken by General Gordon's death in the Sudan, events at the turn of the century at the other end of Africa saw renewed British attention to the settler colonies. Here, Australians fighting alongside fellow British colonists from Canada and New Zealand personified the idea of Greater Britain.⁸⁹ As the Boers demonstrated to the world the limits of both the empire's strength and rectitude, British newspapers invoked the white colonies to provide a measure of solace. Yet just as

the communicative channels of the so-called British world were accessed to promote imperial affection, they could also be used to challenge this feeling.

The timing of events is important. Even before the period of crisis hit, papers such as the *Daily News* could say that colonial loyalty had 'shown that the Empire is no mere fortuitous concourse of political atoms, but a vital organism in which we are all members one of another'.⁹⁰ This idea would soon take on far greater meaning. In November 1899 the *Times*, following a shock reversal in Ladysmith in the British colony of Natal, recognised the benefit of turning to the white settler colonies. 'At a moment when the whole nation is lamenting a serious reverse in the field', the *Times* wrote, 'it is consoling to turn to the action of our colonies and to dwell upon the enthusiastic loyalty with which they are sending contingents to fight side by side with the Imperial troops'.⁹¹ As in 1885, the importance of these troops, at least initially, lay less in their military proficiency than in redirecting the reader's attention to their imperial devotion at a historical juncture. This was no time for uncertainty. The *Times* had to control the direction of its commentary.

Perturbing as the setback in Ladysmith was, it was the succession of routs during Black Week six weeks later that would leave an enduring impression. British forces had, with notable exceptions, become accustomed to quick victories over foreign peoples with lesser military means. More to the point, the British public had become accustomed to reading of these victories.⁹² Black Week ruptured this complacency. Though different publications covered the defeats in differing ways, blaming a variety of actors and causes, the reverses could not be ignored. British papers could, however, attempt to ameliorate the effects of these defeats on the public. To this project the white colonies were indispensable.

More than a silver lining on an ominous cloud, contemporary editorials positioned the white colonies as arguably the essential meaning to be drawn from Black Week. This was true for Alfred Harmsworth's (later Lord Northcliffe's) *Daily Mail*, established in May 1896. This famous paper took full advantage of the war, both encouraging and drawing on imperial loyalty to grow from an initial circulation of approximately 200,000 to just under 999,000 by 1900, making it the most popular in the country.⁹³ For the *Daily Mail*, the 'national outlook' in the early months of the war was 'darker and more threatening than any within the memory of living man', and was 'brightened only by the loyalty of our colonies' and characteristic British tenacity.⁹⁴ In such ways military losses

could be framed as a temporary setback, while colonial unity was the story that could screen the trauma of defeat. Through the recurrent 'colonies as consolation' theme, a disturbing event could be tolerated and even incorporated within a revised imperial story.⁹⁵

When British editors wrote of the colonies, the rhetorical register could shift to a level of abstraction beyond day-to-day events. The war commanded reflection on the evolution of the white colonies, both in and of themselves, and in relation to the empire. This evolution could be measured in demography and wealth, as the colonies reaffirmed belief in an injection of fresh blood to regenerate a tiring Britain, strained by continuing troubles over Indian and Irish nationalisms, and internally burdened by social division and economic decline.⁹⁶ The Welsh *Western Mail* presented an article devoted to the ways the settler colonies could reassure British readers. The article, 'Britain of the Future', explained: 'From Australasia the same tale comes—a tale of loyalty and support in times of need ... Where, it may be asked, can our enemies find any sign of decay or weakness in an Empire which throbs with fresh and vigorous life at all points?'⁹⁷

Press accounts also saw in colonial progress the potential to tap the well of patriotic sentiment in future wars, an idea that doubled as a warning to aspiring imperial contenders. The *Western Mail* later recognised that the power the empire did have depended on colonial loyalty:

Great Britain stands alone as a Colonial Empire, and stands alone also as the one Power, either in ancient or modern times, which has lived in the affections of its Colonies. This, really, is the source of our strength, and it is unnecessary to add that to the extent we are strong we are envied by our jealous neighbours.⁹⁸

Duncan Bell has argued that in the late nineteenth century it was increasingly important for Britons to look to the future rather than the past. As was known to every classicist (as imperial elites usually were), empires invariably declined and fell.⁹⁹ By proclaiming the singularity of Britain's Empire this fate might be avoided—past patterns need not hold true for phenomena without precedent.

Conservative intellectuals understood that besides any material advantages the mother country might gain from her colonies, it was the 'glory' acquired through their possession that was the greatest advantage of all.¹⁰⁰

However, while a cause of unparalleled strength, and therefore of envy for rival powers, the white colonies equally placed Britain in an awkward position. Though concessions to self-government might have been necessary to guarantee colonial 'affections', the concern remained over whether they would be instinctively committed to future conflicts. The lessons of history taught the peril of granting excessive colonial autonomy.¹⁰¹ Colonial independence had to be textually contained, most often by reiterating its subservience to imperial passion. The *Daily Mail* offered a useful reminder of this passion in reporting on the reception of its late 1899 publication of Kipling's 'Absent-Minded Beggar'. Written to encourage fundraising for British troops, the verse was said to have aroused 'wild frenzied enthusiasm' in the colonies, 'ringing from end to end of the island-continent as never a war-song rang in the ears of Australia before'.¹⁰²

Primarily, though, the key motif was the importance to the Mother Country of, as the *Standard* put it, the 'virile young Colonies which have voluntarily sent their sons to fight beside the troops of the Mother Country'.¹⁰³ The weight of the adjectives describing the colonies supplemented their military role. The youthful vigour of the colonies, and the receptiveness of readers to this, was their function. Whatever this communal manliness amounted to in practice, for British newspapers it was a statement of the narrative role of the colonies. Black Week losses required a declaration of virility to offset the evident impotency of British forces.¹⁰⁴

Others were more circumspect. Noting the emotional response in English provinces and the British colonies, Arthur Conan Doyle, in his book on the war, also sought the upside of Black Week, noting that 'Misfortune had solidified us, where success might have caused a sentimental opposition'.¹⁰⁵ The 'gallant' Australians from 'the great island continent' were singled out for praise by the novelist.¹⁰⁶ It was just such a demonstration, superfluous during the Waikato War, which was increasingly essential. Unsurprisingly, Australian accounts were likely to endorse this impression.

Similarly, the *Morning Post*, perhaps conceding the incredulity of readers receiving too positive an account, dealt with Black Week by granting its worst effects before offering a palliative. Upon sketching a sober assessment of the war and predicting a prolonged struggle, it wrote: 'we have drawn the picture thus blackly with the conscious desire of leaving no feature untold which could invalidate our next remarks'.¹⁰⁷

Plausibility intact, the *Morning Post* did not deny the 'gloom' of recent events, but saw cause for optimism: 'We see the country's response to her call; we see the Empire knit together by the eager loyalty of its Colonies.'¹⁰⁸ Military setbacks, moreover, were not just mitigated through colonial devotion, but a necessary catalyst for the 'nation to change its mood'. 'An easy victory,' the editorial continued, 'would have spared many husbands and many widows' sons. It would not have strengthened the sense of patriotism, nor have touched the soul of the Empire, nor yet have brought home to a prosperous people the duty of holding their own.'¹⁰⁹

The *Morning Post* reconfigured battlefield defeat as central to the fibre of imperial and national patriotism. Blood was spilled for the greater good in an act that confirmed British supremacy. More insidiously, the reminder of Britain's 'duty' and 'prosperity' also contained an implicit instruction for the *Morning Post's* readers to be grateful for the wealth they had, resting as it did on contested imperial possessions. The muted suggestion was, if readers enjoyed their prosperity, they would do well not to complain if blood was spilt to defend it or, perhaps, to atone for it.

For the *Standard*, Australia and its fellow settler colonies provided an imaginative transfer of idealism far from the waning exuberance in the imperial metropole. Although 'In the Mother Country itself ... there is no slackening in the resolute intention to achieve success, there is some rebound from the jubilant enthusiasm with which the campaign opened.' 'But', the *Standard* continued, 'the Colonies are young peoples, with all the elastic spring of youth, and they are still in the buoyant stage with which they first welcomed the opportunity of fighting side by side with the Imperial troops.'¹¹⁰

Positively conflating enthusiasm for war with youthful innocence allowed the *Standard* to not only relocate imperial passion, but also to speak for the colonies for the benefit of British readers. This editorial colonisation, so to speak, was necessary to weave together loose ideological strands. The *Standard* redrew British losses as a source of strength, stressing the portable attributes of Britishness. The white colonies could exist as the best of both worlds; situated far from the troubles plaguing Europe, apparently free of internal conflict, and preserving a pure British essence to be called upon when needed.¹¹¹

This in turn required balancing consolation for imperial losses with future hopes for the mother country. The *Standard* noted the war was

actually 'England's war' (or 'Britain's'—the two were used interchangeably), not the colonies' war. It oscillated between conceptions of the imperial relationship as one of unity and one of distinction. Hinting at the angst of metropolitan weakness, the *Standard* warned that 'it would scarcely restore British *prestige* in South Africa, if it could be said that we had to get our Colonists to beat the Boers for us'.¹¹² There was a troubling circularity in this. Where Britain was felt to be weak the colonies offered consolation and diversion, yet through this same consolation British weakness was accentuated.

Elsewhere, the *Morning Post* turned to the past to view colonial contributions to South Africa as part of a continuum, beginning with the NSW contingent to the Sudan which had displayed the progression of 'feeling' that had the likelihood of accumulating.¹¹³ The 1885 NSW contingent 'was the first expression of a growing feeling, which has gradually swollen to gigantic proportions, [and] is now big with the fortunes of Empire'. And this feeling had 'found its finest exposition in the amazing response of the Colonies to the call of the Mother Country'.¹¹⁴ Indeed, such a position appeared to vindicate claims made in 1885 of the historical significance of the NSW contingent. That gesture had clearly retained rhetorical purchase for British commentators monitoring colonial development.¹¹⁵

The editorial shifted from military to political matters to review local affairs. Connecting the NSW contingent to national federation, the *Morning Post* claimed: 'It may almost be said that the federation movement in Australia took its first practical impulse from that patriotic outburst.'¹¹⁶ In the context of the Commonwealth Bill, of which the *Morning Post* approved, Australian federal ambitions were contrasted with the Canadian example. To the *Morning Post*, Australia's stated lack of social division gave it a decisive advantage over the Canadians, that of racial unity. As the *Morning Post* reminded its readers, 'there is no racial problem in Australia'. It clarified: the '[Australian] continent is British—peopled by men of English, Scottish, and Irish blood—and there is no difficulty of language or religion. Shall we give to Canada a high trust, and deny it to a nation wholly of our blood?'¹¹⁷ That is to say, by contrast to Canadian antagonisms between its British and French populations, Australia had no other non-British *white* population of any political consequence, despite Irish Catholics continuing to complicate this assessment.¹¹⁸

Admiration for the white colonies blended easily with rhetoric flattering the unique physicality and unsophisticated masculinity of colonial troops, providing a timely antidote to the perception of Britain's physical 'decay'.¹¹⁹ Fears of bodily deterioration were seemingly borne out by scientific evidence. In 1900 medical reports appeared to show that military recruits had literally shrunk in average height from fifty years prior.¹²⁰ By contrast, the *Daily News* observed: 'A fine, stalwart set of men are these Australian soldiers ... They want more drill, more experience, but their physique is magnificent.'¹²¹ The general mood animating the colonies even traversed gender boundaries as the article praised Australians for their 'warlike spirit' which had 'laid hold even of the women'. These characteristics had peculiarly antipodean origins: 'Bronzed by the sun until their faces shine a dull red, they swing along with an easy independence that speaks of bush life.'¹²² Their climate and rural habitation had thus conditioned colonists' distorted whiteness.¹²³

A broader category of Britishness again accommodated declared differences. According to the *Morning Post*, Australians had demonstrated through their fighting in South Africa that they were 'men of our own blood'. Australians were positioned as inheritors of the tradition of heroism and adventure, where mythical notions of soldierly virtue lived on. It continued:

We have lately seen in South Africa that the Australians have the same fighting qualities with which we proudly credit ourselves; they have great physical strength, and wonderful powers of endurance; they love danger for the very pleasure of it, and adventure to them, as it was to our forefathers and their descendants, is the very breath of their nostrils.¹²⁴

These intangible qualities, rather than the mechanics of imperial federation, were to the *Morning Post* the authentic signs of imperial unity.¹²⁵ Yet these were also based on racial exclusion. 'The Empire is consolidated', it pronounced, 'not by hard and fast laws which can be broken as easily as they are made, but by a community of interests and sympathy and the sentiment of brotherhood which is possible alone to men of the same blood.'¹²⁶ In their ostensibly 'progressive' impulses the settler colonies were to have an edifying effect on the mother country. The *Daily Mail*, reflecting on the losses of Black Week, avowed that Britain 'must catch something more of the progressive spirit of communities which our fathers planted overseas, if these communities are not to be ashamed of

us'.¹²⁷ In a seeming inversion, it was imperial Britain that was here eager to receive colonial endorsement. The lessons of the empire now went the other way. Crucially, the progressive feeling attributed to the colonies was rooted not simply in political ideology, but in emotional and historical ties.

In her account of nineteenth-century British travel texts, Anna Johnston suggests that 'the addressee of most travel writing texts is the home reader whose experience of colonial difference is comfortably mediated by print'.¹²⁸ We can witness something to this effect in reading a *Daily News* interview with Liberal temperance champion Arthur Sherwell titled 'The Colonies through English Eyes'. The interviewer portrayed Sherwell as having discussed colonial and imperial issues with 'leading men of Australia', and as having returned with 'very definite impressions' of life in the colonies and the potential colonial contribution to the empire's future.¹²⁹ Yet in order for these colonies to assist the empire they had to be seen 'through English eyes'. Here Sherwell's selective viewpoint would stand in for that of the readers of the *Daily News*.

'For some months', the interviewer began, 'you must have been looking at the Empire through a Colonial atmosphere and at Colonial life through English eyes. Has this double vision made you more hopeful or more despondent about the future of the Empire?' In this aspect at least, Sherwell was pleased with his visit, upholding his belief 'in the English-speaking race'. Sherwell urged imperial elites to visit the colonies: 'Men who have to govern an Empire should at least have a practical knowledge of the subjects with which they must deal.' Sherwell also wished to educate himself and his readers. And, as Antoinette Burton has argued, the education that British 'reform-minded tourists' received from the colonies could have real influences on policy and ideas in metropolitan Britain.¹³⁰ Given the widespread British ignorance of colonial life, Sherwell also saw the comprehensive understanding of the colonies as the key to maintaining British strength.¹³¹ In Sherwell's estimation, to know the colonies was to see the future of the empire.

The antipodean response to the South African War had revealed to Sherwell the promise of untapped imperial resources. Asked of his greatest impression of Australasia he responded: 'The great latent possibilities which lie buried in the Colonies ... the future belongs to these great undeveloped countries.'¹³² He continued: 'You can have no idea in England of the intensity of the enthusiasm for the Empire which is

everywhere prevalent in Australia and New Zealand. The Transvaal War has been an opportunity of expressing that feeling.'¹³³ Sherwell then affirmed that although in their domestic politics the colonies 'are a great reservoir of Liberal principles', in imperial policy colonial sympathies lay steadfastly with British conservatism.¹³⁴ This, it would seem, was the distinction of colonial progressiveness. It was also, as we have seen, a feature of colonial politics that British commentators had discerned in earlier periods.

For Sherwell, the empire was the paramount fact of colonial social life: 'In Australia', he asserted, 'you feel that the Empire is a reality. You are conscious that it is one of the great forces of the world's life. You completely lose the impression, the result of academic discussion in the Old Country, that the Empire is merely an idea.'¹³⁵ Herein lay an irony. Sherwell and the *Daily News* unfolded for their readers, in the manner of an imperial ethnographer, the notion that the colonies represented imperial feeling in practice, existing beyond intellectual conceptions. Yet the colonies also had to remain an ideal. This was not merely because most *Daily News* readers would never get beyond textual descriptions of Australia and so would have to take Sherwell's (among others) word for it. Rather, as with Henry Dunckley's 'Verax' in 1885, for Sherwell, Australia was of imaginative value because it existed also as a fantasy, where the realities of empire could be displaced and transformed.

Sherwell's 'double vision' appeared to permit him to be both the empathetic visitor viewing the empire from a colonial perspective, and an Englishman dutifully examining the colonies. In fact, his perspective constituted a single imperial vision. Sherwell's panoptical view aimed to understand Australia in order to best manage its role within the empire.

If need be, images of colonial troops could be called on to perform a more localised function by educating and unifying an internally divided London. Some months earlier, the *Daily Mail* reported on the departure from London of the New South Wales Lancers to South Africa. 'The occasion', it wrote, 'was an epoch-making one, and the scene itself gave English men something larger to think about than the mere spectacle of troops bound for the scene of imminent war.'¹³⁶ Rather, 'the history of it will awake in England's children overseas a feeling of kinship such as no diplomacy could evoke'. For the *Daily Mail* the celebration of Australian troops crossed class and gender lines to make for a harmonious London: 'Working men, ladies, and silk-hatted City people clustered shoulder to shoulder and joined in the ... chorus of welcome.' One particularly

overcome woman, representing the 'enthusiasm' of the crowd, was 'almost blinded by tears, and with her bonnet awry, thrust tiny bunches of flowers into the men's hands'.¹³⁷

Though the rhetorical value of the colonies was most valuable in the early stages of the war, they would continue to perform important ideological work. In mid-1902, at the Colonial Conference in London, Joseph Chamberlain famously addressed representatives of Australia, New Zealand, Canada, the Cape Colony and Natal. While he gladly recognised the material aid of the colonies over the past years of crisis, he attached greater import to their 'moral support'. Where foreign nations had competed in the 'campaign of malignant misrepresentation', Britain had found a 'splendid answer' in being 'able to point to the unbiased testimony' of the colonies. The empire's unifying link was 'sentimental in its character' and it was in this sentiment that Chamberlain saw the empire's children bearing the weight of the orb under which 'the weary Titan staggers'.¹³⁸

In such ways the Australian troops offered one rhetorical solution to the domestic and imperial problems faced by Britain. In the anticipatory vision of 'something larger' the colonies could plaster over divisions in British society. This vision could then be extrapolated to bind those other British societies across the seas.

THE COLONIAL TROOPS AMUSE US MOST OF ALL

Just as in the Australian press, an idealised colonial presence in British papers did not go unchallenged. Though the bulk of British publications were faithfully pro-imperial and pro-war, dissent could be located easily enough.¹³⁹ One particularly cutting letter to the *Pall Mall Gazette* saw imperial unity in an altogether different way. It charged Australian and Canadian troops with assisting the British army in carrying out what would now be termed genocide; that is, 'exterminating' and 'slaughtering a small nation of husbandmen and shepherds, who never did them, nor anyone else, any harm'.¹⁴⁰ Even more disconcertingly for colonial readers, the same letter mocked Britain's supposed civilising mission by pointing to the drastically reduced number of Aboriginal people in Australia.

Tellingly, an editorial annotation attached to the bottom of this letter labelled it a sample of the 'rabid rubbish which passes as a truthful statement of the facts' among certain groups.¹⁴¹ The letter was apparently

a step too far for its editor. It seems the letter was published with the proviso that it be simultaneously discredited. Still, it gave a powerful critique of the war, indicating the changing mood in Britain and anticipating the furore initiated by Emily Hobhouse's report to the British Government describing the appalling conditions in the camps for displaced Boer families.

War critics could find greater latitude in working-class papers. *Reynolds's Weekly*, for one, saw Australians as both a population hoodwinked by a malign jingoism, and as cynical opportunists:

The colonial troops amuse us most of all. In our Colonies there is a fearful want of employment. These Australian 'bushmen,' that is, cattle drovers, are generally the ne'er-do-wells of this kingdom. They have been starving on about 15s in the Colonies. It was a perfect God-send to them to get engagements in South Africa at the fancy price of about five times as much as is being paid to Tommy Atkins.¹⁴²

The feted imperial 'bushmen' are here recast as ordinary members of an exploited working class, their mythic patriotism mere economic pragmatism. The following month another *Reynolds's* article addressed the perceived decline of the British race itself, comparing it unfavourably with the Boers, whose 'race is not deteriorating like our own'.¹⁴³ Such opinions subverted the reasoning of mainstream papers, substituting class priorities for those of racial solidarity and reversing the preferential allocation of British whiteness in favour of the Boers. Ideas of economic and racial exploitation surfaced freely on the pages of the radical press. In their connection to the Australian colonies, these critiques could diminish claims of imperial harmony so prominent elsewhere.

That Australia's own press gatekeepers seldom countenanced such attitudes was suggested by a correspondence to *Reynolds's* from Kalgoorlie, Western Australia, by 'Cas-Hamba', the pen name of Mrs A.E. McDonald, herself the owner and editor of a local mining newspaper.¹⁴⁴ 'Cas-Hamba' wrote to the British press to refute the praise of the colonies. She complained: 'the average Colonial newspapers absolutely refuse to open their columns to a word in opposition to the war. They have run mad, in a measure, over enthusiastic demonstrations about what they call "patriotism".'¹⁴⁵ She felt obliged to write to a British paper to be heard at all. 'Cas-Hamba' then spoke the truth of colonial 'patriotism' as she saw it, namely, the class issues and dire economic

circumstances that compelled Australians to offer themselves as soldiers in a foreign land.¹⁴⁶ In such ways the same circulation-animating expressions of worldwide patriotism also allowed it to be challenged.

The mediation of this balance is illustrated by an episode in the Welsh *Western Mail*. In a July 1900 letter, an Australian correspondent wrote that his friends in Cardiff had two months earlier sent him an article, published in May 1900, containing a conversation between a Canadian and an 'Australian-Scot' about England and Australia's relationship vis-à-vis the South African War. Two Welsh readers then mailed this article to their Australian acquaintance who, in turn, wrote back to the *Western Mail*.

In the original May article, the 'Australian-Scot' explained to the Canadian why he voted for the Australian Commonwealth Bill:

It's the objection of a grown man against outside interference. Why should England want a finger in our pie when we can make it and bake it and eat it ourselves ... She is at the Boers now; it may be our turn next. For we are only Boers in a way ... An Australian is a better man than an Englishman ... We are federating so that we can become independent of England.¹⁴⁷

The Canadian responded that this was surely not the representative view in Australia. The reply of the 'Australian-Scot' was sharp: 'don't you make the biggest mistake of your life, my friend. Australia is against this war'.¹⁴⁸

In his July letter, the Australian acquaintance responded by disputing the 'Australian-Scot's' claim of Australian opposition to the war: 'I assert Australia is at one with the Motherland on the war, and very much so.'¹⁴⁹ As proof he asked his readers to 'Witness the eight thousand troops she has sent, and the only difficulty we have met with has been in restraining the ardour of those who wanted to take a hand in it, and the rejoicing over every victory.'¹⁵⁰

Prominent among this correspondent's concerns was the potentially negative Australian image available to other members of the imperial family if the wrong message was transmitted. Noting the 'Australian-Scot's' plea for independence, the correspondent worried that, 'if this is published in the Canadian papers what will our brother Canadian think of us?' He then declared that Australia's loyalty to the empire surpassed even that of the British themselves.¹⁵¹

Though it was not unusual for Australians to debate their role in the South African War, that this was done through a Welsh newspaper, highlighted its transnational scope, and the reach that mediated discussions could have. The concern was that the idea of Australia circulating in print would ultimately become the one imagined throughout the British world. As if to force the point, the writer requested the *Western Mail* publish a corroborating speech by a New South Wales colonial secretary printed in the *Star*, 'a respectable paper'.¹⁵² In negotiating Australia's place in the empire, the subject may have been the war, but its final meaning was fought on the battleground of the newspaper press.

The South African War: Points of Fracture

Much Australian academic assessment of the South African War has focused on public responses to it. It has seen arguments range from claiming near-unanimity of support for the war on the one hand, to, on the other, the suggestion that this alleged enthusiasm was merely ‘manufactured spontaneity’. In this latter view, Australians were misled into fighting in South Africa. Rather than ‘imperialist fervour’ explaining Australian support for the war, Chris Connolly has suggested that it was instead a product of the intentional influence of the British Colonial Office.¹

Craig Wilcox, however, suggests that Black Week marked a turning point in attitudes that resulted in the scotching of most public dissent, including that of the working class.² The *Bulletin* seems to have misread the public mood by adopting an anti-war position, and it paid the price. In an apparent reflection of public attitudes, this tactic led to a sharp drop in circulation.³ It even briefly disavowed its anti-war platform after Black Week to proclaim: ‘The empire, right or wrong.’⁴ Yet it later ‘regained its truculence’, once the British had recovered ground.⁵

This wave of imperial support was followed by a period of scepticism. This turned to profound disillusionment as the harrowing facts of the later guerrilla phase of the war, with its brutal civilian camps and shocking casualty rates, including the deaths of over 20,000 Boer women and children, came to light. Newspaper correspondents began to leave South Africa, and jaded readers turned their attention to other matters,

including the Boxer Rebellion in China, for which South Australia, New South Wales and Queensland had sent a 500-man naval contingent.

Important as these studies of opinion are, far less scholarship exists on the relationship between Australian press responses to the war and broader patterns of colonial thought and feeling, including the varied rationales underpinning, and unsettling, settler narratives. These narratives included attempts to relieve anxieties over gendered and racial decay through ideas of Australian land productivity and territorial inheritance. Yet those ideas held their own tensions.

FURTHER SOILING OUR SOULS

In the colonies, dissent towards the war was, as with the Sudan crisis, never entirely absent. The historian Bobbie Oliver has argued that dissenters could be grouped into four categories: those for whom the war was an unjust attempt to secure goldmines and territories; pragmatists who felt those departing to South Africa would leave Australian defences too sparse; those morally opposed to reported human rights abuses; and radicals decrying capital's undermining of labour interests.⁶

Some framed their dissent as loyalty to the true vision of the empire. Others rubbished the claims of overweening imperialists who would happily sacrifice the lives and wealth of Australians and rot the moral foundations on which Britons stood. These critics saw in the South African War only imperial tyranny over the liberty of European settlers, and the protection of gold prioritised over the protection of a poor, independent people. To the modern sensibility, the positions of dissidents are often the more persuasive arguments. Their opposition now appears admirable, as it did to many at the time. But what else can a close reading of the press reaction to the war tell us of the broader narratives supporting and unsettling Australian society? This section briefly discusses some of the ways that dissidents presented themselves, and the difficulties they faced. What follows looks at the complex relationship between support for the war, and the racial, gendered, and historical complications that arose.

In debates attending the war, other similarities to the Sudan crisis are evident. In colonial parliament, just as the 'precedent' of the NSW contingent to the Sudan was raised to support the sending of the South African contingents, it could also be raised by opponents.⁷ As in 1885, it was in the radical press, and again the *Bulletin*, where dissent was most overt.⁸ The *Bulletin's* vocal 'pro-Boer' opposition to

the war predated Australian involvement and was based on theories of elite financial intrigue, as well as nationalist ideology and pragmatism. The *Bulletin* also promulgated anti-capitalist conspiracy theories in the idiom of an ugly anti-Semitism that targeted the 'large financiers' of 'Jewhannesburg'.⁹

Likewise, perhaps the most significant dissenting letters to a mainstream publication were those of renowned University of Sydney History Professor, George Arnold Wood who, reminiscent of Henry Parkes in 1885, sparred with pro-war rivals in Sydney's *Daily Telegraph*. The exchange carried out in the pages of the *Telegraph* between Wood and his fellow Professor, Mungo William MacCallum, indicated the boundaries of acceptable debate.¹⁰ Wood's letters critiqued supporters of the war, though this was support that he conceded was advocated by the 'majority of those persons in this colony'.¹¹

These letters stirred controversy and were countered by the *Telegraph's* editorials and letters pages. On the grounds that his distasteful views were 'unworthy of a professor of history', even his own university censured Wood.¹² Yet, as with Henry Parkes, Wood was ultimately arguing against a narrow conception of the 'unjustness' of the war, while highly supportive of his own idea of the empire. As he reminded another respondent to his letters:

There are few persons in this colony who feel towards England a love stronger than I feel: few who value more highly the great work that England has done and is doing in the world, few who more ardently hope that the future of the Empire will be even more glorious than the past.¹³

Later broadening his audience, Wood wrote to the *Manchester Guardian* to claim that dissent was far more prominent in Australia than the mainstream press was letting on.¹⁴ To complete the exchange, an unnamed Alfred Deakin assured readers of the *Morning Post* that Wood's view was 'not an Australian growth'.¹⁵ Indeed, of the many famous Australian commentaries on the war, among the most striking remain those of the future Prime Minister Deakin who wrote anonymously on Australian matters for the *Morning Post* during the war and continuing until 1914.¹⁶ Deakin's articles, where he could refer to himself—an actor in the events he described—in the third person, offered a prominent channel through which Britons could receive positive information of Australia. They also provided a corrective to British ignorance of the

colonies.¹⁷ Though Wood's and Deakin's were the most conspicuous cases of Australian attitudes to the war being negotiated in the press, there were less celebrated examples that are no less interesting.

Letters to the editor often presented the most visible challenges to orthodoxy. One such was authored by the prominent Irish-born suffragette and political activist Mary Lee, who was rarely shy of publicising her controversial opinions.¹⁸ Lee sparked a skirmish within the *Advertiser* of her adopted hometown of Adelaide by challenging the reasons for sending Australian men to South Africa. She wrote to explicitly condemn the war. Her chief grievance was the death of young men, 'our bravest, best, noblest young man-blood—their grand young limbs picked to the bones by vultures, whose hellish avarice, in its furious hunger of selfishness regards neither God nor man'.¹⁹ Her address was not directed towards the editor of the paper but to her fellow colonial women in an appeal to act against current policy. To this readership Lee urged: 'Oh England! Mother of peoples, where is your motherhood now? ... Mothers, wives, sisters, daughters of South Australia! Arise! I say, and protest with one voice against our further soiling our souls and our hands in this most infamous jobbery.'²⁰

Lee's enlistment of maternal metaphors helped her campaign against a military involvement that was itself justified by the familial bonds of colony and mother country. For Lee, the high-minded civic virtue of the colonial son fighting for the imperial mother at a figurative level jarred with the maternal appeal to mothers to protect their flesh-and-blood sons from battlefield injury and death. In other words, contested meanings of motherhood highlighted the tension between legitimising war through talk of patriotism, and realising the actual aims of warfare—to injure and kill human beings for political, territorial and cultural-symbolic reasons.²¹ The very idea of motherhood shifted along class, racial, and cultural lines, and according to historical circumstance.²² This contest was played out in the following days with Lee's rhetorical device earning her a spiteful response.

The next day's *Advertiser* contained a letter dismissing Lee as 'hysterical', in the familiar language of feminine excess. Though conceding that the war no doubt caused unnecessary deaths, the respondent appealed to the greater good by considering, without irony, 'the beneficial results that will arise from the occupation of South Africa by so progressive and fair dealing a race as the British, who protect the natives and give every white man worth his salt a fair show to make his living'.²³ The writer

mocked Lee for not failing to ‘enjoy ... the advantages of colonisation here’, implying that she should consider herself lucky that Australia was colonised by the British rather than the French. The writer also noted the irony that Lee’s complaints rested on knowledge only made possible by the British colonisation that allowed the transcontinental telegraph to register ‘the pulse of the whole civilised and uncivilised world’.²⁴ That is, without colonisation there would be no telegraph and so no timely awareness of the war for Lee to campaign against.

Lee’s letter received further replies in the following days, two from women who both chided her on grounds of gender and race. Both letters confronted Lee on her own terms, the first labelling herself ‘A Soldier’s Mother and Sister’, and the second ‘Englishwoman’. Both also attempted to demarcate positions of authority from which to overrule Lee. The first writer presented herself as ‘a true-born Englishwoman’, who spoke back to the nation’s mothers in the idiom of bloodlines and racial lineage. She wished to ‘advise the mothers of Australia to proclaim to the world that they are descended from the same stock that bred the boys of the bull dog breed that made Old England’s name, and also that they mean to help her keep it’.²⁵

‘Englishwoman’ similarly rehearsed the idea of Lee’s ‘hysteria’, only to shift from gender to ethnic heritage: ‘No, Mrs. Lee, your appeal is useless. We are English, thank God—I very much doubt if “Mary Lee” is—and it is to such brave boys as those who are falling ... to whom we owe the splendid liberty that no other nation enjoys’.²⁶ The point here is not to suggest that ideas of patriotism always trumped gender or vice versa, but that these categories could be used in conjunction as practical tactics, employed in often conflicting ways to manage particular tensions.

The references to the liberty of Australia, used to justify war enthusiasm, sat uneasily both with Australia’s carcereal past (if somewhat easier with South Australia’s convictless founding), and the ongoing dispossession of the Aboriginal population. These were contradictions grounded in a historical context that remained unresolved (perhaps unresolvable) and that no amount of rhetoric asserting social unity could fully mask.

THE MOTHER NATION'S GIFT

In debating why Australian colonists should go to South Africa, pragmatic political statements abounded. Troops were being offered as an imperial insurance policy, or they were building credit for future protection by British forces. The press undoubtedly had some influence in this. Members of Parliament were well aware of the ridicule certain organs of the press reserved for 'pro-Boers'. And MPs regularly backed up their respective speeches with reference to the day's news—playing one publication off another. Yet expediency could also be hitched to more sentimental justifications, in the kind of language that inferred rather than explicated, language that reached for thoughts that resisted full expression. The previous chapter noted the colonial desire to link their history to something larger. But there were other, more discomfiting ways that history interrupted a narrative of colonial and British progress.

In the immediate prelude to the war, the *Argus* tried to simplify the matter of national identification by connecting Britishness to Australianness, reframing national belonging as racial legacy. 'It is a great thing', the *Argus* proclaimed, 'to be British in blood and brains, in courage and purpose, and to have inherited British laws and literature. We are heirs to the civilisation of a splendid people.'²⁷

Yet, attempts to assure readers that they were self-evidently British inadvertently hinted at nagging questions about settler history. Offering a defence of any future Australian involvement in the impending war, the *Argus* continued:

The continent we live on is the mother nation's gift, and with it her Australian children have received complete political liberty. Also, under the British flag Australia has enjoyed absolute security for more than a hundred years. We have not had to repel an invader; we have not dreaded the earth hunger of European powers, who, if ever they looked in this direction, saw the British flag floating in the breeze, and thenceforth sought to gratify their territorial ambitions in other parts of the globe ... And for the future our progress and prosperity are bound up with the stability of the empire.²⁸

The *Argus*' conceit of gift giving and receiving between two consenting parties rendered the bequest of the Australian continent uncontroversial – after all, one cannot distribute a gift belonging to someone else. Invisible, of course, is the third party to this transaction.

In its celebration of the lack of invasions on Australian soil, the *Argus* overlooked that the national 'gift' itself was born of the same 'earth hunger' and 'territorial ambition' it condemned. The irony in suggesting that the land came with 'political liberty' and security against the invasion of predatory European powers spoke to the recognition that control of the continent was precarious. It also carried a haunting implication—if the land had only recently been occupied and overrun by outsiders, could history repeat itself?²⁹ This spectre of invasion would trouble Australian public discourse in years to come.³⁰ As such, the idea of the 'gift' of the Australian continent was a more comforting method of assimilating violent conquest into the story of colonial origins.

Even so, receiving the gift of another people's landmass entails at the very least some form of reciprocation. There was, in other words, a debt to be paid as white Australians proved themselves worthy recipients of the land. But how does one repay the gift of a continent? What kind of social bond does this entail? Further, how do the recipients of this gift square the history of Aboriginal dispossession with the duelling narratives of hard won settler possession of the land on the one hand, and its passive reception on the other?

Besides the obvious assumptions of benign white ownership, and Aboriginal absence, the metaphor of the gift is interesting not least in denying Australian settlers' own contribution to claiming the continent. A common rationale for boasts of settler progress was the heroic taming of an unforgiving land. This triumph over adversity was seen to validate territorial occupancy as the settlers made the land their own.³¹ Here, though, the land is simply bestowed from mother to child, bespeaking a natal dynasty at odds with a well-earned right of exclusive occupancy. This sort of language relied on a logic that, as we shall soon see, was more problematically applied to the Boers. Those purporting to speak for Australian colonists faced a dilemma. To validate their presence on the continent, national evolution was celebrated and its achievements publicised to the outside world. At the same time, colonial origins required their history to be woven into a British story. Much Australian press rhetoric relating to the South African War transpired between the poles of self-congratulation and denial.

This exposition might seem a lot to hang on a turn of phrase in one conservative newspaper editorial. But rhetorical gestures of land and self-governance as either gift or inheritance recurred both in 1885, as we have seen, and during the South African War. The metaphor of

inheritance was particularly well chosen. As John Ferry has argued, looking at inherited wealth demonstrates how capitalist structures are premised on the intergenerational transfer of prosperity. Studies of inheritance, Ferry suggests, can show how a social order persisted and reproduced itself over time.³² The simple reference to wealth and succession invoked, and thus rendered timeless and bloodless, an entire system of Western law and tradition, allowing no space for alternatives. The fact that settler inheritance was based on an original theft of Aboriginal land was seamlessly avoided. The Australian colonies, born into the imperial family, had received their due, and were now maturing.

In 1897, journalist and self-confirmed Anglo-Australian 'Imperialist', George Cathcart Craig, published a well-received book urging the consolidation of the Australasian defence system. This system, he said, would enable the colonies to play their part in imperial defence and expansion.³³ He noted the productivity and value that the colonies added to the empire, and the costs borne by Britain in assisting the colonies.³⁴ The very existence of the Australian colonies was said to be brought about by 'the love of adventure and colonization, by that race which has conquered in every clime'. And yet 'We have never yet had to fight, like colonists at the Cape, Canada, or in New Zealand, for the integrity of our rich and glorious possessions, but it is beyond human ken when we shall have to fight to preserve the great inheritance bequeathed to us by our Anglo-Saxon fathers.'³⁵ Craig's selective use of the past set up a contrast with other settler colonies, ignoring history while depending on it. This was a not an especially novel idea. As Simon Ryan has noted, inheritance was a metaphor used by earlier European explorers of the Australian continent, with recent European arrivals seen as heirs to a vast fortune.³⁶ By the 1890s their legatees were wanting to pay their own way.

Drawing from their shallow pool of military experience, Australian politicians and journalists invoked both the New Zealand Wars and the NSW contingent to the Sudan in different ways. In a fiery speech in the New South Wales parliament during the debates over sending Australian troops to South Africa, the future wartime conscriptionist Prime Minister, the irascible William (Billy) Hughes, recalled the contribution of the 1885 NSW contingent in mocking terms.³⁷ In reply to Hughes, Henry Copeland also invoked the memory of the NSW contingent, for which he had argued passionately in 1885. Copeland's aim was to demonstrate how the colonies were required to display their loyalty.³⁸ For Copeland, it was not the men that Britain wanted, but a tangible show

of colonial fidelity. Copeland asserted that if one wanted the advantages of the empire one must also share its burdens. To support this proposition, he drew on a recognisable historical parallel familiar from the early 1860s, and again in 1885:

What right have we here, if a strong nation has no right to say to the weak party, the possessors of the land, you must make room for us? Why do we not bundle up our traps and leave this country to the black-fellows? What right had the people of New Zealand to take that country? Look at the monstrous war which raged in that country ... Will any man tell me that the Maoris of New Zealand are not as brave a race as the Boers of South Africa?³⁹

Copeland answered himself that 'the Maories' were 'every whit as brave'. Indeed, 'If we are to adopt the policy of those hon. Members who oppose the motion, we are bound to abandon this country to the aborigines, and the New Zealanders are bound to abandon their country to the Maoris. So we might go to all parts of the empire which Great Britain has acquired from time to time.'⁴⁰ Clearly, old ideological habits died hard.

Copeland then near-replicated his 1885 parliamentary speech to the effect that the Australian land mass was acquired without costing colonists a drop of blood. That is, Australians owed the British for 'this free gift of more than one-eighteenth of the whole land surface of the earth'.⁴¹ In this way, and in defence of colonial participation in a foreign war, a declaration of undisturbed settler property ownership was fervently performed in houses of colonial legal power, the very sites where the denial of Aboriginal land rights and sovereignty was legislatively sustained.

In the Victorian parliament, a few weeks after Black Week, even the liberal former premier William Sheils spoke extravagantly of 'the imperious duty we owe'. Sheils justified his support for sending further troops not by any necessity or practicality, but in gratitude for the 'gifts' received from the mother country, including the continent they stood on.⁴² At the thought of this munificence Sheils became 'lost in wonder' while his heart 'thrilled with emotion'. Anyone thinking the colonial war effort necessarily summoned stiff-lipped rugged manliness need only imagine Sheils as he spoke: 'the motherland stood by our cradle in infancy, tending, nursing, watching over us with ceaseless care, and, when we were in the mere swaddling-clothes of infant nationhood, endowing us with a great and

marvellous continent as our patrimony, to own and to use as we liked, stipulating for no material advantage for herself'.⁴³

Quaint as this language now sounds, it is worth considering for the ways in which intimate feelings bolstered the most visceral imposition of force. The repayment the mother country was to receive for its nurturing support was, it would seem, for the matured nation to be baptised in blood. Inherited property rights from mother to child—'to use as we liked'—prompted shows of loyalty that manifested in public narratives as physical displays of affection. But the question remained: would this be enough to confirm that the land truly belonged to them? Could they finally be settled enough to enjoy their gift at ease?

In his two most recent books, Henry Reynolds focuses on the century long Aboriginal-settler 'war' for land and sovereignty, and, as already noted, the South African War. In both books, Reynolds raises the question of whether frontier conflict had any discernible impact on colonial understanding of their imperial position, and he notes that contemporaries saw force as legitimate in securing the continent 'as the exclusive domain of the "white race"'.⁴⁴ Beyond this, though, he largely chooses not to put his two latest projects in conversation, or to offer any sustained attempt to relate the rhetoric attending the South African War to conflicts fought over the Australian continent.⁴⁵ It is true that direct references to Aboriginal people were largely absent in discussions of the war in South Africa. But the rationales given for Australian involvement in it, were—as Reynolds does note—drenched in a language of national birth, redemption through blood sacrifice, performing before others, and repaying debts. All of these, I am suggesting, are connected to a historical narrative that is otherwise unspeakable. Seeing precedent in British history, legality, and morality permitted colonists to disregard prior Aboriginal claims to land and sovereignty.

The point is not to rue an absence of colonial calculation, but to recognise the necessary means by which settler society could comprehend itself. Identifying with Britishness or Australianness was not a clear-cut choice. Each was underwritten by a common identification with white settler sovereignty.⁴⁶ There was more at stake for settlers at the turn of the century than a narrowly defined national self-interest in military or economic terms. The assumption of proprietorial rights emboldened Australian settlers to pursue the fight for British territorial sovereignty overseas, and to consolidate it in Australia. What entailed in public debates was a negotiation of how and why to prioritise the two.

TO PRESERVE THIS CONTINENT FOR THE WHITE RACES OF THE FUTURE

In the years preceding the South African War, fears arose that the sparse-ness of the Australian continent would be seen by countries to the north, most notably China, as an invitation to seek territory for surplus populations.⁴⁷ This reached fever pitch in the likes of Oxford historian Charles Pearson's influential 1893 tome, *National Life and Character: A Forecast*. Pearson foresaw the white man's preeminent position in world affairs being usurped by the unceasing numbers of the 'black and yellow races'. The Chinese 'problem' was particularly acute. For some of his esteemed readers, future Australian Prime Ministers Edmund Barton and Alfred Deakin among them, Pearson's book was a cautionary tale, giving white men notice that they could not take their relative progress for granted.⁴⁸

Pearson's was a much more anxious vision than that of the celebratory prophets of Greater Britain before him. He warned that white settlers would be overrun by people hitherto regarded as 'lesser races'. Whereas 'the Aboriginal Australians have been weak and few', the Chinese were growing and, if the British population were not vigilant, could usurp the position of the white race and threaten the settlers' grip on the continent.⁴⁹ The prevalence of these and similar views heightened the need of Australian colonists to further justify their territorial gift.

When the parliament of the newly federated nation was debating the Immigration Restriction Bill in 1901, the recently-elected Western Australian politician and newspaper editor and owner John Kirwan explicitly linked Australian involvement in the war with the need to purify Australia of 'Asiatics'. For Kirwan, this was 'a matter affecting our national existence'. 'We are here', he said, 'to preserve this continent as a heritage for the white races of the future'. Kirwan noted that Australian troops had provided aid to Britain in her time of need in South Africa, but the 'question of a white Australia is of more importance to Australia than were the issues involved in South Africa to the Empire'. For this reason, Kirwan 'believed that the Imperial authorities will support us in connexion with this matter in the same way that we supported them in the Transvaal'.⁵⁰

Kirwan was essentially hoping that Britain would help keep Australia white as a reward for colonial assistance in wartime. Though the proposed trade-offs were not always so simple, the logic followed in much public commentary resulted in racial comparisons that stressed

Australia's intrinsic Britishness. There were ample opportunities for this during the early stages of the war. Here too, the fusion of history and racial dogma led to awkward conclusions.

In early 1900 the *Mercury* grappled with 'an argument advanced in certain pro-Boer papers', namely, equating the oppression and exclusion of Chinese immigrants in Australia with Boer treatment of 'Outlanders' in South Africa. When the *Mercury* promptly dismissed this equivalence as fallacious and disloyal, its logic was revealing, resting chiefly on ancestral and racial differences between Australia and South Africa. 'The Chinese', the *Mercury* wrote, 'never rescued [the Australian colonies] from the attacks of the natives ... but Great Britain did.' Moreover, 'these colonies':

never invited the Chinese to come, but the Boers did expressly invite the British to develop their country. There were no Chinese in these colonies when they were acquired by the British, but there were British subjects in the Transvaal when it was given back on conditions, and the rights of those subjects were expressly secured by stipulating for the equality of all white men.⁵¹

For the *Mercury*, the lack of 'invitation' went some way to legitimising Australian exclusionary policies towards the Chinese. This reasoning, and the suggestion of native violence from which settlers required rescuing, also saw the *Mercury* uncomfortably evoke Australia's foundations. Underscoring this was the need to expel those others who compromised the racial purity of the settler social order. By reverting to racial truisms, the *Mercury's* assertion of difference belied its confidence. 'But there is another and absolutely conclusive difference', the *Mercury* continued:

The Chinese in these colonies occupy the position of the dark races in Africa, that is, they are apart from white civilisation, and cannot be made a part of it. Every country has, beyond doubt, the right to protect itself from the influx of an alien and dissimilar race, and it is agreed in Africa that the black races must be treated as inferior.⁵²

This weaving of the Chinese 'problem' into questions of national rights indicates how Australian colonial thought melded ideas of race, land, and self-government. Asserting control over borders and demographic composition is, after all, among the baldest ways of asserting powers of

territorial governance. Connecting this to the war in South Africa provided another platform to affirm the inherent rights of British subjects around the globe. We need not dwell on the contradictions in comparing the position of Africans in Africa and Chinese in Australia. The aim of such passages was not historical consistency or faultless logic. Rather, it was to loudly proclaim the non-whiteness of others, to emphasise the exclusive properties of colonial whiteness, and to justify British and colonial actions abroad and at home.⁵³

Barring Asian immigrants was not only fundamental to colonial ideas of self-government. As Marilyn Lake has argued, racial exclusion was also ingrained in a form of colonial liberalism that characterised a new wave of colonial politics in Victoria, personified in the likes of Alfred Deakin, Charles Pearson, and the *Age's* David Syme. This colonial liberalism and all it stood for was to be the preserve of white men, and based on exclusive access to the land taken from its original owners. For this version of colonial liberalism, 'Equality required exclusion; democracy demanded discrimination.'⁵⁴ For Lake, racial qualifications marked who was capable and worthy of self-government. The point of these proprietorial claims, however, was their assertion at the very moment they were considered most under attack.⁵⁵

Although Chinese and Aboriginal people occupied different structural positions within Australian society, their similar negative relation to the white settler is important. Just as Chinese and Aboriginal labour was opportunistically exploited by Australian settlers, so too did they both present a social threat. On the one hand, the Chinese threatened the wages of Australia's white labour force. As Pearson put it, no-one who had studied the situation in Australia had 'the smallest doubt that Chinese labourers, if allowed to come in freely, could starve all the white men ... out of it, or force them to submit to harder work and a much lower standard of wages'.⁵⁶ On the other hand, the Aboriginal population posed rival claims to sovereignty and land possession, however disregarded these claims were in practice. In each case, there was the need to shift them out of view—the Chinese to be legislatively excluded for being too many, and Aboriginal people to be imagined away as being too few. Any story of harmonious and pure settler-nationhood, in unqualified belonging and possession of its territory, struggled to incorporate their presence.

The sometime *Bulletin* contributor and songwriter Perce Abbott also made the comparison between the Chinese population in Australia,

and British emigrants to South Africa. Abbott, speaking up for *uitlander* rights in Sydney's *Evening News*, complained that a 'Chinaman is supposed to be the worst-treated of all the aliens in English-speaking countries, but the Celestial is an honoured guest here compared to the Britisher in South Africa'.⁵⁷ Again, Abbott's reasoning becomes problematic when applied elsewhere. He drew a historical narrative to impugn the Boers and vindicate the war effort. 'Let there be no sentimental nonsense about "robbing the Boers of their country"', Abbott implored. 'The Dutch waded breast high in the blood of the innocent, harmless natives of the soil.' After several lurid examples of this blood-letting, Abbott concluded that British conquest of the Boer would be 'poetic justice'. He then recounted the extenuating scenario:

The Boer found a picturesque and moral savage on the land; he killed him off, turned his land into a pig farm, and squatted his own filthy carcass with its nameless offences against decency and morality. The Briton comes next, and turns the pig farm into an El Dorado.

Then, 'Having brought about this state of affairs, the Briton naturally wants a say in the ordering of them', even if, 'in the process of objecting to it, the Boer follows the exterminated nigger'.⁵⁸

Where was Australia placed within a parallel historical synopsis? Were Australians, with their treatment of outsiders and 'natives', equally candidates for invasion? Or did their land productivity as fellow Britons nullify the analogy? Any such comparison was surely inadmissible for Abbott or his readers, but it did reveal a potentially disturbing rationale for fighting the Boers. The position of those such as Abbott was fraught, caught between identifying with Britishness and the empire, and ignoring the structural similarities between Australian and Boer territorial expansion. It was perhaps for this reason that the 'anti-Boer' language in Australian newspapers could take on a startling spitefulness, leading to the double movement of denigrating the Boers in racial terms and comparing Boer and Australian land tenure.

THE TWANG OF FOREIGN DUTCH IS HATEFUL TO OUR EARS

Perce Abbott's polemic shows that even where comparisons between British and Chinese were historically problematic, they at least retained a sharp racial division. Contrasting Australians to the Boers blurred even

this clarity. As with events in 1885, Africans themselves were seldom discussed in comparison with white actors. During the war, it was the Boers whose lifestyles were analysed and disparaged, with articles and books given over to fascination with a white race that had succumbed to African degradation. The belittling of the Boers in the Australian press drew on a long lineage of British rhetoric that had gained force following the first Boer War in 1880. By the turn of the century, British vilification, even dehumanisation, of the Boers had a practical element. It gave psychological aid to those making war on Boer communities and, later, herding Boer families into camps. In Australia, it served other purposes.

An article in the *West Australian* at the beginning of 1900, reproduced from the British periodical, *The Nineteenth Century*, returns us to the *Argus*' depiction of Australian land as Britain's gift discussed earlier. Though a conscious comparison might have been unlikely at the time, juxtaposing the two pieces reveals a telling contrast between ideas of Boer and Australian territorial possession. Where for the *Argus* the basis of Australian growth and progress was the bestowal of land, readers of the *West Australian* could now discern that the unplanned acquisition of South African land was an indication that the Boers did not deserve to keep it all for themselves. Any potential Boer accomplishments were mere by-products of a historical accident. 'The Boers', the article suggested, 'are said to have been the pioneers of civilisation; but in fact they were only refugees from the levelling-up influence of a civilised community.' The resources of the land had simply fallen into Boer laps:

In self-sought isolation they have tried to escape the tide of civilisation. But in vain. Through no fault of theirs, they have become the owners of a fabulously rich mineral country. Through no fault of theirs, the hidden wealth was discovered. Without effort on their part Johannesburg has sprung up, and the gold mining industry has been firmly established.⁵⁹

No struggle for land, no coerced labour or exploitation. Only a spontaneous sequence of events mistakenly credited to the Boers, who passively received their bounty rather than producing it through their own industry.

The key difference between Australian and Boer settlers was the fruitful use of this nature.⁶⁰ This had further implications for claims to whiteness. In the exchanges with Mary Lee discussed above, one of the

letter-writers mentioned the virtues of the British in South Africa over the Boer. Whereas the Boer 'is content to lie in a disreputable shanty all his life, with a cow-dung floor ... the Briton opens the country to the teeming millions of the world to do as our South Australian pioneers did with this fair land, which for centuries was the black man's hunting ground.'⁶¹ Similarly, in May 1899 the *Age* argued that 'It never occurs to him [the Boer] that if he had the right to take the land from the natives in the interests of a semi-barbarous settlement, Great Britain has the same right to supercede the Boer in the interests of a higher civilisation.'⁶²

The parallel for the Australian colonies is obvious, and on rare occasions was publicly pointed out, creating a deeply unsettling picture. In the Queensland parliament in mid-October 1899, the trade unionist and Labor politician 'Harry' Turley denounced his fellow members for conveniently expressing moral outrage at Boer treatment of 'natives' while ignoring comparable Australian cases. Turley asserted that a speaker before him 'did not give us any idea of the atrocities committed by pearlshellers on the blacks not very long ago in Western Australia ... [nor] the treatment meted out to the natives of this colony on the mainland in North Queensland'. Indeed, Turley said, 'The Government knew for years that those atrocities had been going on in Northern Queensland...'⁶³ This was just the sort of narrative that most colonial politicians and the mainstream press spent some effort guarding against. Doing so meant isolating elements of Australian colonial history that set it apart from that of the Boers.

At the war's onset, the *Age* published an editorial referring to numerous Boer transgressions. These included their audacious issuing of an ultimatum to their British superiors, their injurious treatment of the mother country's sons, their oppression of the local black population, and their seemingly irreparable stagnancy in the march to civilisation. Of the latter two points, the *Age* was clear that any distinction between South Africa's black and white populations was collapsing: 'As a people, [the Boers] are quite as unprogressive as the black laborers who are virtually their slaves.'⁶⁴ The more egregious offence to the *Age*, however, was the lack of productive use to which the Boers had put their supremely 'fertile' soil. The editorial went to some effort to provide evidence not only of the Boers inherent inability to use their inherited land, but to show that this was tantamount to relinquishing their claims to it.⁶⁵

This failure was clear when set against Britain and the Australian colonies. A roll call of witnesses and historical statistics stressed the point. We learn, for example, that 'in the year 1892, while Victoria exported wine to the value of £63,000, the Cape Colony exported only £17,000 worth'. The difference between British and Boer use of 'Nature's bounties' in recent history was roundly demonstrated. A comparative table showed 'the difference in placing great natural resources within reach of the unprogressive Boer and of the enterprising Anglo-Saxon'.⁶⁶ The respective successes of two European populations in plugging their conquered lands into the global economic system was translated directly into the language of race. The significance of the comparison went beyond Britain. It was to benefit 'civilisation' as a whole. Ultimately, 'In the interests of humanity the Boer has no more right to lock up these great resources of nature than had the Bantu race which he displaced.'⁶⁷

Needless to say, Australian settlers' own rights to their resources were self-evident. And yet the implication was that the productive use of these appropriated resources must be constantly proved and proclaimed lest they leave themselves open to their usurpation in turn. Etching deeper the boundaries between 'pure' white Britons and other more aberrant whites eased the precariousness of this position.⁶⁸

It is therefore unsurprising that a theme of Australian commentary on South Africa was the hierarchical racial positioning of Australians above Boers. Boers, like the Irish in British accounts, tended to confuse simple racial categorisation. As also with British representations of the Irish, commentators got around this by imputing 'black' characteristics to white skins, showing the gap existing between physical appearance and the psychic charge of race.

An *Argus* editorial in the lead up to the war in July 1899 did this most explicitly in an overt comparison of South African Boer and 'native'. The *Argus*, consistent with the familiar discourse of impending 'native' extinction, frankly concluded: the 'Boer is a vanishing quantity. In one sense he is an aboriginal, to be put up with because he is disappearing.'⁶⁹ The defining characteristic of Aboriginality was thus not their prior possession of the land, but their tendency to vacate it. Similarly, in the NSW parliament, Henry Copeland delivered a speech defending white Australian and New Zealand land rights. He concluded that

it is one of the laws of nature – a predestination – that the better type of humanity should displace the lower type. I have no hesitation in saying

that the Boer is the lowest type of white humanity. You cannot name to me any other race of white people so low in the scale of humanity as the Boer.⁷⁰

Other accounts were more considered, but with similar effect. Some months later an *Argus* article titled 'The Boer and his Habits', described, in ethnographic mode, the Boer's 'primitive', 'superstitious', and 'backward' nature. The writer spared no insult. Their religious rituals were curious and naïve. They had a 'lively dread' of 'the blacks', but in ritual and custom African and Boer were, it was implied, closer to one another than were Boers to the British. The conflation of Boer and African was emphasised in a passage describing how the Boers 'still retain the mediæval belief in witches and witchcraft', and although 'Europe no longer knows these old delusions ... they survive in Africa'.⁷¹ The Boers had succumbed to primitivism, left behind by the march of progress and ill-suited to bring civilisation to the world. Tainted by Africa, they had become hybrids, surrendering their racial purity to the British. The flip side to this was that Australians *were* progressively white and therefore justified in assisting the British in maintaining supremacy in South Africa for the good of the civilised world. The *Argus*' favourable positioning of the Australian over the Boer was a reassuring, if predictable, comparison for Australians aware of their own non-European landscape and Aboriginal population.

The key feature of all this was the degradation of the Boers *despite* their whiteness. As in the Irish case, pale skin pigmentation was no bar to racial inferiority. Whiteness could lose or accrue value in different social and cultural situations, and in different locations. This fluidity had the unsettling potential to threaten Australian racial privilege, but its reversal offered promise. If the superiority of whiteness could be stripped of a people, it could also be earned. Australian readers might well infer that though European ancestry alone was insufficient to secure their place on the upper rungs of the racial ladder, through their deeds they could prove themselves white, and, crucially, whiter than the Boers. We can here read the unsteady movement between needing to maintain a mutable identity, and of freezing it at expedient moments. It was this ambiguity that motivated the meticulous and repetitious cataloguing of the Boer's supposedly repellent customs.

Aversion to the Boer extended to other symbolic practices. In a letter to the *Sydney Morning Herald* (SMH), 'Patriotism' wrote to express,

in an oddly emotional tone, the hope 'that the Transvaal and Orange River colonies will be British not merely in a political sense but also in name'. The writer then clarified, 'When I say "name", I mean that every town, district, or place should be rechristened with an English baptism, and the faintest twang of foreign Dutch removed for ever. It is hateful to our ears.'⁷² Paul Carter has illustrated the significance of the naming and renaming of place to the British colonial enterprise.⁷³ Here, the problem was less the discrepancy between existing European categories and the unknown of the colonial landscape, than the attachment of the wrong European names. Although South Africa might well succumb to British military and political domination, it had also to be captured symbolically.

Elsewhere, the anti-Boer narrative was challenged.⁷⁴ At times, as we have seen, the Boers were directly, and sympathetically, compared with Australians. In the Western Australian parliament, which was generally more concerned with the Commonwealth Bill than the war, the Irish-Australian Charles Moran only supported sending troops with reluctance since 'The Boers are a race of men who have created a home for themselves in the wilderness of Africa, and are, after all, only imitating the British race, the greatest colonisers in the world.' For Moran, it was 'hardly to be hoped that Australian soldiers will be called on to shed the blood of people who, after all, are fellow colonists carving a home for themselves'.⁷⁵

For radical papers such as the *Worker*, meanwhile, the war boiled down to class divisions. A crude jingoism had been summoned to drum up support for a capitalist racket at the expense of hapless or ignorant workers, and of the Boers—'a nation of simple, old-fashioned farmers'.⁷⁶ Likewise, on the first day of 1900, Louisa Lawson's feminist *Dawn* reproduced an article from the Transvaal Committee of Manchester. It stated: 'South Africa is often spoken of as an "English Colony".' Yet, it corrected, 'It is not an English colony. It is a conquered colony which we seized as the prize of war, against the will of its inhabitants.'⁷⁷ The aggrieved 'inhabitants' for this article, of course, were not Africans but the 'Dutch'. In fact, in a two page article on the 'Story of the Boers', Africans surfaced twice, in each case cast as antagonists to the expansion of the Dutch as they 'gradually subdued the wilderness, planted trees, built farmhouses and towns, and spread civilization over an ever-growing territory', all the while thwarted by the English.⁷⁸

We can reasonably guess why *Dawn* elected to reproduce this piece. Besides its proffered rationale that 'knowledge of South African history

is essential to a right understanding of the present difficulties', *Dawn* was explicit in its choice of 'pro-Boer' material. C.P. Scott, Liberal MP, and editor of the prominent 'pro-peace' *Manchester Guardian*, helped establish and run the Transvaal Committee of Manchester, and likely influenced this article.⁷⁹ More than anti-war radicalism, however, there is also an explicit pro-settler rhetoric suggesting transnational sympathies with another colony struggling against a harsh environment and external interference in dealing with its 'natives'. Many Australian settlers identified with *uitlanders* as fellow British settlers, as opposed to their racial others in the form of the Boers. But the existence of 'pro-Boer' articles implied a still broader settler fraternity that complicated the Boer-British division.

Usually far less complex were the distinctions made between British and black 'natives'. But even these seemingly unshakeable racial categories could occasionally cause unease. Doubts arose about the motivations of soldiers, while others saw a threat to the very make-up of colonial society. This was despite, or perhaps because of, attempts to exhibit the singular nature of Australian martial aptitude.

THE UNPLEASANT RISK OF CONFUSION

Barbara Penny has suggested that approximately one-third of Australian troops to South Africa were Bushmen, 'that is, mainly amateurs at soldiering, supported by public subscription, and from backgrounds conforming roughly to the demands of the popular vision'.⁸⁰ The aptness of this designation for an increasingly urbanised Australian populace did not go undisputed, especially in the letters of those writing back to correct more romantic perceptions.⁸¹ Still, the Australian soldier was a catalyst for concerns over racial heritage, Australian affinity with the mother country, and colonial masculinity. Though the war encouraged a celebration of the colonial contribution to Britain's global project, the embodiment of this progress in the bushman figure lent Australia its distinctiveness. In his atavistic, rough-hewn image lay the myth of white Australian nativity.

This mythology was problematic. On the one hand, the bush was a nostalgic symbol of Australian origins. On the other it remained, in Bernard Smith's description, a location in which to project 'fear and guilt'.⁸² The bush, in its very vastness and impenetrability had long been a source of unease for Australian colonists. This was so in practical terms,

for example in the risk of getting lost or being attacked by 'blacks'. The bush also designated areas either unassimilable into the agricultural and pastoral economy, or at least in need of clearing. Again, the ideal of unlimited space also implied an obligation to fill it, use it, and protect it from external threats. The depiction of the land as potentially threatening complicated the exceptional qualities with which the bush endowed its white inhabitants. This was especially so given the supposedly intimate territorial bond held by Aboriginal Australians. But if the bush was perceived by settlers as a potential location of fear, shame, or loathing, what was to be made of its soldierly offspring?

No better proof of the positive difference of the bushman soldier was found than his (always his) aesthetic physicality and his origins on the land. A retrospective account by Major-General Alexander Tulloch drew a direct connection between his admiration of the Victorian soldiers under his command, their refreshing lack of restraint to authority, and the hard labour performed with their 'masters' in plots of 'tens of thousands of acres'.⁸³ As an *Advertiser* editorial had earlier claimed: 'The "back blocks" produce pretty well the only romantic figure left in colonial life.'⁸⁴ In imagery that would recur in future descriptions of the Anzac digger, the editorial described the 'hundreds of rough but picturesque fellows, deficient no doubt in some of the urban graces and refinements of civilisation, a bit "free" occasionally in many hours of relaxation, but brave and manly to the core'.⁸⁵ For the *Advertiser*: 'No body of troops we can send to the war will be more distinctively Australian. It will be thoroughly racy of the soil'.⁸⁶ It was these characteristics that offered 'splendid proofs that Australia is breeding a race of men capable of holding its own against any foe'.⁸⁷ The act of war offered a chance to reverse any remaining doubts over colonial inferiority. Though the bodily features of the soldiers were sometimes described as differing by colonial location, there was a widespread and general fascination with observing and remarking on these exemplars of colonial manhood.⁸⁸

Alongside the assured statements lay doubts. At the end of the same editorial attempts to define colonial identity by conflating environment, masculinity, and race began to break down. This began with a question over whether 'bushman' was the most appropriate label for Australian troops. The *Advertiser* reported how a 'Sydney legislator ... raised the curious and not unimportant point that the word bushman may be misunderstood in South Africa, and cause undesirable prejudice

against the corps'. 'What is feared', the article continued, 'is the unpleasant risk of confusion with the African "bushmen" or bosjesmans, one of the lowest and most degraded races in the world, which is held in general contempt.'⁸⁹ Before suggesting less ambiguous name changes, the *Advertiser* cautioned: 'We do not wish to give anyone the impression that we are sending aboriginals.'⁹⁰ This was not an entirely baseless concern. According to a later account, this was exactly the expectation of a crowd in Port Elizabeth who had turned up to see the disembarkation of Australian 'Bushmen', such that 'our complexions and *comparative* respectability rather disappointed them'.⁹¹

As during the Sudan crisis, this was an unusually overt apprehension that the British and South African onlooker might wrongly identify the Australian soldier as racially compromised.⁹² In describing Australian soldiers as uniquely able to flourish in the South African environment, Australians risked existing in the British imagination not only as too close to the Boers who, though supposedly embodying a retrograde whiteness, were nominally white nonetheless. They also exposed themselves to being conflated with unequivocally inferior 'natives'. This was doubly awkward given the bushman's territorial distinction. For if the *Advertiser* attributed the singularity of the Australian race to their environment, it only made sense that the greatest beneficiaries of these blessings would be those 'natives' who had dwelled in that environment the longest.

As the war progressed, new suggestions exacerbated these concerns. A series of editorials and letters notified readers that the proud colonists who had left Australian shores for South Africa might elect to stay there and 'settle' a different British colony.⁹³ What the reports initially saw as the harmless prerogative of young men taking advantage of accessible land, turned to mild panic when restated in often racial terms that compared South Africa and Australia. One of the more compelling deterrents for Australians seeking work in South Africa was that by competing with low wage African labour, colonists might be perceived as only 'white Kaffir(s)', who would therefore 'sink in the public estimation'.⁹⁴ The primary fear was that Australia might lose its best men overseas, carrying grave implications for Australian 'stock'. This fear was probably a hangover from uneasiness over the colonial birth rate in the years leading to the war.⁹⁵ Letters reprinted from Britain indicated the geographical reach of this notion.

Complicating this view was the balance to be kept between the assumed right of British settlers to seize foreign land, and fears that the

migration of young men would slow the consolidation of colonial gains. Recalling debates regarding volunteers to New Zealand in the 1860s, the thought that the same soldiers lauded for proving Australia's worth in battle might eschew their labour at home for individual reward elsewhere was troubling. Again, local concerns conflicted with British imperial plans. Privately, Alfred Milner wanted the South African problem solved precisely by having Australian and other British settlers move to South Africa. For Milner, the burning need was to populate South Africa with Britons. Though he thought colonists well suited to the task, their national affiliation was of lesser import to his broader imperial vision of demographic redistribution.⁹⁶

Yet, viewed from Australia, concerns over men migrating when there was so much empty space left to make productive hinted at anxieties over the vastness of the territory that required domesticating. As one letter writer had it:

Tens of thousands of square miles now lying idle and uncultivated are available for distribution. To no nobler purpose could a land grant be allotted than to be the means of inducing these brave and most desirable colonists to make their homes in the land of their birth, within our own great territories. Australia needs them.⁹⁷

Similarly, renowned pastoralist William Sawers of the NSW legislative assembly questioned the instinctive sending of troops on the grounds that 'We have the work of colonisation to do – the work of opening up and improving a vast virgin territory.'⁹⁸ Yet, again, this was a position internal to a broader imperial patriotism, not one of a discrete nationalism.⁹⁹ The very supposed rights to this 'virgin territory' both assumed an Aboriginal absence and expressed an impatience for colonising work to fill this absence in.

Just as in the case of the Waikato in the 1860s, interests in land acquisition ran up against less tangible imperatives in colonial and imperial narratives. The material and ideological aspects of empire could seldom be separated. The perceived need to seduce Australian troops back to their 'native land' raised questions over their loyalty and made explicit the economic primacy of the colonial venture. Wealth, material production and land rights were, in some cases, and despite widespread claims, apparently prioritised ahead of patriotism. This was more than a political issue. For if Australian settlers could not affirm their intimacy with the

land, if they were happy to swap one home for another, on what grounds could they claim indigeneity?

Moreover, the notion that Australia was breeding a fitter and more masculine race than the decrepit variety emanating from the old country captured a uniquely modern paradox.¹⁰⁰ It was, according to one school of British thought, through its pre-industrial yeomanism that Australia held the potential to improve the British race. But this was now threatened by the same technological advancement crucial to the national narrative of progress. As the *SMH* noted earlier in 1899, 'nothing is more common than to hear that neither we in Australia nor the members of the race from which we spring are as virile and physically robust now as the race was in former times'.¹⁰¹ In Britain's case this was put down to the increasing mechanisation and urbanisation that were 'draining the manhood of the country districts, and enfeebling it amid irksome conditions of life, laborious occupations in enclosed spaces, and insanitary dwellings and surroundings'. To the *SMH* these trends had resulted in 'the stunted and weedy types of men familiar in the London slums and the manufacturing quarters of towns like Birmingham and Sheffield'.¹⁰² Countering this tendency, Australia was avoiding this trajectory through the vibrancy evident in recent sporting successes. More than this, the celebratory British response to the Australian Lancers that had paraded in Queen Victoria's 1897 Diamond Jubilee celebrations were reported on and read in Australia with extreme satisfaction.¹⁰³

By way of appraisal, the *SMH* assured its readers that, 'It is quite certain that a group of average Australians would satisfactorily stand the test of comparison with a corresponding group of those new arrivals from England with which our population is yearly recruited'.¹⁰⁴ Still, the *SMH* concluded pessimistically by seeing a future decline resulting from deficiencies in climate, food, and to urbanisation, but also to the 'defective vitality of Australian women'. In the final instance it warned: 'if women in general fail to lead healthy and natural lives ... degeneration of the Australian type as a whole would follow sooner or later as a matter of course'.¹⁰⁵

This was a considerable problem. Jane Carey has documented the role of women in propagating a physically and mentally fit white Australian race, and the scientifically informed obsession with 'preventing white racial degeneracy' in the early twentieth century. As Carey points out, if settler colonialism was driven by the need to eliminate the native population 'then the imperative of vigorous white propagation was its necessary

corollary'.¹⁰⁶ Here the panic of maternal failure can be read alongside the parallel fear of England failing to supply the strongest British citizens to the colonies. The 'mother' was both the carrier of the race and the potential source of its dissipation.

In February 1900, one year after this pre-war editorial, we can read another which saw a dramatic shift in the importance of women to the war effort. Far from warning that women might be at the root of Australian deterioration, the *SMH* now solicited the women who 'serve as spurs to the martial instincts of mankind' in support of the war:

Woman herself is one of the most active forces in the stimulus towards war, as well as in its maintenance. She it is who glories in martial ardour, and by none is the thrill of heroic deeds more acutely felt. She does not merely suffer her son, brother, or husband to go to the war, she buckles on his sword in an ecstasy of proud emotion and sends him forth thrice armed in the consciousness that those nearest and dearest to him are in the strongest sympathy with his mission.¹⁰⁷

An idealised masculine soldier is then described as the longed-for object of women's libidinal energy, helpfully outlining the characteristics Australia's men should embody if they wished to receive these affections:

All that pertains to the soldier – smartness, healthy physical development, and the doing of daring deeds – finds a response in the heart of woman, and she indicates in a decisive way her preference for the type of man possessing these qualities over the slothful peace-loving civilian.¹⁰⁸

Female agency was here confined to her relationships with a certain kind of man. Though an 'active force', the role of women was in fact to arouse their would-be warrior's gallant conduct, and motivate his transformation from sloth to soldier. That is, women's agency is secondary to their role as incubator and lover of the nation's troops. The feminine presence fluctuated between being a (potential) scapegoat for Australia's racial failings, to the very reason for Australia's (potential) martial glories. More than simply managing colonial anxieties, the possibility of other conceptions of the role of women suggested uncertainties over what progress was to mean. It also called for the removal of this uncertainty from ideas of Australian manhood.

Stepping back, the striking feature of all this is the convergence of ideas of race, gender, martial exploits and settler colonial processes that are called into play in the case of the South African War. We can see here the entangled rhetoric relating to Africans, white British settlers, (less) white Boers, Chinese, and, more obliquely, Aboriginal Australians. Where British settler-affinities were evident in New Zealand in the 1860s, in South Africa different European settlers fought against one another. Each was marked by distinct racial qualities, and by conflicting and shifting loyalties. The various 'others' of the settlers were themselves of a mutable blackness or indigeneity, in turn moderating the racial characteristics of Australian settlers. British settler-colonists were negotiating between feelings of colonial nationalism, British patriotism, and co-settler feeling. They were also justifying their possession of the land.

Conclusion

In May 1900, London's conservative *Morning Post* published an editorial devoted to Queen Victoria's birthday. The editorial attempted to anchor a plurality of meaning in the Queen as the metonym of the British Empire. The experience of reading about the monarchy had become a routine part of imagining a global British community, as it was around the Queen's image that the empire's scattered parts revolved and cohered.¹ She was not just a sovereign but a maternal figure extending care and blessings to her family. The *Morning Post* perceived that:

Such a personality as the great Queen-Mother is required to draw distant Colonies nearer to the heart of the Empire, and those who have conversed with Canadians and Australians know full well that the QUEEN in her long and glorious reign has been slowly and surely building up the great fabric of a united British Empire.²

Superficially, this reads as a rote recitation of platitudes. But we can dismiss this kind of affective language only by discounting its popular appeal to its assumed readers.³ The choice of familial metaphors was an effort to mark a particularly emotive and reciprocal relationship between the colonies and the mother country. This was a far cry, it would seem, from less affectionate and more economically-minded attitudes towards the colonies held during the Waikato War. The settler colonies had long identified themselves with the figure of the Queen and all she embodied.

But now, the colonies were also crucial for British readers in imagining the global scale of the empire.

The *Morning Post* celebrated the loyal manner in which colonial men 'fling down the tools of their trade, part from their wives and children, and go gladly forth to meet the QUEEN's enemies with a courage unsurpassed in the ages of romance and chivalry'.⁴ This vision of the colonies drew on a mediaeval past to portray compliant soldiers united in their patriotism and ready to sacrifice themselves for their Queen. But this was a vision that sceptical Australian contributors could themselves complicate, as we have seen.⁵

The image is then further domesticated. 'Her picture', the editorial observed, 'hangs on the timber walls of the shearer's shed and in the rancher's homestead at the foot of the Rocky Mountains. Her name is the signal throughout the Empire for men to spring to their feet and invoke GOD's blessing on her days.'⁶ The Queen's gaze, that is, overlooks and monitors the labour of settlers as they go about the business of making productive the lands they inhabit. Making nature productive is, after all, what good settlers do.

For their Queen these settlers unite as the 'great fabric' of empire (a literal fabric, given the nod to Australian wool production), to defend it from those who would dispute this same global project. The casual reference points of 'ranch' and 'shed' signal specific environments and modes of labour. They offer just enough detail to hail readers as partaking in a common imperial community, while dodging any referent of its violent foundations. The shed and the ranch are simply there.

The permanence accompanying ideas of the homestead and the shearer's shed evoke ideas of private property that were guaranteed by the same legal order that denied sovereignty to Indigenous peoples. The presentation of settler property ownership as natural and 'ethically neutral', in Mark Rifkin's words, worked to 'reconcile conflicts over land tenure, access to political and economic resources, personal identity, and membership in the polis'.⁷

That the image portrayed by the *Morning Post* was explicitly not that of rapidly urbanising colonial societies was partly the point. The ideas of the shed and the ranch promoted a fantasy view of the colonies. They also connected familial intimacy to several assumptions that underwrote the global structure of settler colonialism: the unquestioned ownership of territory; the necessity of Indigenous displacement and replacement; the territorial expansion of labouring settlers who

had been ‘gifted’ land on which to supply Britain with its raw materials; and the provision of foreign markets for its final product, all while soaking up the excess metropolitan population. The *Morning Post* acknowledged that the economic utility of the colonies was exceeded only by actions inspired by imperial fidelity. Australians, Canadians, and New Zealanders alike were partners in globally-linked commerce and defence.⁸ These matters of political economy were manifested in the individual colonist’s childlike loyalty to his Queen-Mother. This loyalty, moreover, was no longer a matter of conjecture. Rather, the ‘war in South Africa attests to it’.⁹

This was an uplifting story to tell, and it had a therapeutic effect on British imaginations. The matured settler colonies could no longer be written off as a drain on imperial resources. The investment in them had seemingly paid off, as British papers like the *Standard* had implied it would in the 1860s. Not only had the productive venture of settler pastoralism endured, but the colonies could now repay Britain the favour of military protection. Resistance to acts of British expansion in South Africa offered the chance for the colonies to showcase the unity of the British Empire. Imperial structure and sentiment were entwined.

We have seen in the three conflicts discussed—in the Waikato, the Sudan, and South Africa—an evolution in the ways that the Australian and the British press treated the export of colonial troops to foreign theatres. This book has aimed to draw out in commentary on these episodes the textual expressions of certain social and historical ways of feeling. Often, these revealed anxieties can be discerned in the dissonances, elisions, and ambiguities characterising press narratives of the British Empire in general, and Australian settler colonialism in particular. In this sense, newspapers are something of a cultural palimpsest, where suppressed histories are perceptible in representations of emotional community events. Knowledge of these representations was also facilitated by the materiality of the newspaper form, and the technological developments that enabled the circulation and contestation of the printed word.

Newspapers brought the speeches of politicians, celebrities, and travellers—sometimes one and the same—into the reading rooms, living rooms, and public houses of people otherwise cut off from the political sphere. They circulated the ideas of humanitarian critics, radical journalists, and intellectual dissidents. They also gave voice to the everyday letters of unknown but concerned citizens. The relatively cheap material nature of

newspapers allowed for thoughts, opinions, and feelings to move between readers in the colonies and around the world. And, at certain moments, newspapers could be the embryo of lasting historical memory.¹⁰

My approach in this book has been to pay close attention to the rhetorical responses to particular events, and to read these against the historical and social circumstances from which they arose. It has focused on often elliptical and muted historical inferences, as well as emphatic pronouncements. It has placed these episodes in their imperial setting—not to discount national history, but to complicate it, and to tease out different levels of community belonging and points of fracture. It has tried to situate a study of language within an understanding of the material manifestations of power.

The Waikato War of 1863–1864, as we have seen, occurred in a moment of relative imperial confidence regarding external threats to the British Empire. This situation gave leading British newspapers little incentive to pander to settler complaints about a lack of imperial protection from ‘natives’. Other British papers, by contrast, took a more pro-settler view. They saw the long-term economic gains of the colonies, and their shared Britishness, as outweighing any immediate costs involved in funding the military defence of British possessions.

The Australian press, for its part, spoke for settler colonists across the Tasman who were embroiled in the costly and fretful process of consolidating territorial gains in the face of Māori resistance. Australian newspapers found in their British counterparts both supporters and critics of the war’s rationale, which they saw as protecting and facilitating antipodean settlement. Leading Australian papers bristled at suggestions made in prominent British publications that this project might be, to put it bluntly, more trouble than it was worth. They saw in contemporaneous events in New Zealand a chance to uphold Australian colonial interests. They loudly proclaimed their inherent right to seize territory from their racial inferiors who, they said, were for better or worse historically and culturally incapable of competing with British progression. Something had to give and, for the empire’s own good, it could not be the colonists. So they claimed.

Settlers spoke as diasporic fellow Britons, and against those seen to threaten their distinct ‘way of life’ far from the mother country. The press conversation between those representing settler, British Government, and humanitarian interests highlighted the multifarious nature of the British Empire, and indicated the scope of debate acceptable within it. Colonial

identifications were formed not only in collusion with, or in contrast to, metropolitan homelands. They were formed across and between colonies to sustain a trans-settler consciousness in the era of self-government. This was truly a 'community of feeling', as the *Sydney Morning Herald* had put it in 1863. Though the source of this mutual bond was probably more ambivalent, and more unsettling, than contemporary reports suggested.

The cases of the Sudan and South Africa shared closer similarities, roughly bookending the era of high imperialism in Africa. One response to concerns in the 1860s over British reluctance to pay for colonial defence was a countermovement urging increased imperial unity. British imperial worries, and the need to manage them, rose in proportion to awareness of emerging competitors, internal social troubles, and fears over racial composition. During the Sudan crisis of 1885, tensions between British strategic imperatives and Australian subcolonial ambitions in the South Pacific coincided with the spectacle of General Gordon's misadventure in Khartoum. This timely conjuncture spurred fervent claims of national and imperial unity embodied in the offer of a New South Wales military force. The offer of troops appeared to mark a historical epoch—the potential for a clean break with a past that many colonists would have preferred to forget. But the political, racial, and historical tensions within imperial and colonial rhetoric subverted claims of unity, even as the NSW contingent pointed towards the future of the empire.

Though the reaction to the Sudan crisis was in a sense particular to New South Wales, it was seen in other colonies and in Britain as representing national and imperial sentiment. The NSW contingent allowed these feelings to come to the fore in public life, to be tested and adjusted. This process would continue in the next war Australian colonists felt compelled to enter.

By the time of the South African War, the Australian colonies were verging on a continental federation defined by racial exclusion. They sought to attest to their national credentials by fighting in an imperial campaign against other white Christian settlers in Southern Africa. For many in the colonies, the demands to prove their exemplary racial attributes led them to measure their productivity, and their cultural and material progress against European settlers of a supposedly inferior whiteness. Yet even as British observers recognised Australia as a substantial partner-in-empire, the narrative of patriotic celebration raised uneasy social and historical questions. The years 1899–1902 witnessed a heightening of racial rhetoric at a time of pessimism for many in Britain. At the very moment when British readers

required assurance of imperial progress, they could seek solace in evidence of colonial camaraderie in South Africa. This consolatory gesture was itself made problematic by the range of Australian identifications resting on often unsteady assumptions. The idea of British imperial harmony being realised through the maturing settler colonies was both adopted and contested in newspapers exchanged between Britain and the colonies.

In sum, in 1863–1864 Australians could read British newspaper debates of the worth of the settler colonial project. Often, at best, this worth was said to be primarily material. At worst, their financial costs outweighed even this value. In 1885, colonial onlookers could recognise their new standing in British eyes. Yet the concurrent dismay over their apparent subordination in British strategic calculations tainted even this value. By 1899, colonists could see themselves and their emerging nation repositioned as not only a necessary cog in the imperial machine, but as the embodiment of British imperial ideals. They possessed an agreeable blend of political progressivism at home, and conservative values when looking abroad. The settler colonies, seemingly unburdened by the hesitancies that weighed on vacillating liberals in Britain, could largely get away with unapologetic imperial romanticism. They were the future of Britishness, the location of renewable white racial purity and imperial loyalty. Colonial rehabilitation, in some British eyes at least, was seemingly complete. This view—expedient at the best of times—paid less attention to how colonial values aligned with the treatment of Aboriginal populations.

Throughout the period, the Australian colonies were variously portrayed in their own papers and in Britain's as pragmatic settlers of Greater Britain, as quarrelling colonies, as devoted members of the imperial family, and as a separate nation on the threshold of federation. These portrayals, in other words, shifted according to circumstance. Where settlers felt under attack, settler identity came to the fore. Where an imperial identity was seen as key, this took precedence. The order of priority of each mode of identification rose and fell as needs demanded. The point is not to pin down a single source of identity in a ceaseless flux, but to understand how and why certain events were treated as they were in the colonies and in Britain at different times.

One of the patterns in the coverage of each conflict is the sense in which colonial editors, correspondents, and letter-writers either imagined, or cited directly, the 'view from home'. That is, with how the imperial centre regarded the military exploits of its colonists. When settler society was subject to critique, the response could be overtly defensive.

At other times, colonists basked in the glow of metropolitan praise. This attitude could influence how colonists defined themselves as a collective, where their allegiances lay, and what attributes they were to 'advertise' to others.

Commentators repeated a refrain that sending troops to fight for the empire solidified imperial federation and fortified colonial defence. Others said that since colonial martial commitments had proven these ties, formal imperial federation was now unnecessary. Warfare was a way of physically performing the maturity that had been legislatively granted first through self-government, then national federation. The colonies could now display how they would wield their new responsibilities in repaying their mother country for their territorial and governmental gift.

In each moment, we can read a tension between the outward rationalising imperatives of empire, and powerful affective currents. The same geostrategic and global economic circumstances that made Britain's imperial supremacy possible, also called upon a familiar repertoire of arguments and sentiments to justify belief in the empire. Yet these arguments were also challenged in public commentary by those identifying with other class, ethnic, gender, or religious interests. Global affairs and colonial history coloured local expressions of feeling.

It is also clear that the structural drivers of capital were rarely disconnected from emotional rhetoric. For British observers and colonists alike, the potential to exploit land and resources in the colonies offered opportunities to validate settler colonisation. By the South African War, which had much to do with British investment in gold and diamonds, British commentators recognised the 'latent' commercial, martial, and emotional possibilities of the colonies. As James Froude had earlier observed amid the excitement in Sydney in early 1885, the true lesson of the NSW contingent was in the promise it symbolised. That is, a 'contingent of 700 men was nothing in itself, but it was a specimen from an inexhaustible mine'.¹¹

The convergence of Indigenous dispossession, ideas of territorial and governmental inheritance, and feelings of colonial obligation, played important roles in mediating between honour and dishonour. Putting these histories in conversation with one another, we can see that colonial foundations in land expropriation, and the compulsion to help conquer other lands and peoples were, unsurprisingly, related.

To overlook the passionate public rhetoric at these moments is to disregard a way of understanding the emotions that contemporaries felt

compelled to broadcast. We cannot say for sure how deeply felt these displays of sentiment were. We can say they were performances deemed worthy of display. The values expressed changed over time, for different reasons, and varied within groups. But in each case they were understood to resonate with a particular audience. Dissidents appealed to emotions too, and if not conforming to social norms, were reacting against them.

The language I have traced could also have real effects. It influenced decision-making, and affected those at the pointy end of British arms. In New Zealand, the strategically communicated pressure that ‘men on the spot’ placed on the British Government went at least some way to convincing officials, however grudgingly, to supply troops to the Waikato. In New South Wales in 1885 the consistent appeals to British imperial loyalty drowned out those who criticised the lack of constitutional approval to send troops. In 1899, the circulation of similar appeals to patriotism, and the restricted information available to colonists, smoothed the way for those eager for war in South Africa.

Sentimental rhetoric was useful when asserting ties between settlers or between colony and mother country. It could be positively harmful when applied to the treatment of Indigenous people. The colonies were extolled for their instinctively emotional response to national and imperial perils. They were also applauded for their pragmatic eschewal of sentimentalism when it came to dealing with ‘natives’—wherever in the world they might encounter them. The general shift from the colonial view during the Waikato War of the reckless folly of elite humanitarian sentimentalism, to the effusive displays of collective sentiment during the Sudan and South African crises, had something to do with the changing times, but more to do with the subjects in question. Trumpeting white imperial and national feeling, and offering paeans to British martial sacrifice was one thing. Gushing over Indigenous rights while they resisted settler encroachment was quite another.

The distinction was starkly put in a prominent history by (future *Argus* journalist) Alexander Sutherland in 1888. For Sutherland, the ethical problem of whether Europeans rightfully or ‘wickedly’ displaced the ‘immemorial occupants of the soil’ was irresolvable. Rather, it was ultimately ‘a question of temperament; to the sentimental it is undoubtedly an iniquity; to the practical it represents a distinct step in human progress, involving the sacrifice of a few thousands of an inferior race’. The relative rhetorical value of sentiment and practicality depended on where one stood, and who was being spoken of.¹² It bears repeating

that whether in print or parliament, there was a distinct scarcity of public Aboriginal voices to speak back to interpretations of colonisation, a necessary absence if settler and imperial narratives were to hold.

Ignoring affective language of the past also risks missing its continuity in the present. The descendants of the settlers that form the subject of this book still enter foreign wars out of a sense of communal loyalty, still work hard to re-narrate Australian history and origins, still debate their national position vis-à-vis Aboriginal people, still are preoccupied with external approval, and still contest these matters in the media.

LOOKING AHEAD

From an Australian standpoint the focus on martial themes is an apt, if obvious, choice. At the risk of further fortifying the idea, it remains a truism that war holds a 'sacred' place in Australian society. Well before 1915, it was during foreign conflict that colonial and imperial identifications found their fullest expression. In the late nineteenth century Australian colonists seemingly craved a war to be proud of, one to substantiate their claims to deservedly occupy their vast continent. They wanted to play a meaningful part in world affairs. Not until 1915 was the sacrifice deemed great enough. After this great slaughter, who could question their right to their homeland? Yet even then an emotionally-driven imperial loyalty was a pervasive impulse, however much later nationalist commentary suggests otherwise.¹³

Aboriginal dispossession, unlike convictism, stubbornly resists incorporation into stories of Australian origins. This makes sense. The convict 'stain' now belongs to a strange and curious past. Descendants of convicts, once embarrassed, now commonly take satisfaction, even pride, in their lineage. The circumstances of settler-Indigenous relations offer Australian historiography no such closure. Though the sun formally set on Britain's empire some time ago, the structure of settler colonisation continues. Modern Australia remains a product of Aboriginal dispossession. Subsequently, Raymond Evans writes, 'Australia's substitute founding myth, the Anzac legend sees public service, to a marked degree, in diverting attention from the country's "darkling plains" to the grim cliffs and beach-heads of Gallipoli'.¹⁴ Writing this in the aftermath of the centenary of the 1915 Gallipoli campaign, it is hard to disagree. Ultimately, it was this historical memory that many Australians settled on as their collective story of origin. But we can also read earlier commentary on

troops in overseas wars as attempts to displace the war within, and over, the Australian continent. I have drawn some connections between them.

With a focus on identification also comes an emphasis on how articulations are made and comprehended from certain vantage points. In 2017, focussing on the easy target of Victorian jingoism might seem to convey a too-tidy temporality, as if the structural basis of Australian settler colonisation were not still in place. What requires further consideration is the resilience of this structure to individual volition, now as well as then.¹⁵ Many settlers in the British colonies in 1863, 1885, and 1899 may have deplored the consequences their settlement had on Indigenous populations. Many only landed on foreign shores under duress or out of necessity, and their descendants given little choice but to remain. Many today see these as problems of the past, not affecting the present.

A future task is to continue tracking how historical differences across settler colonies have shaped contemporary debates over the debts that successive generations owe to their forebears, and to those who have been dispossessed. This requires understanding the routine emotional investments made in narratives that rendered opaque individual settler relationships to colonial structures. Tracing the affective character of settler colonial language can help to clarify the continuity and the contingency of its various defences, as well as the way these defences were assisted or hindered by the circulation of this language in print.

The idea I have found captivating is that although the processes of settler colonialism are beyond the scope of any individual, its manifestations can be poignantly captured in turns of phrase, metaphors, and manners of argumentation within everyday speech. In this speech we can glimpse the kind of apprehensions and logics that attended, sustained, and occasionally defied these broader processes. The corollary being that by pointing to these features and submitting them to critique we might be better placed to understand, and challenge, their persistence.

END NOTES

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

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22. See Peter Gibbons, 'Cultural Colonization and National Identity', *New Zealand Journal of History*, 36, no. 1 (2002): 9.
23. Linda E. Connors, Mary Lu MacDonald, and Elizabeth Morrison, 'The Periodicals and Newspapers of Nineteenth-Century Britain and Its Empire: Three Case Studies in "Being British"', *Epilogue: Canadian Bulletin for the History of Books, Libraries, and Archives* 13 (2003): 1–2; Simon Potter, *News and the British World: The Emergence of the Imperial Press System 1876–1922* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 13–15, 24–25.

24. Simon Potter, 'Communication and Integration: The British and Dominions Press and the British World, C.1876–1914', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 31, no. 2 (2003): 202.
25. Atkinson, *Europeans, Democracy*, 248.
26. Julie Codell, 'Introduction: Imperial Co-Histories and the British and Colonial Press', in *Imperial Co-Histories: National Identities and the British and Colonial Press*, ed. Julie Codell (Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2003), 16.
27. Hugh Edward Egerton, *The Origin and Growth of the English Colonies and of their System of Government* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1903), 196, 199.
28. Not to mention the wire agencies. See Alex Nalbach, "'The Software of Empire': Telegraphic News Agencies and Imperial Publicity, 1865–1914', in *Imperial Co-Histories*, ed. Codell, 78, 88.
29. Alexander Andrews, *The History of British Journalism, Volume 2* (London: Richard Bentley, 1859), 316.
30. Simon Potter, 'Webs, Networks, and Systems: Globalization and the Mass Media in the Nineteenth-and Twentieth-Century British Empire', *Journal of British Studies* 46, no. 3 (2007): 629. See for example 'Australian Items', *Bradford Observer*, 25 February 1864, 7; 'The New Zealand War', *SMH*, 19 December 1863, 7.
31. Tony Ballantyne, *Webs of Empire: Locating New Zealand's Colonial Past* (Wellington: Bridget Williams Books Ltd, 2012).
32. Atkinson, *Europeans, Democracy*, 321.
33. James Coultts Crawford, *Recollections of Travel in New Zealand and Australia* (London: Trubner & Co., Ludgate Hill, 1880), vii; A. Martin Patchett, *Australia and the Empire* (Edinburgh: David Douglas, 1889), 64–65, 212–213.
34. Anne M. Cronin, 'Rags and Refuse: The Newspaper, Empire, and Nineteenth Century Commodity Culture', *Cultural Studies* 20, no. 6 (2006): 577.
35. Cited in Lyn Pykett, 'Reading the Periodical Press: Text and Context', in *Investigating Victorian Journalism*, ed. Laurel Brake, Aled Jones, and Lionel Madden (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990), 13.
36. Cambridge, *Thirty Years in Australia*, 303.
37. Catherine Hall and Sonya O. Rose, 'Introduction: Being at Home with the Empire', in *At Home with the Empire: Metropolitan Culture and the Imperial World*, ed. Catherine Hall and Sonya O. Rose (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 23.
38. See the appraisal of 'modern war correspondents' given by Frank Wilkinson, correspondent for Sydney's *Daily Telegraph*, the Melbourne *Age*, and Adelaide's *Advertiser*. Frank Wilkinson, *Australia at the Front: A Colonial View of the Boer War* (London: John Long, 1901), Chap. 23.

39. Ernesto Laclau, *New Reflections on the Revolution of Our Time* (London: Verso, 1990), 101–02.
40. James Grattan Grey, *Australasia Old and New* (Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1901), 187. For Alfred Deakin ‘Mr Syme was *The Age* and *The Age* was Mr Syme’. Alfred Deakin ‘Introduction’, in Ambrose Pratt, *David Syme: The Father of Protection in Australia*, (London: Ward Lock & Co Ltd., 1908), v–vi.
41. Elizabeth Morrison, ‘Australian Titan?: (Re)writing the life of David Syme’, *Australian Journalism Review*, 33, no. 2, (2011): 20.
42. Beatrice Webb and Sidney Webb, *The Webbs’ Australian Diary*, ed. A. G. Austin (Melbourne: Sir Isaac Pitman & Sons Ltd. 1965 [1898]), 67. See also Cambridge, *Thirty Years in Australia*, 303.
43. For ‘structures of feeling’ see Raymond Williams, *The Long Revolution* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1961), 48–49.
44. Andrew Hobbs, ‘The Deleterious Dominance of *The Times* in Nineteenth-Century Scholarship’, *Journal of Victorian Culture*, 18, no. 4 (2013): 474. Hobbs criticises studies that assume the *Times* was representative of the British press.
45. Henry Richard Fox Bourne, *English Newspapers: Chapters in the History of Journalism, Volume 2* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1887), 330.
46. James Bonwick, *Early Struggles of the Australian Press* (London: Gordon and Gotch, 1890), 68.
47. Newspapers were thus ‘the first product with planned obsolescence’. C. John Sommerville, *The News Revolution in England: Cultural Dynamics of Daily Information* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 4. See also 7–8, 20–21.
48. Mark W. Turner, ‘Periodical Time in the Nineteenth Century’, *Media History* 8, no. 2 (2002): 185.
49. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, revised ed. (London: Verso, 1991), 22, 33–35.
50. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 33 n54.
51. Ernesto Laclau, ‘The Death and Resurrection of the Theory of Ideology’, *Journal of Political Ideologies* 1, no. 3 (1996): 206.
52. Ernesto Laclau, *New Reflections on the Revolution of Our Time* (London: Verso, 1990), 182–183.
53. Jacqueline Rose, *States of Fantasy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 4.
54. Renata Salecl, ‘The Fantasy Structure of Nationalist Discourse’, *Praxis International*, no. 3 (1993): 216–217.
55. Joan Wallach Scott, ‘Fantasy Echo: History and the Construction of Identity’, *Critical Inquiry* 27, no. 2 (2001): 289.

56. Ibid., 290.
57. Stuart Hall, 'The Question of Cultural Identity', in *Modernity and its Futures: Understanding Modern Societies, Book 4*, ed. Tony McGrew, Stuart Hall and David Held (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992), 296–297.
58. Barbara Penny, 'Australia's Reactions to the Boer War: A Study in Colonial Imperialism', *The Journal of British Studies* 7, no. 1 (1967): 97.
59. Sally Alexander, 'Women, Class and Sexual Differences in the 1830s and 1840s: Some Reflections on the Writing of a Feminist History', in *British Feminist Thought: A Reader*, ed. Terry Lovell (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990), 35.
60. Derek Hook, *A Critical Psychology of the Postcolonial: The Mind of Apartheid* (East Sussex: Routledge, 2012), 122.
61. John Cash, 'Conclusion: Politics, History and the Unconscious', in *History on the Couch: Essays in History and Psychoanalysis*, ed. Joy Damousi and Robert Reynolds (Carlton: Melbourne University Press, 2003), 197–198.
62. For a representative work see Carl Bridge and Kent Fedorowich, ed. *The British World: Diaspora, Culture, and Identity* (London: Frank Cass, 2003). For a critique see Tamson Pietsch, 'Rethinking the British World', *The Journal of British Studies* 52, no. 2 (2013).
63. From a voluminous literature see Stephen Howe, ed. *The New Imperial Histories Reader* (London: Routledge, 2009).
64. Nicholas Thomas, *Colonialism's Culture: Anthropology, Travel and Government* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994), 97.
65. John Darwin, 'Britain's Empires', in *The British Empire: Themes and Perspectives*, ed. Sarah Stockwell (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2008).
66. Patrick Wolfe, *Settler Colonialism and the Transformation of Anthropology: The Politics and Poetics of an Ethnographic Event* (London: Cassell, 1999), 2.
67. Ibid.
68. Patrick Wolfe, 'Recuperating Binarianism: A Heretical Introduction', *Settler Colonial Studies* 3, no. 3–4 (2013): 270.
69. Patrick Wolfe, 'The Settler Complex: An Introduction', *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 37, no. 2 (2013): 8–9.
70. Lorenzo Veracini, 'Settler Collective, Founding Violence and Disavowal: The Settler Colonial Situation', *Journal of Intercultural Studies* 29, no. 4 (2008): 363–379; Lorenzo Veracini, 'Historylessness: Australia as a Settler Colonial Collective', *Postcolonial Studies* 10, no. 3 (2007): 271–285; Lorenzo Veracini, *Settler Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).
71. Tim Rowse, 'Indigenous Heterogeneity', *Australian Historical Studies*, 54, no. 3 (2014): 301.

72. Ibid.
73. For a similar approach see Bill Schwarz, *Memories of Empire: The White Man's World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 198–205.
74. See J. Kēhaulani Kauanui and Patrick Wolfe, 'Settler Colonialism Then and Now. A Conversation between J. Kēhaulani Kauanui and Patrick Wolfe', *Politica & Società* 2 (2012): 237.

CHAPTER 2: SYMPTOMS OF EMPIRE

1. Anne Coote, 'Imagining a Colonial Nation: The Development of Popular Concepts of Sovereignty and Nation in New South Wales between 1856 and 1860', *Journal of Australian Colonial History* 1, no. 1 (1999).
2. Anne Coote has argued that a 'national' New South Wales consciousness predated a continental identity. Anne Coote, 'Out from the Legend's Shadow: Re-Thinking National Feeling in Colonial Australia', *Journal of Australian Colonial History* 10, no. 2 (2008): 104. Though New South Wales was probably more inclined to 'national' independence than, say, Victoria.
3. Robert J. C. Young, *The Idea of English Ethnicity* (Malden: Blackwell 2008), 1–2, 6–7, 231; Deryck M. Schreuder and Stuart Ward, 'Introduction: What Became of Australia's Empire?' in *Australia's Empire*, ed. Deryck Schreuder and Stuart Ward (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 21–22.
4. John Darwin, *The Empire Project: The Rise and Fall of the British World-System, 1830–1970* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 147.
5. Russell McGregor, 'The Necessity of Britishness: Ethno-Cultural Roots of Australian Nationalism', *Nations and Nationalism* 12, no. 3 (2006). See also Neville Meaney, 'Britishness and Australia: Some Reflections', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 31, no. 2 (2003).
6. Saul Dubow, 'How British Was the British World? The Case of South Africa', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 37, no. 1 (2009): 3, 19.
7. Mark McKenna, 'Transplanted to Savage Shores: Indigenous Australians and British Birthright in the Mid Nineteenth-Century Australian Colonies', *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History* 13, no. 1 (2012).
8. Jane Carey, Leigh Boucher, and Katherine Ellinghaus, 'Epilogue', in *Re-Orienting Whiteness*, ed. Leigh Boucher, Jane Carey, and Katherine Ellinghaus (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 256.

9. George Smyth Baden-Powell, *New Homes for the Old Country* (London: Richard Bentley and Son, 1872), 395–396 (original emphasis). This was a confusion also noticed by a bemused Henry Parkes. See ‘Our Growing Australian Empire’, *The Nineteenth Century*, January 1884, 135.
10. Bill Schwarz, *Memories of Empire: The White Man’s World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), Chap. 2. For an illuminating discussion of the psychic power of whiteness more generally, see chapter 3 of the same book. I have been influenced by both chapters.
11. Marilyn Lake and Henry Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line: White Men’s Countries and the International Challenge of Racial Equality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 3.
12. Lionel Frost, ‘The Economy’, in *The Cambridge History of Australia, Volume 1: Indigenous and Colonial History*, ed. Alison Bashford and Stuart Macintyre (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 315.
13. Janet McCalman and Rebecca Kippen, ‘Population and Health’, in *Cambridge History of Australia, Volume 1*, ed. Bashford and Macintyre, 299.
14. Beverley Kingston, *The Oxford History of Australia, Volume 3: 1860–1900: Glad, Confident Morning* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1986), 107; William Westgarth, *Half a Century of Australasian Progress: A Personal Retrospect* (London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle, & Rivington, 1889), 97–98.
15. See Stuart Macintyre, *A Colonial Liberalism: The Lost World of Three Victorian Visionaries* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1991), 85–88, 102–107; Charles Edward Sayers, *David Syme: A Life* (Melbourne: Cheshire, 1965).
16. Not to mention the differences between the urban and rural press. See Elizabeth Morrison, ‘The Contribution of the Country Press to the Making of Victoria, 1840–1890’, (PhD Thesis, Monash University, 1991).
17. Meg Tasker, ‘Two Versions of Colonial Nationalism: The Australasian “Review of Reviews” V. The Sydney “Bulletin”’, *Victorian Periodicals Review* 37, no. 4 (2004): 121.
18. Simon Potter, *News and the British World: The Emergence of the Imperial Press System 1876–1922* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 30.
19. Angela Woollacott, *Settler Society in the Australian Colonies: Self-Government and Imperial Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 170.
20. Henry Reynolds, *Frontier: Aborigines, Settlers and Land* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1987), 166.
21. This was Dilke’s description, though the sensibility was shared by locals. Charles Wentworth Dilke, *Problems of Greater Britain* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1890), 186. Elsewhere, emigrants were encouraged

- to populate the country and 'reclaim vast tracts of cultivable land from the wilderness'. J.K Arthur, *Kangaroo and Kauri: Sketches and Anecdotes of Australia and New Zealand* (London: Sampson Low, Marston, 1894), 2. Either way, the assumed absence of prior ownership was clear.
22. Thomas Henry Braim, *New Homes: The Rise, Progress, Present Position, and Future Prospects of Each of the Australian Colonies and New Zealand* (London: Bull, Simmons & Co., 1870).
 23. 'Death of Mr Howard Willoughby', *Argus*, 20 March 1908, 5.
 24. Howard Willoughby, *Australian Pictures Drawn from Pen and Pencil* (London: The Religious Tract Society, 1886), 26.
 25. *Ibid.*, 13.
 26. *Ibid.*, 168.
 27. *Ibid.*, 175.
 28. Jessie Mitchell and Ann Curthoys, 'How Different was Victoria? Aboriginal "Protection" in a Comparative Context', in *Settler Colonial Governance in Nineteenth-Century Victoria*, ed Leigh Boucher and Lynette Russell (ACT: ANU Press, 2015), 184.
 29. Henry Reynolds, *Forgotten War* (Sydney: NewSouth Publishing, 2013), 77.
 30. Donald MacDonald, *Gum Boughs and Wattle Bloom, Gathered on Australian Hills and Plains* (London: Cassell and Company, 1887), 41.
 31. George Rusden, *History of Australia, Volume 3* (London: Chapman and Hall Ltd, 1883), 227.
 32. *Ibid.*, 253.
 33. Alison Bashford and Stuart Macintyre, 'Introduction', in *The Cambridge History of Australia: Volume 1*, ed. Bashford and Macintyre, 5.
 34. Reynolds, *Forgotten War*, 148.
 35. Charles Dunford Rowley, 'From Humbug to Politics: Aboriginal Affairs and the Academy Project', *Oceania* 43, no. 3 (1973): 186.
 36. *Ibid.*
 37. Lorenzo Veracini, 'Settler Collective, Founding Violence and Disavowal: The Settler Colonial Situation', *Journal of Intercultural Studies* 29, no. 4 (2008): 371; Lorenzo Veracini, *Settler Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 75.
 38. Mark Rifkin, 'Settler Common Sense', *Settler Colonial Studies* 3, no. 3-4 (2013): 339, n21.
 39. See Henry Reynolds, *An Indelible Stain?: The Question of Genocide in Australia's History* (Ringwood: Penguin, 2001), Chap. 9.
 40. Tom Griffiths, 'Past Silences: Aborigines and Convicts in Our History-Making', in *Pastiche I: Reflections on 19th Century Australia*, ed. Penny Russell and Richard White (St Leonards: Allen and Unwin, 1994), 18.

41. Klaus Neumann, Nicholas Thomas, and Hilary Ericksen, 'Conclusion', in *Quicksands: Foundational Histories in Australia & Aotearoa New Zealand*, ed. Klaus Neumann, Nicholas Thomas, and Hilary Ericksen (Sydney: UNSW Press, 1999), 238.
42. Kingston, *Oxford History*, 304.
43. 'A New Poet', *Freeman's Journal*, 12 February 1887, 17.
44. Alan Lester and Fae Dussart, *Colonization and the Origins of Humanitarian Governance: Protecting Aborigines Across the Nineteenth-Century British Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 236–244.
45. McKenna, 'Transplanted to Savage Shores'.
46. Ann Curthoys, 'Indigenous Subjects', in *Australia's Empire*, ed. Schreuder and Ward, 94. Reynolds, *Forgotten War*, 146–147.
47. Charles Wentworth Dilke, *Greater Britain: A Record of Travel in English-Speaking Countries during 1866 and 1867* (London: Macmillan and Co, 1868), 357. See also Michael Davitt, *Life and Progress in Australasia* (London: Methuen and Co, 1898), 36, 331–332; Henry Cornish, *Under the Southern Cross* (Madras: 'Mail' Press by J.J. Craen, 1879), 323.
48. Dilke, *Problems of Greater Britain*, 358–360.
49. Anthony Trollope, *Australia and New Zealand, Volume I* (Leipzig: Bernhard Tauchnitz, 1873), 77–78, 151–152.
50. Anna Johnston, *The Paper War: Morality, Print Culture, and Power in Colonial New South Wales* (Crawley: UWA Publishing, 2011), 1; Lester and Dussart, *Colonization and the Origins of Humanitarian Governance*, 105.
51. Zoë Laidlaw, 'Breaking Britannia's Bounds? Law, Settlers, and Space in Britain's Imperial Historiography', *The Historical Journal* 55, no. 3 (2012): 825.
52. Tony Barta, "'They Appear Actually to Vanish from the Face of the Earth." Aborigines and the European Project in Australia Felix', *Journal of Genocide Research* 10, no. 4 (2008): 533–534.
53. A. Dirk Moses, 'Genocide and Settler Society in Australian History', in *Genocide and Settler Society: Frontier Violence and Stolen Indigenous Children in Australian History* ed. A. Dirk Moses (New York: Berghahn Books, 2004), 28–30.
54. Alan Lester, *Imperial Networks: Creating Identities in Nineteenth-Century South Africa and Britain* (London: Routledge, 2001), 189.
55. Sarah Maddison, 'Postcolonial Guilt and National Identity: Historical Injustice and the Australian Settler State', *Social Identities: Journal for the Study of Race, Nation and Culture* 18, no. 6 (2012): 699.
56. Ann Laura Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009),

- 57–67. The importance of sentiment as a historical factor has been noted by Australian scholars, most obviously in John Hirst's study of national federation. John Hirst, *The Sentimental Nation: The Making of the Australian Commonwealth* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 2000). I use the distinct but related concepts of affect, emotion and sentiment as synonyms throughout.
57. Alan Lester, 'British Settler Discourse and the Circuits of Empire', *History Workshop Journal* 54, no. 1 (2002): 24–48.
 58. Lester, 'British Settler Discourse', 25, 30.
 59. *Ibid.*, 31.
 60. Rebecca Wood, 'Frontier Violence and the Bush Legend: The *Sydney Herald's* Response to the Myall Creek Massacre Trials and the Creation of Colonial Identity', *History Australia* 6, no. 3 (2010): 67.7–67.8.
 61. Rosa Campbell Praed, *My Australian Girlhood: Sketches and Impressions of Bush Life* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1902), 17–19.
 62. Wood, 'Frontier Violence', 67.7–67.8.
 63. Kenton Storey, *Settler Anxiety at the Outposts of Empire: Colonial Relations, Humanitarian Discourses, and the Imperial Press* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2016). I thank Kenton for providing me with a copy of his PhD thesis and for subsequent correspondence.
 64. See Kirsten McKenzie, *Scandal in the Colonies: Sydney & Cape Town, 1820–1850* (Carlton: Melbourne University Press, 2004), 12.
 65. Robert William Dale, *Impressions of Australia* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1889), 6–7. Dale's book was recommended by Charles Dilke for students of Australia and the empire. Charles Dilke, *The British Empire* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1899), 147.
 66. Trollope, *Australia and New Zealand, Volume 1*, 117–118.
 67. Willoughby, *Australian Pictures*, 5.
 68. Darwin, *Empire Project*, 18–20, 305–307.
 69. Ronald Hyam, *Britain's Imperial Century, 1815–1914* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 32. For Robinson and Gallagher, 'British Africa was a gigantic footnote to the Indian Empire'. Ronald Robinson and John Gallagher, 'The Partition of Africa', in *Imperialism: The Robinson and Gallagher Controversy*, ed. WM. Roger Louis (New York: New Viewpoints, 1976), 99.
 70. Darwin, *Empire Project*, 26–36.
 71. *Ibid.*, 18.
 72. Hyam, *Britain's Imperial Century*, 73.
 73. Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000* (New York: Random House, 1987), 155. See also Bernard Porter, *The Lion's Share: A Short History of British Imperialism, 1850–2004* 4th ed. (Harlow: Pearson/Longman, 2004).

74. Antoinette Burton, 'New Narratives of Imperial Politics in the Nineteenth Century', in *At Home with the Empire: Metropolitan Culture and the Imperial World*, ed. Catherine Hall and Sonya O. Rose (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 215–216.
75. For a prominent later work from a Canadian commentator see George Robert Parkin, *Imperial Federation: The Problem of National Unity* (London: Macmillan and co, 1892).
76. Critical scholarship on these figures includes Duncan Bell, *The Idea of Greater Britain: Empire and the Future of World Order, 1860–1900* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007); Schwarz, *Memories of Empire*, 78–84; Anna Johnston, "'Greater Britain': Late Imperial Travel Writing and the Settler Colonies", in *Oceania and the Victorian Imagination*, ed. Richard D. Fulton and Peter H. Hoffenberg (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013). Richard Jebb would stress the rise of a complementary 'colonial nationalism' after his travels to the British settler colonies at the turn of the century. Richard Jebb, *Studies in Colonial Nationalism* (London: Edward Arnold, 1905), viii. For his discussion of the Australian press see his Chap. 9.
77. James Joll, *Europe Since 1870: An International History* (London: Penguin Books, 1990 [1973]), 1–2, 14, 19.
78. Hyam, *Britain's Imperial Century*, 198.
79. This position is based on the classic essay by John Gallagher and Ronald Robinson, 'The Imperialism of Free Trade', *The Economic History Review* 6, no. 1 (1953).
80. This internal pastoral expansion into the Port Philip district 'bore many of the hallmarks of a planned military invasion'. Lester and Dussart, *Colonization and the Origins of Humanitarian Governance*, 119 n21.
81. For a view that is sympathetic to Robinson and Gallagher's account but further complicates it see John Darwin, 'Imperialism and the Victorians: The Dynamics of Territorial Expansion', *The English Historical Review* 112, no. 447 (1997): 614–642.
82. Hyam, *Britain's Imperial Century*, 189–197, 202–204; Patrick Brantlinger, 'Imperialism at Home', in *The Victorian World*, ed. Martin Hewitt (London: Routledge, 2012), 137.
83. Catherine Hall and Sonya O. Rose, 'Introduction: Being at Home with the Empire', in *At Home with the Empire*, ed. Hall and Rose, 30. See also 1–2, 21.
84. Gary B. Magee and Andrew S. Thompson, *Empire and Globalisation: Networks of People, Goods and Capital in the British World, C. 1850–1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 186. Magee and Thompson do, however, note the spikes in coverage of the colonies especially during the South African War.

85. Robert D. Grant, *Representations of British Emigration, Colonisation and Settlement: Imagining Empire, 1800–1860* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).
86. See Bell, *The Idea of Greater Britain*, 18, 34–46, 53, 142. See also Schwarz, *Memories of Empire*, Chap. 1.
87. For a gushing encomium of the changing place of the colonies in English ‘minds’ over this period, referencing the NSW contingent to the Sudan, see the memoir of Queensland’s first Governor (and later New Zealand Governor towards the end of the New Zealand Wars), George Ferguson Bowen, *Thirty Years of Colonial Government, Volume 1*, ed. Stanley Lane-Poole (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1889), 3–13.
88. Bell, *Idea of Greater Britain*, 24, 142.
89. Hugh Edward Egerton, *A Short History of British Colonial Policy* (London, Methuen & Co., 1897), 451; Charles Oman, *England in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Longmans, Green, and co, 1899), 260–261.
90. See Schwarz, *Memories of Empire*, Chap. 2. See also Darwin, *Empire Project*, 101–102.
91. John Martineau, *Letters from Australia* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1869), 192–193.
92. See for example, *Times*, 16 February 1863, 8.
93. *Blackburn Standard*, 18 November 1863, 2.
94. See Bell, *Idea of Greater Britain*.
95. Magee and Thompson, *Empire and Globalisation*, 190.
96. Aled Jones, *Powers of the Press: Newspapers, Power and the Public in Nineteenth-Century England* (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1996), 203.
97. John M. MacKenzie, ‘The Press and the Dominant Ideology of Empire’, in *Newspapers and Empire in Ireland and Britain: Reporting the British Empire, C. 1857–1921*, ed. Simon Potter (Portland: Four Courts Press, 2004), 26. See the account of Scottish traveller David Kennedy Jr, *Kennedy’s Colonial Travel: A Narrative of a Four Years’ Tour through Australia, New Zealand, Canada, &c.* (London: Simpkin, Marshall, & Co., 1876), 10, 150.
98. Jones, *Powers of the Press*, 95, 132; Lucy Brown, *Victorian News and Newspapers* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), 86.
99. See John Atkinson Hobson, *The Psychology of Jingoism* (London: Grant Richards, 1901).
100. This is the argument of Mark Hampton, *Visions of the Press in Britain, 1850–1950* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2004), 10, 75, 106. The ‘mission and power of the press’ in ‘transforming moral character’, and its heroism in speaking truth to power could be—to put it mildly—overstated by contemporaries. James Grant, *The Newspaper Press; its*

- Origin, Progress, and Present Position, Volume 2* (London: Tinsley Brothers, 1871), 454–462.
101. Hampton, *Visions of the Press*, 8–11, 33–37.
 102. Antoinette Burton and Isabel Hofmeyr, ed. *Ten Books That Shaped the British Empire: Creating an Imperial Commons* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014).
 103. Jones, *Powers of the Press*, 92; Brown, *Victorian News*, 78–79, 89.
 104. Indigenous peoples' use of media varied. For a pertinent New Zealand case see Lachy Paterson, 'Identity and Discourse: *Te Pipiwharauroa* and the South African War, 1899–1902', *South African Historical Journal* 65, no. 3 (2013). On the more limited Indigenous Australian media in the nineteenth century see Michael Rose, *For the Record: 160 Years of Aboriginal Print Journalism* (St. Leonards: Allen & Unwin, 1996).

CHAPTER 3: THE WAIKATO WAR: SETTLER RIGHTS AND PRODUCTION

1. The approximate 3000 figure is taken from Jeff Hopkins-Weise, *Blood Brothers: The Anzac Genesis* (North Shore: Penguin Books, 2009), 236.
2. See the argument of James Belich, *The New Zealand Wars and the Victorian Interpretation of Racial Conflict* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1986).
3. Philippa Mein Smith, *A Concise History of New Zealand* (Port Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 72.
4. This is the central argument of Hopkins-Weise, *Blood Brothers*, 238.
5. *Ibid.*, 145.
6. *Appendix to the Journals of the House of Representatives*, 'Papers Relative to the Formation of Military Settlements in the Northern Island of New Zealand', A.-No. 8., 31 July 1863, 2–4.
7. See Hopkins-Weise, *Blood Brothers*, 15–16. As it happened, the promised allotments in many cases failed to materialise or were of too poor quality to sustain settlement. Michael Allen, 'An Illusory Power? Metropole, Colony and Land Confiscation in New Zealand, 1863–1865', in *Raupatu: The Confiscation of Maori Land*, ed. Richard Boast and Richard S. Hill (Wellington: Victoria University Press, 2009), 139.
8. The Act was based on a long history of confiscating land for treason and rebellion. New Zealand officials were well aware of the Irish precedent. Bryan Gilling, 'Raupatu: The Punitive Confiscation of Maori Land in the 1860s', in *Raupatu*, ed. Boast and Hill, 14–16.

9. See Colonial Secretary William Fox's comments on Williams Martin's paper on the proposal. *British Parliamentary Papers: Colonies* (New Zealand), Volume 41, 1862–1864, 309.
10. Vincent O'Malley, *The Great War for New Zealand: Waikato 1800–2000* (Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 2016), 464–469.
11. Gilling, 'Raupatu', in *Raupatu*, ed. Boast and Hill, 13.
12. See Hopkins-Weise, *Blood Brothers*, 12–13, 169; Leonard L. Barton, *Australians in the Waikato War, 1863–1864* (Sydney: Library of Australian History, 1979), 7; Norman Bartlett, 'Australia and the Maori Wars', *Canberra Historical Journal* 5 (1980): 1–6; Frank Glen, *For Glory and a Farm: The Story of Australia's Involvement in the New Zealand Wars of 1860–66* (Whakatane: Whakatane & District Historical Society, 1984), 10, 102.
13. Glen, *For Glory and a Farm*, 19–20, 32–34; Hopkins-Weise, *Blood Brothers*, 190–191. See the letters in *Argus*, 20 January 1864, 5; *Argus*, 21 January 1864, 7.
14. See 'Another New Zealand War', *Liverpool Mercury*, 8 September 1863, 6; *Times*, 24 December 1863, 8; 'New Zealand', *Standard*, 17 November 1863, 3.
15. *SMH*, 28 August 1863, 5.
16. See Damien Fenton, 'Australians in the New Zealand Wars', in *Before the Anzac Dawn: A Military History of Australia to 1915*, ed. Craig Stockings and John Connor (University of New South Wales: NewSouth Publishing, 2013).
17. A.J. Harrop noted that the wars 'attracted the equally close attention of newspapers in many lands'. Angus John Harrop, *England and the Maori Wars* (London: Whitcombe & Tombs, 1937), 15.
18. Vaughan Wood, Tom Brooking, and Peter Perry, 'Pastoralism and Politics: Reinterpreting Contests for Territory in Auckland Province, New Zealand, 1853–1864', *Journal of Historical Geography* 34, no. 2 (2008).
19. Keith Sinclair, *The Origins of the Maori Wars* (Wellington: NZ University Press, 1961), 205.
20. For a recent, excellent outline of this history see Atholl Anderson, Judith Binney, and Aroha Harris, *Tangata Whenua: An Illustrated History* (Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 2014), Chaps 7–9.
21. Peter Adams, *Fatal Necessity: British Intervention in New Zealand, 1830–1847* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1977).
22. Some *rangatira* chose not to sign the Treaty, including Te Wherowhero of the Waikato, who would later be the first Māori king. Of the 500 or so Māori that did sign, all but 39 signed the Māori-language document.

23. James Belich, *Making Peoples: A History of the New Zealanders: From Polynesian Settlement to the End of the Nineteenth Century* (Auckland: Allen Lane/Penguin Press, 1996), 194.
24. The literature is vast, but the obvious starting point remains Claudia Orange, *The Treaty of Waitangi* (Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 2015 [1987]).
25. Belich, *Making Peoples*, 229–234.
26. Belich, *New Zealand Wars*, 80, 114. For work touching on the themes of this chapter in relation to the Taranaki War see Angela Woollacott, *Settler Society in the Australian Colonies: Self-Government and Imperial Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 194–204.
27. Grey was also later Premier of New Zealand (1877–1879). On the conflicting assessments of Grey see James Rutherford, *Sir George Grey: A Study in Colonial Government* (London: Cassell, 1961), v.
28. Sinclair, *Origins*, 269.
29. O'Malley, *The Great War for New Zealand*, 193–199.
30. *Ibid.*, 205.
31. Belich, *New Zealand Wars*, 77–78.
32. Belich, *Making Peoples*, 234.
33. Belich, *New Zealand Wars*, 304.
34. *Ibid.*
35. *Ibid.*, 312–213.
36. *Ibid.*, 304.
37. *Ibid.*, 77.
38. Alan Ward had in an earlier article listed several supplementary drivers of the war besides land. These included genuine settler anxiety, the need to impose law and order, settler racism, and humanitarian schemes of 'amalgamation'. Alan Ward, 'The Origins of the Anglo-Maori Wars: A Reconsideration', *New Zealand Journal of History* 1, no. 2 (1967): 148–170.
39. *Times*, 15 March 1862, 11. It has been argued that the Australian colonies—by contrast to New Zealand—were Britain's 'favourites', insofar as talk of a mid-century British desire for 'separatism' was actually just frustration at colonists being unwilling to fund their own defence. Stanley R. Steinbridge, *Parliament, the Press, and the Colonies, 1846–1880* (New York: Garland Publishing Inc, 1982), 173. See also 107, 159–167, 174–178, 277–280.
40. Duncan Bell, 'Victorian Visions of Global Order: An Introduction', in *Victorian Visions of Global Order*, ed. Duncan Bell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 6.
41. John Darwin, *Unfinished Empire: The Global Expansion of Britain* (London: Allen Lane, 2012), 325.

42. O'Malley, *The Great War for New Zealand*, 11, 68–72, 151, 193, 416; Sinclair, *Origins*, Chaps. 7, 15; Brian James Dalton, *War and Politics in New Zealand, 1855–1879* (Sydney: Sydney University Press, 1967), 1–2, 13–20. Earlier, in 1852, the British Parliament passed the New Zealand Constitution Act granting a more limited representative government. But New Zealand colonists, as with the Australians, wanted greater political autonomy.
43. See Alfred Domett's remarks in *New Zealand Parliamentary Debates*, House of Representatives, 8 August 1862, 515. For a long and elaborate plea from another New Zealand politician for imperial assistance, and a defence of colonists against accusations from the *Times* after the Taranaki War, see Crosbie Ward, *Letter to the Right Honorable the Lord Lyttelton, on the Relations of Great Britain with the Colonists and Aborigines of New Zealand* (London: Edward Stanford, 1863).
44. Comparative Australasian progress in production and population could be painstakingly detailed. See *SMH*, 12 March 1863, 4.
45. Alan Lester has noted similar rhetoric in the 1840s in the Cape Colony, New Zealand and New South Wales. Alan Lester, 'Colonial Settlers and the Metropole: Racial Discourse in the Early 19th-Century Cape Colony, Australia and New Zealand', *Landscape Research* 27, no. 1 (2002): 44.
46. 'Withdrawal of the British Troops from New Zealand', *Brisbane Courier*, 5 March 1863, 2.
47. 'The Maories', *South Australian Register*, 4 August 1864, 2. See also *SMH*, 10 July 1863, 10.
48. Mark Rifkin, 'Settler Common Sense', *Settler Colonial Studies* 3, no. 3–4 (2013).
49. For the same rhetoric of 'absurdity', see also *Argus*, 15 July 1864, 5.
50. *Argus*, 4 September 1863, 4.
51. Ibid. The justification that 'the Maoris' had only claimed title to New Zealand by 'killing and eating the former proprietors' was also given in the *Times*, 23 September 1865, 8.
52. Jessie Mitchell, "'Are we in Danger of a Hostile Visit from the Aborigines?'" Dispossession and the Rise of Self-Government in New South Wales', *Australian Historical Studies* 40, no. 3 (2009): 294–307; Mark McKenna, 'Transplanted to Savage Shores: Indigenous Australians and British Birthright in the Mid Nineteenth-Century Australian Colonies', *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History* 13, no. 1 (2012); Ann Curthoys, 'Taking Liberty: Towards a New Political Historiography of Settler Self-Government and Indigenous Activism', in *The Atlantic World in the Antipodes: Effects and Transformations since the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Kate Fullagar (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2012), 245.

53. Bain Attwood, 'The Law of the Land or the Law of the Land?: History, Law and Narrative in a Settler Society', *History Compass* 2, no. 1 (2004): 2.
54. Patrick Wolfe, 'The Settler Complex: An Introduction', *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 37, no. 2 (2013): 1.
55. James Boyce, *1835: The Founding of Melbourne and the Conquest of Australia* (Collingwood: Black Inc, 2011), 165–166.
56. James Bonwick, *Early Struggles of the Australian Press* (London: Gordon and Gotch, 1890), 67; Henry Gyles Turner, *A History of the Colony of Victoria from its Discovery to its Absorption into the Commonwealth of Australia, Volume 1* (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1904), 353.
57. William Westgarth, *Personal Recollections of Early Melbourne & Victoria* (Melbourne: George Robertson & Co., 1888), 101.
58. 'Indeed, land was *the* question in all the settlement colonies: all politics was land politics in one form or another.' Darwin, *Unfinished Empire*, 100 (original emphasis).
59. Anne Coote, 'Out from the Legend's Shadow: Re-Thinking National Feeling in Colonial Australia', *Journal of Australian Colonial History* 10, no. 2 (2008): 108–109.
60. *Argus*, 30 September 1864, 4.
61. Ibid. See also *Argus*, 23 May 1863, 4; *SMH*, 24 June 1864, 4; *South Australian Register*, 23 March 1865, 3.
62. For an explicit assertion of the Queen's 'inherent sovereignty, free of all stipulation or treaty, over every inch of soil in the colony', see *Argus*, 12 June 1863, 4. For a more ambivalent view see the *Brisbane Courier*, 15 February 1864, 2.
63. *Mercury*, 29 May 1863, 2.
64. Boyce, 1835, 130 (original emphasis).
65. *Mercury*, 29 May 1863, 2.
66. Hopkins-Weise, *Blood Brothers*, 11–12.
67. *SMH*, 21 August 1863, 4.
68. *SMH*, 15 August 1863, 6 (reproduced in 'Enlistment', *SMH*, 21 August 1863, 6). See also *Empire*, 14 September 1863, 5.
69. See 'Volunteers for New Zealand', *Taranaki Herald*, 5 September 1863, 3. For the circulation of emotion throughout the 'Australian World' see also 'The Union of Forces', *Daily Southern Cross*, 17 December 1863, 5.
70. *Argus*, 20 August 1863, 5.
71. William Westgarth, *The Colony of Victoria* (London: Sampson Low, Son and Marston, 1864), 370. See, in the same context, Westgarth's discussion of the differences between Māori and Aboriginal Australians, 224–225. See also *SMH*, 20 August 1864, 4.

72. *Times*, 23 October 1863, 6.
73. 'The "Argus" on the New Zealand Question', *The Press*, 30 April 1863, 1.
74. 'The State of the North', *The Press*, 2 October 1863, 2.
75. *Brisbane Courier*, 15 February 1864, 2.
76. *Argus*, 20 January 1864, 4.
77. Lester, 'Colonial Settlers', 44–46.
78. *Fraser's Magazine*, 'England and Her Colonies', cited in *Leeds Mercury*, 1 October 1863, 2.
79. 'New Zealand', *Illustrated London News*, 23 July 1864, 81.
80. *Ibid.*
81. *Ibid.*
82. 'New Zealand', *Illustrated London News*, 31 October 1863, 430.
83. *Ibid.*
84. *Ibid.*
85. *Ibid.*
86. For earlier British statements that settlers should, among other things, fund their own defence, see the *Times* editorial from January 19 1863, discussed at length in the Australian and British press: *Argus*, 7 April 1863, 4. See also *Times*, 1 May 1863, 9; *Times* 17 July 1863, 9; 'Another New Zealand War', *Liverpool Mercury*, 8 September 1863, 6. Kenton Storey notes that during the Taranaki War the *Times* initially supported settler rights before critiquing their motivations. This was due not to a reassessment of Māori rights, but to frustrations over the protracted and costly nature of the war. Kenton Storey, *Settler Anxiety at the Outposts of Empire: Colonial Relations, Humanitarian Discourses, and the Imperial Press* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2016), 196–197.
87. Charles Wentworth Dilke, *Greater Britain: A Record of Travel in English-Speaking Countries during 1866 and 1867* (London: Macmillan and Co, 1868), 393.
88. *Ibid.*, 396.
89. *Times*, June 14 1864, 11. Similar opinions found their way into the New Zealand press. For one example of many see *New Zealand Spectator and Cook's Strait Guardian*, 24 August 1864, 2.
90. *Times*, 3 December 1864, 6. See also *Times*, 14 August 1863, 8; *Times*, 24 December 1863, 8.
91. *Times*, 16 July 1864, 11.
92. *Standard*, 15 June 1864, 4.
93. *Ibid.*
94. *Ibid.*
95. Alan Lester, 'Humanism, Race and the Colonial Frontier', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 37, no. 1 (2011): 142–143.

96. *Standard*, 15 June 1864, 4. For a near-identical sentiment from 1863 drawing on Australia see *Fraser's Magazine*, 'England and Her Colonies', cited in *Leeds Mercury*, 1 October 1863, 2. The *Manchester Guardian* also praised the 'unity of spirit' evident in Australian support in New Zealand, arguing for resources to protect 'the lives and property of Englishmen, together with the national reputation'. Cited in *New Zealand Herald*, 12 February 1864, 4. See also the writer who recognised that while London may 'grumble' at the cost of aiding the colonists, they would surely 'grumble' more if they lost the colony. 'The War in New Zealand', *Glasgow Herald*, 18 November 1863, 3.
97. James Belich, *Replenishing the Earth: The Settler Revolution and the Rise of the Anglo-World, 1783–1939* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 9. For similar rhetoric of 'transplanting' English overseas see 'Foreign Summary', *Sheffield & Rotherham Independent*, 1 October 1863, 2.
98. *Standard*, 28 April 1864, 4.
99. *Ibid.*
100. *Ibid.* See also *Times*, 19 November 1863, 8.
101. *Standard*, 15 June 1864, 4.
102. *Ibid.*
103. *Ibid.*
104. Adele Perry, *On the Edge of Empire: Gender, Race and the Making of British Columbia, 1849–1871* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), 19.
105. Patrick Wolfe, 'Nation and Miscegenation: Discursive Continuity in the Post-Mabo Era', *Social Analysis* 36 (1994): 95.
106. Beenash Jafri, 'Desire, Settler Colonialism, and the Racialized Cowboy', *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 37, no. 2 (2013): 78–79.
107. Also overlooked was the practice of Indigenous women turning to sexual transactions after their traditional economies and social relations had been destroyed. See Victoria Freeman, 'Attitudes toward "Miscegenation" in Canada, the United States, New Zealand, and Australia, 1860–1914', *Native Studies Review* 16, no. 1 (2005): 56–57.
108. Patricia Grimshaw and Ann Standish, 'Making Tasmania Home: Louisa Meredith's Colonizing Prose', *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies* 28, no. 1 (2007): 14–15.

CHAPTER 4: THE WAIKATO WAR: PHILANTHROPY AND THE SETTLER FANTASY

1. Heather Streets, *Martial Races: The Military, Race, and Masculinity in British Imperial Culture, 1857–1914* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), 7–8; Patrick Wolfe, *Traces of History: Elementary Structures of Race* (London: Verso, 2016), 7.
2. See Catherine Hall, *Civilising Subjects: Metropole and Colony in the English Imagination, 1830–1867* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2002), 12, 24, 55–57.
3. Duncan Bell, *The Idea of Greater Britain: Empire and the Future of World Order, 1860–1900* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 115.
4. See Tony Ballantyne, *Orientalism and Race: Aryanism in the British Empire* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006).
5. *Hampshire Advertiser*, 31 October 1863, 2.
6. See, for example, *Times*, 19 September 1865, 6.
7. ‘New Zealand’, *Morning Post*, 13 May 1864, 6.
8. ‘Colonists and Savages’, *Dundee Courier & Argus*, 17 June 1864, 2.
9. James Belich, *The New Zealand Wars and the Victorian Interpretation of Racial Conflict* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1986), 326. As the *Standard* reported: ‘Men who have lived long in this country and are well capable of judging, assure us that the aboriginal inhabitants of the beautiful islands are in no way inferior, intellectually or physically, to the Europeans who have settled amongst them’. *Standard*, 16 September 1864, 4.
10. Ibid. See also ‘Our Australian Colonies’, *Glasgow Herald*, 11 January 1864, 6. In 1863 the *Argus* said that while the troops included ‘loafers’, they were ‘altogether a fine body of men’. *Argus*, 1 September 1863, 5. New Zealand papers could also make a more favourable assessment of the Australian colonists’ appearance, ‘fine robust looking men they were’. ‘Arrival of the Volunteers’, *Daily Southern Cross*, 4 September 1863, 2; ‘The Native War’, *Lyttelton Times*, 16 September 1863, 5.
11. ‘New Zealand’, *Bristol Mercury*, 30 May 1863, 5.
12. Laura Tabili, ‘A Homogeneous Society? Britain’s Internal “Others”, 1800–present’, in *At Home with the Empire: Metropolitan Culture and the Imperial World*, ed. Catherine Hall and Sonya O. Rose (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), Chap. 3.
13. *Daily Telegraph*, 31 December 1863, 5.
14. *Times*, 31 December 1863, 8.
15. Ibid.

16. For this idea in settler narratives more broadly see Lorenzo Veracini, 'Historylessness: Australia as a Settler Colonial Collective', *Postcolonial Studies* 10, no. 3 (2007): 271–285.
17. *Times*, 31 December 1863, 8.
18. *Standard*, 21 August 1863, 4.
19. For similar comparisons see *Morning Post*, 14 April 1863, 2; *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper*, 30 August 1863, 6; *Royal Cornwall Gazette, Falmouth Packet, and General Advertiser*, 11 September 1863, 6.
20. See the *Times*, 21 November 1860, 8. This was a position that would alter with the frustrations of the coming years.
21. Patrick Brantlinger, *Dark Vanishings: Discourse on the Extinction of Primitive Races, 1800–1930* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003), 4. See also Renato Rosaldo, 'Imperialist Nostalgia', *Representations* 26, no. Spring (1989): 108. For the predicted demise of Māori due to colonisation see *London Daily Telegraph*, 17 August 1863, 4; *London Daily Telegraph*, 31 December 1863, 5; *Standard*, 28 April 1864, 4; *Times*, 16 July 1864, 11.
22. This was a process that could work both ways. In 1863, for example, the Kingitanga newspaper *Tē Hōkioi* evoked the successful Haitian resistance against the French. Keith Sinclair, *The Origins of the Maori Wars* (Wellington: NZ University Press, 1961), 77–78.
23. 'The New Zealand Difficulty: How It Must Be Dealt With', *Huddersfield Chronicle and West Yorkshire Advertiser*, 28 November 1863, 8.
24. *Ibid.*
25. *Ibid.*
26. *Ibid.*
27. See John Eldon Gorst, *The Maori King* (London: Oxford University Press, 1959 [1864]). Sinclair, *Origins*, 267. Keith Sorrenson, 'Gorst, John Eldon', *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*. *Tē Ara—the Encyclopedia of New Zealand* (2013), <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/biographies/1g15/gorst-john-eldon>.
28. 'The New Zealand War', *Times*, 24 December 1863, 10. Gorst's rodent analogy was a familiar one—apparently recounted by Māori to Charles Darwin decades earlier. James Belich, *Making Peoples: A History of the New Zealanders: From Polynesian Settlement to the End of the Nineteenth Century* (Auckland: Allen Lane/Penguin Press, 1996), 147.
29. See *New Zealand Herald*, 2 March 1864, 3; *Taranaki Herald*, 5 March 1864, 2; *Daily Southern Cross*, 30 July 1864, 3.
30. "'Suppressio Veri, Suggestio Falsi.'" Mr Gorst and the Maori King', *SMH*, 19 September 1864, 2.
31. Gorst, *Maori King*, 262.

32. Elizabeth Elbourne, 'The Sin of the Settler: The 1835–1836 Select Committee on Aborigines and Debates over Virtue and Conquest in the Early Nineteenth-Century British White Settler Empire', *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History* 4, no. 3 (2004); James Boyce, *1835: The Founding of Melbourne and the Conquest of Australia* (Collingwood: Black Inc, 2011), 39–40.
33. Alan Lester, 'British Settler Discourse and the Circuits of Empire', *History Workshop Journal* 54, no. 1 (2002). See the *SMH*'s chastisement of 'the leading English press'. *SMH*, 20 August 1864, 4.
34. Alan Lester and Fae Dussart, *Colonization and the Origins of Humanitarian Governance: Protecting Aborigines Across the Nineteenth-Century British Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 20–21.
35. Lester, 'British Settler Discourse', 26.
36. *Ibid.*, 26–27.
37. Alan Lester, 'Colonial Settlers and the Metropole: Racial Discourse in the Early 19th-Century Cape Colony, Australia and New Zealand', *Landscape Research* 27, no. 1 (2002): 46.
38. Alan Lester, *Imperial Networks: Creating Identities in Nineteenth-Century South Africa and Britain* (London: Routledge, 2001), 190.
39. On the various uses and misuses of the term 'humanitarian' see Claire McLisky, "'Due Observance of Justice, and the Protection of their Rights": Philanthropy, Humanitarianism and Moral Purpose in the Aborigines Protection Society circa 1837 and its Portrayal in Australian Historiography, 1883–2003', *Limina* 11 (2005): 57–66. See also Jessie Mitchell, *In Good Faith?: Governing Indigenous Australia Through God, Charity and Empire, 1825–1855* (Canberra: ANU Press, 2011), 11–12.
40. See Kenton Storey, *Settler Anxiety at the Outposts of Empire: Colonial Relations, Humanitarian Discourses, and the Imperial Press* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2016), 5–9; Anne O'Brien, 'Humanitarianism and Reparation in Colonial Australia', *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History* 12, no. 2 (2011).
41. It is well recognised that self-proclaimed humanitarians, for all their rhetoric, could be complicit in settler colonisation. James Boyce offers a telling example of this during Melbourne's founding. Boyce, *1835*, Chaps. 5 and 15.
42. *Mercury*, 10 October 1863, 2. This too was a trans-settler project that concerned those at the highest levels. William Fox, variously New Zealand's Premier, Colonial Secretary, and Native Minister in the early 1860s, wrote an account of events at least in part to correct impressions given by some British newspapers. See William Fox, *The War in New Zealand* (Christchurch: Capper Press, 1973 [1866]), vii.

43. See 'The "Times" On New Zealand Answered', *SMH*, 15 April 1863, 3.
44. See for example *SMH*, 22 September 1863, 4.
45. See for example, 'Australian Items', *Bradford Observer*, 28 July 1864, 7. Kenton Storey mentions the importance of Australian newspapers for British press narratives during the Taranaki War and the anxiety felt in Australia about imperial support. See Storey, *Settler Anxiety*, 198–199.
46. 'The New Zealand War', *Argus*, 4 September 1863, 5.
47. *Argus*, 4 September 1863, 4.
48. 'The New Zealand War', *Argus*, 8 September 1863, 7.
49. Ibid. For scholarly discussion of the relationship between settler colonialism and genocide see A. Dirk Moses, 'Genocide and Settler Society in Australian History', in *Genocide and Settler Society: Frontier Violence and Stolen Indigenous Children in Australian History*, ed. A. Dirk Moses (New York: Berghahn Books, 2004), 30.
50. *South Australian Advertiser*, 11 September 1863, 2.
51. *Empire*, 12 January 1864, 4.
52. 'The Maories', *South Australian Register*, 4 August 1864, 2; *Age*, 12 October 1864, 4.
53. For a taste of the New Zealand settler view of Selwyn see *Nelson Examiner*, 18 March 1863, 4.
54. *Brisbane Courier*, 5 April 1864, 2.
55. *Mercury*, 29 May 1863, 2.
56. 'England and Auckland—Is it Peace?', *SMH*, 24 August 1864, 5.
57. *Age*, 26 May 1863, 4.
58. *Age*, 25 June 1863, 4. It should be noted that later the *Age* argued against the break-up of communal Māori landholdings, partly because this would lead to a 'relapse into savagery' not unlike that of the 'blacks of Australia'. *Age*, 31 August 1864, 5. During and after the war the New Zealand Government introduced legislation for a Native Land Court that individualised Māori land title, facilitating its transfer to settler ownership. The disastrous effects of this process for Māori are well documented. David Williams, *Tē Kooti Tango Whenua: The Native Land Court, 1864–1909* (Wellington: Huia, 1999).
59. *Age*, 2 September 1863, 4.
60. *Age*, 12 October 1864, 4.
61. Leigh Boucher and Lynette Russell, "'Soliciting Sixpences from Township to Township": Moral Dilemmas in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Melbourne', *Postcolonial Studies* 15, no. 2 (2012): 149–165.
62. Jessie Mitchell and Ann Curthoys, 'How Different was Victoria? Aboriginal "Protection" in a Comparative Context', in *Settler Colonial Governance in Nineteenth-Century Victoria*, ed. Leigh Boucher and Lynette Russell (ACT: ANU Press, 2015), 184. Note the timing of the

- establishment of the famous, and infamous, Coranderrk Aboriginal station at Healesville, near Melbourne, in 1863.
63. *Border Watch*, 5 June 1863, 2.
 64. For the comparison with the ‘wild philanthropy’ during the Indian Rebellion see also *Argus*, 4 September 1863, 4; *Argus*, 24 August 1863, 4. In Britain a direct comparison between events in the Waikato and the Indian Rebellion is made in *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, November 27 1863, 4. See also ‘New Zealand’, *Morning Post*, 16 October 1863, 3. On the impact of the rebellion in the Australian press see Jessie Mitchell, “‘Great Difficulty in Knowing Where The Frontier Ceases’: Violence, Governance, and the Spectre of India in Early Queensland’, *Journal of Australian Colonial History* 15 (2013): 43–62.
 65. *Border Watch*, 5 June 1863, 2.
 66. *Ibid.*
 67. *Argus*, 30 September 1864, 4.
 68. *Ibid.*; *Argus*, 30 August 1864, 4.
 69. *Argus*, 30 September 1864, 4.
 70. *Times*, 15 March 1862, 11.
 71. *Times*, 30 December 1864, 11.
 72. See also *Brisbane Courier*, 15 February 1864, 2.
 73. *Argus*, 22 December 1863, 4.
 74. *Ibid.* The Hobart *Mercury* likewise saw that ‘There must be no halting, under a dread of what will be said in Exeter Hall ... Good may therefore, come of evil.’ *Mercury*, 22 June 1863, 2.
 75. *Argus*, 22 December 1863, 4.
 76. Warren E. Limbrick, ‘Selwyn, George Augustus,’ in *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography. Te Ara—the Encyclopedia of New Zealand* (1990; reprint, updated 30-Oct-2012). <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/biographies/1s5/selwyn-george-augustus>.
 77. *Argus*, 22 December 1863, 4; *Star*, 12 November 1863, 2.
 78. *Argus*, 22 December 1863, 4.
 79. *Ibid.*; ‘The Principles Involved in the New Zealand Question’, *SMH*, 21 August 1863, 6; *Argus*, 14 January 1864, 4; *Argus*, 8 July 1864, 4; *Mercury*, 25 June 1864, 2; *Australasian*, 12 November 1864, 3; *SMH*, 11 March 1864, 4; *SMH*, 21 July 1864, 6.
 80. See also *Mercury*, 25 June 1864, 2. Belich, *New Zealand Wars*, 328.
 81. *Argus*, 22 December 1863, 4.
 82. Kenton Storey, ‘Colonial Humanitarian? Thomas Gore Browne and the Taranaki War, 1860–1861’, *Journal of British Studies* 53, no. 1 (2014): 115.
 83. See for example Henry Reynolds’ discussion of arguments made for Government intervention in the Australian frontier since at least the

- 1830s. Henry Reynolds, *Frontier: Aborigines, Settlers and Land* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1987), 41–42; Henry Reynolds, *Forgotten War* (Sydney: NewSouth Publishing, 2013), 58–60.
84. Geoffrey Serle, 'Wilson, Edward (1813–1878)', Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University. Accessed 26 August 2016. <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/wilson-edward-4866/text8131>, published first in hardcopy 1976.
 85. Edward Wilson, *Rambles at the Antipodes* (London: W.H. Smith and Son, 1859), 24 (original emphasis). In his renowned 1852 history of Tasmania, future *SMH* editor John West was in the same bind when vindicating the 'mournful record' he had recounted. Though deploring the consequences of occupation he felt the 'assumption of sovereignty over a savage people is justified by necessity'. John West, *The History of Tasmania, Volume 2* (Launceston: Henry Dowling, 1852), 92.
 86. Wilson, *Rambles at the Antipodes*, 24.
 87. *Ibid.*, 26.
 88. *Argus*, 15 July 1864, 5; *SMH*, 21 October 1864, 13. The *Argus* elsewhere describes Māori fighting against the British as 'Bishop Selwyn's pets', *Argus*, 23 May 1863, 4.
 89. This position is forcefully put by Victoria's *Mount Alexander Mail*, 10 September 1864, 2.
 90. *Argus*, 15 July 1864, 5. A year earlier the *Argus* said the war was 'one of race against race—the struggle which is to be, is one of sovereignty'. In this '*The Times* is utterly and grossly wrong when it declares that the quarrels are not the quarrels of England, but of New Zealand'. *Argus*, 7 April 1863, 4.
 91. *Argus*, 15 July 1864, 5; *Argus*, 22 March 1864, 4. The defence of settlers against humanitarians would continue when conflict renewed in years to come. See *Brisbane Courier*, 15 March 1866, 2.
 92. For New Zealand press reproductions of a *SMH* editorial calling for confiscation of Māori land and for Māori subjugation both for their own good and the good of British settlers, see 'The Only Way to Save the Native Race', *Wellington Independent*, 14 May 1864, 4; *Nelson Examiner and New Zealand Chronicle*, 10 May 1864, 3.
 93. Moses, 'Genocide and Settler Society', 30.
 94. Bell, *Idea of Greater Britain*, 179.
 95. Elisabeth Wallace, *Goldwin Smith: Victorian Liberal* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1957), 183. See the exchange on colonial 'independence' in the *Times*, 20 September 1862, 8, 12. For a study rejecting the prominence of Smith's views, see Stanley R. Stemberge, *Parliament, the Press, and the Colonies, 1846–1880* (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc, 1982).

96. Goldwin Smith, *Reminiscences* (New York: Macmillan & Co. 1911), 221. Bell, *Idea of Greater Britain*, 183–184.
97. Robert J.C. Young, *The Idea of English Ethnicity* (Malden: Blackwell 2008), 194–195.
98. Goldwin Smith, *The Empire: A Series of Letters Published in 'The Daily News,' 1862, 1863* (Oxford: John Henry and James Parker, 1863).
99. Wallace, *Goldwin Smith*, 183–192; Edmund Bohan, *Climates of War: New Zealand in Conflict, 1859–69* (Christchurch: Hazard Press Limited, 2005), 166–167.
100. Smith, *The Empire*, 154.
101. Ibid.
102. For the original letter see ‘The “Quarterly Review” On the Colonial System’, *Daily News*, 30 July 1863, 4–5.
103. ‘The War in New Zealand’, *Daily News*, 30 December 1863, 4.
104. *Mercury*, 2 November 1863, 2.
105. *Argus*, 23 February 1864, 4. See also *SMH*, 21 November 1862, 13; *Argus*, 21 June 1864, 4. For a more circumspect view on Smith see *Brisbane Courier*, 15 February 1864, 2.
106. *Argus*, 23 February 1864, 4.
107. Ibid.
108. Ibid.
109. Alan Lester, ‘Race and Citizenship: Colonial Inclusions and Exclusions’, in *The Victorian World*, ed. Martin Hewitt (London: Routledge, 2012), 368.
110. Reynolds, *Frontier*, 9–22.
111. For a summary of these events see Henry Reynolds, *An Indelible Stain?: The Question of Genocide in Australia’s History* (Ringwood: Penguin, 2001), 121–130.
112. John Featon, *The Waikato War 1863–1864* (Christchurch: Capper Press, 1971 [1879]), 11. For a description by an avowed ‘Aborigines Protectionist’ of settler fear of natives and the concomitant obligation of Government protection, see James Edward Alexander, *Incidents of the Maori War* (London: Richard Bentley, 1863), 127–128.
113. A. Dirk Moses, ‘Moving the Genocide Debate Beyond the History Wars’, *Australian Journal of Politics & History* 54, no. 2 (2008): 263.
114. Lester, ‘British Settler Discourse’, 30.
115. Ibid.
116. Ibid., 39.
117. Ibid., 42.
118. ‘Our societies are never harmonious ensembles. This is only the fantasy through which they attempt to constitute and reconstitute themselves.’ Yannis Stavrakakis, *Lacan and the Political* (London: Routledge, 1999), 74.

119. See Slavoj Žižek, *Tarrying with the Negative: Kant, Hegel and the Critique of Ideology* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993); Yannis Stavrakakis and Nikos Chrysoloras, '(I Can't Get No) Enjoyment: Lacanian Theory and the Analysis of Nationalism', *Psychoanalysis, Culture & Society* 11 (2006); Alan Finlayson, 'Psychology, Psychoanalysis and Theories of Nationalism', *Nations and Nationalism* 4, no. 2 (1998); Jason Glynos and Yannis Stavrakakis, 'Lacan and Political Subjectivity: Fantasy and Enjoyment in Psychoanalysis and Political Theory', *Subjectivity* 24, no. 1 (2008).
120. Žižek, *Tarrying*, 201.
121. Žižek, *Tarrying*, 202. See also his *The Metastases of Enjoyment: Six Essays on Women and Causality* (London: Verso, 1994), 205.
122. I give a fuller account of this process in Sam Hutchinson, 'Humanitarian Critique and the Settler Fantasy: The Australian Press and Settler Colonial Consciousness During the Waikato War, 1863–64', *Settler Colonial Studies* 4, no. 1 (2014).
123. Anthony Moran, 'The Psychodynamics of Australian Settler-Nationalism: Assimilating or Reconciling with the Aborigines?', *Political Psychology* 23, no. 4 (2002): 676.
124. On the triangular dynamic of settler colonialism see Lorenzo Veracini, *Settler Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), Chap. 1.
125. *Argus*, 10 December 1863, 4.
126. Mitchell, 'Great Difficulty', 44, 48–49, 58–59. Mitchell discusses the case of Queensland, where humanitarians were deeply unpopular, in the years leading to separation from New South Wales in 1859.
127. Moses, 'Genocide and Settler Society', 34.
128. See Fox, *The War in New Zealand*, 239–261.

CHAPTER 5: THE SUDAN CRISIS: DISPLAYS OF UNITY

1. I use the modern spelling of Sudan but retain 'Soudan' in original source quotations.
2. Malcolm Saunders, *Britain, the Australian Colonies and the Sudan Campaigns of 1884–85* (Armidale: University of New England Publishing Unit, 1985), 32.
3. Peter Stanley, ed. *But Little Glory: The New South Wales Contingent to the Sudan, 1885* (Canberra: Military Historical Society of Australia, 1985); Saunders, *Sudan Campaigns of 1884–85*, 5.
4. The 200,000 figure is from Ken Inglis, *The Rehearsal: Australians at War in the Sudan 1885* (Adelaide: Rigby Publishers, 1985), 53.

5. See the motivations suggested in Beverley Kingston, *The Oxford History of Australia, Volume 3: 1860–1900: Glad, Confident Morning* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1986), 197–198.
6. Ann Laura Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), 60–62.
7. Luke Trainor, *British Imperialism and Australian Nationalism: Manipulation, Conflict and Compromise in the Late Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 104.
8. For the basic historical account in this chapter I am indebted to Inglis, *The Rehearsal*; Saunders, *Sudan Campaigns of 1884–85*; Stanley, *But Little Glory*; Barbara Penny, ‘The Age of Empire: An Australian Episode’, *Historical Studies: Australia and New Zealand* 11 no. 41 (1963).
9. Ronald Robinson, John Gallagher, and Alice Denny, *Africa and the Victorians: The Official Mind of Imperialism* (London: Macmillan, 1981), 123–125, 133–134, 151–152, 156; Saunders, *Sudan Campaigns of 1884–85*, 9–10; John Darwin, ‘Imperialism and the Victorians: The Dynamics of Territorial Expansion’, *The English Historical Review* 112, no. 447 (1997): 634–635;
10. John Darwin, *The Empire Project: The Rise and Fall of the British World-System, 1830–1970* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 75.
11. Ian St. John, *Gladstone and the Logic of Victorian Politics* (London: Anthem Press, 2010), 288. See also Saunders, *Sudan Campaigns of 1884–85*, 13; Robinson, Gallagher, and Denny, *Africa and the Victorians*, 132–155.
12. Joseph O. Baylen, ‘Politics and the “New Journalism”: Lord Esher’s Use of the “Pall Mall Gazette”’, *Victorian Periodicals Review* 20, no. 4 (1987): 126–130. Charles Dilke, author of *Greater Britain*, was in the Cabinet that commissioned Gordon.
13. Richard Shannon, *The Crisis of Imperialism, 1865–1915* (Frogmore: Paladin, 1976), 166.
14. Winston Churchill, *The River War: An Historical Account of the Reconquest of the Soudan* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1902 [1899]), 58–60.
15. Henry Colin Gray Matthew, *Gladstone, 1809–1898* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 399–401.
16. Premier Alexander Stuart was in New Zealand recovering from a stroke. On Garran see Gavin Souter, *Company of Heralds: A Century and a Half of Australian Publishing by John Fairfax Limited and Its Predecessors, 1831–1981* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1981), 90.

17. Inglis, *Rehearsal*, 19.
18. Ibid.
19. Ibid.
20. For speculation on why this was see Chris Coulthard-Clark, 'The Dispatch of the Contingent', in *But Little Glory*, 19–24.
21. Saunders, *Sudan Campaigns of 1884–85*, 24–26. New Zealand, according to Premier Robert Stout, made no offer of troops in large part because they had learned that other colonial offers had been declined. *New Zealand Parliamentary Debates*, House of Representatives, Volume 51, 17 June 1885, 33.
22. See for example *British Parliamentary Papers: Colonial and British Possessions*, Volume 52, October 1884–August 1885, 578, 580, 590, 593.
23. For some immediate retrospectives of the contingent see *Brisbane Courier*, 24 June 1885, 4; *SMH*, 23 June 1885, 6; *Mercury*, 25 June 1885, 2.
24. Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000* (New York: Random House, 1987), 194.
25. Lucy Brown, *Victorian News and Newspapers* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), 229.
26. Kingston, *Oxford History*, 298; Robinson, Gallagher, and Denny, *Africa and the Victorians*, 143–144; Roger C. Thompson, *Australian Imperialism in the Pacific: The Expansionist Era, 1820–1920* (Carlton: Melbourne University Press, 1980), 58–59.
27. Stuart Ward, 'Security: Defending Australia's Empire', in *Australia's Empire*, ed. Deryck Schreuder and Stuart Ward (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 237.
28. Ibid., 235–240.
29. Trainor, *British Imperialism*, 24.
30. Thompson, *Australian Imperialism*, 103, 227.
31. Darwin, *Empire Project*, 77–78.
32. William Pember Reeves saw the 1885 establishment of the Federal Council of Australasia as a 'demonstration' in the face of the Imperial Government's rebuff over New Guinea. William Pember Reeves, *State Experiments in Australia and New Zealand* (New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., 1903), 148. Though, significantly, New South Wales never joined the Council.
33. Thompson, *Australian Imperialism*, Chaps. 4–6; Saunders, *Sudan Campaigns of 1884–85*, 51. See for example Victorian Premier James Service's remarks in *Victorian Parliamentary Debates*, Legislative Assembly, Volume 48, July 1 1885, 211–214.

34. Robin B. Walker, *The Newspaper Press in New South Wales, 1803–1920* (Sydney: Sydney University Press, 1976), 204.
35. *Argus*, 8 June 1885, 4.
36. Ibid.
37. Ibid. See also *Brisbane Courier*, 27 February 1885, 4; *Brisbane Courier*, 11 March 1885, 4.
38. *Argus*, 8 June 1885, 4.
39. ‘Australia’s Godspeed’, *Evening News*, 3 March 1885, 4.
40. John M. MacKenzie, ‘Heroic Myths of Empire’, in *Popular Imperialism and the Military: 1850–1950*, ed. John M. MacKenzie (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1992), 110.
41. *London Daily Telegraph*, 11 February 1885, 4.
42. Inglis, *Rehearsal*, 7.
43. This is Benedict Anderson’s phrase. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, revised ed. (London: Verso, 1991), 35.
44. ‘From Our Correspondent’, *Times*, 8 April 1885, 7.
45. *Age*, 12 February 1885, 7.
46. ‘Lex’, *Age*, 14 February 1885, 10.
47. *Argus*, 12 February 1885, 4. See also ‘A Patriotic Fund’, *Evening News*, 16 February 1885, 4.
48. ‘To The Editor of the Herald’, *SMH*, 12 February 1885, 5. For similar references see *Age*, 12 February 1885, 4.
49. For a regional breakdown of community loyalty see ‘The Feeling in the Country’, *Australian Town and Country Journal*, 21 February 1885, 11.
50. *SMH*, 16 February 1885, 6. See also *Mercury*, 17 February 1885, 2.
51. *Evening News*, 16 February 1885, 4. Even three years later a retrospective account recalled that ‘It was not possible for the great heart of the people to be unmoved while the “Contingent” was astir. The thrill of sentiment was a universal impulse.’ W. Frederic Morrison, *The Aldine Centennial History of New South Wales, Volume 1* (Sydney: The Aldine Publishing Company, 1888), 177.
52. *Evening News*, 16 February 1885, 4.
53. *South Australian Advertiser*, 16 February 1885, 4 (emphasis added).
54. ‘The New South Wales Expedition’, *SMH*, 4 March 1885, 7.
55. On the ambivalence of affective links towards home and family in the colonial Australian context see Penny Russell, ‘“Unhomely Moments”: Civilising Domestic Worlds in Colonial Australia’, *The History of the Family* 14, no. 4 (2009): 327–339.
56. Catherine Hall and Sonya O. Rose, ‘Introduction: Being at Home with the Empire’, in *At Home with the Empire: Metropolitan Culture and the*

- Imperial World*, ed. Catherine Hall and Sonya O. Rose (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 26–27.
57. I am drawing here from the discussion in Mrinalini Sinha, ‘Nations in an Imperial Crucible’, in *Gender and Empire*, ed. Philippa Levine (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 190–192.
 58. Terra Diana Walston Joseph, ‘A “Greater Britain”: Colonial Kin in Fictions of Settlement, 1850–1890’, (PhD Thesis, University of Illinois, 2011), 29–30.
 59. ‘The Patriotic Fund’, *SMH*, 21 February 1885, 11.
 60. *Argus*, 3 March 1885, 4. This was not a new sentiment. The *Freeman’s Journal* had claimed that Queensland, through its New Guinea annexation, had acted like ‘a son announcing ... that he has come of age’, cited in Kingston, *Oxford History*, 300.
 61. ‘To The Editor of the Herald’, *SMH*, 12 February 1885, 5.
 62. ‘Victoria’, *Brisbane Courier*, 4 March 1885, 3 (emphasis added). See also *Brisbane Courier*, 5 March 1885, 4. See also the summary account in ‘Return of the Contingent’, *Evening News*, 23 June 1885, 4.
 63. *South Australian Advertiser*, 18 February 1885, 4; *Kapunda Herald*, 24 February 1885, 2. See also *South Australian Register*, 19 February 1885, 4.
 64. See Strickland’s letter, ‘To The Editor of the Herald’, *SMH*, 12 February 1885, 5; ‘The Death of General Gordon’, *Argus*, 12 February 1885, 6.
 65. Inglis, *Rehearsal*, 16, 26. See also *Mercury*, 4 May 1885, 2; *Mercury*, 21 May 1885, 2. Though just under 400 Canadian civilian volunteer ‘voyageurs’ had assisted the British in navigating boats up the Nile.
 66. ‘To The Editor of the Age’, *Age*, 14 February 1885, 10.
 67. *New Zealand Parliamentary Debates*, House of Representatives, Volume 51, 17 June 1885, 34.
 68. *Ibid.*, 31–32.
 69. *Argus*, 23 February 1885, 4. This idea could at times be balanced by the stated ‘material’ effects of the contingent. *Mercury*, 10 April 1885, 2.
 70. *Argus*, 20 February 1885, 4.
 71. *Brisbane Courier*, 13 February 1885, 4. In New Zealand the *Bay of Plenty Times* saw the contingent had, unsurprisingly enough, advertised not simply New South Wales but ‘Australasian’ imperial spirit. *Bay of Plenty Times*, 19 February 1885, 2. For a corrective to this response in the New Zealand press see *The Press*, 17 February 1885, 2.
 72. *SMH*, 16 February 1885, 6.
 73. *Bulletin*, 28 February 1885, 3.
 74. *SMH*, 15 May 1885, 6.

75. Ibid.
76. Ibid; 'Advance Australia!', *Evening News*, 13 February 1885, 5.
77. *SMH*, 15 May 1885, 6.
78. 'The Australian Contingent', *SMH*, 15 April 1885, 10; *SMH*, 4 April 1885, 10. See also the reproduction of praise and exhortations of unprecedented imperial unity from a range of British papers in 'The Australian Offer for the Soudan', *Adelaide Observer*, 4 April 1885, 6.
79. *British Parliamentary Papers: Colonial and British Possessions*, Volume 52, October 1884–August 1885, 605. See also 'The Australian Contingent for the Soudan', *Launceston Examiner*, 7 March 1885, 3.
80. See for example *Mercury*, 14 February 1885, 2.
81. *Argus*, 9 May 1885, 8. For another Victorian paper the NSW contingent had proven that 'Australia has got out of its swaddling clothes'. *Ovens and Murray Advertiser*, 10 March 1885, 2.
82. *Argus*, 9 May 1885, 8.
83. Victorian Premier James Service's primary concern was that his offer of a Victorian contingent had prevented any 'odious comparisons' with New South Wales as to their respective imperial patriotism. See *Victorian Parliamentary Debates*, Legislative Assembly, Volume 48, 1 July 1885, 225.
84. *Argus*, 17 February 1885, 4. This position was attacked head-on a few days later by Sydney's *Evening News*. See 'Australian Loyalty', *Evening News*, 20 February 1885, 4.
85. A similar takeaway message was reached in 'The Australian Contingent to the Soudan', *Tasmanian*, 7 March 1885, 16.
86. *Argus*, 9 May 1885, 8.
87. Ibid.
88. Ibid. In the Victorian parliament too, Angus Mackay saw the sending of the contingent as 'the greatest historical event in the history of Australia', which is 'looked upon in England, not merely as representative of New South Wales, but as representative of the Australian colonies'. *Victorian Parliamentary Debates*, Legislative Assembly, Volume 48, 17 June 1885, 21.
89. *Mercury*, 21 May 1885, 2.
90. Ibid.
91. Ibid. See also A. Martin Patchett, *Australia and the Empire* (Edinburgh: David Douglas, 1889), 220–221.
92. 'Australia and the Mother Country', *Times*, 2 April 1885, 10.
93. Simon Potter, *News and the British World: The Emergence of the Imperial Press System 1876–1922* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 106–107.

94. *Times*, 18 March 1885, 9. See also *Birmingham Daily Post*, 21 February 1885, 4.
95. Martin Green, *Dreams of Adventure, Deeds of Empire* (New York: Basic Books, 1979), 3.
96. W.E.H. Lecky saw the NSW contingent as a turning point in the mutually beneficial relationship between England and the colonies in anxious times—a relationship going beyond ‘a calculation of interests’. William Edward Hartpole Lecky, *The Empire, its Value and its Growth* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1893), 18–19.
97. Duncan Bell, *The Idea of Greater Britain: Empire and the Future of World Order, 1860–1900* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 1–6.
98. *British Parliamentary Debates*, Commons, Volume 294, 20 February 1885, 923. See also ‘Summary of News’, *Manchester Guardian*, 21 February 1885, 7; *Glasgow Herald*, 21 February 1885, 4.
99. Neville Meaney, ‘Australia and the World’, in *Under New Heavens: Cultural Transmission and the Making of Australia*, ed. Neville Meaney (Port Melbourne: Heinemann Educational Australia, 1989), 399.
100. William Edward Forster, *Imperial Federation* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, & Co., 1885), 21–23. Forster was the chair of the first imperial federation conference held in July 1884.
101. Harold Finch-Hatton, *Advance Australia!: An Account of Eight Years’ Work, Wandering, and Amusement in Queensland, New South Wales, and Victoria* (London: W.H. Allen, 1885), 374–380.
102. Robert Cooper Seaton, *Six Letters from the Colonies* (London: Hull, Wildridge & Co., 1886), 19–20.
103. Thompson, *Australian Imperialism*, 103.
104. ‘Australia and the Mother Country’, *Times*, 2 April 1885, 10.
105. Bell, *Idea of Greater Britain*, 31–34. See James Grant, *Cassell’s History of the War in the Soudan* (London: Cassell and Company Ltd, 1885–86), 168, 170.
106. *Daily News*, 10 February 1885, 5.
107. Bell, *Idea of Greater Britain*, 101–102.
108. See, for example, ‘How We Gained Our Colonies’, *Leeds Mercury*, 28 February 1885, 1.
109. *Daily Telegraph*, 31 March 1885, 5. It were these editorial claims that were disputed by the *Hobart Mercury* as discussed earlier.
110. *Ibid.*
111. *Ibid.*
112. ‘True Federation’, *Leicester Chronicle and the Leicestershire Mercury*, 14 March 1885, 8.

113. Ibid. Indeed, for one letter-writer to the *Times*, the martial history of the Australian colonies extended back to the New Zealand Wars. T. W. W, 'Colonial Aid in War', *Times*, 6 April 1885, 8.
114. 'The Historian Interviewed', *Evening News*, 14 February 1885, 5.
115. James Anthony Froude, *Oceana: or England and Her Colonies* (London: Longmans, Green and co, 1886), 150.
116. Ibid., 149.
117. Ibid., 140–141, 146.
118. Ibid., 150–151.
119. Ibid., 149.
120. Ibid., 151.
121. For example, 'Mr. Froude's "Oceana" (the *Times*)', *Brisbane Courier*, 3 March 1886, 2.
122. 'Review: Oceana', *SMH*, 6 March 1886, 9.
123. Elim Henry D'Avigdor, *Antipodean Notes Collected on a Nine Months' Tour Round the World* (London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle, & Rivington Ltd, 1888), 8–10; E. Katherine Bates, *Kaleidoscope: Shifting Scenes from East to West* (London: Ward and Downey, 1889), v–vi. Edward Kinglake, *The Australian at Home: Notes and Anecdotes of Life at the Antipodes* (London: Leadenhall Press, 1891), 4.
124. 'A regiment or two of sturdy colonists will be a real help to us. But the moral value of the aid they have volunteered to give is of infinitely greater importance.' 'Shall Chester or Wrexham Control The Dee?', *Wrexham Advertiser*, and *North Wales News*, 21 February 1885, 5.
125. *Morning Post*, 16 February 1885, 4. For the *Manchester Guardian* the offer exceeded diplomacy or practicality to make 'a proclamation to the whole world that men of English blood beyond the seas are English still'. *Manchester Guardian*, 16 February 1885, 5.
126. 'Ruskin on "Punch" and Colonial Assistance in the Soudan', *Huddersfield Daily Chronicle*, 24 February 1885, 3. See also, *London Daily Telegraph*, 31 March 1885, 5.
127. 'A Tour in Australia', *Essex Standard*, *West Suffolk Gazette*, and *Eastern Counties' Advertiser*, 21 March 1885, 7. For metropolitan ignorance of the Australian colonies see 'The Colony of New Zealand', in *Leicester Chronicle and the Leicestershire Mercury*, 15 August 1885, 3. The message was apparently received, with recognition of the contingent made by correspondents in Berlin, Paris and Rome. See Frank Hutchinson and Francis Myers, *The Australian Contingent* (Sydney: Thomas Richards, 1885), 103–105.
128. 'A Tour in Australia', *Essex Standard*, *West Suffolk Gazette*, and *Eastern Counties' Advertiser*, 21 March 1885, 7.
129. Ibid (original emphasis).

130. For the original editorial see *Pall Mall Gazette*, 13 February 1885, 1. For the responding letter see 'Correspondence', *Pall Mall Gazette*, 20 February 1885, 1. The *Pall Mall Gazette* seemed to take the correction on board in future. See the description of the contingent that stressed its 'Irish element' in 'Correspondence', *Pall Mall Gazette*, 22 December 1885, 6.
131. 'London Correspondence', *Freeman's Journal and Daily Commercial Advertiser*, 21 February 1885, 5.
132. Ibid.
133. For explicit reference to the contingent as proving 'racial sympathies' see 'The English Race', *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper*, 28 June 1885, 6.
134. 'A Tour in Australia', *Essex Standard, West Suffolk Gazette, and Eastern Counties' Advertiser*, 21 March 1885, 7.
135. Ibid.
136. See Froude's evocative account of this shift at the time, referencing the attitudes of productive colonists, 'natives', and ignorant imperial elites during the New Zealand Wars. Froude, *Oceana*, 4–13.
137. For J. R. Seeley the difference between the white settler colonies and the Indian Empire was the former's blood connections with the mother country. John Robert Seeley, *The Expansion of England: Two Courses of Lectures* (London: Macmillan and Co, 1883), 184–185.
138. 'True Federation', *Leicester Chronicle and the Leicestershire Mercury*, 14 March 1885, 8. See also *Morning Post*, 4 May 1885, 4.
139. For example, the letter by 'Australis', 'Mr. Gladstone on the Union of English-Speaking Peoples', *Times*, 18 February 1885, 12. See also the mixed metaphors in '1885', *Ipswich Journal*, 31 December 1885, 3.
140. *Standard*, 7 March 1885, 5.
141. Ibid. Likewise, the *SMH* reprinted an article from the *St James Gazette* that declared 'Australian fellow-subjects' were 'untarnished by the womanish sentimentalism which bids fair to paralyse the mother-country'. 'The Australian Contingent', *SMH*, 15 April 1885, 10. See also 'Australia and the Mother Country', *Manchester Guardian*, 13 February 1885; *Glasgow Herald*, 5 March 1885, 4.
142. *Standard*, 7 March 1885, 5.
143. Ibid.
144. Elizabeth Elbourne, 'The Sin of the Settler: The 1835–36 Select Committee on Aborigines and Debates over Virtue and Conquest in the Early Nineteenth-Century British White Settler Empire', *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History* 4, no. 3 (2004).
145. For Seeley, Britain's colonial possessions 'have no past and an unbounded future ... All is liberty, industry, invention, innovation, and as yet tranquillity'. Seeley, *Expansion of England*, 176.

146. 'New South Wales to the Front', *Western Mail*, 5 March 1885, 2. See also the *Times*' description of 'Colonies with keener Imperial instincts than ourselves, endowed with the perception, which we are in danger of losing, that nations are knit together, not with invoices and bills of exchange, but with blood and iron'. *Times*, 11 March 1885, 9.
147. 'Letter CCCXL', *Manchester Times*, 7 March 1885, 5.
148. Ibid.
149. Ibid. For similar historical claims see *London Daily Telegraph*, 5 March 1885, 5.
150. 'Letter CCCXL', *Manchester Times*, 7 March 1885, 5.
151. Ibid.
152. Darwin, *Empire Project*, 99–100, 147–148.
153. Leigh Boucher, 'Race, Rights and the Re-Forming Settler Polity in Mid-Nineteenth Century Victoria', *Journal of Australian Colonial History* 15 (2013): 83–104.
154. Ross Gibson, *South of the West: Postcolonialism and the Narrative Construction of Australia* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992), 77.

CHAPTER 6: THE SUDAN CRISIS: CREATING HISTORICAL MEMORIES

1. See for example, 'Return of the Contingent', *Evening News*, 23 June 1885, 4.
2. *NSW Parliamentary Debates*, Legislative Council, 17 March 1885, 5. See also Mr George Edwin Cass in *NSW Parliamentary Debates*, Legislative Assembly, 24 March 1885, 239–240.
3. *NSW Parliamentary Debates*, Legislative Council, 17 March 1885, 4.
4. *NSW Parliamentary Debates*, Legislative Council, 20 March 1885, 179.
5. Stephen Turner, 'Settlement as Forgetting', in *Quicksands: Foundational Histories in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand*, ed. Klaus Neumann, Nicholas Thomas, and Hilary Ericksen (Sydney: UNSW Press, 1999), 35.
6. I have drawn from Fredric Jameson, *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1981), 35.
7. 'The Australian Contingent to the Soudan', *Tasmanian*, 7 March 1885, 16.
8. *Maitland Mercury*, 17 February 1885, 4.
9. *Age*, 5 March 1885, 7.

10. Ibid.
11. *Daily Telegraph*, 31 March 1885, 5.
12. 'The Australian Contingent in the Soudan', *Times*, 24 April 1885, 13. See also 'A Tour in Australia', *Essex Standard, West Suffolk Gazette, and Eastern Counties' Advertiser*, 28 March 1885, 7. J.R. Seeley thought the Australian colonies unique in having a 'native Australian race ... so low in the ethnological scale that it can never give the least trouble'. John Robert Seeley, *The Expansion of England: Two Courses of Lectures* (London: Macmillan and Co, 1883), 47.
13. The war correspondent and biographer of General Gordon, Archibald Forbes, said the young colonies desired the sense of Britain's agedness itself, the 'fixed order of things that obtains in their country of origin'. Archibald Forbes, *Souvenirs of Some Continents* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1885), 112–113. For Forbes' view of Gordon himself see 'What Archibald Forbes says about General Gordon', *The Burra Record*, 20 February 1885, 3.
14. Patrick Wolfe, 'Recuperating Binarism: A Heretical Introduction', *Settler Colonial Studies* 3, no. 3–4 (2013): 263.
15. For an extended analysis of the differences between colonial and 'home-bred' soldiers in relation to environment and prosperity see *Brisbane Courier*, 20 June 1885, 4. David Walker, *Anxious Nation: Australia and the Rise of Asia 1850–1939* (St. Lucia: UQ Press, 1999), 141–153.
16. *Brisbane Courier*, 17 February 1885, 4.
17. 'The Soudan Business', *Brisbane Courier*, 20 February 1885, 5.
18. Ibid.
19. Robert Dixon, *Writing the Colonial Adventure: Race, Gender and Nation in Anglo-Australian Popular Fiction, 1875–1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 11.
20. Beverley Kingston, *The Oxford History of Australia, Volume 3: 1860–1900: Glad, Confident Morning* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1986), 282.
21. Dixon, *Writing the Colonial Adventure*, 11, 72.
22. 'That Contingent', *Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate*, 16 May 1885, 8.
23. 'News and Notes', *The Bega Gazette and Eden District or Southern Coast Advertiser*, 30 May 1885, 2.
24. 'The Banquet', *SMH*, 5 March 1885, 5.
25. Ibid.
26. 'The Flaneur', *Freeman's Journal*, 28 February 1885, 14. I thank Anna Johnston for drawing the 'Flaneur's' probable identity to my attention.
27. 'Australian Troops for Egypt', *Bendigo Advertiser*, 25 February 1885, 1.

28. *SMH*, 13 February 1885, 5. See also *Brisbane Courier*, 27 February 1885, 4.
29. *SMH*, 13 February 1885, 5.
30. Lorenzo Veracini, 'What's Unsettling About *On Settling*: Discussing the Settler Colonial Present', *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy* 17, no. 2 (2014): 239.
31. For these ideas see Sara Ahmed, 'Affective Economies', *Social Text* 22, no. 2 (2004): 127.
32. See Henry Reynolds, *Forgotten War* (Sydney: NewSouth Publishing, 2013), 194–227.
33. *Ibid.*, 127–30, 217. For press coverage of frontier relations and the Native Police in an earlier period see Denis Cryle, *The Press in Colonial Queensland: A Social and Political History 1845–1875* (St Lucia: UQ Press, 1989), Chaps. 1, 4.
34. George Rusden, *History of Australia, Volume 3* (London: Chapman and Hall Ltd, 1883), 231.
35. For example, *Queensland Figaro*, 3 January 1885, 6.
36. *Brisbane Courier*, 20 February 1885, 4.
37. *Brisbane Courier*, 25 February 1885, 4. Similarly, Sydney's *Evening News* drew a straight line between British racial parentage and colonial martial enthusiasm 'in this young land of ours'. 'Advance Australia!', *Evening News*, 13 February 1885, 5.
38. 'The Daintree', *Brisbane Courier*, 3 April 1885, 6.
39. *Ibid* (emphasis added). See also Reynolds, *Forgotten War*, 217–218.
40. It is difficult to judge the level of semantic awareness of the *Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate* (which opposed the contingent) in scorning troops that 'imagine that they are going to meet a number of undisciplined aboriginals', rather than 'a courageous race; men who have had the manliness and spirit to die in defence of their country as readily as any British or *Australian native* would die for his'. 'The Soudan Expedition', *Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate*, 26 February 1885, 2 (emphasis added).
41. John Herman Leopold Zillmann, *Past and Present Australian Life* (London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle, & Rivington Ltd, 1889), v–viii.
42. 'The Soudan Campaign', *Evening News*, 11 March 1885, 6.
43. Thus, 'nations must be ready to face or pass through a time of sacrifice, and perhaps heavy loss'. *Argus*, 3 March 1885, 4.
44. See the conjuncture of 'blood', 'birth', and 'race' in 'The Australian Contingent to the Soudan', *Tasmanian*, 7 March 1885, 16.
45. *Echo*, 3 March 1885, 1.

46. Deborah Bird Rose, 'Settler Colonialism and the Transformation of Anthropology (Book Review)', *Postcolonial Studies: Culture, Politics, Economy* 4, no. 2 (2001): 254.
47. *Echo*, 3 March 1885, 1.
48. Ibid.
49. Patrick Wolfe, 'The Settler Complex: An Introduction', *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 37, no. 2 (2013): 13.
50. *NSW Parliamentary Debates*, Legislative Council, 17 March 1885, 10. See also the 'magnificent inheritance' gained when 'the mother-country handed over to us absolutely the whole of Australia'. 'Our Obligations to England', *Goulburn Evening Penny Post*, 26 March 1885, 5.
51. William Adams Brodribb, *Recollections of an Australian Squatter or Leaves from my Journal since 1835* (Sydney: John Woods & Co., 1883), 25 (original emphasis).
52. For more on the connections between masculinity, frontier violence, and the colonial political elite see Angela Woollacott, *Settler Society in the Australian Colonies: Self-Government and Imperial Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), Chap. 6.
53. Brodribb, *Recollections*, 30.
54. Ibid., 31.
55. Ibid., 33.
56. *NSW Parliamentary Debates*, Legislative Council, 17 March 1885, 11.
57. Ibid., 38.
58. Bede Nairn, 'Baker, Ezekiel Alexander (1823–1912)', Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/baker-ezekiel-alexander-2919/text4213>, published first in hardcopy 1969, accessed online 23 July 2016.
59. *NSW Parliamentary Debates*, Legislative Council, 17 March 1885, 14 (my emphasis).
60. *NSW Parliamentary Debates*, Legislative Assembly, 19 March 1885, 139.
61. Mark McKenna, 'Transplanted to Savage Shores: Indigenous Australians and British Birthright in the Mid Nineteenth-Century Australian Colonies', *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History* 13, no. 1 (2012).
62. *NSW Parliamentary Debates*, Legislative Assembly, 19 March 1885, 139. A later writer linked Dalley's offer to the colonists' inheritance of the 'virgin' continent on which 'there had not been a drop of bloodshed on its soil in the strife of war'. Joseph Maria Gordon, *The Chronicles of a Gay Gordon* (London: Cassell and Co Ltd., 1921), 188–189.

63. *NSW Parliamentary Debates*, Legislative Assembly, 20 March 1885, 181–182.
64. *Ibid.*, 181. On McElphone see Anna Doukakakis, *The Aboriginal People, Parliament and Protection in New South Wales, 1856–1916* (Sydney: The Federation Press, 2006), 43–46, 57–58.
65. For a discussion of exceptions see Malcolm Saunders, *Britain, the Australian Colonies and the Sudan Campaigns of 1884–85* (Armidale: University of New England Publishing Unit, 1985), Chap. 5.
66. *Brisbane Courier*, 17 February 1885, 4. See also *Argus*, 18 February 1885, 4.
67. Henry Parkes, *Fifty Years in the Making of Australian History* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co, 1892), 418.
68. *Ibid.*, 421. And some papers in New Zealand too. See the negative response to Parkes in Wellington's *Evening Post*, 25 February 1885, 2.
69. Including a response in the *SMH* by future Prime Minister and Parkes' political adversary George Reid. 'To the Editor of the Herald', *SMH*, 20 February 1885, 3. A point-by-point rebuttal to Parkes was also offered in *SMH*, 20 February 1885, 6; *SMH*, 24 February 1885, 6.
70. He would be premier twice more before the decade was over.
71. See the summary judgement in Alexander Sutherland and George Sutherland, *The History of Australia and New Zealand from 1606 to 1890* (London: Longman, Green and Co, 1894), 175.
72. James Anthony Froude, *Oceana: or England and Her Colonies* (London: Longmans, Green and co, 1886), 143.
73. John Hirst, *The Sentimental Nation: The Making of the Australian Commonwealth* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 2000), 86; Barbara Penny, 'The Age of Empire: An Australian Episode', *Historical Studies: Australia and New Zealand* 11 no. 41 (1963): 36.
74. 'The Soudan Expedition', *SMH*, 19 February 1885, 5. Parkes had made a similar point in 1860 discussing the proposal for troops leaving to fight in New Zealand's Taranaki War. See 'Disturbances in New Zealand', *SMH*, 6 April 1860, 5.
75. 'The Soudan Expedition', *SMH*, 19 February 1885, 5. See also *Age*, 5 March 1885, 4; and, in New Zealand, the *Auckland Star*, 13 March 1885, 2; *Auckland Star*, 10 March 1885, 2. On the *SMH*'s response see *New Zealand Herald*, 27 March 1885, 6.
76. A.W Martin claims in his biography that on the Sudan question Parkes and the *Bulletin* were 'one in their rejection of British imperialism'. Allan William Martin, *Henry Parkes: A Biography* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1980), 350.
77. 'The Soudan Expedition', *SMH*, 19 February 1885, 5.

78. Parkes had approvingly cited J. R. Seeley in making his case. 'Our Growing Australian Empire', *The Nineteenth Century*, January 1884, 138–149.
79. On mid-1880s radical colonial newspapers see Frank Bongiorno, 'Constituting Labour: The Radical Press in Victoria, 1885–1914', in *Journalism: Print, Politics and Popular Culture*, ed. Ann Curthoys and Julianne Schultz (St Lucia: UQ Press, 1999).
80. *NSW Parliamentary Debates*, Legislative Assembly, 18 March 1885, 98–99.
81. *Ibid.*, 100. See also 'We Have No Business There', *Geelong Advertiser*, 20 February 1885, 3.
82. Sylvia Lawson, *The Archibald Paradox: A Strange Case of Authorship* (Melbourne: Allen Lane, 1983), 186.
83. *Ibid.*, 52–53, 57–69, 87–88; 137–140.
84. See also *Freeman's Journal*, 28 February 1885, 14.
85. See also the particularly virulent criticism of the contingent in 'The Return of the Contingent', *Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate*, 22 May 1885, 2.
86. *Bulletin*, 28 February 1885, 3.
87. Ken Inglis, *The Rehearsal: Australians at War in the Sudan 1885* (Adelaide: Rigby Publishers, 1985), Chap. 4.
88. Lawson, *Archibald Paradox*; John Docker, *The Nervous Nineties: Australian Cultural Life in the 1890s* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 26–32, 64.
89. *Bulletin*, 7 March 1885, 3.
90. *Ibid.*
91. Renata Salecl, 'The Fantasy Structure of Nationalist Discourse', *Praxis International*, no. 3 (1993): 220.
92. Lawson, *Archibald Paradox*, 130, 40.
93. 'Parliament of New South Wales', *SMH*, 19 March 1885, 6. Alfred Reginald Fremlin similarly felt the contingent 'wipes out the infamy which has rested on the colony for many years'. *NSW Parliamentary Debates*, Legislative Assembly, 15 September 1885, 208.
94. Lawson, *Archibald Paradox*, 131–140.
95. Terra Diana Walston Joseph, 'A "Greater Britain": Colonial Kin in Fictions of Settlement, 1850–1890', (PhD Thesis, University of Illinois, 2011), 165.
96. *Ibid.*
97. *Bulletin*, 28 February 1885, 3 (original emphasis).
98. Docker, *Nervous Nineties*, 28, 68.

99. Sylvia Lawson, 'Print Circus: The *Bulletin* from 1880 to Federation', in *Journalism: Print, Politics and Popular Culture*, ed. Ann Curthoys and Julianne Schultz (St Lucia: UQ Press, 1999), 87. For the contradictory attitudes of the *Bulletin* towards Aboriginal Australians, see Lawson, *Archibald Paradox*, 52–53, 57–69, 87–88.

CHAPTER 7: THE SOUTH AFRICAN WAR: TRYING AGAIN

1. As a percentage of their respective populations New Zealand's contribution more than doubled Australia's.
2. Thomas Pakenham, 'The Contribution of Colonial Forces', in *One Flag, One Queen, One Tongue: New Zealand, The British Empire and the South African War*, ed. John Crawford and Ian McGibbon (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2003), 58.
3. John Darwin, 'Afterward: The Imprint of the War', in *The Impact of the South African War*, ed. David Omissi and Andrew S. Thompson (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 289.
4. Luke Trainor, 'Building Nations: Australia and New Zealand', in *Impact of the South African War*, ed. Omissi and Thompson, 262. The six Australian colonies were 'states' from 1901, though as this chapter is not chronological I retain 'colonies' for clarity.
5. John Darwin, *The Empire Project: The Rise and Fall of the British World-System, 1830–1970* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 243–254. Australians in the Transvaal numbered approximately 1000. Craig Wilcox, *Australia's Boer War: The War in South Africa, 1899–1902* (South Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 2002), 12–13.
6. See Iain R. Smith, 'A Century of Controversy over Origins', in *The South African War Reappraised*, ed. Donal Lowry (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000).
7. See the account in Ronald Robinson, John Gallagher, and Alice Denny, *Africa and the Victorians: The Official Mind of Imperialism* (London: Macmillan, 1981).
8. Robinson, Gallagher, and Denny, *Africa and the Victorians*, 13; Richard Shannon, *The Crisis of Imperialism, 1865–1915* (Frogmore: Paladin, 1976), 160, 163–166, 324.
9. 'Boer' is a more specific demographic designation than the broader Afrikaner. Given the subject matter, I have preferred 'Boer'.
10. Darwin, *Empire Project*, 219.
11. Cited in Andrew Porter, *The Origins of the South African War: Joseph Chamberlain and the Diplomacy of Imperialism, 1895–1899* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1980), 228. Joseph

- Chamberlain himself sought to defend the principle that 'Great Britain must remain the paramount power in South Africa'. Charles W. Boyd, ed. *Mr Chamberlain's Speeches, Volume 2* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914), 21.
12. *SMH*, 13 October 1899, 6.
 13. Peter J. Cain and Anthony G. Hopkins. 'Gentlemanly Capitalism and British Expansion Overseas II: New Imperialism, 1850–1945', *The Economic History Review* 40, no. 1 (1987): 13.
 14. Shula Marks, 'War and Union, 1899–1910', in *The Cambridge History of South Africa, Volume 2, 1885–1994*, ed. Robert Ross, Anne Kelk Mager, and Bill Nasson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 157.
 15. Stanley Trapido, 'Imperialism, Settler Identities, and Colonial Capitalism: The Hundred-Year Origins of the 1899 South African War', in *Cambridge History of South Africa, Volume 2*, ed. Ross, Mager, and Nasson, 66.
 16. Christopher Saunders and Iain R. Smith, 'Southern Africa, 1795–1910', in *The Oxford History of the British Empire, Volume 3: The Nineteenth Century*, ed. Andrew Porter (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 618.
 17. Saul Dubow, 'How British Was the British World? The Case of South Africa', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 37, no. 1 (2009): 7–8.
 18. Stephen Badsey, 'The Boer War as Media War', in *The Boer War: Army, Nation and Empire, The Chief of Army/Australian War Memorial Military History Conference, Nov 1 1999*, ed. Peter Dennis and Jeffrey Grey (Canberra: Department of Defence, Army History Unit, 2000).
 19. Stephen Badsey, 'A Print and Media War', in *Recording the South African War: Journalism and Official History 1899–1914*, ed. Craig Wilcox (London: Sir Robert Menzies Centre for Australian Studies, University of London, 1999), 6–7.
 20. Simon Popple, '"Fresh from the Front": Performance, War News and Popular Culture During the Boer War', *Early Popular Visual Culture* 8, no. 4 (2010): 401–418.
 21. Paterson himself had shifted from anonymous dissident-poet of the radical *Bulletin* during the Sudan crisis to mythologiser of the Australian soldier as war correspondent for the mainstream *Sydney Morning Herald*, *Advertiser*, and *Argus* during the South African War. He then duly turned against that war. See Peter Pierce, 'Perceptions of the Enemy in Australian War Literature', *Australian Literary Studies* 12, no. 2 (1985): 172–173.

22. William Reay, *Australians in War: With the Australian Regiment, from Melbourne to Bloemfontein* (Melbourne: A.H. Massina and Co., 1900), 55. See also Frank Wilkinson, *Australia at the Front: A Colonial View of the Boer War* (London: John Long, 1901), 249.
23. Alfred Greenwood Hales, *Campaign Pictures of the War in South Africa (1899–1900): Letters from the Front* (London: Cassell, 1900), 162.
24. 'Letters to the Editor', *Daily News*, 16 November 1900, 3.
25. 'Back from the Wars', *Daily News*, 8 October 1900, 3.
26. 'Letters to the Editor', *Daily News*, 17 November 1900, 7.
27. Laurence Melville Field, *The Forgotten War: Australian Involvement in the South African Conflict of 1899–1902* (Clayton: Melbourne University Press, 1979), 94.
28. 'The Late Mr W.J. Lambie', *Brisbane Courier*, 16 February 1900, 6.
29. As in the *Argus*, 25 October 1899, 6.
30. *SMH*, 20 January 1900, 8. See also *Mercury*, 24 January 1899, 2.
31. See Glen O'Hara, 'New Histories of British Imperial Communication and the "Networked World" of the 19th and Early 20th Centuries', *History Compass* 8, no. 7 (2010): 618.
32. Cited in Craig Wilcox, 'Australian Involvement in the Boer War: Imperial Pressure or Colonial Realpolitik?', in *The German Empire and Britain's Pacific Dominions, 1871–1919: Essays on the Role of Australia and New Zealand in World Politics in the Age of Imperialism*, ed. John A. Moses and Christopher Pugsley (California: Regina Books, 2000), 215.
33. Chris Connolly, 'Class, Birthplace, Loyalty: Australian Attitudes to the Boer War', *Australian Historical Studies* 18, no. 71 (1978): 211.
34. See the opening chapter of Paula M. Krebs, *Gender, Race, and the Writing of Empire: Public Discourse and the Boer War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).
35. For the joyous reception of news of the relief in New Zealand and Australia, and its signalling of imperial unity, see Percy F. Rowland, *The New Nation: A Sketch of the Social, Political, and Economic Conditions and Prospects of the Australian Commonwealth* (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1903), 298–299.
36. Krebs, *Gender, Race, and the Writing of Empire*, 2–3.
37. John Buffon, *Tasmanians in the Transvaal War* (Hobart: S.G. Loone, 1905), 154.
38. Leo S. Amery, *The Times' History of the War in South Africa, 1899–1900, Volume 3* (London: Sampson, Low, Marston and Co, 1905), 3, 28. Before his editorship of the seven volume *Times History*, Amery was a *Times* correspondent during the war.

39. Simon Potter, 'Webs, Networks, and Systems: Globalization and the Mass Media in the Nineteenth-and Twentieth-Century British Empire', *Journal of British Studies* 46, no. 3 (2007): 636.
40. Ibid.
41. See *Victorian Parliamentary Debates*, Legislative Assembly, Volume 92, 10 October 1899, 1777. J.A. Hobson gave a similar account of the 'method of manufacturing loyal support in our colonies for the war'. John Atkinson Hobson, *The Psychology of Jingoism* (London: Grant Richards, 1901), 121. See also John Atkinson Hobson, *The War in South Africa: Its Causes and Effects* (London: Nisbet, 1900), part 2, Chap. 3.
42. *Victorian Parliamentary Debates*, Legislative Assembly, Volume 92, 10 October 1899, 1731.
43. See, for example, *Queensland Parliamentary Debates*, Legislative Assembly, Volume 82–83, 12 October 1899, 387–390.
44. For an extended recent discussion see Chap. 2 of Henry Reynolds, *Unnecessary Wars* (Sydney: NewSouth, 2016).
45. The major publications dealing with Australia's role in the war are mostly of a nationalist slant. See Wilcox, *Australia's Boer War*; Field, *Forgotten War*; and several chapters in Peter Dennis and Jeffrey Grey, ed. *The Boer War: Army, Nation and Empire*.
46. Andrew Barton Paterson, *The Works of Banjo Paterson*, (Hertfordshire: Wordsworth, 1993), 149. For Kipling too, the new nation was 'Daughter no more but Sister'. Rudyard Kipling, *The Collected Poems of Rudyard Kipling* (Hertfordshire: Wordsworth, 1994), 196.
47. John Hirst, 'Blooding the Nation: The Boer War and Federation', in *The Boer War: Army, Nation and Empire*, 221.
48. Thomas Givens, *Queensland Parliamentary Debates*, Legislative Assembly, Volume 82–83, 18 October 1899, 497.
49. *Victorian Parliamentary Debates*, Legislative Assembly, Volume 92, 10 October 1899, 1760.
50. Ibid., 1783.
51. Reynolds, *Unnecessary Wars*, 110. See also 100, 139, 229.
52. Ibid., 35, 103, 110–111, 179–180, 196–197.
53. Ibid., 197. See also 126–128.
54. Ibid., 118–119.
55. Here I am using the ideas of Pierre Bourdieu. See John B. Thompson, 'Editor's Introduction', in Pierre Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*, ed. John B. Thompson (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991), 12.
56. Reynolds, *Unnecessary Wars*, 107.
57. Ibid., 100–101.
58. Ibid., 101, 105, 107.

59. Ibid., 234.
60. Ibid., 223.
61. Mark Salber Phillips, 'On the Advantage and Disadvantage of Sentimental History for Life', *History Workshop Journal* 65, no. 1 (2008): 53, 63, n5.
62. Field, *Forgotten War*, 52.
63. Robert L. Wallace, *The Australians at the Boer War* (Canberra: The Australian War Memorial and the Australian Government Publishing Service, 1976), 34–35.
64. Western Australia again proved the exception by largely avoiding the effects of the depression through the timely discovery of goldfields.
65. John Docker, *The Nervous Nineties: Australian Cultural Life in the 1890s* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), xvii.
66. The Australian Natives Association, whose members were exclusively men born in the Australian colonies, began in the early 1870s.
67. Anthony Burke, *Fear of Security: Australia's Invasion Anxiety* (Port Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 2008).
68. Amery, *Times' History*, 3, 31.
69. *Argus*, 30 October 1899, 4.
70. Ibid.
71. Beverley Kingston, *The Oxford History of Australia, Volume 3: 1860–1900: Glad, Confident Morning* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1986), 109.
72. *West Australian*, 18 March 1899, 4–5.
73. Ibid.
74. *SMH*, 4 November 1899, 8.
75. Ibid. See Michael Billig, *Banal Nationalism* (London: Sage, 1995).
76. *SMH*, 4 November 1899, 8.
77. *SMH*, 1 January 1900, 4.
78. Ibid.
79. Ibid.
80. John Henry Macartney Abbott, *Tommy Cornstalk: Being Some Account of the Less Notable Features of the South African War from the Point of View of the Australian Ranks* (London: Longmans, Green, 1902), 213.
81. 'Farewell to the Contingent', *Brisbane Courier*, 1 November 1899, 4.
82. Among the first newspaper interviews was that between W.T. Stead and General Gordon in 1884.
83. William Henry Fitchett, *Deeds that Won the Empire: Historic Battle Scenes* (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1897), v.
84. 'The Rev. Dr. Fitchett', *Advertiser*, 23 December 1899, 11.
85. 'Australian and Imperial Topics', *SMH*, 7 November 1899, 3.
86. Ibid.

87. Ibid.
88. A still strong overview is found in Barbara Penny, 'Australia's Reactions to the Boer War: A Study in Colonial Imperialism', *The Journal of British Studies* 7, no. 1 (1967): 97–130.
89. Colonial politicians jostled for position of the most patriotic. See *Victorian Parliamentary Debates*, Legislative Assembly, Volume 99, 18 December 1901, 3701–3702.
90. *Daily News*, 26 October 1899, 4.
91. *Times*, 1 November 1899, 9.
92. John M. MacKenzie, 'Introduction: Popular Imperialism and the Military', in *Popular Imperialism and the Military: 1850–1950*, ed. John M. MacKenzie (Manchester: Manchester University Press 1992), 17.
93. Raymond Williams, *The Long Revolution* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1961), 203.
94. *Daily Mail*, 30 January 1900, 4.
95. See for example 'Diary of the War', *Standard*, 18 December 1899, 5.
96. Martin Hewitt, 'Introduction: Victorian Milestones', in *The Victorian World*, ed. Martin Hewitt (London: Routledge, 2012), 33.
97. 'Britain of the Future', *Western Mail*, 22 December 1899, 4.
98. 'Rising to the Occasion', *Western Mail*, 20 December 1899, 4. See also *Daily Mail*, 20 March 1900, 4.
99. Duncan Bell, *The Idea of Greater Britain: Empire and the Future of World Order, 1860–1900* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 208–210.
100. See Charles P. Lucas 'Introduction', in George Cornewall Lewis, *An Essay on the Government of Dependencies*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1891), lii–liii.
101. *Daily Mail*, 26 April 1900, 4.
102. 'In Australia', *Daily Mail*, 31 January 1900, 3.
103. *Standard*, 16 November 1899, 6.
104. See also 'Britain of the Future', *Western Mail*, 22 December 1899, 4.
105. Arthur Conan Doyle, *The Great Boer War* (London: Smith, Elder and Co, 1900), 197.
106. Ibid., 244.
107. *Morning Post*, 19 December 1899, 4.
108. Ibid. The proprietor of the *Morning Post*, Lord Glenesk (Algernon Borthwick), was well aware of the heartening actions of loyal Australians in South Africa. Andrew S. Thompson, *Imperial Britain: The Empire in British Politics c. 1880–1932* (Harlow: Pearson Education Ltd. 2000), 65; Reginald Lucas, *Lord Glenesk and the Morning Post* (London: Alston Rivers, 1910), 387.

109. *Morning Post*, 19 December 1899, 4.
110. *Standard*, 29 December 1899, 4.
111. See also 'The Transvaal War', *Illustrated Police News*, 2 December 1899, 2.
112. *Standard*, 29 December 1899, 4 (original emphasis). Kipling accused the British of having 'fawned on the Younger Nations for the men who could shoot and ride!' 'The Islanders', *Times*, 4 January 1902, 9. This unsurprisingly generated rebuttals. See *Times*, 15 January 1902, 12.
113. For links between colonial support for the empire in 1885 and 1899 see 'The War and the Colonies', *Daily News*, 9 December 1899.
114. *Morning Post*, 14 May 1900, 4.
115. See also S.W. Cooke in *Victorian Parliamentary Debates*, Legislative Council, Volume 92, 11 October 1899, 1797.
116. *Morning Post*, 14 May 1900, 4.
117. Ibid. See also 'The Bushmen's Contingent', *The Graphic*, 21 April 1900, 582.
118. Miriam Dixon sees in Irish-British animosities 'a bitter original ethnic divide ... scored into the Australian national imaginary'. Miriam Dixon, *The Imaginary Australian: Anglo-Celts and Identity—1788 to the Present* (Sydney: UNSW Press, 1999), 94.
119. See "'Sons of the Empire": Why our Colonial Troops are so Well Qualified to Meet the Boers', *Daily Mail*, 30 December 1899, 7.
120. Ronald Hyam, *Britain's Imperial Century, 1815–1914* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 274–275.
121. 'With The Australian Volunteers', *Daily News*, 7 December 1899, 3.
122. For a report that perversely juxtaposes praise of Australian colonial physicality and 'bush experience' with the imminent 'extinction' of South Australia's Aboriginal population, see 'Our Australasian Colonies,' *Morning Post*, 11 November 1899, 6.
123. 'With The Australian Volunteers', *Daily News*, 7 December 1899, 3.
124. *Morning Post*, 4 October 1900, 4.
125. See also the apparent world-historical uniqueness of the 'real organic unity' of the empire evidenced by Australian and Canadian participation in South Africa. *Daily News*, 23 April 1900, 4.
126. *Morning Post*, 4 October 1900, 4.
127. *Daily Mail*, 1 January 1900, 4.
128. Anna Johnston, "Greater Britain": Late Imperial Travel Writing and the Settler Colonies', in *Oceania and the Victorian Imagination*, ed. Richard D. Fulton and Peter H. Hoffenberg (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013), 33.
129. 'The Colonies through English Eyes', *Daily News*, 16 November 1900, 8.

130. Antoinette Burton, 'New Narratives of Imperial Politics in the Nineteenth Century', in *At Home with the Empire: Metropolitan Culture and the Imperial World*, ed. Catherine Hall and Sonya O. Rose (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 222, 225.
131. 'The Colonies through English Eyes', *Daily News*, 16 November 1900, 8.
132. On the 'latent resources' the settler colonies offered the empire see also 'The Colonial Contingents at the Cape', *Daily News*, 7 December 1899, 6.
133. 'The Colonies through English Eyes', *Daily News*, 16 November 1900, 8.
134. Ibid.
135. Ibid.
136. 'For Empire and Liberty', *Daily Mail*, 11 October 1899, 3.
137. Ibid.
138. *The Colonial and Imperial Conferences from 1887–1937, Volume 1: Colonial Conferences*, ed. Maurice Ollivier, (Ottawa: Edmond Cloutier, 1954), 153.
139. Kenneth O. Morgan, 'The Boer War and the Media (1899–1902)', *Twentieth Century British History* 13, no. 1 (2002): 5.
140. 'Correspondence', *Pall Mall Gazette*, 21 April 1900, 3.
141. Ibid.
142. 'The Slump in Jingoism', *Reynolds's Newspaper*, 26 August 1900, 1.
143. 'The Handwriting on the Wall', *Reynolds's Newspaper*, 13 May 1900, 1.
144. AustLit, 'Cas-Hamba', in (www.austlit.edu.au) (2002-). <http://www.austlit.edu.au/austlit/page/C594046>.
145. 'Correspondence', *Reynolds's Newspaper*, 22 April 1900, 5.
146. Ibid.
147. 'Will England Go Right?', *Western Mail*, 2 May 1900, 4.
148. Ibid.
149. 'Correspondence', *Western Mail*, 19 July 1900, 3.
150. Ibid.
151. Ibid.
152. Ibid.

CHAPTER 8: THE SOUTH AFRICAN WAR: POINTS OF FRACTURE

1. Chris Connolly, 'Manufacturing "Spontaneity": The Australian Offers of Troops for the Boer War', *Australian Historical Studies* 18, no. 70 (1978): 106–107.

2. Craig Wilcox, *Australia's Boer War: The War in South Africa, 1899–1902* (South Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 2002), 26–27, 425 n3, 428 n17.
3. Barbara Penny, 'Australia's Reactions to the Boer War: A Study in Colonial Imperialism', *The Journal of British Studies* 7, no. 1 (1967): 115. Percy F. Rowland, *The New Nation: A Sketch of the Social, Political, and Economic Conditions and Prospects of the Australian Commonwealth* (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1903), 272.
4. *Bulletin*, 10 February 1900, 6.
5. The quote is from Chris Connolly, 'Class, Birthplace, Loyalty: Australian Attitudes to the Boer War', *Australian Historical Studies* 18, no. 71 (1978): 221.
6. Bobbie Oliver, '"A Wanton Deed of Blood and Rapine": Opposition to Australian Participation in the Boer War', in *The Boer War: Army, Nation and Empire, The Chief of Army/Australian War Memorial Military History Conference, Nov 1 1999*, ed. Peter Dennis and Jeffrey Grey (Canberra: Department of Defence, Army History Unit, 2000), 192–94.
7. For the former case see Alfred John Stephenson in *Queensland Parliamentary Debates*, Legislative Assembly, Volume 82–83, 18 October 1899, 449. For the latter case see Henry Turley, *Queensland Parliamentary Debates*, Legislative Assembly, Volume 82–83, 12 October 1899, 387. It was even raised in the New Zealand debates over South Africa. *New Zealand Parliamentary Debates*, Legislative Council, Volume 110, 28 September 1899, 121.
8. See 'Editorial Mill', *The Worker*, 21 October, 1899, 2.
9. Cited in Penny, 'Australia's Reactions', 110.
10. For a discussion of this exchange see Barbara Penny, 'The Australian Debate on the Boer War', *Historical Studies* 14, no. 56 (1971): 526–527.
11. 'Two Ideals of Empire', *Daily Telegraph*, 22 November 1899, 4.
12. Cited in Wilcox, *Australia's Boer War*, 331–332.
13. 'Two Ideals of Empire', *Daily Telegraph*, 22 November 1899, 4. See also *Daily Telegraph*, 11 November 1899, 6. For MacCullum's responses that month see *Daily Telegraph*, 15 November 1899, 9; *Daily Telegraph*, 24 November 1899, 4.
14. Wilcox, *Australia's Boer War*, 334.
15. Cited in *ibid.*
16. For examples of Deakin's writings on the South African War see Alfred Deakin, *Federated Australia: Selections from Letters to the Morning Post 1900–1910* (Carlton: Melbourne University Press 1968), 10–11, 24–27.

17. Simon Potter, *News and the British World: The Emergence of the Imperial Press System 1876–1922* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 85; John Andrew La Nauze, *Alfred Deakin: A Biography* (Carlton: Melbourne University Press, 1965), 199, 347.
18. Helen Jones, 'Lee, Mary (1821–1909),' *Australian Dictionary of Biography* (National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, 1986).
19. 'Another Contingent', *Advertiser*, 19 December 1899, 8.
20. For a similar call to 'the women of civilised nations', see *Dawn*, 1 March 1900, 8.
21. Renata Salecl, 'The Fantasy Structure of Nationalist Discourse', *Praxis International*, no. 3 (1993): 216–217; Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 381.
22. Joan Wallach Scott, 'Fantasy Echo: History and the Construction of Identity', *Critical Inquiry* 27, no. 2 (2001): 303.
23. 'The Boers and Mrs. Mary Lee', *Advertiser*, 20 December 1899, 8.
24. *Ibid.*
25. 'Replies to Mrs. Lee and Mr. Lester', *Advertiser*, 22 December 1899, 8.
26. *Ibid.*
27. *Argus*, 2 October 1899, 4.
28. *Ibid.*
29. David Walker, *Anxious Nation: Australia and the Rise of Asia 1850–1939* (St. Lucia: UQ Press, 1999), 9.
30. *Ibid.*, 98–112.
31. Ann Curthoys, 'Expulsion, Exodus and Exile in White Australian Historical Mythology', *Journal of Australian Studies* 23, no. 61 (1999): 3–10.
32. John Ferry, 'The Will and the Way: Inheritance Practices and Social Structure', *Journal of Australian Colonial History* 1, no. 2 (1999): 122, 125, 127.
33. George Cathcart Craig, *The Federal Defence of Australasia* (London: William Clowes & Sons, Ltd, 1897), x.
34. *Ibid.*, Chap. 3.
35. *Ibid.*, 20 (emphasis added).
36. Simon Ryan, *The Cartographic Eye: How Explorers Saw Australia* (Cambridge: University of Cambridge, 1996), 23.
37. *NSW Parliamentary Debates*, Legislative Assembly, 18 October 1899, 1429–1430.
38. *Ibid.*, 1437–1438.
39. *Ibid.*, 1439. A more thoughtful variation on the same theme of Aboriginal origins and British rights to the continent is found in a talk

- on the war reproduced in 'The Transvaal Question: Lecture by Father Fagan', *The Richmond River Herald*, 26 January, 1900, 4.
40. *NSW Parliamentary Debates*, Legislative Assembly, 18 October 1899, 1439.
 41. *Ibid.*, 1440–1441.
 42. *Victorian Parliamentary Debates*, Legislative Assembly, Volume 93, 9 January 1900, 2879.
 43. *Ibid.*, 2878.
 44. Henry Reynolds, *Unnecessary Wars* (Sydney: NewSouth, 2016), 6–7, 20–21.
 45. The primary argument of *Forgotten War* is that the most significant war Australians have fought, in terms of outcomes for the nation—the attainment of territory and sovereignty—was on Australian soil, not overseas. Henry Reynolds, *Forgotten War* (Sydney: NewSouth Publishing, 2013).
 46. For reflections on this theme see Aileen Moreton-Robinson, *The White Possessive: Property, Power, and Indigenous Sovereignty* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015).
 47. For one such account see James Coutts Crawford, *Recollections of Travel in New Zealand and Australia* (London: Trubner & Co, 1880), 451–452.
 48. See Marilyn Lake, 'The White Man Under Siege: New Histories of Race in the Nineteenth Century and the Advent of White Australia', *History Workshop Journal* 58, No. 1 (2004): 41–62.
 49. Charles H. Pearson, *National Life and Character: A Forecast* (London: Macmillan & Co, 1893), 44, 53. On the pessimism of Pearson compared with those celebrating Greater Britain, see Marilyn Lake and Henry Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line: White Men's Countries and the International Challenge of Racial Equality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 75–82.
 50. *Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates*, House of Representatives, No. 39, 25 September 1901, 5146.
 51. *Mercury*, 3 January 1900, 2.
 52. *Ibid.*
 53. Warwick Anderson, 'Travelling White', in *Re-Orienting Whiteness*, ed. Leigh Boucher, Jane Carey, and Katherine Ellinghaus (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 66–69.
 54. Marilyn Lake, 'Equality and Exclusion: The Racial Constitution of Colonial Liberalism', *Thesis Eleven* 95, no. 1 (2008): 22.
 55. Marilyn Lake, 'White Is Wonderful: Emotional Conversion and Subjective Formation', in *Re-Orienting Whiteness*, ed. Boucher, Carey, and Ellinghaus, 129–130.

56. Pearson, *National Life and Character*, 132.
57. 'Why Should We Fight?', *Evening News*, 12 October 1899, 5.
58. Ibid.
59. 'The Situation in South Africa', *West Australian*, 8 January 1900, 7. The article was earlier reproduced in *Brisbane Courier*, 11 November 1899, 7–8.
60. We can note George Rusden's earlier comment on Australian promotional literature making no mention of the 'dispossessed heirs of the soil' while 'climate, mineral treasures, and resources, were extolled as though they had been invented and not conferred'. George Rusden, *History of Australia, Volume 3* (London: Chapman and Hall Ltd, 1883), 227.
61. 'The Boers and Mrs. Mary Lee', *Advertiser*, 20 December 1899, 8.
62. *Age*, 16 May 1899, 4.
63. *Queensland Parliamentary Debates*, Legislative Assembly, 12 October 1899, 385.
64. *Age*, 21 October 1899, 8.
65. See also 'The Trek of Nineteen Hundred', *SMH*, 29 January 1900, 7.
66. *Age*, 21 October 1899, 8.
67. Ibid.
68. I have drawn inspiration from the excellent chapter on the South African War in Bill Schwarz, *Memories of Empire: The White Man's World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), Chap. 4.
69. *Argus*, 22 July 1899, 8.
70. *NSW Parliamentary Debates*, Legislative Assembly, 18 October 1899, 1439.
71. 'The Boer and his Habits', *Argus*, 28 October 1899, 4.
72. 'Renaming the Conquered State', *SMH*, 7 June 1900, 3.
73. Paul Carter, *The Road to Botany Bay: An Exploration of Landscape and History* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 42–51.
74. See, for example, 'The Story of African Development', *Advertiser*, 11 November 1899, 8.
75. *Western Australian Parliamentary Debates*, Legislative Assembly, Volume 15, 5 October 1899, 1558.
76. *The Worker*, 30 September 1899, 2.
77. 'The Story of the Boers', *Dawn*, 1 January 1900, 8. Louisa Lawson was the mother of famed poet Henry Lawson.
78. Ibid.
79. The Manchester Transvaal Committee declared that it was 'pro-peace, not pro-Boer'. Steven C. Call, 'Voices Crying in the Wilderness: A Comparison of Pro-Boers and Anti-Imperialists, 1899–1902' (Master's Thesis, University of Nebraska, 1991), 23.

80. Penny, 'Australia's Reactions', 120. On the 'Bushmen', see Laurence Melville Field, *The Forgotten War: Australian Involvement in the South African Conflict of 1899–1902* (Clayton: Melbourne University Press, 1979), Chap. 4.
81. 'More Soldiers for South Africa', *Advertiser*, 19 December 1899, 8.
82. Bernard Smith, *The Spectre of Truganini* (Sydney: Australian Broadcasting Commission, 1980), 21.
83. Alexander Bruce Tulloch, *Recollections of Forty Years' Service* (Edinburgh and London: William Blackwood and sons, 1903), 361–362.
84. *Advertiser*, 18 January 1900, 4.
85. Ibid. See also Chief Secretary James Vincent O'Loghlin's speech in *South Australian Parliamentary Debates*, Legislative Council, 10 October 1899, 147.
86. *Advertiser*, 18 January 1900, 4.
87. Ibid.
88. For the fascination with the colonial soldier's bodily features and how these differed locally, see John Henry Macartney Abbott, *Tommy Cornstalk: Being Some Account of the Less Notable Features of the South African War from the Point of View of the Australian Ranks* (London: Longmans, Green, 1902), Chap. 1. For the Bushman myth generally see Graham Seal, *Inventing Anzac: The Digger and National Mythology* (St Lucia: UQ Press, 2004), 10–13.
89. *Advertiser*, 18 January 1900, 4.
90. Ibid. It has recently been said that Aboriginal Australian 'trackers' were used as part of the war effort in South Africa. See Dale Kerwin, 'The Lost Trackers: Aboriginal Servicemen in the 2nd Boer War', *Sabretache* 54, no. 1 (March 2013): 4–14.
91. Richard Charles Lewis and Frank Morton, *On the Veldt: A Plain Narrative of Service Afield in South Africa* (Hobart: J Walch and Sons, 1902), 16 (my emphasis). See also Frank Wilkinson, *Australia at the Front: A Colonial View of the Boer War* (London: John Long, 1901), 278.
92. In a complementary fashion, a 'friendly Uitlander' seemingly felt compelled to clarify that 'the Boer is not a "Blackman"', but rather 'a rough, hard-living, and fairly hard-working farmer'. 'The Boers', *Evening News*, 3 October 1899, 5.
93. These concerns were also aired in parliament. See George Prendergast's speech in *Victorian Parliamentary Debates*, Legislative Assembly, Volume 99, 18 December 1901, 3681.

94. 'A Warning from South Africa', *Advertiser*, 27 August 1900, 7. See also 'South Africa', *Advertiser*, 27 August 1900, 5; *SMH*, 19 June 1900, 4; 'New South Wales or South Africa', *SMH*, 27 August 1900, 8.
95. Alan Atkinson, *The Europeans in Australia, Volume 3: Nation* (Sydney: UNSW Press, 2014), 315.
96. See Cecil Headland, ed. *The Milner Papers: South Africa 1899–1905, Volume 2* (London: Cassell & Company, 1933), 75, 116, 144, 282–283.
97. 'Lots of Bone and Sinew', *Advertiser*, 27 April 1900, 6. For the *SMH* this was the natural inclination of 'the roving spirit of our race, always prone to seek new pastures'. *SMH*, 10 May 1900, 6.
98. *NSW Parliamentary Debates*, Legislative Assembly, 19 October 1899, 1555.
99. This seems to be the position of Henry Reynolds in quoting this same passage. Reynolds, *Unnecessary Wars*, 156.
100. For more on warfare and the 'Coming Man', see Richard White, *Inventing Australia: Images and Identity 1688–1980* (Sydney: George Allen & Unwin, 1981), 72–84, 104.
101. *SMH*, 1 February 1899, 6.
102. *Ibid.*
103. John Hirst, *The Sentimental Nation: The Making of the Australian Commonwealth* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 2000), 226.
104. *SMH*, 1 February 1899, 6.
105. *Ibid.*
106. Jane Carey, '"Wanted! A Real White Australia": The Women's Movement, Whiteness and the Settler Colonial Project, 1900–1940', in *Studies in Settler Colonialism: Politics, Identity and Culture*, ed. Fiona Bateman and Lionel Pilkington (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 136.
107. *SMH*, 10 February 1900, 8.
108. *Ibid.*

CHAPTER 9: CONCLUSION

1. John Plunkett, 'Civic Publicness: The Creation of Queen Victoria's Royal Role 1837–61', in *Encounters in the Victorian Press: Editors, Authors, Readers*, ed. Laurel Brake and Julie Codell (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 16. See also *Times*, 18 September 1900, 7; *Morning Post*, 25 December 1900, 4.
2. *Morning Post*, 24 May 1900, 6.

3. See Mark McKenna, 'Monarchy: From Reverence to Indifference', in *Australia's Empire*, ed. Deryck Schreuder and Stuart Ward (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 265.
4. Ibid.
5. See also *Daily Mail*, 9 March 1900, 4.
6. *Morning Post*, 24 May 1900, 6.
7. Mark Rifkin, 'Settler Common Sense', *Settler Colonial Studies* 3, no. 3–4 (2013): 331.
8. On British views of Australia as imperial 'partners', and the interconnected concerns of the 'Australian sheep farmer' and global imperial defence, see also 'The Imperial Idea', *The Yorkshire Herald*, 10 October 1899, 4.
9. *Morning Post*, 24 May 1900, 6. George Witton, recalling his part in the 'Breaker' Morant episode, said when Australian volunteers were called for 'I could not rest content until I offered the assistance one man could give to our beloved Queen and the great nation to which I belong'. George Witton, *Scapegoats of the Empire: The True Story of Breaker Morant's Bushveldt Carbineers* (London: Angus and Robinson Publishers, 1982 [1907]), 1.
10. Irish republican MP and prominent war critic Michael Davitt recalled being a newsboy in England and peddling papers reporting on the Waikato War. For Davitt, writing some 35 years later, most British knowledge of New Zealand had come from memories of the 'Maori wars', no doubt created through those same newspaper reports and commentary. Michael Davitt, *Life and Progress in Australasia* (London: Methuen and Co, 1898), 344.
11. James Anthony Froude, *Oceana: or England and Her Colonies* (London: Longmans, Green and co, 1886), 151.
12. Alexander Sutherland, *Victoria and its Metropolis: Past and Present*, Volume 1. (Melbourne: McCarron, Bird & Co, 1888), 29.
13. Joan Beaumont, 'Unitedly we have Fought: Imperial Loyalty and the Australian War Effort', *International Affairs* 90, no 2 (2014): 397–412.
14. Raymond Evans, 'The Country Has Another Past: Queensland and the History Wars', in *Passionate Histories: Myth, Memory and Indigenous Australia*, ed. Frances Peters-Little, Ann Curthoys, and John Docker (Canberra: ANU E Press & Aboriginal History Inc, 2010), 12.
15. See Patrick Wolfe's remarks on 'voluntarism' and the logic of elimination in the North American context. Patrick Wolfe, *Traces of History: Elementary Structures of Race* (London: Verso, 2016), 199–200.

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Age.

Argus.

Australasian.

Australian Town and Country Journal.

Bega Gazette and Eden District or Southern Coast Advertiser.

Bendigo Advertiser.

Border Watch.

Brisbane Courier.

Bulletin.

Burra Record.

Daily Telegraph (Sydney).

Dawn.

Echo.

Empire.

Evening News.

Freeman's Journal (Sydney).
Geelong Advertiser.
Goulburn Evening Penny Post.
Kapunda Herald.
Launceston Examiner.
Maitland Mercury.
Mercury.
Mount Alexander Mail.
Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate.
Ovens and Murray Advertiser.
Queensland Figaro.
Richmond River Herald.
South Australian Advertiser.
South Australian Register.
Star.
Sydney Morning Herald.
Tasmanian.
West Australian.
Worker.

British:

Australian & New Zealand Gazette.
Birmingham Daily Post.
Blackburn Standard.
Bradford Observer.
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Daily Mail.
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Illustrated Police News.
Ipswich Journal.
Leeds Mercury.
Leicester Chronicle and the Leicestershire Mercury.
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Royal Cornwall Gazette, Falmouth Packet, and General Advertiser.
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