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**(Con)textual Identities: British Women's Autobiographical Accounts of
Travel, India and the 1857 Mutiny**

by

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for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

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Abstract

This dissertation analyses autobiographical writings by twelve British women who resided in India during the 1857 Mutiny: Katherine Bartrum, Charlotte Canning, Adelaide Case, Ruth Coopland, Caroline Dickson, Frances Duberly, Maria Germon, Georgina Harris, Julia Inglis, Matilda Ouvry, Georgina Paget and Harriet Tytler. The study contends that through exposure to travel, settlement and war, the writers use diaries, journals, letters and memoirs as a framework to construct (con)textual identities: textual personas that are strongly marked by context. By scrutinising two elements: self and place, the discussion determines that voyages, relocation and war induce a textual restructuring of the self that reflects a conflict between remaining womanly whilst simultaneously appearing new and exceptional. By denying the weaker parts of female identity, elevating the status of existing female functions and assuming unwomanly roles the writers challenge the boundaries of mid-Victorian femininity.

Chapter One examines the origins of the writings and interrogates the relationship between the sea-voyage and identity, asserting that travel triggers the commencement of new personas. Chapter Two discusses settlement in India, revealing that physical displacement evokes a modification of gendered and national identity. Chapter Three argues that the beginning of war generates paradoxical portrayals of the self, from fearful victim to heroic participant. Chapter Four determines that the main months of the Mutiny prompt the ultimate textual collapse of conventional womanly functions, through the advent of masculine and militaristic personalities. Chapter five examines the aftermath of the rebellion. It contends that post-war personas reveal a multitude of anxieties and that publication provides one final challenging context.

Ultimately, the dissertation contends that travel, India and the Mutiny provide new contexts for twelve women to interrogate the parameters of feminine identity in autobiographical personas that as a result of their transient nature are (con)textual identities.

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Table of Contents

	Page
Introduction (Con)textual Identities	5
Chapter 1 “The air seems very different here”: Origins and Departures	44
Chapter 2 “We have passed into a different stage of existence here”: Life in Pre-Mutiny India	84
Chapter 3 “We must be ready to mount our horses”: Rumours, Preparations and Outbreaks	131
Chapter 4 “An attack is going on while I am writing”: Accounts of the Mutiny	175
Chapter 5 “It was done at last”: Post-War Anxieties and the Process of Publication	211
Conclusion Travel, India, the Mutiny and Identity	274
Appendix 1 Map	279
Bibliography	280

Introduction

(Con)textual Identities

Empire messes with identity.

(Gayatri Spivak, *Outside in the Teaching Machine*, 1993)

This dissertation examines autobiographical writings by twelve British women who resided in India during the period of the 1857 Indian Mutiny. Concentrating on diaries, journals, letters and memoirs the study analyses accounts of their voyage from Britain, life in India and experiences during the rebellion and shortly after, by tracing two fluctuating and intertwining components of each text: identity and place. Within their narratives, the writers construct (con)textual identities: textual personas that are strongly marked by the context in which, or in some cases of which, they write. Writing within the context of travel, India, the Mutiny and its pre and post periods, the twelve British women construct transient textual personas that can be defined as new and exceptional. Through the experience of travel, settlement and war, the writers use autobiographical discourse as a framework to construct fleeting identities that metamorphose into maritime, militaristic and masculine personas. The dissertation evaluates the textual repercussions of relocation and war and argues that new and unwomanly contexts provide a temporal platform for British women to question the parameters of their written identity in a turbulent struggle to restructure the self without endangering mid-nineteenth century gender conventions.

Within their autobiographical writings, Katherine Bartrum, Charlotte Canning, Adelaide Case, Ruth Coopland, Caroline Dickson, Frances Duberly, Maria Germon, Georgina Harris, Julia Inglis, Matilda Ouvry, Georgina Paget and Harriet Tytler reinvent the self at each stage of their passage from Britain to India and at their specific site during the Mutiny. These (con)textual identities subvert two canonical masks: women as domestic figures in the British home and women as fragile submissive figures in the empire. By adopting “a geographical paradigm for the self” (Reaves 1), the writers assemble textual personalities that reflect a conflict between representations of the private and public self, personal and collective identity, domestic and militaristic occupation, and the role of heroine and victim. By approaching the autobiographical writings from literary

and historical perspectives, as well as drawing upon postcolonial theory, the dissertation argues that India and the Mutiny provide unorthodox contexts for the writers to construct new and exceptional textual personas. The following chapters argue that there is an identifiable trend within the twelve writers' constructions of identity and place, and that the Mutiny induces a momentary, yet distinguishable, reshaping in their narratives.

Female identity in mid-nineteenth century Britain was primarily linked to place. This was expressed overtly in the dominant female ideology of the period: "the Angel in the House".¹ The Victorian principle of "separate spheres" located domesticity and the home as women's realms where roles were limited to marriage and motherhood and where women were expected to be "loving and self-sacrificing" (Helsingier xiv). This stood in stark contrast to the public or worldly sphere that was the province of men.² The twelve writers examined in this study, who were detached from the "domestic altar" (Wayne 1) and forced into the predominantly masculine and public spheres of India and the 1857 Mutiny, confront the complexities of being women writing about travel and war. Travel has commonly been perceived as a masculine space that is "no place for a lady"³. Male writers seldom question the legitimacy of their position as observers and documenters of combat. Women writers, on the contrary, are usually aware of their presence in "the Forbidden Zone" (Borden 1),⁴ where writing is complicated by the continuing struggle to establish the authority of their perspective as well as evade cultural limitations on what and how they reveal. In her diary Georgina Harris, a chaplain's wife based in Lucknow during the rebellion, reveals a certain self-consciousness regarding her proficiency in documenting war: "I am quite ignorant... I cannot attempt to describe the movements which have taken place" (159). However, despite conveying overt

1. The term "the Angel in the House" was coined in Coventry Patmore's popular poem of the same name (1854) about a self-sacrificing heroine and an idealised version of marriage. The version of femininity to be found in "The Angel in the House" is by no means exclusive to Patmore. The title became a catchphrase for the ideal of feminine domesticity in the nineteenth century.

2. See Robert B. Shoemaker, *Gender in English Society, 1650-1850: The Emergence of Separate Spheres?* (1998) and Elizabeth Langland, *Nobody's Angels: Middle-class Women and Domestic Ideology in Victorian Culture* (1995) for detailed discussions regarding gender and separate spheres.

3. "No place for a lady" forms the title of two influential books to this study. Barbara Hodgson's book of the same name (2002) profiles women travellers who narrated their travels around the world between the seventeenth and nineteenth century. Hodgson defines her subjects as "intrepid women" who "abandoned their constrained lives to travel and found themselves right in the thick of danger" (1). Helen Rappaport's *No Place for Ladies: The Untold Story of Women in the Crimean War* (2007) sheds light on the relationship between women and war in the mid-nineteenth century by providing case studies of officers' wives, female nurses and war tourists who experienced and wrote about the Crimean conflict.

4. Mary Borden, writing of her nursing experience behind the lines in the First World War, described "The Forbidden Zone", in her book of the same name (1929), as a physical and metaphorical place where women are not expected or accepted.

reluctance, she progressively assembles her identity within her diary as an experienced and critical pundit by emphasising “the great mistake” (4) made by the British and criticising the way in which “Government has shut its eyes to [the rumours of a rebellion] and laughed at it, till now it may be too late” (9). In contrast to her claims of incompetency, regarding the documentation of war, she emphatically asserts: “there never was a more mismanaged affair” (35). For Harris and her eleven fellow writers, India and the Mutiny form the “rallying place” (Boehmer 8) for complex negotiations of identity as they vacillate between constructions of the feminine ideal of “the Angel in the House” and a new and authoritative interpretation of the self.

This thesis demonstrates that both travel and war enable female authors to rearrange textual versions of self. Moreover, it contends that when both journeys and military conflict become the focus in one narrative the consequences are complex and unconventional. The study takes inspiration from Laura Nenzi’s claims that “along the road women could subtly call into question some of the parameters by which their lives and roles were delineated and could rearrange them along different trajectories in the pages of their memoirs” (72). Travel, India and the Mutiny provide a backdrop for the twelve writers to assemble personas that were contentious but that a nation sought during a problematic period of history: paradoxical symbols of passive femininity and unwomanly militancy that helped to construct, defend, and interrogate the empire.⁵ The writers predominantly construct war as a special initiation, adventure and escapade, made the more so by its horrors, which are proudly minimised rather than accentuated. In her memoir Harriet Tytler, an officer’s wife who was in Delhi during the siege, habitually presents military hostilities with a stolidly calm, yet indomitable disposition:

When a shell came over the Flag Staff Tower, whizzing as it came along till it fell within the mud walls of our sepoy’s lines close to where we were and exploded there, poor Captain Villock jumped up saying, ‘My God, what was that?’ I replied calmly, ‘Oh! It is only a shell’. He was so astounded at the indifferent way I took it that he repeated it at the mess,

5. In *Rule Britannia: Women, Empire, and Victorian Writing* (1995) Deirdre David exposes the ideological workings of imperial culture. Citing the work of postcolonial theorist Homi Bhabha, David examines the manner in which British Victorians used “overlapping race and gender ideologies” (5) to construct national identity and to justify the subjugation of colonised peoples.

after which it became a byword in the camp. ‘Oh! It is only a shell’ ...
 Even my baby never winked or blinked, sleeping through it all as he lay
 on his bed of straw. If he had lain on a feather bed in a palace he couldn’t
 have slept more soundly. (151)

Tytler’s portrayal of the self in a militant, courageous and unwomanly guise contrasts with Harris’ unskilled, self-conscious and modest persona who is initially inept at relating martial events. These conflicting textual constructions serve as an example of the complex negotiation of textual identity that takes place during war, a contention that forms the focal point of the following research.

The matter of identity provides a framework for studying the complex and contradictory processes involved in conceptualising and representing self, difference, and otherness: issues that are undeniably at stake in any cross-cultural exploration undertaken in a colonial environment. Cross-cultural writings provide, as Dennis Porter has argued:

a particular[ly] rich field of inquiry for anyone interested in the way we conceptualise and represent the world, categorise its people to a variety of overlapping schemas... and perceive our own (apparently central) place within this imaginary global geography. (3)

Throughout the following chapters, attention is paid to the textualisation of the colonial world and the impact of “imagined geographies” upon textual identities.⁶ The authors assemble both Britain and India as ideologies, cultural codes, myths and fictions by building and expanding on existing stereotypes. The dissertation focuses largely on how interactions with and subsequent textualisations of “the Other”, whether geographical or human, induce a reconsideration or change in the textualisation of the self.⁷

The emphasis of the work is principally literary, with a historical and postcolonial approach to the literature taken at certain stages. Close attention is given to the language used by the writers in their attempts to simulate experiences within the constraints of autobiographical discourse. It is important

6. The concept of “imagined geographies” has evolved out of the work of Palestinian social theorist Edward Said, particularly his critique on Orientalism published in 1978. “Imagined” is used not to mean “false” or “made up” but “perceived”. It refers to the perception of space created through certain images, texts or discourses. See Gill Valentine, “Imagined Geographies: Geographical Knowledge of Self and Other in Everyday Life” in *Human Geography Today* (1999) for a detailed consideration of the concept.

7. Jeff Lewis in *Cultural Studies: The Basics* (2002) offers a simple definition of the term “the Other”: “postcolonised peoples of colour are defined as ‘the other’ or as ‘different’ in relation to the normative condition of ‘whiteness’, especially male whiteness” (340).

to assert that although this dissertation focuses in the main on published material, manuscripts have also been considered when available and any divergences between published and non-published accounts are alluded to. The question of what each woman decides to omit or emphasise and the artistic shaping of the self is a central concern. Through a detailed analysis of textual content and style there is an interrogation of the relationship between private modes of writing and the documentation of public historical events. By emphasising literary content, the research aims to distance itself from exclusively historical and archival accounts of the Mutiny, but historical strategies are necessary at certain stages. The history of British India and the origins of the 1857 rebellion are considered, as well as nineteenth-century social ideologies relating to British women and the origins, developments and trends of female authorship.

At appropriate stages debates from post-colonial theory are addressed.⁸ The thesis draws largely on the concept of “Orientalism” popularised by Edward Said in his book of the same name (1978).⁹ Other principal texts examined include Said’s *Culture and Imperialism* (1993), Homi Bhabha’s *Nation and Narration* (1990) and *The Location of Culture* (1994). Key issues from post-colonial feminism are also considered. The research employs theories and frameworks from Antoniette Burton’s *Burdens of History* (1994), Indira Ghose’s *Women Travellers in Colonial India* (1998), Inderpal Grewal’s *Home and Harem* (1996), Mary Louise Pratt’s *Imperial Eyes* (1992) and Indrani Sen’s *Woman and Empire* (2002). The concepts utilised include travel, displacement, savage versus civilised, aestheticism and exoticism. By determining how the writers conduct and construct the self when immersed in a divergent culture, the discussion reveals the ways in which social categories such as class, sex and race impact upon the writer’s textual self.

The dissertation breaks new ground and makes an original contribution to scholarly knowledge in three main ways. Firstly, it examines predominantly unexamined manuscripts and out of print texts which are only available in the Asia, Pacific and Africa Collections at the British Library and private collections.

8. See Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin, *Key Concepts in Post-Colonial Studies* (1998) for an uncomplicated introduction to postcolonial topics.

9. Said summarised “Orientalism” in *Orientalism* (1978) in these terms: “My contention is that Orientalism is fundamentally a political doctrine willed over the Orient because the Orient was weaker than the West, which elided the Orient’s difference with its weakness... As a cultural apparatus Orientalism is all aggression, activity, judgment, will-to-truth, and knowledge” (204).

The writings by Bartrum, Canning, Case, Coopland, Duberly, Germon, Harris, Inglis and Tytler have received only a small amount of historical criticism, whilst the narratives by Dickson, Ouvry and Paget have received no critical attention at all. Secondly, it considers autobiographical writings of the Mutiny as literary texts, rather than as documentary histories as previous studies have predominantly done. Thirdly, it concentrates solely on female interpretation of the rebellion. The thesis relates to existing studies by Pat Barr, Alison Blunt, Margaret MacMillan and Jane Robinson who have all considered the autobiographical writings of British women in India during the Mutiny period.¹⁰ These scholars, however, have principally offered biographical sketches and historical accounts rather than analysing women's writings using a literary approach as this study does.

Robinson's book *Angels of Albion: Women of the Indian Mutiny* (1996) and Blunt's articles "Spatial Stories Under Siege: British Women Writing from Lucknow in 1857" (2000) and "Embodying War: British Women and Domestic Defilement in the Indian Mutiny, 1857-8" (2000) are the most directly related studies to this thesis; however, their focus is different. Robinson's approach to the primary material is historical. She regards the Mutiny writings by British women as true and faithful accounts and offers a synopsis of events and detailed biographical descriptions of key male military figures. She utilises brief quotations from the narratives by Bartrum, Case, Coopland, Germon, Harris, Inglis and Tytler, amongst other women writers, in an attempt to provide an outline of the revolt. Blunt's articles on the Mutiny focus briefly on the narratives by Bartrum, Case, Germon and Inglis. Her research evaluates the primary material with a predominantly historical focus, with brief literary and media analysis at certain stages. In "Embodying War" she considers the use of domestic imagery in newspapers, visual images and women's diaries in depicting the severity of the uprising. In "Spatial Stories Under Siege" she reviews narratives by Bartrum, Case, Germon and Inglis and argues that their diaries tell stories of an imperial crisis on a domestic scale.

10. See Pat Barr, *The Memsahibs: The Women of Victorian India* (1976), Alison Blunt "Spatial Stories Under Siege: British Women Writing from Lucknow in 1857" (2000) and "Embodying War: British Women and Domestic Defilement in the Indian Mutiny, 1857-8" (2000), Margaret Macmillan, *Women of the Raj: The Mothers, Wives, Daughters of the British Empire in India* (1988) and Jane Robinson, *Angels of Albion: Women of the Indian Mutiny* (1996) for studies focussed on British women in India during the period of the rebellion.

In contrast to Robinson and Blunt this dissertation centres on the textual identities within the narratives rather than the female authors who produce them. Moreover, it reviews each writer as an individual rather than as part of a collective whole before presenting any compatible trends in their texts. As the primary interest is to review constructions of the self that exist textually, the study does not therefore suggest that the writers' textual personas are genuine and unembellished. Its aim is not to throw fresh light on long-worn assumptions about "real" colonial white women. Nor does the discussion attempt to refute the crude and negative stereotype predominantly associated with nineteenth-century British women in India.¹¹ It concentrates instead on the strategies by which the writers assemble identity and place on the page.

The study will refer to the events of 1857 as "the Mutiny", "the revolt", "the siege" and "the rebellion" due to those being the terms most commonly used by the British women writers in their published accounts and within British history. However, it is important to acknowledge that the episode is also regarded, chiefly in India, as "the Indian Rebellion of 1857", "the First War of Independence" and "the Sepoy Rebellion". This dispute between titles reveals the diversity of opinion and the controversial place of the 1857 Mutiny in the history of the British Empire.¹²

The 1857 Indian Mutiny

The rebellion of 1857 began when Indian soldiers in the Bengal army of the British East India Company collaborated to cause a widespread uprising against British rule in India. Indian troops revolted and killed British officers in response to allegations that the greased cartridges they were expected to use had been smeared with beef and pork fat, in violation of both Hindu and Muslim faiths.¹³

The major events erupted in Meerut at the beginning of May 1857, but there had

11. Jane Sharpe in *Allegories of Empire: The Figure of Woman in the Colonial Text* (1993) defines this dominant stereotype: "She is a scapegoat for imperialism, the remedy and poison that both ensures racial segregation and threatens to undermine race relations" (92).

12. Gregory Fremont-Barnes in *The Indian Mutiny 1857-58* (2007) considers the various titles and complications of defining the war: "The very name 'Indian Mutiny' has been challenged, especially by some Indian scholars, as an inaccurate description of the conflict which raged across northern and central India in 1857-58. To many on the sub-continent it is better known as 'The First War of Independence' – a war of national liberation. To contemporary Britons, it was variously known as 'The Great Rebellion', 'The Sepoy Revolt' or 'The Great Mutiny'. Whatever name one ascribes to the event, there is no foundation to the claim that the Mutiny was a national rebellion much less a war of independence, for the revolt affected only a portion of Indian forces in British service, the remainder of whom remained loyal to the Raj" (9).

13. Saul David, *The Indian Mutiny: 1857* (2002), Andrew Ward, *Our Bones Are Scattered: The Cawnpore Massacres and the Indian Mutiny of 1857* (1999) and Pramod Nayar, *The Penguin 1858 Reader* (2007) offer the most recent detailed accounts of the events with sources and extensive bibliographies.

been indications that an uprising was imminent for a number of months. The alliance between British and Indian officers had been fraught for some time, a situation that was disregarded by the relatively new Governor General in Calcutta, Charles Canning, husband of Charlotte Canning, one of the most prominent writers considered in this dissertation. Numerous accounts by British soldiers and civilians expressed the belief that the government had let them down by not heeding the foreboding omens. Signs that trouble and disorder were stirring were widespread. Eliza Greathed, wife of the Civil Commissioner of Meerut, recalls seeing placards that had been raised in the city “calling upon all true Mussulmans [sic] to rise and slaughter the English” (xiv). In his published journal (1858) Captain Robert Anderson reported:

Men were seen, here and there, with figures dressed up as European children; and, much to the amusement of the mob, the heads of these dolls were struck off with sword cuts... Seditious placards were found stuck up in all the main streets calling upon all good Mussulmen and Hindoos to rise and kill the Christians. (9-10)

Such reports were not taken seriously, and soon news of arson and rumours of midnight meetings of Sepoys spread among Britons in India. Accompanying these rumours were mysterious reports of chapattis being transferred around the regions and Indian newspapers thought their appearance was an invitation to the country to unite for a secret mission.¹⁴

On 26 February 1857 the events culminated in the 19th Native Infantry at Berhampore refusing to accept an issue of the controversial new cartridge. As punishment, the Sepoys were court-martialled, marched to Barrackpore in late March, and publicly disarmed and disbanded. Reports emerged of strange and unexplained fires in cantonments and barracks, followed closely by the actions of Mangal Pandey, a Brahmin Sepoy of the 34th, who on 29 March turned his gun on General Hearsey in Barrackpore. He was caught, tried and hanged and is often remembered in India as an iconic leader of the siege due to his defiance of the

14. Saul David claims that one of the earliest chapatti sightings was in late January 1857 “in the vicinity of Mathura, a large city on the Jumna River, 34 miles from Agra. The magistrate, Mark Thornhill, had just returned to his cutcherry when he noticed four chapattis lying on the table, ‘dirty little cakes of the coarsest flour, about the size and thickness of a biscuit’. On questioning his staff, Thornhill discovered that an unidentified man had arrived at a nearby village and given a single chapatti to the watchman, ‘with injunctions to bake four like it, to distribute them to the watchmen of the adjacent villages, and to desire them to do the same’” (64).

British.¹⁵ On 23 April, Colonel George Carmichael Smyth, of the 3rd Light Cavalry, Meerut, against all guidance from his junior officers, enquired of each of the eighty-five men in his regiment whether they would consent to use the disputed cartridges. Only five of them agreed to do so and eventually Smyth ordered court-martial for all eighty-five. On 8 May, the men were found guilty and put in irons in public view. That night a Sepoy warned Hugh Gough, a junior officer in the regiment, that the Sepoys would mutiny the next day, but as before, no credence was given to the warning. In the narrow streets, soldiers from the 3rd Cavalry met and debated the fate of the eighty-five men. When the 60th went for church parade, speculation began to circulate that they would be put in irons too. Signs of unrest were also noticed in the 48th at Lucknow. Events had reached a climax. In a letter to his mother, dated 15 May 1857, British officer Everard Phillipps records the beginnings of the rebellion:

‘We were suddenly called to the Parade ground by our colonel whom we found speaking to our men who were violently excited. We were ordered to search our lines for arms that might be hid. While doing so we heard a great loud shouting from the 20th parade and, on going to see what was the matter, found the 20th had seized their arms and were advancing loaded upon us’. (qtd. in S. David 86)

The biggest Indian-British military encounter since the Anglo-Mysore Wars and Plassey, exactly one hundred years earlier, had begun. Three sites were viewed as key to the Mutiny’s unfolding: Delhi, Lucknow and Cawnpore (see Appendix 1: Map).

As more Indian soldiers revolted, a cycle of massacre and retribution commenced. One of the most horrifying incidents was the massacre of British women and children in a building called the Bibighar in Cawnpore. Within this large house Indian soldiers held kidnapped British women and children and in one night it is believed that 197 were massacred. The British women were put under the charge of a slave girl owned by Baji Rao II named Hussaini Khanum who had acquired the name “The Begum”. Mutiny historian Saul David suggests, “this was on account of her imperious manner, and she is said to have made the prisoners’ lives a misery” (252). “The Begum” complied with the orders of an

15. See Rudrangshu Mukherjee, *Mangal Pandey: Brave Martyr Or Accidental Hero?* (2005) and Amaresh Misra, *Mangal Pandey: The True Story of an Indian Revolutionary* (2005) for summary and debate about Mangal Pandey’s role in the Mutiny.

alleged organiser Nana Sahib, who ordered her to kill the Britons. After failing to instruct the Sepoys on guard to follow these orders she allegedly sent for her lover Sarvur Khan to bring his own “execution squad” (S. David 253) who went about the task of murdering the women and children.

When British soldiers arrived they were too late to rescue their wives and children, and the macabre sight that they faced is detailed in numerous military accounts of the event. In his diary, General Bingham of the 64th wrote: “the place was literally running ankle deep in blood, ladies’ hair torn from their heads was lying about the floor, in scores, torn from them in their exertions to save their lives no doubt” (105). Reports suggested that the walls and floors were covered with bloody handprints and personal items whilst pieces of footwear and dismembered bodies lay all around. Following death some female bodies had been thrown into a well and scores of identical accounts exist of the infamous “Well at Cawnpore”. Bingham wrote: ““to crown all horrors, after they had been killed, and even some alive, they were all thrown down a deep well in the compound. I looked down and saw them lying in heaps”” (qtd. in S. David 255).¹⁶

It is important to acknowledge that the rebellion was characterised by violent reprisals on either side. The British directly avenged the looting and burning of homes and mass slaughter of Britons. Retribution was terrible and immediate with Indian prisoners being blown from cannons and innocent civilians being hanged from trees; however, not all Britons believed that the retaliation was right. Charles Canning argued against the large-scale massacre of Indians and in a letter to Queen Victoria wrote: ““not one man in ten seems to think that the hanging and shooting of 40,000 or 50,000 men could otherwise be practical and right”” (qtd. in Nayar 16).¹⁷ Despite such contentious revenge, in the British press of the time and British historical tradition, it is the massacre of British women that, then and now, dominates accounts.

As news reached Britain of the Sepoys’ revolt through numerous eyewitness accounts, articles, journals, diaries and letters, the British popular

16. See Patrick Brantlinger, “The Well at Cawnpore: Literary Representations of the Indian Mutiny of 1857” in *Rule of Darkness: British Literature and Imperialism, 1830-1914* (1988) for a detailed analysis of autobiographical and fictional literature linked to the infamous well.

17. In the Proclamation by the Queen to the Princes, Chiefs, and the People of India, 1 November 1858, Victoria called for peace and offered forgiveness: ““We deeply lament the evils and misery which have been brought upon India by the acts of ambitious men, who have deceived their countrymen by false reports, and led them into open rebellion. Our power has been shown by the suppression of the rebellion in the field; we desire to show our mercy by pardoning the offences of those who have been misled, but who desire to return to the path of duty”” (qtd. in Dutt 234).

imagination was filled with terror. Newspapers, when not filled with accounts of British courageousness, inked their pages with descriptions of Indian atrocities. Kathryn Castle argues that India was, at the time of the Mutiny, portrayed in British school textbooks as a country “in a state of anarchy and confusion, with a population ravaged by the constant warfare of constituent states” (13). It was this belief that led Britain into thinking that deranged and unbalanced India needed a dominant and stable colonial ruler and thus Britons were staggered that compliant, passive and ingenuous India had not only opposed but had attacked its colonial rulers. In her diary Ruth Coopland writes about the beginning of the Mutiny in a composed and relatively nonplussed manner: “our calm was slightly ruffled by hearing of some disturbances” (69). However, despite Coopland’s rather calm and reserved response, it must be recognised that the rebellion marked a serious interruption to the colonial hierarchy. Britons were shocked as an anonymous diary extract from India, published in *The Times* on 16 September 1857, indicates:

There now, we are sorry to say, remains no room for doubt that the most fearful stories and fiendish cruelties perpetrated there by the ruffian Nana Sahib are entirely true. The name Nana Sahib will hold rank as one of the greatest enemies of the human race to the end of the world. (6)

Newspapers were filled with impassioned and enraged responses that Robert Druce defines as “Mutiny Gothic” (199).¹⁸ Elaborate descriptions emerged of atrocities committed against allegedly innocent and vulnerable British women and increasingly these figures became icons of heroic British innocence.¹⁹ Druce contends that such examples were “essentially pornographic at heart”, as “the white breasts and golden hair of the outraged and mutilated heroine” (199) were drawn to the readers’ attention.²⁰

In contrast, a small number of reports soon surfaced that suggested that the seemingly submissive British woman was conceivably more defiant and

18. See Salahuddin Malik, *1857 War of Independence or Clash of Civilizations?: British Public Reactions* (2008) for a detailed consideration of public reactions to the Mutiny in Britain.

19. Gautam Chakravarty in *The Indian Mutiny and the British Imagination* (2005) argues “Recent studies on the discursive figuration of the rebellion have fruitfully argued how popular images of European matrons, young wives and girlhood exposed, helpless and at the mercy of the dark-skinned male rebels, yields a scene of crime, showing up English women as innocent victims and Indian men as sadistic sex criminals” (38).

20. Nancy L. Paxton in *Writing Under the Raj: Gender, Race and Rape in the British Colonial Imagination, 1830-1947* considers the wealth of novels about the Indian Mutiny and the reputed rapes of white women by native Sepoys. Similarly, Jenny Sharpe in *Allegories of Empire: The Figure of Woman in the Colonial Text* (1993) considers that a central memory of the Mutiny is the raping of British women by Indian men.

courageous than had previously been thought. One such example reported in the press was an account of Eliza Wheeler, General Sir Hugh Wheeler's youngest daughter.²¹ Newspapers reported how she had killed her abductors before they could rape her, after which she threw herself down a well. Through the act of taking her own life to protect her innocence, her story became iconic and formed the inspiration for one of the most famous images of the siege, a steel engraving reproduced in Charles Ball's *The History of the Indian Mutiny* (1859): "Miss Wheeler defending herself" (338). The engraving features Wheeler with a gun in her hand and a determined look upon her face, shooting one mutineer as another comes up behind her. David summarises her extensively retold story:

It was widely reported at the time that, rather than succumb to her captor's amorous advances, she had killed him before taking her own life. Her brave and honourable death was the subject of countless Victorian theatricals and the most popular mutiny engraving. It was what the Victorian public wanted to believe because the alternatives were too awful to contemplate. (S. David 221)²²

As with the majority of hearsay regarding the rebellion, Wheeler's story is now considered by historians to be dubious. Robinson claims that Wheeler was in fact rescued by an Indian man and spent the rest of her days living with him (45). In the same manner, Paxton offers doubts about Wheeler, and cites "distinguished historian George Trevelyan" who asserted that her survival proves either that she had consented to sex and so was not raped or that she was not a true British woman, since a racially pure woman would have died trying to protect her honour or would have committed suicide immediately afterwards. Trevelyan thus concludes that Wheeler "'was by no means of pure English blood'" (qtd. in Paxton 251). There was also a belief that Nana Sahib's agents circulated stories of her defiance simply "to discourage mutineers from keeping English girls hostage" (Ward 675). This thesis does not posit that the twelve writers under scrutiny assemble textual identities reminiscent of Ball's construction of Wheeler, the defiant, gun-toting and fearless woman. However, it does determine

21. See Richard Allen and Harish Trivedi's edited collection *Literature and Nation: Britain and India, 1800 to 1990* (2000), Jenny Sharpe, *Allegories of Empire: The Figure of Woman in the Colonial Text* (1993) and Christopher Herbert, *War of No Pity: The Indian Mutiny and Victorian Trauma* (2008) for detailed examinations of Miss Wheeler's story.

22. Saul David's phrase "amorous advances", as a term to describe attempted rape, serves as an example of history's writing out of violence to women through the use of light phrases. See Laura E. Tanner *Intimate Violence: Reading Rape and Torture in Twentieth-Century Fiction* (1994) for an exploration of literary trends and the issues at stake in the process of writing about female rape and torture.

that the writers transmit unwomanly and exceptional versions of the self, that are, in a similar way to Wheeler's story, questionable and contentious.

Initial reports of the revolt were so rich in drama and so full of horrors that the rebellion left a "deep wound upon the Victorian psyche" (Judd 66), and as a result the British imagination was stimulated and fiction was influenced for decades afterwards.²³ The popularity of the Mutiny theme grew steadily and between 1858 and 1860 more than eighty Mutiny novels were published (Barfoot 197). Of this literary trend Hilda Gregg, in 1897, wrote:

The events of that time seemed to provide every element of romance that could be desired in a story. Valour and heroism, cruelty and treachery, sharp agony and long endurance, satiated vengeance and bloodthirsty hatred, were all present. (219)

The Mutiny has always been the subject of debate and controversy with multiple interpretations existing both in Britain and India. British "heroes" of the event were glorified with 50,700 military and civilian Britons receiving the Indian Mutiny Medal (Asplin 3). Whilst British newspapers and periodicals celebrated such heroes, Nana Sahib and Mangal Pandey were demonised. Temporarily, Britons could represent themselves not as India's oppressors, but as its "gallant and benign victims, as a people more sinned against than sinning" (Baucom 112). After the initial shock, Britain soon sought to explain the incomprehensible turning of once loyal Indians and looked to the religious, social and political contexts of the British in India. The events became, in the words of Anglo-Indian historian Charles Crosthwaite, "the epic of the race" (169) and they were quickly succeeded by numerous historical publications.²⁴ Accompanying these histories emerged "local accounts" in two different modes: official documents by civil and army officers in the manner of government reports and military despatches and more personal accounts, many by British women.

This dissertation is written at a time when there is renewed interest and increased criticism surrounding the Mutiny. The rebellion has always been widely discussed within military texts and histories of India, but as 2007 marked

23. Gautam Chakravarty, *The Indian Mutiny and the British Imagination* (2005) offers an extensive survey of fictional and nonfictional narratives that were influenced by the Mutiny.

24. Before the Queen's Proclamation read by Charles Canning at Allahabad on 1 November 1858 marked an official end to the Mutiny, George Bruce Malleson wrote the first part of *The Mutiny of the Bengal Army: A Historical Narrative*, which appeared in July 1857, only two months after the first uprising at the Meerut garrison.

the 150-year anniversary, there has been an increase of awareness in historical and literary criticism, television and films.²⁵ This awareness accompanies the late twentieth and early twenty-first century concern with colonial travel, discourse and the East. Sara Mills in *Discourses of Difference* (1993) labels this trend as “the Raj revival” (2), and through this perceived “Raj revival” the role of the British in India and the Mutiny has come under increasing scrutiny.²⁶ Crispin Bates and Andrea Major’s seven volume series “Mutiny at the Margins: New Perspectives on the Indian Uprising of 1857” (2013-14) offers the most recent criticism. This history-based collection of essays delivers a comprehensive collection of historical writing on the Mutiny and focuses on neglected social groups and geographic areas from the uprising.

2003 saw the publication of Saul David’s *The Indian Mutiny*, shortlisted for the Westminster Medal for Military Literature, which was shortly followed by Andrew Ward’s *Their Bones Were Scattered* (2004), winner of the Washington State Governor’s award. Both texts provide detailed accounts from a historical approach. There has also been recent literary and social criticism through Gautam Chakravarty’s *The Indian Mutiny and The British Imagination* (2005) and Christopher Herbert’s *War of No Pity: The Indian Mutiny and Victorian Trauma* (2007). Chakravarty draws on a wide range of primary sources to demonstrate how the rebellion took hold of the popular imagination and how such narratives were inflected by the concerns of colonial policy and the demands of imperial self-image. Herbert’s study seeks to discover why the Mutiny was such an epochal event and argues that the rebellion provoked a national conscience. Enhanced by the 150-year anniversary of the rebellion, 2007 also witnessed the arrival of several other texts offering new historical debates on the Mutiny such as Andrew Walker’s *The Indian Mutiny* and Gregory Fremont-Barnes’ *The Indian Mutiny 1857-1858*. Both texts discuss the origins of British rule in India, the causes of the conflict, the rival forces and the fighting itself. In contrast, Julian Spilsbury’s *The Indian Mutiny* (2007) weaves together

25. In *Freedom Fighters of India* (2008) M. G. Agrawal considers the 2007 response to the Mutiny and recent debates about the rebellion in popular culture. (2-84)

26. Andrew Thompson in *The Empire Strikes Back?: The Impact of Imperialism on Britain from the Mid-Nineteenth Century* (2005) asserts: “During the 1980’s a series of imperial ‘heritage’ films – *The Jewel in the Crown*, *The Far Pavilions* and *A Passage to India* – invested the Raj with considerable glamour. Critics complained that this ‘Raj revival’ portrayed India primarily through European eyes, and that in the films Indians had only walk-on parts. But the whirligig of time seems to have turned full circle here. For hard on the heels of the ‘Raj revival’ came the spread of Bollywood’s appeal to Western audiences in the early twenty-first century” (224).

eyewitness accounts with fiction to create a story set against the backdrop of the rebellion. Despite this recent literary surge, scant attention has been paid to the textual strategies employed by British women in their Mutiny writings.

In 2005 the most expensive Bollywood film in history, *The Rising: Ballad of Mangal Pandey*, was released.²⁷ Based on the rebellion, the film is chiefly a retelling of the Mutiny through Indian Eyes. The film stresses the significance of this point through the tagline: “The British called it the Sepoy Mutiny but for Indians it was the first war of independence”. In *The Rising*, Mangal Pandey (Aamir Khan) is portrayed as a heroic Sepoy, who saves the life of his British commanding officer William Gordon (Toby Stephens). A strong friendship develops which challenges the pre-established boundaries of rank and race during the period; however, the camaraderie between the Indian and British soldiers is soon challenged by the introduction of the Enfield rifle. Following its cinema release, *The Rising* met with mixed criticism and controversy that has attracted yet more public attention to the rebellion, and fundamentally, the role of the British in India in the mid-nineteenth century. In one notable scene a British officer is shown bidding for a slave girl who is sent to a brothel for the exclusive use of British officers. Later, a fellow British officer orders the destruction of an entire Indian village after its inhabitants refuse to set aside land for opium production. On 13 August 2005 acclaimed Mutiny historian and author Saul David, in *The Telegraph*, attacked these two scenes, claiming they are damaging fabrications:

I am no apologist for the British East India Company but I have never come across any evidence which supports either of these assertions. It is nonsense. Of course a certain amount of criticism is justified but this sounds like vilification of the British just for the sake of it. (41)

The principal actor in the film, Khan, addressed the controversial reaction to the film in the West by stating:

What appealed to me when I was reading the script, is that something that happened 150 years ago is still happening today. That time it was the East India Company, today it is the US. It is entering places, taking out money from there, taking out resources from there and then claiming it is doing

27. See Mihir Bose, *Bollywood: A History* (2007), for a discussion of the film.

them a favour. And they are so strong that no one can do anything about it. (“Interview”)

Recent works on the Mutiny form an interesting collection of fresh criticism and insight. However, as Herbert asserts, “The learned literature dealing with this episode over the past several decades only affords a glimpse” (5). This dissertation aims to fill one void by considering little explored narratives of the event by twelve British women.

British Women in India

In a review article in 1897 in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* entitled “The Indian Mutiny in Fiction”, Gregg wrote: “Of all the great events of this century, as they are reflected in fiction, the Indian Mutiny has taken the firmest hold on the popular imagination” (218). In her article, Gregg reviewed the wealth of literature spawned by the events and for her the rebellion stands apart from the other “great events of the century” (218). By comparison, she claims “the impression made on imaginative literature by the Crimean War is a very faint one” (221). For fiction writers of the age, the siege provided a wealth of material with which to represent India and its British residents. The Mutiny acquired its own “form, meaning and mythography” (Chakravarty 3). Comprehending the allure of the rebellion is complex. Was it the bewilderment of the British nation, the unanticipated decline of the colonial ruler or the immense loss of life? Perhaps, more conceivably, it was the impact of numerous Mutiny accounts that collectively assembled the identity of the commonly perceived victim of the rebellion: the British woman in India.

The historical and literary depiction of British women in India has been one of great contrasts and controversy. In “Three and – an Extra” in *Plain Tales from the Hills* (1888), thirty years after the Mutiny, Rudyard Kipling presents one dominant stereotype through a portrait of the infamous and abominable Mrs Hauksbee:

Mrs Hauksbee appeared on the horizon; and where she existed was fair chance of trouble. At Simla her by-name was the ‘Stormy Petrel’. She had won that title five times to my own certain knowledge. She was a little, brown, thin, almost skinny, woman, with big, rolling, violet-blue eyes, and the sweetest manners in the world. You had only to mention her

name at afternoon teas for every woman in the room to rise up, and call her not blessed. She was clever, witty, brilliant, and sparkling beyond most of her kind; but possessed of many devils of malice and mischievousness. (12)

Mrs Hauksbee is the epitome of the intolerant, boorish and officious British woman who had become a caricature and myth in nineteenth-century fiction. Indeed, in 1901 Maud Diver stressed the influence that such fictional portrayals had in reality: “Kipling has sketched her for us with inimitable skill and truth” (1).

From the seventeenth century when the British woman arrived in India on the fishing fleets to her fleeing departure at partition in 1947, the portrayal has undertaken several shifts from that of the “sickly, despotic, abusive and cruelly insensitive officer’s wife” (Hyam 119), to the calm, innocent and heroic victim of an unwarranted and horrifying mutiny.²⁸ Isabella Blagden’s Mutiny poem “Light and Dark”, which appeared in the *English Woman’s Journal* (1858), contrasts greatly with Kipling’s portrait of Mrs Hauksbee:

Fair Saxon hair all dimmed with gore,
And soft pale breasts all rudely torn,
And babes whom English mothers bore,
Are brought out day by day to die;
Sweet stars quench’d ‘neath that cruel sky, (29-33)

The juxtaposition between Kipling’s unsparing construction of the “frivolous, vacuous, and vain” Mrs. Hauksbee (Lind 2) and the symbolism of “violated purity” (Tuson 2) illustrated in Blagden’s poem reflects stark inconsistencies in how Britons viewed British women in India during the period.²⁹

In her aptly titled conduct manual *The Englishwoman in India* (1901) Diver claims that when a British woman arrives in India:

[her] mind and body undergo a mysterious readjustment. She is converted once and for all into an Anglo-Indian woman, and any criticism of her

28. The East India Company was in India from as early as the sixteenth century and in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries British women were sent by the shipload, in what were called “fishing fleets”, to search for husbands in India. Such arrangements were made by the East India Company for whom these men worked. Margaret MacMillan writes: “The cargo, divided into ‘gentlewomen’ and ‘others’, were given one set of clothes each and were supported for a year – quite long enough it was thought, for them to find themselves husbands” (17).

29. The icon of the martyred British woman was also made famous by numerous post-Mutiny paintings such as Joseph Noel Paton’s *In Memoriam* (1858).

conduct or character which overlooks these altered conditions cannot but be partial, false, unjust. (112)

Diver suggests that the journey from Britain to India marks an alteration and conversion of identity. She asserts that when a British woman has successfully completed this adaptation she is most commonly given the title of “Anglo-Indian” or “Memsahib”.³⁰ There is a danger when employing labels such as “Anglo-Indian” or “Memsahib” that British women in India are identified with one history and guise. They had been in India long before there were the “Kiplingesque” (Lind 2) characters in the way contemporary society has come to imagine them, and it is important to recognise that British women existed in India in a variety of roles and functions. Some were unknown apart from in their own domestic territory, whilst others attempted to make an impact, to transform India and its inhabitants.

For British women travellers such as Elizabeth Bruce Elton Smith and Emma Roberts, India provided a “land of Arabian Nights exoticism” (Teltscher *India/Calcutta* 191) to sketch for those in Britain. However, autobiographical writings, travel narratives and sketchbooks, composed in the empire by British women, were routinely regarded with less validity in comparison to those of their male counterparts. For others, India provided an untouched landscape in need of social reform, a belief that “became justification for British colonial rule” (Grewal 42). Annette Ackroyd Beveridge, Annie Besant and Mary Carpenter are three such women whose travels and interests focused on colonial reform, politics and the welfare of Indians.³¹ However, even reformers were subjected to ridicule and often criticised or humiliated in the popular press, particularly when they campaigned about sexuality or vice (Tuson 7).

Contiguous to these two groups of women are one faction whose place in India was habitually considered with less regard and whose history is steeped in

30. Krishan Kumar in *The Making of English National Identity* (2003) considers the meaning of the term “Anglo-Indian” and argues that “At the simplest level, ‘Anglo’ is the combining form from ‘England’ and ‘English’, whether the people or the language. The offence that the imperial use of ‘England’ and ‘English’ causes the Welsh, Scots and Irish is compounded by this multiple meaning of Anglo. Anglo-Indian is similarly complex, referring both to relations between India and England (or Britain), and to the sensitively placed Eurasian community... who spent most of their working lives in India” (11). The term “Memsahib” was used to designate a European woman stationed in India. See Henry Yule and A.C. Burnell, *Hobson-Jobson: The Anglo-Indian Dictionary* (1996) for a comprehensive history of term (567).

31. See Kumari Jayawardena, *The White Woman's Other Burden: Western Women and South Asia during British Colonial Rule* (1995), Julia R. Parker, *Women and Welfare: Ten Victorian Women in Public Social Service* (1988) and A. F Young, *British Social Work in the Nineteenth Century* (1956) for studies which evaluate the social work of Western women in South Asia in the nineteenth century.

negativity: military wives and daughters. Barr summarises their dominant portrayal:

Writers have handed down to us a fictional image of the typical memsahib as a frivolous, snobbish and selfish creature who flitted from bridge to tennis parties in the hill while her poor husband slaved on the plains... the women loyally and stoically accepted their share of the white people's burden and lightened the weight of it with their quiet humour.

(1)

Army wives were essentially married to the military and the accepted norm before the rebellion was a lifestyle of “tennis at the Club followed by tea, dinner and possibly a dance” (Lind 19) with allegations of a “lamentable ignorance of anything outside it” (Hyam 119). Common were accusations of “extra-marital affairs” (Hyam 119) alongside the mistreatment of Indian servants and, as Robinson asserts, the stereotype is a “distasteful mixture of arrogance, ignorance and intolerance” (xvii). Yet, despite this unfavourable branding, army wives and daughters became the dominant representatives of British women in India in the mid-nineteenth century.

Unquestionably, the social climate in India was affected by their arrival. A crude version of the argument holds that when white women arrived in large numbers, race relations deteriorated; white colonial society closed in upon itself by the attempted recreation of Britain in India and did not pay sufficient attention to political stirrings. Nevertheless, one thing is unequivocal, as “Sunday, 10 May [1857] dawned in peace and happiness” (Greathed 1), the British in India and Britons back home were not expecting or prepared for the events that were to follow.

The causes of the Mutiny have been widely debated since the event. Ward asserts “that anyone who tries to tell the story must subsist on a sometimes sparse diet of questionable depositions, muddled accounts, dubious journals, and the narratives of shell-shocked survivors with axes to grind” (555). Even the matter of the greased cartridges is shrouded in uncertainty: “it has never been confirmed that the cartridge grease contained beef or pork fat” (Ward 54). Moreover, further causes have been suggested, such as the “resentment of the westernising policies of the East India Company, fears for Indian religions and dislike of superior attitudes of the British in India” (Judd 59). Notably, of the

events of 1857, the British opposition leader, Benjamin Disraeli, stated that “the decline and fall of empires are not affairs of greased cartridges. Such results are occasioned by adequate causes, and by an accumulation of adequate causes” (qtd. in B. Porter 30). Disraeli was criticising the East India Company, but his speech poses a significant question: What did cause the Mutiny? Karl Marx considered that: “however infamous the conduct of the sepoys, it is only the reflex, in a concentrated form, of England’s own conduct in India” (152). Was the Mutiny a reaction to British conduct, and if so what part did British women play in this? Richard Hyam asserts “it has long been said that the biggest mistake the British made in India was to bring their women out, thus making it impossible to meet Indians as friends” (119). Accompanying her husband, the British woman became either deliberately or inadvertently “implicated in the structures of colonialism” (Suleri 76), and with this proposition in mind, if the decline and fall of India was not “an affair of greased cartridges”, was it an affair of British women?

Biographical Sketches

The majority of the women writers that this dissertation focuses on were army wives whose collective reputations some have considered form a “disparaging picture of shallow women” (Strobel 9). With such diverse interpretations and constructions in existence, the roles and functions that the writers claim to hold within their narratives will be analysed in depth throughout the dissertation. It is also important to acknowledge that although the study focuses on narratives by twelve British women there are more British female Mutiny narratives in existence.³² The twelve writers that are the focus of the research have been chosen due to their locations during the conflict, their contrasting reasons for being in India, their diverse backgrounds and, most crucially, the critical appeal of their texts. Within the thesis certain women are more leading and significant, whilst some, who appear intermittently in some chapters, emerge more prominently in others. The narratives of Charlotte Canning, Harriet Tytler and Matilda Ouvry are paramount, as they are discussed in every chapter, whilst the writings of Katherine Bartrum, Adelaide Case, Ruth Coopland, Caroline

32. Rosemary Seton’s *The Indian 'Mutiny' 1857-58: A Guide to Source Material in the India Office Library and Records* (1986) provides a comprehensive list of Mutiny material in the British Library.

Dickson, Frances Duberly, Maria Germon, Georgina Harris, Julia Inglis and Georgina Paget appear at intervals to corroborate and provide further support to the debate.

The only relatively famed woman to be considered in this dissertation is Charlotte Canning (1817-1861), Lady of the Bedchamber to Queen Victoria and daughter to a British ambassador. Her husband Lord Canning was appointed Governor-General of India and she accompanied him to Calcutta in 1856. Following her death in India in 1861 *The Annual Register* remembered her as one who “gained the respect... by the exercise of a hospitality that was never exceeded, by manners that were always gracious and winning” (Burke 415). Through her journal and letters this thesis traces her journey to India via Egypt onboard the *Caradoc*, a ship that she boarded with her husband in France. Whilst in India Canning wrote frequently to her mother and Queen Victoria, describing her new social life and detailing the “strange and terrible outbreaks” (C. Allen 12) of violence which were the start of the Mutiny. The study considers the manuscripts of Canning’s journal and letters to Queen Victoria from December 1855 to July 1858. The manuscripts examined in relation to Canning are located at the British Library and at Leeds District Archives.

Frances “Fanny” Durberly (1829-1903) has also received some historical attention largely due to the fact she experienced, survived and published accounts of two wars: the Crimean War and 1857 Mutiny. A Wiltshire banker’s daughter, she married Henry Duberly, paymaster of the 8th King’s Irish Hussars, one of the component units of the famous Light Brigade in the Crimea. At the age of twenty five Frances followed her husband to the Crimea at her own expense and famously disobeyed Lord Lucan who “forbade any woman to leave Scutari” (Sweetman 81). Her Crimean narrative, *Journal Kept During the Russian War* (1855), was published and sold successfully but Duberly’s adventures and more crucially her writing did not always sit well with society as John Sweetman in *The Crimean War* (2001) summarises: “Queen Victoria considered her behaviour unladylike, refused dedication of the published journal to her and even ignored Fanny during a review, when one of the royal children pointed her out” (83). Frances later travelled to India in October 1857 alongside her husband and the Hussars. Her narrative describes a 2028 mile march through

Rajputana from Bombay, and culminates in an account of the battle of Gwalior.

Duberly concludes her narrative with the following claims:

I close the record of our first year's Field Service in India wherein that part of the Brigade, which was accompanied by my husband and myself... marched in spite of Indian sun and India rain, and in the toilsome pursuit of an ever flying foe, a distance of 2,028 miles, more than 1,800 of which I have myself accomplished on horseback. (246)

Her mutiny account was published in *Campaigning Experiences in Rajpootana and Central India: During the Suppression of the Mutiny, 1857-1858* (1859).

At the age of 23, Katherine Bartrum (1834-1866), a Bath silversmith's daughter, was living in a bungalow in Lucknow with her husband Doctor Robert Bartrum (1831-57) of the Bengal Medical Service and their 15-month-old son Bobby. It was here that she kept a diary that she later compiled with her letters to form her published memoirs *A Widow's Reminiscences of the Siege of Lucknow* (1858). Her husband Robert and son died in the conflict and in 1857 when public attention converged on the widows of the Mutiny, Bartrum was comforted that "his was a glorious death: coming to the rescue of his wife and child, he fell at his post doing his duty" (6). This dissertation focuses largely on Bartrum's published account but the manuscript copy of her diary, which resides in the British Library, has also been examined.

Adelaide Case (1819-1900) is another widow of the rebellion. Her journal and the letters of her sister Caroline Dickson (1825-1893) appear in one published narrative *Day by Day at Lucknow: A Journal of the Siege of Lucknow* (1858). Both Case and Dickson were trapped at the Residency, a building that served as a refuge for Britons at Lucknow, for five months. In July 1857, Case's husband, Colonel William Case of the 32nd Queen's Regiment was killed, a situation witnessed by Case, Dickson and Julia Inglis. After allowing Dickson to write in her journal, for a brief period whilst she grieved for her husband, Case shortly returned to writing until early December 1857 when both she and Dickson finally reached safety.

Maria Germon, Julia Inglis, Matilda Ouvry, Georgina Paget and Harriet Tytler were officers' wives whose husbands survived the siege. Maria Germon (1823-1898), daughter of a British officer and wife of a Captain, wrote her journal detailing her escape from Lucknow to Calcutta during the conflict. This

thesis examines her published narrative: *Journal of the Siege of Lucknow* (1870). In her writings, the horror of the event is not realised solely through descriptions of warfare and artillery, but through her horror at overcrowding and hygiene problems. Her journal entries, written almost daily, are dominated by references to food, bedding and the state of her husband Charlie's "unmentionables" (65), yet progressively militaristic references contaminate her autobiographical text. Although the published narrative is the main focus of the research the manuscript of Germon's journal at the British Library has also been studied.

Julia Inglis (1833-1904) was the wife of the colonel of the 32nd and was deemed by many "as one of the most compassionate and sensible women around" (Robinson 171). She was in the Lucknow Residency alongside Germon, Bartrum, Case and Dickson, all of whom make reference to her in their narratives. This study examines Inglis' *Letter Containing Extracts From a Journal Kept by Mrs. Inglis, During The Siege of Lucknow* that was printed for private circulation in 1858 and her published diary *The Siege of Lucknow: A Diary* (1892).

Matilda Ouvry (1856-1892) went to India to accompany her husband of seven months, a Captain in the 3rd King's Own Light Dragoons. In her published narrative *A Lady's Diary Before and During the Indian Mutiny* (1892), Ouvry details her preparations to leave Britain, their one hundred and sixty day journey to India and her subsequent experience of the Mutiny.

Georgiana Paget's (1822-1919) journal *Camp and Cantonment, A Journal of Life in India in 1857-1859: With Some Account of the Way Thither* was published in 1865. Like Duberly, Paget left Britain for India during the early stages of the rebellion. Despite not experiencing India or the Mutiny in the same manner as the other writers, her place in this study is appropriate as she offers interesting contrasts and comparisons as a woman who was thrust into the middle of war. She departed Britain on 4 August 1857 from Arsenal Quay at Woolwich on a crowded troop ship called the *Warrior Queen* with her husband Captain Leopold Paget, his field battery, another company of the Royal Artillery and a troop of 3rd Dragoon Guards. Paget declared that they were "the first detachment to leave England for the relief of the sufferers in India" (4).

In contrast to the ten other writers, officer's wife Harriet Tytler (1828-1907) wrote her memoirs of the Mutiny approximately fifty years after the event.

This dissertation refers to the first published version entitled *The Englishwoman in India*, published in 1985 by Anthony Sattin, the owner of Tytler's manuscripts. An important contrast to the other writers is that Tytler was born in India to an army family. Her confused and conflicted national identity informs much of her memoir. At the age of nineteen she married Captain Robert Tytler, a widower ten years her senior. Her memoirs describe her childhood in India and her suffering at the hands of a tyrannical aunt during her schooling in Britain. She also recounts her adult life in India before detailing the tale of her dramatic escape from Delhi at the outbreak of the Mutiny when she is eight months pregnant. With her husband, two children and French maid she returned to witness the three-month British siege of the city. Notably, Tytler describes herself as "the only lady" (119) present at the siege of Delhi.

Both Ruth Coopland and Georgina Harris were chaplains' wives. Ruth Coopland (1837-1907) arrived in Gwalior in January 1857 as the wife of Rev. George William Coopland, a chaplain to the East India Company. At the height of the Mutiny she arrived in Agra, after a sixty-mile trek whilst, like Tytler, she was eight months pregnant. Her diary, dedicated to Rev. Henry Philpott who was Chaplain to Prince Albert, was published under the title *A Lady's Escape From Gwalior and Life in The Fort of Agra During The Mutinies of 1857* (1859). At the beginning of her text Coopland stresses her intention to offer a personal interpretation of the event: "In this simple narrative I have, of course, confined myself strictly to scenes and occurrences that have fallen under my own eye; many of which, as far as I am aware have not hitherto found a narrator. It seems to amount almost to a duty" (v).

Georgina Harris (1829-1886) arrived at Lucknow as wife of Rev. James Harris, an army chaplain, in March 1857. In her diary, *A Lady's Diary of the Siege of Lucknow*, published anonymously in 1858, Harris details the conditions of the Residency and expresses how thankful she is that her husband's duty does not separate him from her, like many other officer's wives. On 2nd July the Chief Commissioner Sir Henry Lawrence was mortally wounded and in her diary, Harris details his screams and groans of agony as she claims to nurse him in his last hours.

The twelve British women offer their own interpretations of events, and not one of them wholly conforms to the stereotypical images previously

discussed. The following study refuses to let the writers stand as typical examples and it aims to indicate their individual styles of writing as well as any shared attributes. They are all unique writers with a different story to tell; however, this dissertation demonstrates that they share many characteristics linked to the construction of (con)textual identities.

New and Exceptional Identities

Nineteenth-century British women's travel to the empire is frequently understood as the means through which "the Angel in the House" left her sphere and thereby challenged British femininity. The empire was commonly positioned as a site of emancipation and the collapse of British womanhood. This "collapse" in the East coincided with the rise of the women's movement, "The Woman Question", in the West and the slow emergence of the self-proclaimed "modern", literary and cultural figure: "the New Woman".³³ Both movements marked a resistance against subordination, but it is predominantly considered that women in India had more freedom, independence and rights than those at home in Britain. Rosemary Marangoly George in "Homes in the Empire, Empires in the Home" (1994) asserts: "The memsahib was a British citizen long before England's laws caught up with her" (120). This dissertation takes this argument further by demonstrating that travel, life in India and the Mutiny prompted (con)textual identities that are new and exceptional and that challenge the behavioural and textual constraints of nineteenth-century femininity. By denying the weaker parts of female identity, elevating the status of existing female functions and assuming masculine roles within their constructions of the self, the twelve writers discard many of the prevailing behaviours of British women and acceptable modes of women's writing in the period.

This thesis posits that for the majority of the writers under scrutiny, the passage to India and the subsequent Mutiny provide a certain degree of elevated authority allowing them to assemble new and exceptional constructions of the self. In a letter to Queen Victoria, following her arrival in India, Canning conveys pleasure that in India her "maids live like ladies" (Lady Canning to

33. See Mary Evans' edited collection *The Woman Question: Readings on the Subordination of Women* (1982), Christina Crosby's *The Ends of History: Victorians and "The Woman Question"* (1991) and Elizabeth K. Helsinger, *The Woman Question: Social Issues, 1837-1883* (1983) for a consideration of "The Woman Question".

Queen Victoria, Aug. 8. 1856, RA Z 502/4). Her letter accentuates the unique higher status that many British women experienced upon arrival in India. The new environment permitted women to feel exceptional. The notion of being an “exceptional woman” has historically prompted both fascination and fear. The particular fear being that too many exceptional women would make equality the rule. Mary D. Sheriff in *The Exceptional Woman* (1996) defines the stereotype:

The “exceptional woman” has a specific meaning and refers to the woman who, owing to some particular circumstance (talent, money, family ties, beauty, luck, political clout), has been exempted from rules or laws (be they perceived as natural, social, or statutory) prescribing the behaviour of the female sex... Thus defined, the exceptional woman can only be a problematic role model, for aspiring to her position implies collusion with the general subjugation of women. Separation from other women is a price a woman pays for her exceptionalness, and she pays it doubly, since the exceptional woman was easily construed as the unnatural or unruleable (unruly) woman by men and women alike. (2)

This thesis utilises the concept of being exceptional or expressing exceptional qualities in a number of ways. Firstly, it considers an exceptional persona as someone who has achieved something out of the ordinary with celebration and success. Second, exceptionality is linked with being unique and achieving dispensation from the rules that regulate others. Lastly, being exceptional can be related to being opportunistic by the exploitation of immediate contexts, regardless of the consequences. It is important to note, that on many occasions, the women are merely attempting to project the self as exceptional, when in reality they are not in fact being exceptional. For example, Tytler’s claims that she was “the only lady” (119) present at the siege of Delhi is not accurate. It is the writers’ belief that they are achieving something new and exception that is the most revealing and important part of the identities they construct. The research acknowledges that there were other British women travelling in the period, and indeed a small group of women had already written war narratives prior to the Mutiny, but this thesis maintains that twelve British women experienced and narrated a defining moment in British imperial history in a truly unique manner. The identities and narratives they construct, and indeed the

public's unprecedented response to their writings, present a neglected, but exceptional case study in the field of Victorian women's writing.

The following chapters contend that the writers, through an emphasis on their elevated status, sense of authority and uniqueness, construct new personas. The research defines new as being rebellious, subversive and modern and the writers demonstrate this temperament through a variety of means. New identities are conveyed through the writers' attempts to replicate the empire on a domestic scale within their narratives and via the construction of the self as an authoritative giver of discipline or help to Indians. It was commonly perceived that upon her arrival in India, the British woman's duty and challenge was to assert her authority and keep this peculiar territory under strict control whilst her husband was asserting his authority in the office or on the field: "The English home in the colony thus represents itself as the Empire in miniature" (George 108). The first chapter of Flora Annie Steel and Grace Gardiner's *The Complete Indian Housekeeper and Cook* (1888) presents the domestic realm in terms of duties, rules, rewards, and punishment:

The first duty of a mistress is, of course, to be able to give intelligible orders to her servants; therefore it is necessary she should learn to speak Hindustani... The next duty is obviously to insist on her orders being carried out.... "How is this to be done?"... The secret lies in making rules and keeping to them. The Indian servant is a child in everything but age... faults should never go unpunished. But it will be asked, 'How are we to punish our servants when we have no hold on their minds or bodies?'...

The answer is obvious. Make a hold. (3-4)

The instruction to "make a hold" highlights the domestic authority that British women were permitted whilst in India, a condition that promoted their new and exceptional character.

Despite women's only acceptable avenue for contributions to the empire being via domesticity, motherhood and traditional feminine preoccupations, this dissertation argues that the writers seek empowerment through the construction of personas that straddle feminine, domestic, masculine and militaristic guises. War is domesticated and domestic functions are militarised. In Germon's journal there is a perceptive blend of domesticity and warfare as militaristic terms invade her discussions regarding personal hygiene: "A tolerable quiet day, but a

discovery made of light infantry in a lady's head" (91). As her narrative continues there are recurrent references to "More dreadful discoveries of light infantry" (92), and it is not until September 25, that the reader discovers that light infantry are in fact head lice. British women as active participants in the war could barely be conceived of, but although they could not battle on the frontline, they could battle in the home. Judith Flanders presents "the Victorian home" as a symbolic battleground: "the focus of existence, the source of refuge and retreat, but also of strength and renewal" (xxi). Victorian household manuals, or what Margaret Horsfield defines as "Cleaning Propaganda", habitually defined the conquering of dirt as a kind of "domestic warfare" (Horsfield 25), whilst Steel and Gardiner transported this message to the Empire when writing: "life in India always partakes of the nature of a great campaign" (21). They suggest that the daily supervision of servants is undertaken like "an inspection parade" (8). This point is emphasised by Germon who employs militaristic terminology to convey domestic actions: "I took possession of my godown [storehouse] and was made mistress of all the provisions" (105). The concoction of feminine, domestic, masculine and militaristic trends exemplify the composite nature of the writers' identities.

The British women, who in addition to documenting travel and their settlement in a new environment, are confronted with the controversial act of being women writing about war. The twelve authors were writing at a time when women "were only allowed to figure as symbols of home and purity" (Mills *Discourses* 3). As a result women who behaved and wrote outside of conventional boundaries, such as the documentation of war, were effectively "killing the Angel in the House", a phrase that Virginia Woolf claimed was "the occupation of a woman writer" (238).³⁴ In 1842 Mary Ann Stodart writing in *Female Writers: Thoughts on Their Proper Sphere and on Their Power of Usefulness* appealed to fellow female writers:

When we speak of ourselves, we are standing on the edge of a precipice, and it is well if we escape a heavy fall. Publicity can, to a woman, never be a native element; she may be forced into it by circumstances, but the

34. See Emily Blair, *Virginia Woolf and the Nineteenth-Century Domestic Novel* (2002) for a study of Woolf's persistent fascination with destroying "the Angel in the House".

secret sigh of every truly feminine heart will be for the retirement to private life. (67)

Stodart forewarned women about writing publicly about the self and public events. She stated rather emphatically that female writers should not act as historians as their passion and emotions hinder their judgment: “in women, the imagination is commonly too active, the judgment not sufficiently so” (4). Women were expected to be “shaded by sweetness” and “veiled by modesty” (Stodart 127), vital qualities that must also emerge within their writings. With a similar approach social commentator Emily Thornwell in *The Lady's Guide to Perfect Gentility* (1856) instructed women on appropriate etiquette. Remarking on how a lady should conduct her conversation and letter writing, Thornwell, echoing numerous conduct manuals of the period, advised that a woman should not understand, nor use “indelicate expressions” or “hard words unnecessarily” (157). Such guidelines may appear uncomplicated strategies for British women writers to abide by when fulfilling the personal and private duties of the “Angel in the house”, but how do writers comply with Stodart and Thornwell’s criteria when they write about war? In her diary Harris hints at the conflict of being a British woman narrating the Mutiny: “I have really felt too downcast to write, having only horrors to record” (45). As the rebellion progresses Harris, along with her fellow writers, struggles to balance her want to convey information and her need to remain within the boundaries of mid-Victorian literary decorum.

Imagined Indian Landscapes and “the Other”

By the middle of the nineteenth century India had been largely mapped and inscribed, with very few territories remaining outside of British knowledge. Land had been systematically traced and charted and Indians, the commonly perceived “Other”, had been scrutinised and categorised.³⁵ Yet, despite the fact that India had been widely documented, in the British imagination India was still equated with mystery. Its land was considered perilous and chaotic, and in need of further comprehension, for knowledge was intrinsically tied to power. Western literature, with “sheer knitted-together strength” (Said *Orientalism* 6), revealed

35. Examples include Elizabeth Bruce Elton Smith, *The East India Sketch-Book* (1832), James Mill, *History of British India* (1817), Reginald Heber, *Narrative of a Journey through the Upper Provinces of India* (1828) and Emma Roberts, *Scenes and Characteristics of Hindostan with Sketches of Anglo-Indian Society* (1835).

India as pleasingly exotic whilst at the same time uncivilised and dangerous. Said in *Orientalism* (1978) defined literature that promoted this formula as “Orientalist discourse” (12). Alastair Pennycook in *English and the Discourses of Colonialism* (1998) summarises the Orientalism stereotype as “the eternal and unchanging East, the sexually insatiable Arab, the feminine exotic, the teeming marketplace, corrupt despotism and mythical religiosity” (171). It should be acknowledged that Said’s theories are currently under fresh and often negative criticism, but as Ibn Warraq contends in *Defending the West: A Critique of Edward Said’s Orientalism* (2007): “Orientalism has now become a dirty word. Nevertheless it should be used for a perfectly respected discipline” (52).

Said does not offer an explicit definition of the term Orientalism, but he begins his study with three loose “meanings” of the expression: An Orientalist is “anyone who teaches, writes about, or researches the Orient... either in its specific or its general aspects”. Second, Orientalism is a “style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between ‘the Orient’ and (most of the time) ‘the Occident’”. Any writing, Said goes on to suggest, which accepts as its starting point a basic dichotomy between East and West and “the Orient, its people, customs, mind, destiny, and so on” supports Orientalism. Finally, Orientalism is “a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient” (Said *Orientalism* 2-3). In light of Said’s clarification, this dissertation considers the narratives of British women writers alongside the model of Orientalism and theories of “the Other”.

The study traces the composition and textual construction of landscapes within the twelve writers’ narratives by arguing that the writers classify and textualise India in a certain manner in order to subordinate, control and reflect their (con)textual identity. Documentation and the textual portrayal of Indian landscapes as a form of ordering and authority has always played an important role in the lives of those who travel East and, in compliance with Said’s definition, forms part of the Orientalist trend. Susan Bassnett claims “Traditional mapping is perceived as an inherently male act, since the intention is to circumscribe, define, and hence control the world” (230). The thesis asserts that mapping, naming and labelling of the land, and the flora and the fauna, marked ownership and created authoritative personas for the women writers.

Their textualised maps fluctuate between pictorial, picturesque, feminine landscapes and wild, dull and dangerous spaces at different stages before, during and after the Mutiny to suit the tone, mood and context of the days' events. At the height of the rebellion Case writes: "The rain makes everyone and everything look most miserable, and in the trenches it must be dreadful. My poor heart aches" (85). Case, along with the other writers, liberally employs techniques such as pathetic fallacy and foreshadowing when narrating landscapes to reflect the fluctuating context of the day. The writers' descriptions predominantly feature motion and variation, and are rarely fixed illustrations describing one still image. The research contends that the landscapes the writers construct are as fictional as the identities they assemble on the page: they are "imagined Indian landscapes".

"The Other" in terms of Indians was everything that the British woman was not and the writers' constructions of Indians demonstrate how Western literature and thought on social debates regarding racism, white supremacy and the British imperial agenda arguably influenced the writers and their textual personas. Andrew Porter claims that in the nineteenth century the definition of races held enormous potential "for justifying rule, generating unity, and for establishing practices of political and administrative exclusion" (22). In 1839 John L. O'Sullivan coined the phrase "Manifest Destiny" (qtd. in Horsman 219), which gave white men a justification to expand and claim new territory and Victorians interpreted their success at ruling millions of racially different peoples as indisputable evidence of racial superiority. The importance of race could not be underestimated as Sidonia, a character from Benjamin Disraeli's 1847 novel *Tancred* declares: "All is race; there is no other truth" (104).³⁶ Likewise, in *The Races of Men* (1850) Robert Knox claims "Race is everything: literature, science, art, in a word, civilisation depend on it" (qtd. in R. Young 93). The theory of white supremacy was heightened further by evolutionary debates. J. C. Prichard's lecture "Extinction of Human Races" (1839) and similar debates that preceded Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of the Species* (1859) introduced the concept that those in the East were evolutionary inferior to those in the West.

36. Popular fiction also took on a new preoccupation with race during the nineteenth century as Deirdre David in "Empire, Race, and the Victorian Novel" asserts: "the subjects of race and slavery became increasingly visible in novels" (86) where readers were exposed to multiple references to empire and racial stereotypes.

Even before Darwin had proposed that in the development of the species, the weak die and the strong survive, Prichard asserted: “It is obvious that the savage races could not be saved” (42).

Out of these theories grew the notion that superior nations such as Britain would always triumph over “savage” India. Notably, following the Mutiny, British newspapers demonised and dehumanised Indians into barbaric savages and animals, locating them with emphasis at the lower end of the evolutionary spectrum. This trend was demonstrated on 8 August 1857 when *The Times* published a letter stating: “Those bloodthirsty fiends have placed themselves in the same relation to their fellow man as that of a rabid dog to his kind” (12). The culture of empire was an integral part of establishing and maintaining colonial control. However, colonial writing, such as the narratives examined in this thesis, even if unwittingly at times, confirm and support the enterprise of empire.

The research supports Grewal’s claims that encounters in India are “central to construction of English nationalism” (7). The empire is predominantly portrayed as the domain of Britain’s mastery of the globe; however, this dissertation demonstrates that in India the writers’ Britishness is altered and reformed. Tim Youngs draws attention to the impact of travel upon identity: “Travel writing, especially in an imperial or colonial context, is an expression of identity based on sameness to and yet remoteness from the members of the home society” (*Africa* 3). With a similar approach Linda Colley considers that interactions with “the Other” impact greatly upon British people’s sense of national identity:

A sense of a common [British] identity did not come into being because of an integration and homogenisation of disparate cultures. Instead, Britishness was superimposed over an array of internal differences in response to contact with the Other, and in response to conflict with the Other. (6)

By drawing upon Grewal’s theory that “colonial encounters created linked, yet distinct, constructs of nation and gender” (288), this study demonstrates Britishness was itself a product of the colonial culture that it seemed to have created elsewhere.

In the narratives the twelve writers’ versions of Britishness are assembled as a result of a series of geographical, cultural and militaristic conflicts. “Home”

becomes “a space that was deployed variously... transparent in its clear manifestation of moral virtues” (Grewal 25). Within Coopland’s narrative, there is a continual affirmation of her national identity through references and comparisons to “home”. Upon her arrival in India, she writes:

I was much pleased with my first sight of the grand Fort, the Cathedral, the fine row of houses on Chowringhee-road, which is the “Belgravia” of Calcutta, the Maidân, or “Hyde-park”, and the imposing-looking Government House, whose lofty dome was surmounted by some adjutants (birds) looking down on what was passing below, with grave attentive dignity. (2-3).

By continually comparing India with recognisable sites from Britain Coopland tries to textually control and order the new contexts that the East presents carefully within her diary. The research highlights attempts by the British women to reconstruct elements of “home”, but argues that in turn these new contexts are predominantly depicted as sites of chaos and confusion, rather than spaces of belonging and stability.

Definitional Dilemmas

The autobiographical writings examined confront complex theories regarding how one writes about the self. Autobiographical theory over the last four decades presents the unravelling of traditional assumptions about textual identity.³⁷ Sidonie Smith and Julie Watson assert that the self is now a subject and is the “site of dialogue with the world, others, memory, experience, and the unconscious” (15). They argue that multiple interpretations of the self have resulted in the “generic extinction” of the term “autobiography” (17). As a result definitions of what constitute autobiography are becoming increasingly more confused and chaotic: “the definition of autobiography as a literary genre seems... virtually impossible” (Olney 38). On this theme Gerri Reaves asserts: “theorists and critics have scrutinised the problematics of traditional autobiography, calling into question the premise that the self is paradoxically both the origin and the object of the text; that the autobiographical text is an inaccurate mirror” (11). This thesis endorses Reaves’ theory by maintaining that

37. See Linda Anderson, *Autobiography* (2005) for an examination of the theory and practice of autobiographical writing from St. Augustine to the present.

the writer is merely the “organiser” of the self on the page rather than the subject. This dissertation defines this construction of the self on the page as a textual persona or identity.

The fact-fiction dichotomy will be considered at certain stages of the analysis as the dissertation determines that in certain contexts the writers purposefully fictionalise their own identity. Elizabeth Podnieks asserts:

The issue of genre authenticity is linked to the question of whether the self can ever be known and whether it can be rendered accurately, if at all, in words. Defining the self is one of the most problematic tasks facing theorists of life writing, one that today remains unresolved. How we interpret the self impacts on how we read a diary. Though definitions of selfhood remain problematic, theorists of life writing generally acknowledge that the self is always to some degree invented; the diary that contains this self is thus at least partially fictive. (5)

Roland Barthes reminds us that there can be no writing of the self that coincides with the fragmentary and transitory passage of lived experience: “the one *who speaks* (in the narrative) is not the one *who writes* (in real life) and the one *who writes* is not the one *who is*” (qtd. in Branigan 87). Andrea Stöckl substantiates this notion further:

‘The self we write about is turned into “an Other” when we progress in time. Thus, who we think we are when we write a text is already another self. We can thus know and write about our selves from a limited perspective... If we create ourselves as an ego in the text, we should be aware that it is not always our selves we are talking about’. (qtd. in Helmers 7)

Autobiographical narratives exist in an area between what is fact and fiction and what is history and literature. Paul de Man argues that “autobiographies produce fictions or figures in place of the self-knowledge they seek” (919), whilst Casey Blanton considers that women’s writing in the empire in particular “is a narrative style that borrows from fiction in its use of rising and falling action, character, and setting” (5). No experience is either simply or transparently committed to the page and the dispute between fact and fiction raises questions about the reliability of autobiography. Mills warns against the assumption that women’s travel writings, in particular, are truthful accounts. She argues that the identity

that emerges on the page is as much a character as a woman in a novel (*Discourses* 36-39). This study argues that autobiographical writing offered the British women a means of redefining themselves in India and assuming a persona different to one that existed in Britain.

The research acknowledges that there are challenges linked to the collective analysis of both manuscript and published diaries, journals, letters and memoirs. The diaries and journals here are chronological and some appear in the form of personal narratives, written for the self, whilst some address a specific reader, a context that undoubtedly influences the writers' approach. The impact of defining a recipient becomes significant when examining the letters of Canning and Inglis, particularly when the recipient, as in the case of Canning, is Queen Victoria. Moreover, memoirs, being written following an event, are distinct. The difference between diaries and memoirs, in terms of war accounts, is also significant. Diaries are written at the moment, or at least shortly after, thus accounts predominantly reflect the personal emotions, feelings and minute particulars experienced at the time of writing. In contrast, memoirs of war are written following the event by "survivors", thus writers have the opportunity to write with or without the fear felt at the time and with retrospection and therefore certain details may be omitted or added for dramatic effect. The following argument is informed by an awareness of the diversity of autobiographical forms, but the central interest remains with the impact of historical and spatial contexts upon textual constructions of the self.

Reference must also be made to the amalgamation of genres to which the twelve writers' narratives belong and the women's efforts at writing towards varying genres without endangering nineteenth-century gender conventions. The foremost themes which dominate their writings are domesticity, travel and war but whilst domestic detail fits appropriately into the traditionally feminine, personal and private modes of dairies, journals, letters and memoirs, the themes of travel and war link the women's writing with the modes of travel writing and military documentation which were both predominantly male genres in the mid-Victorian era. The debate between feminine and masculine modes of discourse and the reshaping of the self within unwomanly modes of writing maintains recurring focus in the ensuing research.

Acknowledgment must also be made to the relatively new label of “life writing” which is used as an umbrella term to cover “personal narrative, including interviews, profiles, ethnographies, case studies, diaries, Web pages, and so on” (Eakin 1).³⁸ The narratives considered within this thesis do, to a certain extent, fit within the broad definition of “life writing”; however, the term autobiography is used within this dissertation due to the more precise nature of the genre and because the research draws largely upon established and new ideas linked specifically to autobiographical theory.

Both the genres of autobiography and travel writing have experienced a recent surge in interest, but prior to this travel theory, in particular, has largely been absent in the tradition of literary criticism. Peter Hulme and Tim Youngs define the field as a “broad and ever-shifting genre” (1) and defining the British women’s Mutiny narratives as travel writing is highly problematic. This complication is owing to the rebellion’s relationship with slaughter and mayhem, and the genre of travel writing being associated with “glamour, adventure or trivial everyday events” (Bassnett 225). As a result, this thesis draws mainly upon theories of travel writing in Chapters One and Two which focus on pre-Mutiny writings. The study draws upon and contributes to the dominant notion that travel is linked to identity alteration and “journeys of the mind and the imagination” (Johnston 2): “In travel, the territorial passage from one zone to another, the border crossing, represents a critical moment for the identity of the mobile subject” (Musgrove 31).

Locating Identity

This dissertation is divided into five chapters and uses a chronological layout allowing the reader to follow the women’s experiences as well as the narratives’ journey from a personal to a published text. This sequential format also allows the reader to trace the development of the writers’ (con)textual identities before, during and after the Mutiny. It does not follow every British woman’s experience of India and the rebellion in their entirety. Some writers’ narratives only detail selected parts of their life and some narratives finish at the height of the uprising.

38. See Marlene Kadar *Essays on Life Writing: From Genre to Critical Practice* (1992) for a collection of essays that explore the term “life writing”.

However, all twelve writers feature in Chapter Four, which focuses on July to December 1857, the main months of the Mutiny.

The first two chapters follow the writers' depictions of travel and settlement in India before the Mutiny. Chapter One analyses how the British women describe their journey to India. Focusing on the narratives of Charlotte Canning, Frances Duberly, Matilda Ouvry, Georgina Paget and Harriett Tytler, the chapter is concerned with the beginnings of their narratives, departures from Britain and its impact upon textual identities. It examines the relationship between the sea-voyage and representations of the self and argues that within their autobiographical writings the writers depict the imperial ocean as a site where textual personas begin to resist traditionally feminine identities and where new and authoritative voices emerge. The chapter demonstrates how the writers imagine new ideas in relation to femininity, notions of home and nationality as they locate the self in a space of instability and mergings, divided physically and metaphorically between the East and the West.

Chapter Two concentrates on arrival, settlement and life in India. Focusing on writings by Charlotte Canning, Ruth Coopland, Matilda Ouvry and Harriet Tytler the chapter examines the construction of the writers' individual, collective, and gendered identities. It demonstrates how, for the writers', the textualisation of the self is a negotiation between two conflicting extremes, Britain and India, and how their textual personas reflect physical and emotional displacement and a conflict between an authoritative and subjugated self. It plots the paradoxical construction of India as both a space of instability and home, and argues that the writers textually construct the pre-Mutiny Indian landscape and Indians as imaginary and abstract entities. The chapter illustrates how pre-Mutiny India acts as a place of recreation and textual re-creation.

Chapters Three and Four focus on accounts of the Mutiny. Chapter Three examines the beginnings of the rebellion and considers how Katherine Bartrum, Charlotte Canning, Adelaide Case, Ruth Coopland, Caroline Dickson, Frances Duberly, Maria Germon, Georgina Harris, Julia Inglis, Matilda Ouvry and Harriet Tytler present their textual identities during the rumours, preparations and outbreaks that form the beginning of the Mutiny. The chapter argues that the commencement of the siege generates an increased and more distinguishable modification of textual identity. By playing close attention to the roles that the

women claim to undertake and the contrasts between representations of fearful victims and brave participants, it determines that the beginning of the Mutiny is an event where traditional feminine domestic personas and masculine and militaristic identities compete against each other.

Chapter Four considers narratives written between July and December 1857, the main months of the Mutiny. Focusing on all twelve writers it illustrates how the Mutiny was influential in the ultimate collapse of stable constructions of the textual self and how the act of writing war was a means of assuming new and exceptional characteristics. It presents a spectrum of textual personas that transmit a multiplex of sorrow, despair, authority, independence, anger, activism and criticism. The chapter focuses largely on what positions the women claim to undertake during the rebellion and how these compare with their previous identities. By examining the diverse strategies the writers use and by addressing theoretical issues related to war and gender the chapter suggests, in the main, that the writers assemble masculine and militaristic personas that fundamentally challenge “the Angel of the House” and foremost assumptions about women’s capacities and capabilities. The Mutiny emerges as a context that opened doors to possibilities and personas otherwise denied to British women.

Chapter five focuses on the aftermath of the Mutiny and is devoted to the close examination of post-war textual identities, the process of publication and the public response to published Mutiny writings by Katherine Bartrum, Charlotte Canning, Adelaide Case, Ruth Coopland, Frances Duberly, Maria Germon, Georgina Harris, Matilda Ouvry, Georgina Paget and Harriet Tytler. It makes a final case that the Mutiny provided an avenue for dramatic alterations of the self by demonstrating that whilst travel, settlement and war gave rise to constructions of authoritative and unwomanly identities, the suspension of war generates textual personas that convey perceptible anxieties associated with returning to pre-war normality. The chapter concludes by exploring the public response to the published narratives, as it argues that the process of publication provided one final “battlefield” for British women writers of the 1857 Mutiny.

Through close literary analysis the ensuing research demonstrates that travel, relocation and war induce a textual restructuring of the self in autobiographical narratives by twelve British women. The writers’ (con)textual identities indicate a struggle between remaining womanly whilst simultaneously

appearing new and exceptional. “Empire”, as Spivak has observed “messes with identity”, a comment that is usually taken to mean that colonialism disrupts, distorts and deforms the identities of the colonised; however, the following chapters argue that it is the identity of the coloniser, here British women in India, which endures conflict.

Chapter One

“The air seems very different here”: Origins and Departures

But doth suffer a sea-change
Into something rich and strange.

(William Shakespeare, *The Tempest*, 1. 2. 564-5, 1623)

This chapter is concerned with matters of identity alteration and textual transformation in British women’s autobiographical accounts of sea travel from Britain to India before the 1857 Mutiny. It contends that Charlotte Canning, Frances Duberly, Matilda Ouvry, Georgina Paget and Harriet Tytler construct textual identities, within the context of their sea-voyage, that are new and exceptional. Travel to India yields an opportunity for the five women to recreate themselves textually with the sea serving as a stage for the writers to construct (con)textual identities that challenge nineteenth-century gender boundaries and modes of writing. The writers realise this through the aggrandisement of domestic duties, the establishment of unfeminine personas and the reshaping of autobiographical writings. For the five women under scrutiny, the sea acts as a disorderly space, one of recurring challenges, disruption and uncertainty; however, close exploration of their discourse reveals that this new context also renders opportunities for diversity, authority and adventure. The opening epigraph, Ariel’s song from *The Tempest*, is pertinent to the chapter’s debate not only because the metaphor of sea change proposes a link between sea travel and identity alteration, but because it eloquently articulates the theory that travellers undergo a textual rebirth at sea that is both “rich” in multiplicity and “strange” in its diversity.

By drawing upon established theories of travel and investigations of the self, the following chapter proffers its own assumptions on the interconnection between the sea-voyage and female representations of the self in autobiographical writings, a topic that has been relatively neglected in wider research.³⁹ The research demonstrates that writings produced against the sea, an

39. The small collection of research that refers to women and sea travel includes: Robert Foulke, *The Sea-voyage Narrative* (1997), Andrew Hassam, *Sailing to Australia: Shipboard Diaries by Nineteenth-Century Emigrants* (1996), Susan Neville, *Sailing the Inland Sea: On Writing, Literature, and Land* (2007), Robin Miskolcze, *Women and Children First: Nineteenth-Century Sea Narratives and American Identity* (2008), Nancy Pagh, *At ‘home’ Afloat: Women On the Water of the Pacific Northwest* (2001) and Cora Kaplan, *Sea Changes: Culture and Feminism* (1986).

incessantly variable environment, are themselves at all times changing: “just when we think we have its identity pinned down, it assumes a new guise and moves” (Foulke 155).⁴⁰ The debate disputes Andrew Hassam’s claims that those travelling by sea “did not see travel as a way of altering their personality, and continuity of identity was largely unquestioned” (148). Instead, the research substantiates Debbie Lisle’s assertion that travel discourse has “become a cultural site for the expression of identity politics” where writers from “previously marginalised groups” can articulate their claims for “recognition within wider cultural and political communities” (7). The sea journey enabled Canning, Duberly, Ouvry, Paget and Tytler to break with the ordinary and engage with an out of the ordinary space and time, a context which enkindles new and exceptional interpretations of the self and the literature. The sea becomes an active stage on which new identities are revealed, an idea endorsed in Nenzi’s study of travel and identity:

When travellers began their journeys and were no longer tied by convention as when they lived in the same row of houses, they eagerly exploited the flexibility and the “anything goes” atmosphere of the open road to redraw both horizontal and vertical lines, reshaping personal hierarchies and, on more than one occasion, temporarily crafting new identities. Along the road, recreation became synonymous with re-creation (as in “regeneration,” or “creation of a new self”). (2)

The chief proposal of this chapter is that the five writers “regenerate” the self. On 16 November 1854, after nine days at sea, Ouvry announces in her diary: “The air seems very different here to anything I have ever felt before – so beautifully soft and yet fresh” (2). Her optimistic words refer to the altered environment, but they also mark a significant symbolic boundary in her narrative: a subtle division between an old and new state. Following her declaration Ouvry’s textual identity journeys from being “unwell” and “fearful” (2) to being new and exceptional through authoritative and unfeminine depictions. After two weeks at sea Ouvry becomes noticeably untroubled

40. Paul Gilroy focuses this hypothesis further by declaring that ships and sea-voyages, in particular, create new identities (12). Robin Miskolcze views the sea as a “frontier”, a new place for the self, or more precisely, a new, altered and mature self to emerge: “the sea has been read as the boundary between boyhood and manhood, ignorance and discovery” (x).

regarding surrounding dangers and depicts the death of a sailor as an exhilarating adventure:

While we were sitting at breakfast, we heard a call for the life-buoy. Every person rushed on deck; there were two men overboard. Some sailors jumped into the sea and managed to save one, but the other was drowned. The adventure gave such a feeling of excitement to the whole day. (8)

It could be contended that this unwomanly account is manipulated by Ouvry's class status. Her presentation of the death of a lower class sailor could be regarded as an example of Victorian "slumming" via her fascination with the event, rather than her sympathy; nevertheless in these examples Ouvry depicts herself as exceptional in several ways.⁴¹ Firstly, the fact she is travelling makes her extraordinary, an idea frequently put forward by travel theorists who claim that women who travel "establish themselves as truly exceptional due to their willingness to traverse boundaries that ordinary respectable women in their cultures would not dare to cross" (Merchant 210).⁴² Moreover, Ouvry's self-confident tone contributes to her exceptional status as "the exceptional woman saw herself as being apart from other women, and as superior to them" (Eisentein 39). Additionally, by the act of recounting death and defining the event as an "adventure", Ouvry risks being classified as unfeminine, an attribute of the exceptional woman, who displays "talents that others might characterise as manly" (Ziegler 9).

The sea-voyage enabled the British writers to remain temporarily detached from Britons at "home" and those already in India, an indeterminate and disruptive context. For the five women under scrutiny this in-between locale spawns new identities, which reflect a disorderly sense of gender and nationality. Critics argue that travel authorised women to journey beyond the boundaries of British "constraints" (Mills *Gender* 125-47), by lifting the weight of domestic responsibilities and enabling women "to exert the power of independence" (Roberson 4). However, the following chapter does not support the notion that travel induces a clear revolt against feminine boundaries. Instead it posits that sea

41. See Seth Koven's *Slumming: Sexual and Social Politics in Victorian London* (2006) for a detailed study of the Victorian trend of "slumming".

42. Susan Bassnett in "Travel Writing and Gender" in Peter Hulmes and Tim Youngs, eds. *The Cambridge Companion to Travel Writing* (2002), Sara Mills in *Discourses of Difference* (1993) and Shirley Foster and Sara Mills in the "Introduction" to *An Anthology of Women's Travel Writing* (2002) discuss the notion of women travellers being considered "exceptional women".

travel challenges gender spheres by authorising female writers to gain legitimacy via the elevation in status of female concerns and roles. The chapter tracks the delicate balancing act undertaken by the women in their construction of the self as they attempt to project the masculine qualities of authority and adventure while retaining the female domestic qualities considered appropriate for their sex.

The five autobiographies alternate between personal and collective narrative forms as the women begin to identify themselves as part of a unique collective living on the water. The writers, at times, define themselves as part of a seafaring community and imply that they, like the male sailors onboard, assist with the running of the ship through the construction of maritime identities: identities that denote a special role in seafaring activities. Robert Foulke makes some fundamental points regarding the construction of maritime identities and seafaring communities: “the absolute isolation of the ship makes adapting to the fixed society on board unavoidable” and that “once committed to the open sea, human beings are enclosed irrevocably by the minute world of the vessel in a vast surround” (8). Foulke proposes that the formation of a community in the self-contained world of a ship is unavoidable, but his study, alongside others, fails to investigate how the process of community and “home” formation is depicted in textual accounts of sea travel, a void that the following discussion aims to fill.

Jan Ryan states “little is known about the motivations of female travellers” (106) and this is largely the case for the writers involved here. Their accounts are not exclusively personal narratives, the most acceptable form of writing for women in the period. They offer few indications regarding rationale and purpose and instead render rhetorical complexity by featuring a blend of characteristics from an amalgamation of textual genres; a quality that Foulke claims is inherent in writing about the sea:

Writers about the sea seldom limit themselves to one mode of dealing with their subject, whether it be the simple recording of facts, technical analysis of events, a straightforward chronicle larded with anecdotes, fictionalised autobiography, or pure invention of imagined events in a sea setting. (xii)

The multifaceted nature of travel writing is also underlined by Mary Louise Pratt who proposes that travel narratives can be categorised under two fundamentally different modes: “the informational and the experiential” (*Imperial* 134). Pratt argues that whilst informational travelogues focus on scientific exploration and natural history, experiential texts emphasise adventure and emotions. Despite defining these distinct modes Pratt points out that the majority of travel texts are hybrid forms as they feature a blend of “objective scientific status” whilst being unable to renounce the “intense and authority-giving personal experience” (Pratt *Fieldwork* 32). Pratt’s theory regarding the multifaceted nature of travel writing provides a useful framework for exploring the narratives in the following chapter. However, this chapter expands upon Pratt’s principles by considering how female writers at sea balance their voice whilst trying to remain “womanly”, in the mid-nineteenth century sense of the word.

The research does not claim that the writers all experience travel in the same way, or that they construct identical personas. It does argue, however, that some fundamental characteristics concerning nineteenth-century sea travel and identity alteration are discernible in the British women’s writings.

Departures

The sea-voyage to India in the mid-nineteenth century has routinely been portrayed through descriptions of enthusiastic colonials seeking adventure upon a soothing excursion. Ships were associated with the aristocracy and relaxation, and an idealistic notion of white upper and middle-class, luxury travel. However, for many women travelling to India on a troop ship, the journey was not characterised by a sense of opulence, indulgence, and relaxation. Personal accounts stress over-crowding and point to the strict segregation and regimentation that operated onboard. The passage was typified by hard physical exertion, toil and malady as women attempted to uphold domestic standards in difficult conditions, a notion emphasised by Paget early in her narrative: “No one whose ideas of the comforts of a long voyage are founded upon the accommodation of a fine passenger ship, can know the horrors of this [trooping] transport” (7).

The fear of shipwreck was a genuine concern and there remained a very real danger that a ship may not reach its destination.⁴³ Until the massive loss of life aboard the Titanic in 1912, the most famous shipwreck was the Birkenhead in 1852, only five years before the Mutiny. The Birkenhead, a 1400-ton iron steamship, left Cork Harbour on 5 January 1852 on her way to Port Elizabeth in South Africa to reinforce troops engaged in the 8th Kaffir War. On 26 February at 2 a.m. the ship struck an uncharted reef off the coast of Cape Town and 436 of the 643 people on board died: “Many of the soldiers, according to the accounts, stood at attention as the ship went down” (Miskolcze 51). Maritime historians point to the men’s action aboard the Birkenhead as the inauguration of Britain’s “unwritten maritime code” that women and children should come first (Brown 167).

Through history, women and their relationship with sea travel has caused controversy. The traditional view for centuries was that women had no place at sea. It was “a space for predominantly male activities such as exploration, wars, whaling, and sailing” (Miskolcze xi). Women were perceived as too weak and a distraction to men onboard. There was even an accepted theory that female passengers brought bad luck. Suzanne Stark in *Female Tars* (1996) tells of an example from the middle ages when at the height of a storm, men fearing their bad luck was brought on by women, threw 60 women overboard in an attempt to reverse their bad fortune (50). By the nineteenth century such superstition had largely expired and women were considered the best navigators, hence the figure of a woman was accepted as a ship’s figurehead. Despite this, women are largely non-existent in maritime history.⁴⁴ If women are referenced, it is either because “they were exceptional women in a man’s world or they were mentioned incidentally in studies concerning the domestic lives of fishermen or seafarers” (Hagmark-Cooper 1).

“Seafaring was an extraordinary proposition for a nineteenth-century lady” (Druett 22), but Canning, Duberly, Ouvry, Paget and Tytler respond to this “extraordinary” excursion by taking control of the environment rather than the

43. See Charles Hocking, *Dictionary of Disasters at Sea During the Age of Steam, 1824-1962* (1969) and Denis Griffiths, *Steam at Sea: Two Centuries of Steam-powered Ships* (1997) for statistics of shipwrecks during the nineteenth century.

44. Studies of note on women in maritime history include David Cordingly, *Heroines and Harlots: Women at Sea at Sea in the Great Age of Sail* (2001), Joan Druett, *Hen Frigates: Passion and Peril, Nineteenth Century Women at Sea* (1998), Louise Henriette, *Sailors in Skirts: A Serendipity of Sea-faring Incidents* (1980) and Jo Stanley, *Bold in her Breeches: Women Pirates across the Ages* (1995).

other way around. When the context is a place of disorientation and external forces are uncontrollable, the women focus on documenting something they can control: their narratives and the construction of the self. The following work supports Hassam's theory regarding sea travel and narration:

To be carried off to sea for three or four months out of contact with land was to have made a symbolic break with the old and yet not to have entered the new; it was to be caught between two worlds and two lives.

This sense of transition needed to be contained if it was not to get out of hand, and one way of doing this was to write it down in a book. (3)

The women mark departure and separation from the geographic homeland via a complex response conveying displacement, isolation and alienation alongside hope, excitement and aspiration. Such a beginning (separation from Britain), middle (sea journey) and end (arrival in India) can be viewed as a significant life changing event or to use Belgian anthropologist Arnold van Gennep's term a "rite of passage" meaning "to cross a boundary in order to understand belonging and to be transformed in some way that enables us to live in the world differently than before" (Slater 208). Although written early in the 20th century and structuralist in approach, van Gennep's classification of rites in *Les rites de passage* (1909; tr. 1960), remains current particularly in studies of travel literature and identity construction.⁴⁵ He describes an individual's life in any society as "a series of passages from one age to another and from one occupation to another" (2-3) and sees these passages as connected to three phases of rites: "separation, transition, and incorporation" (10-11). Separation, the act of departing a particular state, marks the first important stage in a rite of passage when "identity is fractured, bringing about dislocation and disorientation" (Slater 208). Van Gennep applies his classification to life events such as pregnancy, marriage and funerals, but travel and emigration can be legitimately defined as life events and therefore "rites of passage", despite lacking formalised religious/social ceremonies. The following section of the chapter demonstrates that departure from Britain to India marks a transition from one life/identity to another. However, this beginning is marked by no formal ceremony. Instead it is

45. Studies that consider theories of rites of passage in travel writing include: Johannes Evelein, *Exiles Travelling: Exploring Displacement* (2009), Glenn Hooper and Tim Youngs, *Perspectives on Travel Writing* (2004), Margarita Marinova, *Transnational Russian-American Travel Writing* (2011), Jennifer Speake, *Literature of Travel and Exploration: R to Z* (2003), Carl Thompson, *Travel Writing* (2011) and Tim Youngs, *Travel Writing in the Nineteenth Century: Filling in the Blanks* (2006).

marked by a “textual” ritual: the construction of “fractured” versions of the self that reflect both fear and hope about the ensuing journey.

At the age of thirty-eight Canning began her sea-voyage to India from Marseilles in France. Prior to this she had travelled to Calais and then overland across France by train. It was a cold day on 3 December 1855 when the steamer *Caradoc* set sail carrying Canning and her husband Charles, the newly appointed Governor-General of India. Charles had been Postmaster-General since 1853, but with Lord Dalhousie’s imminent retirement from the Governor-Generalship of India, Charles’ name had been put forward as a successor. The only passengers on board were Canning, her husband and a select number of staff who included her two maids, West and Rain. The journey involved a stop in Malta and at Alexandria in Egypt where the Egyptian ruler Ismail Pasha received the Cannings. Canning had previously travelled as far east as Constantinople, but it is in Cairo that she writes her first letters and journal entries about the voyage and refers to her “first impression of the real East” (Lady Canning to Queen Victoria, Dec. 19. 1855, RA Z502/1). The next stage of her journey was by horse-drawn carriage across the desert to Suez where an East India Company steam frigate, the *Feroze*, was waiting to take them on to Bombay. They reached Bombay on 29 January 1856, fifty-seven days after leaving France. There was a fortnightly mail service and Canning’s letters were written over a two-week period and would have had a delay in reaching Britain.

Before their departure to India, the Cannings were well respected in aristocratic circles: “To casual observers they must have appeared a singularly privileged and charmed couple, blessed with good looks and good health, titled, successful, comfortable in the exercise of authority” (C. Allen 3). However, some historians consider Charles’ selection and prompt departure controversial. Canning expresses in her personal letters of June 1856 her view regarding his appointment and her probable relocation to India. The first indication of concern and a discontented self is evident in a letter she wrote to her younger sister Louisa:

What did you think of the news Mama told you? I cannot yet tell you what answer is to be given... but there are really no reasons, but one’s own feelings and dislikes against it and I think it will be that we go, but I don’t and will not take any part in the decision but will be ready to follow

like a dog. If it was only for one year I wd delight in it- but 5 is terribly long. (Lady Canning to her sister Louisa, Jun. 1856, I.O.O., MSS. EUR D661)

Employing the expression “follow like a dog” Canning conveys her dissatisfaction at her subsequent departure. She identifies herself in a subordinate role. She will go to India faithfully if she is told to do so. Her letter voices her initial concern and awareness of displacement and she establishes the identity of a faithful, yet subjugated woman, one of a series of personas that modify along the journey.

Charles Canning was undecided about the appointment. Lord Malmesbury advised him to refuse but on 16 June 1856, after a final talk with Lord Aberdeen, he finally accepted. On the same day, in a letter to her mother Charlotte wrote:

You will not be surprised I think, I feel sure it is the right decision or tho’ C [Charles] never is in the habit of distressing himself by looking back to what might have been, and wd not have done it, yet I think many an occasion might arise when the contrary decision wd really be a cause for regret. (Lady Canning to her Mother, Lady Stuart de Rothesay, Jun. 16. 1856, I.O.O., MSS. EUR D661)

Only two weeks after her first response to the news, Canning’s textual identity alters. She considers the positive and negative implications of her situation. She reflects anxiety as she struggles to reconcile two differing and inescapable definitions of the self: a subordinate supportive wife and an independent perceptive woman.

One reason for Canning’s obvious pessimism is the separation from her family and friends. Her life in Britain had been dominated by the roles of daughter and doted. She was a loyal daughter and sister in an aristocratic family and had been Queen Victoria’s Lady-in-waiting. However, she was now going to India to be Wife of the First Viceroy of India, a position of privilege and supremacy and a role which made her apprehensive: “Now we must try and think it is still a good while before the moment arrives. I believe we must not talk about it yet, and indeed it feels a respite to keep it quiet as long as possible” (Lady Canning to her Mother, Lady Stuart de Rothesay, Jun. 16. 1856, I.O.O., MSS. EUR D661).

The sole motivation for Canning's displeasure is not made explicitly clear in her writings. However, clues can be gathered from other sources. On the evening of 1 August 1856 Lord Canning took the oath of office at the Indian Office in London and on that same evening, at a banquet thrown in his honour, he spoke to the Court of Directors of the East India Company:

‘I wish for a peaceful time of office, but I cannot forget that in our Indian Empire the greatest of all blessings depends upon a greater variety of chances and a more precarious tenure than in any other quarter of the globe. We must not forget that in the sky of India, serene as it is, a cloud may arise, at first no bigger than a man's hand, but which growing bigger and bigger, may at last threaten to overwhelm us with ruin’. (qtd. in Kaye 378)

In his speech, Lord Canning promotes the popular nineteenth-century ideology of India as “dark, veiled and mysterious” (Ashcroft, Griffiths, Tiffin 21), and implies its inhabitants have the potential to cause calamity for the colonial rulers. It was a speech that eerily foreshadowed the Mutiny. Moreover, a number of historians have suggested that Lord Canning was having an adulterous relationship in Britain and it was “in order to break up Canning's love-affair that he had been appointed to India” (Surtees 194). Gossip had it that one of Cannings' most influential friends, Lord Lansdowne, had engineered the appointment in order to get him away from “the spell of his inamorata” (C. Allen 8). Even if such allegations were true, Charlotte Canning makes no reference to it in her personal writings.⁴⁶

Few letters survive from Canning's last few months in Britain, largely because she spent time with her main recipients, her mother and sister, who had joined her from Ireland before her departure. On 22 November 1856 the Cannings called formally on Queen Victoria at Windsor and made their official farewells. The Queen noted in her journal: “After our breakfast we took leave of the dear Cannings, with great regret. They start on the 26th” (Queen Victoria's Journal, Nov. 22. 1856. RA). Evidence of Canning's anxious and melancholic self is reflected in the numerous prolonged goodbyes written in her letters and

46. Charles Allen in *A Glimpse of the Burning Plain* (1986) claims that the Canning's marriage had been marred by Charles Canning's adultery: “What is beyond dispute is that at some point in the late 1840's Charles Canning became deeply involved with another woman and remained so for some years, a shadowy relationship that was common knowledge among his contemporaries” (7).

journal entries of the period: “This would have been our real last Goodbye if you had one and I grudge all these days very much I might have had with you and Lou” (Lady Canning to her Mother, Lady Stuart de Rothesay, Dec. 2. 1856, I.O.O., MSS. EUR D661). As Canning prepares to depart her indecision and distress all point towards an obedient yet disorientated textual self.

Matilda Ouvry was also accompanying her husband to India. Henry Ouvry was the Captain of the 3rd King’s Own Light Dragoons. They were married in January 1854 and left Gravesend on 7 November in the same year in an Aberdeen clipper-built ship Omar Pasha. Unlike Canning’s relatively short fifty-seven day trip, it took Ouvry and her husband one hundred and six days to reach Bombay. They did not stop in Egypt and instead travelled “the long way round” (Mabbett 241). Unlike Canning’s empty steamer, Ouvry was travelling on a “trooping ship”, alongside officers going to join their regiments. Throughout the sea-voyage, she maintained a diary and in contrast to Canning’s fervent personal views about departure, Ouvry offers no pronounced indication of distress or anxiousness at the prospect of separation. Instead, Ouvry summarises the weeks leading up to her departure reflectively and her entries construct an optimistic persona, reflected by the positive tone in her writing.

Whilst Canning mourns her departure from Britain, Ouvry’s narrative embraces the separation. She seizes the new opportunities offered by travel as she constructs an identity that displays the beginnings of an authoritative adventurer:

The regiment marched in three detachments, I rode on horseback at the head of one detachment through Sherborne to Milborne Port – where Sir W.M. Meddlycott called and invited Henry and myself to his house – thence to Shepton Mallet, where we remained over Sunday; then to Keysham; next day to Gloucester; then on to Tewkesbury, Worcester, etc, being billeted at the different hotels, and I enjoyed the trip very much. (1)

Markedly, Ouvry expresses her satisfaction at her unique position amongst the male soldiers as she enthusiastically welcomes new contexts. Ouvry makes no complaint or reference to fatigue and her first impressions of military life are presented positively: “Two days’ march brought us to Burnley” and “I went into barracks for the first and only time in my life and enjoyed the novelty very

much” (2). In contrast to Canning she presents no display of typical feminine emotion regarding departure:

We left England on the 7th of November 1854 in the Aberdeen clipper-built ship *Omar Pasha* (her first voyage), it being too late in the season for any of Green’s ships. We had very few passengers, principally officers going to join their regiments in India. Wednesday. 8th. We anchored in the Downs for the night, but early on the 9th, a favourable breeze springing up, we set sail. (2)

Even Ouvry’s account of the weather complements her “favourable” mood at leaving Britain. This positive approach to a new context marks the start of Ouvry’s exceptional persona, which is revealed to a greater extent later in her account.

Harriet Tytler’s voyage to India took place under entirely different circumstances from those of Canning, Duberly, Ouvry and Paget. She details the journey in memoirs written approximately sixty years after the voyage. She is vague about the circumstances and does not detail the exact dates of her journey, but research demonstrates that it was during 1845, twelve years before the Mutiny. In notable distinction to the other writers Tytler was born in India and was returning there after spending six unhappy years being educated in Britain whilst her parents Lieutenant Colonel and Mrs John Lucas Earle waited for her in India. This was not an uncommon event for British girls who were born in India as Diver summarises:

It has already been said that more than half the Englishwomen in India today have not spent their girlhood and early childhood in the country itself, which, in most cases, means they have been sent “home” at the age of seven or thereabouts, returning to face the chief business of their lives.

(11)

Tytler began her return voyage to India at the age of seventeen without “the charge of some responsible person” (46). She travelled the same route that Canning did almost a decade after. At Southampton, she boarded the most powerful P. & O. paddle steamer of the time, the *Hindustan*, and travelled to Alexandria. At Alexandria she took a smaller boat to Cairo, before travelling overland to Suez and then taking yet another boat for the final part of the journey.

Tytler's journey to India and the identity she constructs are distinct from those of the other writers in many aspects. Having been born in India, she was returning "home" to her parents and to where she was born. At departure she constructs an unstable equilibrium as she establishes the persona of a young girl confused by her national identity. Tellingly, she compares the years spent in Britain to an imprisonment: "I longed for the companionship of girls my own age... and for freedom out of prison, for such was our 'home' in Camden Hill" (44). She continues to reinforce the identity of a captive by counting down the days to her "release" back to India:

When I reached sixteen my spirits revived for I knew then that I should only have one more year to wait, so I tore up 365 pieces of paper and strung them together and hung them up on a nail in the schoolroom.

Every day I pulled one off and counted the remainder to the very end. At last my seventeenth birthday arrived. (45)

Tytler conveys departure as a significant life event. Her recollection of the farewell at port maintains the enthusiasm and impatience for India that she has built up in her memoir: "The time now came for the vessel to leave her moorings, the bell rang and all was ready" (46). She recollects the impact of her leaving upon her aunt and uncle who had been her guardians in Britain for six years:

My uncle, who looked upon me as his daughter, for I was just the age his eldest daughter would have been had she lived, was weeping bitterly. My aunt too was distressed, I don't for a moment suppose at parting with me, but probably for his sake. (46)

Her judgment of her aunt, "almost fifty years" (119) after the Mutiny, remains full of resentment. Tytler offers no reconciliation or resolution of their feud; however, her account is tinged with some remorse at her own unresponsive reaction:

I tried hard to cry and would have given anything not to appear heartless, but alas! Not a tear would come. The joy within at going 'home' to my father and mother was too great for hypocrisy, so that I could not even squeeze out a tear. My poor uncle was led away between my aunt and Mr Lovell in an agony of sorrow. (49)

Written over the whole of Tytler's memoir is an ominous anxiety and disorientation regarding her national identity, a concept that is explored in greater depth in Chapter Two. She defines herself as "An Englishwoman in India", the name of her published memoir, yet ironically she longs to be back in India, the place that she later refers to as "home" (46). The extent to which Tytler identifies with Britain poses a significant problem for her status as a traveller. A traveller moves between different locations, and experiences distances from their homeland, but Tytler, an unanchored subject, claims no "home" from which to travel and as the ship sets sail she can be defined as a "nomad", a confused identity unable to clearly define the boundaries of "home" and "away".

Frances Duberly and Georgiana Paget's journeys and journals are unique in this chapter as their sea-voyages to India take place during the early stages of the Mutiny. Although their narratives conflict with the chronological format of this dissertation, mentioning them in this chapter is pertinent and valuable as they offer interesting comparisons with Canning, Ouvry and Tytler's experiences of travel.

On the 8th October, 1857 Frances Duberly, accompanying her husband Captain Henry Duberly, paymaster to the 8th Royal Irish Hussars, left Portsmouth on the steam-ship *Great Britain*, for Bombay with Captain John Gray at the helm. Instead of commencing her diary with feminine emotion, Duberly conveys her mixed views about the voyage by using intertextual content and employing hyperbole, personification and pathetic fallacy, traits that point towards her intention to publish her writings. In contrast to Canning, Duberly offers no obvious personal opinions and instead begins her narrative with two textual quotations that establish an optimistic tone within her narrative. The first, from Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's poem "Hyperion" (1839), reads: "Look not mournfully into the Past. It comes not back again. Wisely improve the Present. It is thine. Go forth to meet the shadowy Future, without fear, and with a manly heart" (87). Longfellow's quote, although somewhat ominous in its reference to a "shadowy Future", conveys the prevailing characteristics of bravery and hope and is complemented by the subsequent quote from Tennyson's "Locksley Hall" (1835): "The mighty wind arises, roaring seaward, And I go" (56).

Both quotations function in conveying Duberly's textual self as brave, prepared and confident at the beginning of her journey, as she sets up the

conviction that she must travel “without fear, and with a manly heart”. However, following this intertextual preface Duberly’s opening account of the environmental context transmits a conflicting mood to her narrative:

The wind, which had blown a hurricane on the 7th, was still raging in our teeth as we steamed out of Queenstown, and the heavy confused sea made the ship labour hard to keep her way, and sent us to our cabins. Violent rolling continued until we had passed the current running through the Gut of Gibraltar. (1-2)

Whilst Duberly’s opening quotations contribute to the construction of a fearless and determined identity, her opening commentary of the ship’s departure forms an anxious and turbulent atmosphere. The hyperbolic personification of the ship through the “raging teeth” is angry and threatening and the pathetic fallacy conveyed through the “hurricane” and “violent rolling” adds a unstable and threatening tension within her writing. Like Canning and Tytler her textual self appears unsettled. As she departs Portsmouth, her narrative displays an amalgam of tones whilst her identity appears equally disorientated.

Georgina Paget travelled on 4 August 1857 from Arsenal Quay at Woolwich with her husband Captain Leopold Paget who was in command of the field battery Royal Artillery. She was travelling on a crowded trooping ship called the Warrior Queen alongside “the first detachment to leave England for the relief of the sufferers in India” (4). From the beginning of her narrative Paget’s writings are surprising by their lack of any obvious distress about the escalating Mutiny with the domestic conditions onboard forming her main concern. Her initial entries have a traditionally feminine and domestic focus as she highlights the fact that the ship is extremely disorganised and chaotic: “In the midst of much confusion, we embarked in two small steamers, which were so crowded with soldiers and baggage... the excitement of the scene, fortunately preventing our dwelling on the misery of separation from all we held dear in this world” (4). Like the other writers there is an ominous sense of unease and mourning for the past stability of “home”. The liveliness of her account and the confused syntactical structure reflects the confusion of the experience. Paget responds to this disorientation by carefully narrating and ordering the ship in her entries. Descriptions such as “We found ourselves in possession of one of the stern cabins... and when we had got it in order, it was really comfortable, and

contained a good cupboard in which to stow away superfluous articles” (4) allow the space to become familiar, a concept endorsed by Hassam: “a diary can be employed to help overcome spatial confusion” (61). Moreover by outlining her new domestic space Paget invests the ship with the connotations of “home”.

Paget’s description of the ship’s departure attempts to convey the emotion associated with leaving but her description lacks any overcharged sentiment:

Then were enacted the scenes of painful partings inseparable from the departure of troops on service, where the wives are of necessity left behind, and greatly was the sergeant’s wife envied who was allowed to accompany me as my maid. (7)

In this extract Paget disassociates herself from fellow army wives and from the emotion of separation. She is one of only three wives permitted to travel with their husbands, a status that allows her to feel a sense of exceptionality.

However, as the ship sets sail Paget’s privileged role amongst the women does not give her a favoured position on the ship: “a corner of the paddle-box was the only place I could find to sit on” (4). From the beginning of her narrative Paget establishes a textual identity that is multifaceted and unsettled.

It is important to stress that the preservation of a diary/series of letters over a voyage lasting months in such a physically and metaphorically hostile environment would have required great commitment and exertion by the women considered in this chapter. Against the context of a rolling and pitching ship, the disturbance caused by other passengers, the poor hygiene and, of course, the often-unyielding seasickness, the process of narrating the journey can be deemed as a “strategy for controlling disturbances and asserting normality” (Hampsten 57). The female diarists under scrutiny were in a perilous position on the sea-voyage to India, not simply because of the physical threat to their safety, though that was fundamental enough, but because the new experiences that travel offered were at odds with prescribed gendered boundaries dominant in mid-Victorian Britain.

The Origins of Private and Personal Narratives

W. H. G Kingston in his travel advice guide *The Emigrant Voyager’s Manual* (1850) offers advice to passengers undergoing a long sea-voyage during the mid-

nineteenth century. Primarily, the handbook acknowledges the disarray such a journey can cause: “You are on board ship. All seems confusion and disorder” (7). Following his recommendations for luggage, health and safety, and daily exercise, Kingston emphatically stresses the significance of undertaking autobiographical writing whilst travelling: “I wish particularly to impress upon your minds the advantage and amusement to be derived from keeping a journal of the occurrences of each day” (23).⁴⁷ Kingston views writing in the same way that he views gymnastic exercise: “Resolve that nothing shall hinder you from this practice, and depend on it and you will often find it will assist you in keeping to good resolutions and in avoiding bad habits” (23). The manual argues that writing a diary is key to preserving self-discipline, but Kingston also saw the benefits of tracking new contexts. He views the diary as having two purposes. Firstly it can be used to document factual observations: “Observe what fish and birds you see, and describe them”, “observe whether you pass many ships” and “then mention who comes on board; what is done and what you have done” (24-25). Secondly, Kingston recognises the diary’s role in tracking the development of one’s own identity by advising passengers to: “Note down your own feelings... describe your first night at sea, how you think and feel... note what trades you learn and how you occupy yourself” (24-25). In basic terms, Kingston was inviting his readers to provide personal stories of travel, whilst simultaneously presenting facts and observations related to the sea-voyage. This presented a contradictory and complex task for Victorian women writers. The customary subject matter of female diaries was domestic and personal matters and thus sea travel provided mostly unwomanly and contentious material.

150 years later Pratt’s research also identifies a similar dual purpose evident in travel narratives. She asserts that travelogues are either “informational” or “experiential” or a combination of the two modes. Informational travelogues focus on scientific exploration and natural history, characterised by an abundance of precise scholarly information ranging in nature from the geographic, mineralogical, botanical and agricultural, to the economic, ecological and ethnographic. In experiential texts the traveller becomes the

47. William H. Sherman in “Stirrings and Searchings 1500-1720” in *The Cambridge Companion to Travel Writing* claims “Documentation has always played an important role in travel, particularly in overseas ventures. English merchants and mariners had long been instructed to keep careful records of their movements” (17).

protagonist, the self-dramatising speaker emphasising personal adventures and emotions. In informational texts, the self is erased, whilst in experiential narratives, the narrator is at the centre of the action. To simplify, if the informational is typified by descriptions of landscape, weather and animals, then the experiential is typified by heroic adventures within the landscape, against the weather when battling animals.

The narratives under analysis promote interrogation into why Canning, Duberly, Ouvry, Paget and Tytler wrote. Hassam argues that “writing was an attempt to frame and control the meaning of the voyage out” (4) fulfilling “the desire to give a durable form to the defining experience of an emigrant, the journey from the old life to the new” (21). Indeed, the accounts under scrutiny comply with the notion that one must keep the narrative going no matter what the context. Paget heeds Kingston’s advice that “nothing should hinder” writing despite the chaos, seasickness, adverse weather and lack of new content: “There are two other ladies on board, both more or less suffering from seasickness, and I felt miserably cold and wretched, though determined not to give in” (7). Even when weather prevents immediate writing, once it is possible, Paget quickly catches up on the missed action: “The last two days I have been too ill to do anything but lie on my back, and the weather has been most wretched - continued storms of wind and rain, and the former dead against us, so that we beat backwards and forwards” (9).

Ironically when there is little to report, the monotony becomes the focus: “Writing about having nothing to write about is at least writing” (98 Hassam).⁴⁸ Once the trauma of departure has lessened and the routine of life at sea had been established Duberly finds it a challenge to generate new content, yet still continues to write:

Life of board ship becomes so listless and so objectless, that those who have been accustomed to exercise and activity usually suffer both in health and temper... For the next fortnight one bright day wore away as its predecessor had done, with sunshine, monotony, and music. (2-3)

48. The importance of maintaining a diary everyday no matter what the context is considered by Rebecca Steinitz in *Time, Space and Gender in the Nineteenth-Century British Diary* (2011) who claims that “sometimes, keeping up with demands of dailiness, fullness, accuracy, and their implications of immediacy, diarists resorted to fakery” (24).

Ouvry too endorses this sense of monotony and searching for an experience to narrate: “The least thing is an event on board ship, even the sighting of three rocks, about 30 miles from Trinidad” (5). Paget identifies the strength that is needed to continue in such a monotonous context: “Our amusing powers are utterly exhausted, all energy for games and amusements vanished, and we are reduced to a state of passive endurance!” (25). She adds to the sense of tedium and the increasing uniformity of life at sea by outlining daily routines:

I generally have a bason of coarse oat meal gruel directly when I come on deck in the morning, which serves me for breakfast; the bread and biscuit are both uneatable, which is a great privation. At twelve, we have either a small pudding, made by one of our servants, or a cup of arrowroot; and our dinner, at four, is brought to us on deck, where we eat with our plates on our knees. (19-20)

Hampsten suggests that repetition and routines in diaries act as “strategies for controlling disturbances and asserting normality” (57) and Duberly, Ouvry and Paget’s continuance in writing, complaints of boredom and structuring of routines noticeably defuses the threatening confusion that was conveyed at departure. Likewise, this intention is also revealed via descriptions of weather, nature and landscapes. Such reports give narrative coherence to the diaries, spatial coherence to the voyage and are important in giving the travellers a sense of controlling a new and transient context; however, the manner in which such information is put across presents a conflict between experiential/informational and masculine/feminine modes of writing. The mid-Victorian female diary was expected to focus on “intimacy: a text that represented the family and the domestic sphere” (Steinitz 95), but the writings challenge this convention. Ouvry initially rejects the diary as a personal account of thoughts and feelings by turning towards a public mode and setting out her narrative like a ship’s log via the daily recording of navigational data and temperatures. By adopting the masculinised approach of “mapping, charting, collecting and botanising” (Smethurst 10) Ouvry avoids the picturesque, “a distinctly feminised form of travel writing” (C. Thompson 175). Ouvry develops a pattern of beginning each day’s account with a temperature report: “Friday, 24th. The weather has become very warm now – thermometer 82° and 83°” (Ouvry 3). It becomes habitual for Ouvry to begin her daily entry with a rather monotonous temperature update:

“Saturday, 20th. Thermometer at 90° in the shade and 125° in the sun” (8). Even when she does not report the precise temperature, weather habitually becomes her focus: “Friday, 26th. Squally, with calms between the squalls... Friday, 9th. A dead calm all last night and to-day” (9). Ouvry’s fixation with recording the climate leads her diary to mimic Theodore Karamanski’s definition of a ship’s log: a text that fixates on “weather and wind to the exclusion of almost all other topics” (173). Indeed Ouvry, for the first half the sea-voyage, avoids writing about the self and focuses more on detailing navigational coordinates:

Thursday, 7th. We have gone 20° 25m in five days since we crossed the line... We are going east, and cannot make the one-degree of latitude we want of the line. I believe we have not made any latitude for five days... We tack twice in twenty-four hours, only gaining one point north each way. From twelve o’clock yesterday to twelve today we went two hundred and fifty miles. (5-9)

Tim Cahill defines the ship’s log as “a storyless compendium of facts” (xviii) and Ouvry’s opening accounts comply with this classification as data and figures govern and the tale surrounded them is omitted. By aligning her diary with the masculine mode of ship’s log it can be claimed that Ouvry was attempting to increase the status of her diary from a private narrative to a purposeful account with amplified value and cultural significance. However, the next phase of the chapter demonstrates that when experiencing a new and transitory context, personal, experiential and feminised writing styles appear an inescapable custom for the five women writers.

A ship’s log may have deemed as having more “educational value” (Speake 737) than a personal female diary, but Ouvry’s content is scarcely engaging, as Pratt herself points out: “informational kind of writing suffered from one serious defect: it was terribly boring” (43) for both writer and reader. Duberly, Ouvry and Paget’s diaries substantiate this theory as experiential personal comments develop and progressively begin to eclipse informational accounts. Amid the tedium of temperatures and distances travelled a narrative gradually emerges and a sense of personal agency surfaces made evident through the writers’ use of personification, hyperbole and pathetic fallacy. Tellingly, for the final month of her sea-voyage Ouvry doesn’t refer to one numerical temperature reading, despite weather occasionally remaining a common theme in

her narrative. Her comments regarding climate become unquestionably experiential as she permits her personal experiences of the weather to surface:

Saturday 16th. A most unpleasant night and day, we could not have service. I went up on deck but the spray dashed over me and I got wet through... Sunday, 28th. Violent rain all night, accompanied by the most vivid lightning I ever saw, the thunder was not loud (5-9).

Instead of writing overtly about feminine emotion, the writers convey their thoughts and feelings about the journey through fictional methods such as personification and pathetic fallacy, a tendency that Hassam claims is prevalent in travel narratives:

Diarists more often shy away from introspection, becoming embarrassed at what may be thought of as self-indulgence. This is not to say the diaries display no emotion; storms and sunsets offer diarists the opportunity to evoke fear or wonder as the occasion demands. (35)

Paget furnishes her diary with a deeper sense of personal experience as she employs pathetic fallacy when ascribing her feelings of nostalgia for Britain to the weather: "The temperature is delicious, like a good specimen of May at home" (26). She continues to use weather/astronomical observations to reflect her internal musings about Britain:

We have a good deal of mist in the evenings, which obscures the brightness of the stars. I miss the dear old familiar face of the Great Bear, and am much disappointed in the Southern Cross, which is composed of bright stars at a great distance from each other, and rarely visible at the same time, instead of a vivid, distinct diamond-like cross. (27)

In late October, following a day of "rowing indulged by those who liked it" (39), Paget's description of the weather reflects her happiness at an enjoyable day:

The sunset was glorious, the great orb itself going down in a flood of gold, whilst on the opposite side of the sky appeared a shower of rose-coloured rain, the intermediate clouds being the brightest crimson, shedding floods of rosy light all along the water, which was smooth and glossy as a pond. (39)

Here Paget's description can arguably be defined as hyperbolic due its use of exaggerated colours. When Paget is happy descriptions such as the "Sapphire

sea” (37) and “majestic mountain” (17) mark her account, but when the context of a day has been negative, her weather accounts mimic this. In early November, following a bout of food poisoning and whilst suffering “bad headaches in consequence” (43), her depiction of the environment reflects her unease: “the weather has been variable, sometimes close and suffocating even on deck, and then succeeded by perfect cataracts of rain; squalls abounding” (43).

Duberly’s account uses personification, hyperbole and pathetic fallacy in a more explicit manner. Her account unquestionably appears more imaginary and fictional than the other four writers. This could possibly be owing to her aforementioned published narrative on the Crimean war and her awareness that attention grabbing and imaginative accounts might appeal to readers. The opening of her account is dominated by her optimism and excitement which is shrewdly revealed in her accounts of climate/conditions: “as we followed our southern course the sea became tranquil, and the manifold beauties of tropical day and nights gradually unfolded themselves – days all gold and nights all silver” (2). Her description of the ship’s movement is manipulated with hyperbolic effect: “Our ship spread her white wings and sailed slowly and gracefully over the foam-flecked, sparkling waves” (2). Following a brief stop in St. Vincent Duberly reflects her longing for land by using a religious analogy: “Noah from the windows of the ark did not look forward to being on land again with greater eagerness than we; and like Noah we stood upon a rock” (2). Most significantly, she emphasises her concern at leaving Cape Town via the exaggerated personification of the ship:

The first few days after leaving the Cape were disagreeable, and cold, and rough; the Great Britain rolled about, as if she had uneasy dreams, although from her great size and breadth of beam, she went through the sea more easily than a smaller craft... Every furnace was a-light; the ship throbbed from stem to stern, like an over-driven horse; her waste pipes gasped and sobbed. (10-13)

Here, the gasps and sobs of the ship may as well be Duberly’s own, but by using figurative techniques she detaches herself from feminine sentiment. She avoids a

self-indulgent response and thus resists what Anne-Marie Millim defines as the “emotional labour” commonly seen in mid-Victorian female diaries.⁴⁹

Tytler also employs rhetorical techniques when describing the voyage. Her writing style conforms with both informational/experiential methods when she recounts stopping in Gibraltar and attempts to document the flora: “What a happy day that was for me. We went to the land and there I saw dear old friends, flowers that were so familiar to me in India, besides geraniums and roses growing in profusion” (49). Tytler’s description of the flowers features an obvious personal agenda. She employs personification when referring to the flowers as “old friends”, a term that she uses sparingly in reference to her fellow passengers or family in Britain. However, on her arrival in Aden, the tone of Tytler’s narrative drastically alters as she receives harrowing news:

When we reached Aden, everyone with the exception of myself received letters from their friends... It appears, however, there was a letter for me and Mr. Lamb the clergyman was to have delivered it in person. The first words I read were, and I recollect no more, ‘I grieve to tell you of your dear father’s death.’ When I came to again, I found myself in my berth, just as I was, but alone. (53)

As her ship nears India and Tytler learns of her father’s death, the hectic and eventful social life on board the ship is now contrasted by the image of a seventeen-year-old girl crying alone in her berth. In contrast to the formerly described “happy day”, Tytler now documents a turbulent and dangerous storm: “Time wore on, and as we neared Ceylon a severe storm overtook us. Part of one of the paddle wheels was carried away, as well as several boats, also the poor cow went overboard... We were all in our nightgowns, and a sorry lot we looked” (54). Tytler’s construction of the external chaos and turbulent storm reflects her internal traumatised self and it is questionable whether Tytler, writing more than sixty years after this episode, embellishes the climate to accentuate the inner torment that she wishes to communicate in her memoir.

As Canning, Duberly, Ouvry, Paget and Tytler’s narratives/journeys progress there is a mounting conflict between the purpose of writing and the

49. Anne-Marie Millim’s *The Victorian Diary: Authorship and Emotional Labour* (2013) offers an examination of neglected diaries and argues that authors such as Elizabeth Rigby Eastlake, Edith Simcox and George Eliot exploit the diary’s self-reflexive, diurnal structure in order to manage emotion and enhance their own creativity.

Careful balancing of traditional womanly content and masculine modes of writing. The narratives develop an amalgamation of technical and methodical writings alongside personal and emotional themes as the writers arguably manipulate and control descriptions of environment to reflect their textual self. Moreover, as the subsequent phase of this chapter determines, this conflict becomes increasingly complicated as the writers draw closer to India.

Exceptional Travellers

A dominant theme running throughout studies of women who travel is the theory that they are somehow exceptional, eccentric and adventurous personalities who stand apart from those women at home.⁵⁰ They are commonly presented, upon their arrival in an exotic land, as having been somehow able to break free, if only minimally, from prescribed behaviours and roles. But, what happens to such identities when en route? Did the sea-voyage afford British women the opportunity to stretch the boundaries of mid-nineteenth century femininity? This chapter now progresses to demonstrate that as Canning, Duberly, Ouvry, Paget and Tytler experience a long stretch of time upon the unstable context of the sea, a new set of identities gradually emerge. The writers manipulate new contexts by highlighting masculine maritime traditions, roles and responsibilities in textual identities that accentuate their exceptionality and distinction from British women at home. The female authors all construct textual personas that can be deemed unwomanly at certain points, although it is critical to acknowledge that they do not completely reject or undermine traditional feminine behaviours. On the contrary, the women elevate the status of womanly roles and attempt to expand upon them. Hassam argues that “Leaving home, embarkation, and setting sail can be seen as marking the end of the old life precisely because the voyage out is already culturally defined as a movement towards a new life” (56). However, the following research goes against Hassam’s claims by proposing that the sea-voyage offers opportunities for new additions to the existing life. The five writers under examination do not wholly cut ties with traditional female identities, but

50. Sara Mills makes reference to this throughout her book *Discourses of Difference* (1993): “As a subject, the study of women’s travel writing is usually considered as falling within the field of social sciences, as part of women’s history which is often characterised as being that of exceptional women” (31).

they do propose a subtle, but discernable transformation between the self at home in Britain and the self at sea en route to India.

The history and infamy of Tytler's memoir revolves around the notion of her exceptionality. She has received some historical attention because she gave birth to her son on a ridge in the middle of the Mutiny.⁵¹ Moreover, it is often said that she was the only woman to be present at the Siege of Delhi, a claim that she declares assertively at the beginning of her account: "I was the only lady" (119). The opening paragraph of her narrative constructs and introduces the reader to her proud self-definition as a traveller:

Mother told me I was born on the 3rd of October 1828, in Secrora and that the native nurse noticed in giving me my first bath a mole on the soul of my left foot, from which she predicted I should travel till I died – so far her prediction has come true. Years ago I was weary of so much travelling with a number of little children and often threatened to burn out the mole, whereupon my husband would exclaim, 'Oh Harrie don't do any such thing, it may really mean the end of your travelling!' The mole is still there, and no rest yet, as far as I can see, to the soles of my weary feet. (5)

Tytler's self-classification as a traveller runs throughout her writings and notably the first account in her memoir begins with the words: "At the great age of thirteen days I began my first journey" (5). Her declaration suggests that this was the first of many excursions and that she is fundamentally "a traveller". By classifying herself as a traveller Tytler highlights a common conflict found in travel writings linked with exceptionality, between being a traveller and a tourist.

Ever since Thomas Cook swept the first working-class package tourists into British seaside resorts in the 1840s, tourist-bashing and debates regarding the real way to travel have served as an issue of class conflict and social superiority. The traveller versus tourist dilemma has been widely debated by travel theorists who assert that "the traveller was working at something: the

51. On June 17, 2007 the *Sunday Times* ran an article entitled "The woman who watched Delhi fall" by Christopher Hudson that detailed Tytler's story.

tourist was a pleasure-seeker” (Boorstin 85).⁵² Speake in *Literature of Travel and Exploration* (2003) considers the debate:

A dichotomy seems to emerge between tourist and traveller whereby the traveller seeks encounter with the unfamiliar, leaving the well-beaten track to travel independently, whereas the tourist remains childishly dependent, led by the nose to sights that are reduced to cliché by the gaze of tourists. The tourist is that “other fellow,” ignorant and insensitive. (1186)

Although Speake notably refers to the traveller as “he”, her comments further underline the issues of superiority and supremacy associated with being a traveller. “Every Englishman abroad, until it is proved to the contrary, likes to consider himself a traveller and not a tourist” (27), said Evelyn Waugh in *Labels* (1930) and for the Canning, Duberly, Ouvry, Paget and Tytler, the same can be said.

Reflecting the symbolic separation between traveller and tourist Canning uses her writings to distance herself from being a tourist, instead promoting her identity in the guise of a seasoned traveller. Her journal entries and letters from the initial days of travel onboard the *Caradoc* are occupied by superior declarations that she was the only passenger to “retain full possession of appetite and stomach” (Lady Canning to Queen Victoria, Dec. 19. 1855, RA Z502/1). This is not an uncommon trait in Canning’s writing. At the age of twenty, onboard a ship going to Southend, she writes a letter to her sister Louisa conveying a similar message:

‘Our expedition to Southend has not answered to any of the party but me and Carlo [Charles Canning]. I have liked it very much as it is very quiet and I have had plenty of sea air but I must own that all the rest have good cause of complaint’. (qtd. in Surtees, 26)

Canning is aware that unlike the majority of British women travelling to India, she is privileged to be onboard the *Caradoc*. Unlike Duberly and Paget’s uncomfortable trooping ships, her position as wife of the Governor-General of India permits her a superior class of travelling: “Our voyage was most agreeable (tho’ perhaps others liked it less than I) as we had a very strong fair wind and

52. See Patrick Holland and Graham Huggan, *Tourists with Typewriters: Critical Reflections on Contemporary Travel Writing* (1998), Arthur Asa Berger, *Deconstructing Travel* (2004) and Graham Dann, *The Tourist as a Metaphor of the Social World* (2002).

rough seas to Malta – the comfort of being in the Caradoc instead of a crowded passenger vessel is not to be described” (Lady Canning to Queen Victoria, Dec. 19. 1855, RA Z502/1).

Canning’s exceptionality is additionally enhanced by the fact that she was writing in response to instructions from Queen Victoria. Within her letters there is increasing evidence that she had been charged with compiling a record of her travels for the Queen’s perusal:

Madam, As your Majesty so kindly expressed a wish to hear from me I venture to write, for tho’ this is but a very early stage in our long journey we have seen and done so much I could easily believe we had been away 3 months rather than 3 weeks... I cannot tell your Majesty how much civility and what honours have been paid to us. (Lady Canning to Queen Victoria, Dec. 19. 1855, RA Z502/1)

The notion that Canning is writing at the request of a monarch is suggested further in Victoria’s enthusiastic response to her letter: “Dearest Lady Canning, Your first very interesting letter of the 19th Dec. from Cairo has given me the greatest pleasure and I thank you very much for it. How very wonderful all those Oriental luxuries and customs must be” (Queen Victoria to Lady Canning, Jan. 25, 1856, CP).

From her dirty, busy trooping ship Paget also assembles an identity that sets her apart from her fellow passengers. She continually defines herself as being more suited to travel than those around her: “The poor woman who was to act as my maid has, of course, been more ill than I have been” (14). On an occasion when she is ill she blames the domestic conditions rather than the travelling: “I do not believe I should be at all ill if it were not for the horrid smells and the bad food” (7). She details how travelling down the Channel “at a great rate” reduced “most of the passengers to a pitiable state” (13); however, she is clear to emphasise “but not me” (13). Crucially, Paget recognises that her status as an Army Captain’s wife is a privileged and advantaged position:

The poor women have no accommodation of any kind as yet, but the captain promises to put them up somewhere... They have hitherto slept on chairs, or tables, or anywhere in a corner, and only get a chance mouthful after our meals, which is a great shame. (8)

Paget reinforces the perception of her being the only woman in a position of responsibility by detailing how she has “been busily employed in organising a school for the soldiers”, a daily event that forms her “regular occupation” (16). It is notable that Paget’s utilises the terms “employed” and “occupation” here; she seeks a purpose during the journey. The role she assumes can be considered as traditionally feminine, due to it being an educational/teaching position. Yet, whilst female teachers in a mid-Victorian British context were commonly perceived as “young, naïve, and malleable” (Prentice and Theobald 4) Paget elevates the status of this role to one of authoritative leadership. Teaching becomes an “employment” that emphasises Paget’s exceptionality and gives her a special role amongst other women.

Increasingly, as the writers become accustomed to life on the sea, the oceanic context starts to have more bearing upon their textual identities as maritime personas, identities that suggest a special role in seafaring activities, gradually emerge. Textual portrayals of the self progressively lose their feminine domestic focus and vocabularies become embedded with nautical terms and maritime traditions. The writings increasingly feature seafaring idioms and slang as the writers indicate their involvement and knowledge regarding the running of ships. The nautical context temporarily authorises the women to enter a masculine domain and their textual identities reflect this new and exceptional context.

One significant maritime tradition that Ouvry, Paget and Tytler narrate is the experience of crossing the equator. The practice of “crossing the line” has often been viewed as a symbolic boundary for sea travellers. Simon Bronner’s *Crossing the Line: Violence, Play, and Drama in Naval Equator Traditions* (2007) summarises the ceremony metaphorically as “a baptism, with ritual birth and rebirth” (9). This chapter now determines that within Ouvry and Paget’s narratives crossing the equator does indeed mark a discernable division. Although the research does not claim that identities are “reborn”, it does posit that that cultural experience of “crossing the line”, in the same manner as a rite of passage, leaves a lasting mark on textual identities.

Initially Ouvry establishes her textual identity as being fearful on the sea and “sea-lingo” is non-existent in her diary: “We passed a fearful night, the ship rolled and tossed so much I scarcely slept at all” (2). Unlike Canning, Paget and

Tytler she suffers with some seasickness: “I felt unwell for the first few days” (2). Her account of the “crossing the line” ceremony is described in a fictional and imaginative tone that builds tension and a feeling of significance for the approaching event. Crucially, Ouvry does not introduce or explain what the ceremony means and notably introduces Neptune, the fictional figure, as a real person: “In the evening, our sailors sent off a tar-barrel, and Neptune is to come on board on Saturday” (4). Ouvry invests wholly in the importance of the event as she builds up a sense of anticipation by providing regular updates regarding the upcoming ceremony: “Thursday, 30th. Neptune’s secretary came on a donkey, made up for the occasion, to take down the names of those who have never crossed the line” (4). On the day of the ceremony, the ritual is described in an intensely fictional manner: “Saturday, 2nd. Neptune and his wife came in a kind of car covered with sheepskins, and there was a procession with a drum and fifes... After a little parade, they went to work and played all manner of tricks on the sailors” (5). Notably, as Ouvry crosses the equator and the ship moves closer to India, her use of nautical terminology becomes increasingly more technical: “I believe we have not made any latitude for five days. The deck is being caulked, which makes a great noise” (9). Ouvry does not define the meanings of such terms as she increasingly portrays herself as knowledgeable of maritime routines. She even claims to have a maritime nose: “I smelt land this morning and some said they saw it before the sun rose” (9). Whilst Ouvry firmly establishes herself as a passenger at the beginning of the voyage, following her passage across the equator she suggests a co-identity with sailors and a participation in masculine activities:

The mainmast was put up today. The captain was on deck from five in the morning until ten at night, and even had his meals on deck. It was a long concern getting the mast up and then there were all the sails and rigging to be put in order. I went on the fore-castle to assist. (6)

Within her memoir Tytler constructs a more comprehensive maritime record as she details some of the traditions and rituals of her sea-voyage with an instructive tone. Tytler, a self-proclaimed “traveller”, conveys nautical customs as common knowledge, therefore enforcing her maritime identity:

The Captain used to call us little ones and say, ‘Now children, whistle for a wind.’ We tried our best, but none of us knew how to whistle. So the

long wished for cat's paw did not appear, but no sooner did the slightest breeze spring up than every sail was set in hopes of getting out of the becalmed latitude. (29)

The phrase "whistle for a wind" refers to the common superstitious practice among sailors to whistle for a wind during calm seas and the "Cat's Paw" refers to a light breeze. William Matthews argues that: "Sailors's Talk is a dialect as distinct from ordinary English as Hindustani is, or Chinese" (200), but Tytler employs such terms without further explanation, thus enforcing her experienced traveller status. Tytler constructs her textual self as being accustomed with crossing the equator by beginning her account of the ceremony with the words "as usual":

As usual in the evening, on crossing the line, there was great fun for all, both young and old, when Neptune came on board, trident in hand, tremendously got up, to tar and feather all who had not crossed the Equator before. (29)

Like Ouvry, Paget places symbolic importance on crossing the equator and expects a better journey following the event: "In short, it is now the rainy season here south of the Line, and we cannot expect fine weather till we have crossed it." (43). Tellingly, when she has indeed "crossed the line", the description of the weather takes on a more pleasant tone: "We had a slight breeze on Wednesday, which carried us over the Line, but left us becalmed in heavenly weather ever since" (44). Notably, like Ouvry, Paget conveys her ability at smelling land: "The smell of land was quite perceptible, a balmy perfume of hay" (48), and acknowledges that this is a new phase of her life by defining her daily routine as "the kind of bivouac life we lead" (29). The term bivouac denotes a range of masculine connotations regarding being a member of a camp/regiment and it is a declaration that indicates that Paget has adjusted to the seafaring community on the ship. Paget's newly acquired maritime identity stands in stark contrast to the hygiene obsessed and downbeat woman she constructs at the beginning of the journey.

Another way in which the writers manipulate the sea context in order to convey their textual self as exceptional is by implicating their involvement in maritime adventures. Their narratives increasingly feature tales of heroic adventures that fit with Pratt's experiential model. Adventure stories, to use

Pratt's terminology, can be defined as discourse that "narrates the journey as an epic-style series of trials and challenges" (*Scratches* 131). Such adventures very rarely involve the women directly, yet such opportunities for retelling "trials and challenges" are eagerly grasped as something that permitted them to stretch the boundaries of feminine involvement.

The women appear keen to define events as "adventures" and supplement this by using indelicate and unwomanly declarations alongside a lack of sentimentality and fear. For Duberly, an incident involving a man overboard is conveyed as a welcome experience to break the monotony of the day:

For the next fortnight one bright day wore away as its predecessor had done, with sunshine, monotony, and music, when suddenly as we were sitting dreaming on the after part of deck, and the men forward were amusing themselves with games and songs, the cry of 'A Man Overboard!' was taken up from mouth to mouth, till, in an instant, it surged from end to end of the ship. Rushing to the side, we saw him flash by underneath. (3-4)

Notably, Duberly express no concern or worry for the man's fate and her retelling lacks the "sentimentality and piety" (Gray 226) expected in Victorian women's writing. Ouvry too recounts a man overboard and is similarly unwomanly in her factual description and definition of the event as an "adventure":

While we were sitting at breakfast, we heard a call for the life-buoy. Every person rushed on deck; there were two men overboard... They tried to cling to the side of the ship – it was calm, and we were not going on at all – but the ship was rolling so terribly that they went an immense way under water every time she rolled... what an adventure. (7-8)

Paget's attempts at narrating adventures are on a slightly smaller scale, but they are nonetheless symbolic:

We had been congratulating ourselves lately on the disappearance of the cockroaches since the cold weather, when, last night just after I had stepped into bed, I discovered an enormous one, full two inches long, cautiously emerging from a crevice, followed by six others; after a most exciting hunt, I succeeded in capturing them all. (40)

Paget's account is littered in hyperbole as she details the successful "hunt" and "capturing" cockroaches. Paget, like Duberly, Ouvry and Tytler, is keen to emphasise her new and exceptional self by portraying her participation in maritime adventures.

Within her diary Duberly looks back upon her sea-voyage with nostalgia, whilst also looking forward to India with optimistic anticipation:

It was with feeling of regret that I thought of leaving the ship... I had begun the voyage in much unhappiness at having so soon again to leave England... The beauties of the tropic sea and sky, however, had turned my thoughts from the past to the present: the contemplation of the present braced my spirits, and I gradually learnt to unwind my heart from England... and to allow it to anticipate its Indian future... And now the voyage is over I cannot, but be glad that this new phrase of life opens before me. (11-18)

Duberly's rather passionate assertion conveys gratefulness for the opportunities that the sea context has offered but also suggests pleasure at "unwinding" from British constraints. However, can the flexibility of gender boundaries that was offered upon the ship remain when British women reach India and experience a military conflict? Duberly appears to think so by stressing enthusiastic hope regarding her future life in India. Despite having already experienced one militaristic conflict, the Crimean War, her textual identity at this point is fearless and confident. Instead of dwelling on the past, or reflecting anxiousness regarding the Mutiny that awaits her, she looks to India with excitement and the new and exceptional contexts before her.

Navigating Collective Identities

As this chapter has thus far proven, the textual identities of the five women under focus are far from static. The discussion now concludes by investigating the impact of sea travel upon the writers' portrayals of collective identity. It probes the following enquiry: if new and exceptional versions of the self test the limits of mid-Victorian gendered ideals, do constructions of a collective identity or community help strengthen and protect British values? Can a threat to one's gendered identity be offset by the cultivation of a communal identity?

The concept of a united collective identity was particularly apparent for Britons in the mid-nineteenth century. Colley asserts that Britons “came to define themselves as a single person not because of any political or cultural consensus at ‘home’, but rather in reaction to “the Other” beyond their shores” (6). Colley goes on to suggest that the empire caused a new feeling of jingoistic pride (7), a point emphasised by Graham MacPhee and Prem Poddar: “English pride, privilege, and chauvinism remained powerful forces” (191). Hassam suggests that this trait was even more prevalent in those Britons who experience sea travel: “There is nothing like crossing the seas for bringing out a culture’s latent chauvinism, and one of the main objectives... was to retain a sense of never having left Britain” (2). Critics of travel writing have frequently remarked on the impact of travel upon an individual’s sense of collective national identity and have commonly proposed the belief that the disappearance of territorial consciousness induces feelings of disorientation and disassociation in a traveller’s psyche.⁵³ Hassam contends that physical detachment from a homeland triggers a desperate and inevitable struggle to recapture home: “in the alien world of the voyage out emigrants clung to what they knew” (2).

As this chapter has previously illustrated, women writers respond to physical dissociation from British land via attempts to define and organise the ship as a “home”. The discussion now moves on to demonstrate that an awareness of nationality, “home” and belonging can also be gained through the symbolic formation of a collective community at sea. Anthony Cohen leaves out the concept of space and geographical boundaries completely when he argues that communities are constructed through symbolic shapes:

Symbols are effective because they are imprecise. Though obviously not contentless, part of their meaning is ‘subjective’. They are, therefore, ideal media through which people can speak a ‘common’ language, behave in apparently similar ways, participate in the ‘same’ rituals, pray to the ‘same’ gods, wear similar clothes and so forth. (21)

Here Cohen indicates that a community does not have to exist in a fixed environment, but it can exist through the gathering of travellers’ similar symbolic

53. See Judith Johnston, *Victorian Women and the Economies of Travel, Translation and Culture, 1830-1870* (2013), Marjorie Morgan, *National Identities and Travel in Victorian Britain* (2001), and Kristi Siegal, *Gender, Genre, and Identity in Women’s Travel Writing* (2004).

customs and practices which when conjoined together allow travellers to realise a collective identity.

Rather surprisingly, for the majority of the writers under scrutiny, the urge to construct a sense of collective British community is not instantaneously evident in their accounts of departure and the early phase of life at sea. Crucially, it is a characteristic that surfaces much further in the journey and is most prominent when the ships near India and the writers are confronted with “the Other”. Indeed, at the beginning of their journeys and narratives, the tone of the writing is more critical of fellow Britons than praising as Ouvry, Paget and Tytler elevate the status of their individual identity by narrating themselves in superior social positions above other Britons onboard.

The writers begin their narratives by providing sketches of the poor behaviour of fellow British passengers. They textually inscribe the well-defined social groups on the ship and place themselves at the upper end in terms of class and moral status. Ouvry distances herself from fellow Britons by criticising their corrupt behaviour:

The cook made us a cake last night. I just tasted it, and put it on the window-sill looking on to the lower deck; but while we were both in the cabin, someone managed to crawl in and steal it!... Someone has stolen the chessboard, so we cannot play any more. (9)

Ouvry becomes progressively more exasperated by her fellow Britons: “There was a tremendous row on board, the monotony of the voyage is trying to people’s tempers” (9). Tytler, a self proclaimed “traveller”, is also intensely critical of fellow Britons and is distressed by their overindulgence:

Wine of the very best was provided ad lib at meals. There was such waste in everything. I have seen stewards pouring good whisky into blacking bottles to clean their boots with. Champagne flowed like water. (48)

Tytler’s memoir is full of numerous anecdotes of waywardness among British passengers during “boardship episodes” (48) and through the retelling of such events she symbolically isolates herself from her travelling companions. At Malta she recalls buying three gold Maltese cross-pins and a canary, but when she is in Alexandria she discovers the pins have been stolen: “I could have cried with vexation... Some of the ladies knew this Mrs Henderson... and pointed her out as the thief as so many things had been missed before” (50).

Paget's representation of a British communal identity is perhaps the most surprising of the writers as she was travelling to India during the early stages of the Mutiny when the British reportedly joined together in national mourning.⁵⁴ As a result, there is perhaps a more overt expectation for national pride and community within her account. On the contrary, the opening of Paget's seaboard account is, like Ouvry and Tytler's, decidedly critical of fellow passengers, which in Paget's case were British male soldiers and sailors:

Two of the sailors were found drunk in the hold yesterday, having broken into a barrel of beer... the examination of the culprits ended in a tremendous scuffle, during which our skipper, who is a powerful man, knocked down the offenders... he threatens to imprison them on our arrival at Bombay. (26-27)

The opening of Paget's sea narrative is dominated by her disgust at others and superiority over them. By retelling largely unfeminine stories of behaviour in such a graphic manner she is arguably being unwomanly, but with the admissible purpose of showing her moral superiority:

One of the sailor's beds was discovered to be on fire today, occasioned probably by a drunken man smoking. It was fortunately found out in time to throw it into the sea... but our commanding officer, finding extreme carelessness and neglect prevail among the officers of the ship, made stringent regulations. (6)

Social sketches, criticisms and distancing techniques function powerfully by allowing the women writers to map the developing social circle as the journey progresses. Ouvry, Paget and Tytler's accounts of seafaring scandal shrewdly convey the social relationships, or lack of them, on board, and at this stage of their journeys/narratives a sense of shared communal identity is recurrently undermined.

Suzanne Bunkers, in her study of women's dairies, argues that women writers cannot remain individuals within private autobiographical writings: "meaningful connections with other human beings" always become the focus (16). Bunkers argues that "the diary becomes a place where they can write about relationships with others, thereby validating themselves as members of

54. George Forrest in *A History of the Indian Mutiny* (1904) refers to the sense of national grieving as he writes: "the joy of the nation was turned into mourning" (185).

communities” (16). Duberly, Ouvry, Paget and Tytler’s narratives substantiate Bunkers’ claims. As demonstrated, the women initially want to marginalise their fellow travellers, but as both journeys and narratives progress, the writers appear more willing to allow some passengers into their sphere; relationships evolve and a sense of communal identity is founded.

Within her memoir Tytler overtly conveys this approach by referring directly to the relationships that the sea-voyage induces. Within a short space of time formerly bemoaned “strangers” become “friends”:

Our principle amusements, I mean amongst the boys and girls, were dancing twice a day and playing cards – old maid and suchlike games – in the evening. Of course there was the usual amount of seasickness in the Bay of Biscay, while we were strangers to each other, but as soon as we reached Gibraltar everybody forgot their sorrows and troubles and were friends. (49)

Here Tytler reflects that the shared experience of “seasickness”, an ailment that she formerly declared she did not suffer from, has become a community forming behaviour, a “commonality” (Cohen 1), used to evoke a growing sense of unity and shared experience. Even Paget, who was extremely critical of fellow travellers and eager to establish her superior position, now defines such passengers as “our community”. Arguments, which were earlier depicted with undertones of violence and anxiety, become a community forming behaviour and experience of group bonding:

Arguments on given topics have now become the most popular source of amusement among us, and well worried the poor argument gets, like a bone amongst a set of hungry dogs, before the eighteen members of our community have done with it. Sometimes these arguments are very pleasant and even instructive. (42)

Paget and Tytler’s use of the terms “friends” and “community” signify the forming of a temporal home at sea and an increasing sense of communal identity. Paget’s complaints regarding drunkenness and fighting are superseded by accounts of social activities that add to the growing sense of community in her diary:

then generally commences a grand game of cock-fighting, or similar amusements, among the young gentlemen; followed by singing, either

amongst ourselves or the soldiers, sometimes varied by the latter dancing hornpipes or jigs, to the music of a flute and bones. (18)

She documents the passengers' attempts to maintain shared undertakings despite the conditions: "We had a game of whist this evening, under difficulties... the wind blew all stray cards in various directions" (15). Previously labelled drunken soldiers now become great allies in common amusements: "various games prevailed among the officers, and even the ladies took to hop-sotch and a skipping-rope!" (40)

Ouvry extends the notion of community by including those Britons who were travelling on other ships through the realisation of another collective identity that can be defined as a "sea-community". The sea-community differs from a national and gendered identity. Ouvry portrays it as a unique collection of travellers who share their belongings and wisdom:

Tuesday, 28th. We met a homeward bound vessel... We got all our letters ready and a boat was lowered... Our boat returned with the captain of the other ship... We gave her some of our potatoes and she sent us a present of some claret... The gentlemen dined on board the Ratcliffe, and when they left it, the two ships were close together. Their sailors gave three loud cheers which were soon answered by ours. They returned them and set sail for England. (4)

Despite not being allowed to dine on the neighbouring ship, a position reserved for the gentleman, Ouvry's textual self appears reassured by the exchanges that the sea-community offers. She details with sentiment the tradition of contributing and sharing goods between ships: "The captain was exceedingly kind, giving us a goose, turkey, etc.," (10) and a sense of extreme generosity is implied when she writes: "She sent a boat to ask for water as she had only eighty gallons left. We had none to spare but the captain gave sixty gallons" (11). In this account it is pertinent to note Ouvry's use of "we". A switch from an individual identity to a collective one is arguably discernible across the narratives via the increased rejection of the writers' "I", as writings becoming largely focused on the "we" in events. As the journeys progress and routines are established the kinds of activities that keep Duberly, Ouvry, Paget, Tytler busy are communal and therefore "we" becomes more appropriate, but the use of "we" when referring to

exchanges between ships is also symbolic. “We” signals the subtle loss of an individual persona and the progressive development of a collective sea identity.

As the writers approach India the community that has been revealed has had little to do with nationality or Britishness. However, for both Paget and Duberly, reminders of the Mutiny, the awaiting war in India, generate distinctly British communal identities within their writings. Arguably, the most noteworthy moment in Paget’s sea narrative happens on November 15 1857 when the captain from their ship goes on board a passing convict ship, the *Shah Allum*, returning from Bombay carrying ninety-five convicts who had reportedly committed atrocities in the early stages of the Mutiny:

It was a moment of great anxiety to learn the state of India, and what might be on landing. We were told of more dreadful massacres at Cawnpore and elsewhere, and that Delhi had at last been taken... After breakfast I made one of a party to visit the “*Sham Allum*”... The convicts were fine-looking ruffians, confined in cages on the lower deck... Some of our sergeants who went on board looked perfect Gullivers among the Lilliputs. (44-46)

This interaction marks a perceptible transformation to a British communal identity in Paget’s narrative. The reference to Jonathan Swift’s *Gulliver’s Travels* (1726) is apt given that the novel is often considered a metaphor for the British Empire of the eighteenth century. Gulliver represents the strong, proud and successful British giant, whilst the Lilliputians are the smaller, weaker race. Tellingly, following this event, Paget presents a sense of national unity and togetherness between herself and her fellow passengers as if remembering the battle between Britons and Indians in India. There is a resurgence of her British identity as she make nostalgic references to Britain: “We were regaled with a delicious tiffin of bananas and sweet cakes and had pure fresh water to drink – the first since we left England” (46).

Duberly too hears news of the Mutiny from the ship *The Himalaya* who “brought tidings of the fall of Delhi” (9). Like Paget, an update on the war conjures a renewal of British patriotism: “We fancied that with the taking of Delhi the chief part of the mutiny was crushed, and that the rebels would never attempt resistance any more” (9). Duberly recounts the soldiers’ disappointment that the Mutiny would be over before their arrival: “the news was unwelcome, as

they feared the work would be over before they arrived” (10). She recalls with jingoistic pride: “One officer, especially, to whom the smoke of the cannon was as the breath of life, would chafe at the tardy motion of the ship that held him back from the tented field” (10). Duberly describes him as “the strong, the gentle, the bravest of the brave, true Christian, true soldier, and true friend” (10), an indicator of her amplified sense of national pride and identity.

It is initially challenging to detect pleasure and pride at British identity within the writers’ depictions of travel. Their (con)textual identities present an anxious separation from Britain as they eagerly construct themselves as socially superior individuals. However, the argument has revealed how a new and notable sense of national identity is discernible when writers are faced with “the Other”, a concept and trend that will be explored in much greater depth in the following chapters.

Voyages of the Self

The preceding discussion has revealed that travel to India in the mid-nineteenth century had the ability to throw (textual) identities into turmoil. On one hand the sea has been exposed as a site of loss and disorientation possessing the ability to provoke anxiety at the lack of clearly defined roles and duties. On the other hand, this chapter has demonstrated how initial loss and disorientation of sea leads to opportunities for identities and modes of writing that can be defined as new and exceptional. Hassam contends that “a diary had already done a good deal of work by the end of the voyage” (2), a claim that this thesis wholly supports. Narrating a voyage offers a writer an attempt at controlling and familiarising the new, but its conclusion in India was not the end of a writer’s metaphorical journey: experiences continue to be dominated by identity alteration.

As Canning and Paget’s ships near their destination their writings hint that any newfound sense of exceptionality provoked at sea will be a challenge to maintain in India: a new context that presents a whole new set of tasks, trials and encounters. Upon her arrival, Canning’s advantaged and exceptional status is eroded when it is decided that she cannot land with her husband:

C of course agreed to whatever was proposed, but I don’t think he admired the arrangement more than I did, and it was not a pleasant addition to such an affair to have to make my public entry by myself. I

did not feel at all good-humoured about it, I own. I had my own choice whether to land before or after C. so I pocketed my grievance, and settled to land first, and see him arrive, instead of following after, quite privately when the crowd had dispersed, and all his show was at an end. (Lady Canning's Journal, Madras, Feb. 24 1856. CP)

Canning displays her objection at having to leave her husband and not be involved in "his show" and in stark contrast to the confident and assertive traveller she appeared on the ship, her textual self now appears secondary and subordinate. Likewise, arrival in India marks a variation in Paget's confident and optimistic tone as the "sapphire sea" is bluntly contrasted by an ominous description: "The sea no longer retains the transparent blue of the ocean, but ever since we have been in the surroundings of India, it has been of a thick, dullish green" (53). The darkening of the water and the darkening tone of Paget's description, like the shift in Canning's identity, symbolises the complexities and anxieties that India induced within the narratives reviewed in this dissertation.

For Canning, Duberly, Ouvry, Paget and Tytler the sea was not simply an inert flat line between two points of interest. It was an active stage on which the self was questioned and altered. However, after surviving the rigours of this "active stage", the writers now faced a fresh and challenging context: that of making a new "home" in India in the garrison that they had struggled for months to reach.

Chapter Two

“We have passed into a different stage of existence here”:

Life in Pre-Mutiny India

My dilemma was how to come as close as possible to the Other without losing my own identity.

(Barbara Frischmuth “Looking Over the Fence”, 1995)

This chapter is concerned with constructions of gender, racial and national identity in British women’s accounts of life in pre-Mutiny India. The discussion asserts that Charlotte Canning, Ruth Coopland, Matilda Ouvry and Harriet Tytler textually construct India, a colonial context, as an imaginary and conceptual place, where individual and collective identities of self and “Other” modify, alter and transform. Focusing on the letters and journal of Canning, the diaries of Coopland and Ouvry, and Tytler’s memoir, and through an emphasis on identity and place, the discussion contends that India formed a primary arena for women writers to compose new (con)textual identities that are unique and exceptional. The writers’ freshly constructed identities are demarcated against “the Other” in encounters within paradoxically domestic, private, militaristic and public spaces.

The research argues that the very act of being a British woman in India constituted a form of gender power as women sought and were granted access to experiences and roles not permitted back in Victorian Britain, a notion supported by Grewal: “Englishwomen could show their equality with Englishmen by participating in the colonial project” (65). However, the discussion also contends that the quest for a new and freer textual self, via a complete transgression of gender boundaries, was neither possible nor desired. By entering the public world of the military, attempting domestic management and social reform, the four women writers under scrutiny cautiously sought independence and authority by elevating the status and expanding upon traditional female functions. The narratives reflect a relentless struggle between embracing new opportunities whilst not overtly being contentious.

The following discussion plots the construction of complex and shifting boundaries as India is imagined as a space of instability and foreignness, as well

as home and belonging. It draws and builds upon the theory posited in Chapter One that identity is habitually defined through the properties and interpretations of place and context and that as a result textual versions on the self can be defined as (con)textual identities. Within the four accounts India is constructed as an “imagined Indian landscape”, a space of disorientation, provoking complex negotiations for writers who struggle to reshape the self and support Britain’s imperial agenda without endangering gender conventions.

In India, the representation and textualisation of the self becomes a negotiation between two opposing extremes: Britain and India. Consequently, textual personas reflect physical and emotional displacement, a dispute between authoritative and subjugated identities and anxieties regarding the loss of British identity. Within the narratives India behaves as a “zone of occult instability” (H. Bhabha *Nation* 281), a place of confusion and irregularity that the writers manipulate in order to reconstruct the self. Whilst Chapter One argued that travel generated the foundations of new and exceptional identities, Chapter Two develops and expands upon this notion by asserting that encounters in pre-Mutiny India provide Canning, Coopland, Ouvry and Tytler with the opportunities to depict the textual self as an assertive, active and authoritative woman who could not exist in Britain.

Coopland’s depiction of her landing in India delivers an appropriate introduction to the main concepts debated throughout this chapter:

We all gathered on deck to view the rapidly approaching land. Some, who were returning to homes and relations, welcomed this country of their adoption as an old friend. Others, like myself, examined with a critical eye the new and strange land which they believed would be their home for many years... A friend of mine told me he once overheard two fine fashionable-looking girls, just come from some great school, say to one another, on seeing a boat approaching the ship, containing two yellow-looking, ordinary people, “Who are those old quizzes? what an antediluvian couple!” when, to their horror and dismay, the despised couple claimed the gay young ladies as their own children. (1-2)

Coopland’s story suggests that nineteenth-century India had the ability to make Britons, after a short space of time, unrecognisable to their former self and she calls attention to a pivotal question considered throughout this thesis: How does

travel impact upon identity?⁵⁵ There is a common assumption that living in an Eastern country set nineteenth-century British women apart from their fellow counterparts in Britain: “[she] had to face life’s problems and perplexities under conditions wholly different to those which she faced back in Britain” (Diver 12-13). The East-West encounter was deemed to leave an immutable mark on the self. What sparked this irreversible and “mysterious readjustment” (Diver 8) of identity has, since the nineteenth century, been subject to speculation. Some assume that India was responsible for causing a subsequent crisis of gendered and national identity for female Britons in the East, whilst others argue that the alteration of women’s everyday domestic roles and newfound authority upset the balance.⁵⁶

Travel and migration have always been intrinsically linked to “a search for difference and differentiation” (Richards and Wilson 5) and can be deemed as an excursion in identity from the quotidian norm at home. Travel exemplifies a simple desire to break with the ordinary and engage with an out of the ordinary space whilst in search of “inspiration or profit, enlightenment or escapism” (Nenzi 1). Diver focuses this hypothesis further by arguing that when British women reside in India an excursion in identity is inevitable as new “Anglo-Indian” identities are always steadily adopted:

The Anglo-Indian woman cannot - in a social sense - live unto herself alone. Whether she will or not, her life is blended inextricably with those about her. Be her mental and moral landmarks - on arrival - never so definitely laid down, be her prejudices and her insular aloofness never so deeply ingrained, yet slowly – imperceptibly almost – she will find her outlook on life widened, her heart softened, her nervous system more or less undermined; in a word, she will be called upon to face life’s problems and perplexities under conditions wholly different to those she faced “at home”. (7)

Diver’s assertion that an alteration of identity was unavoidable for British women in India highlights the confused cultural identities of the writers under scrutiny. The identities embedded within each of the narratives examined

55. Recent studies that consider the link between place, context and identity include Wilfred McClay and Ted McAllister, *Why Place Matters: Geography, Identity, and Civic Life in Modern America* (2014), Laura Nenzi, *Excursions in Identity: Travel and the Intersection of Place, Gender, and Status in Edo Japan* (2008) and Michele Strong, *Education, Travel and the ‘Civilisation’ of the Victorian Working Classes* (2014).

56. Laura Callanan debates this in *Deciphering Race: White Anxiety, Racial Conflict, and the Turn to Fiction in Mid-Victorian English Prose* (2006).

vacillate between those who embrace and mimic Indian culture and language, and those who aim to maintain and recreate aspects of Britain in India. In all cases examined in the following discussion traditional Britishness and femininity are disrupted and new and disorientated textual personas are formed.

Canning, Coopland, Ouvry, and Tytler convey an intense awareness of being “both here and there and neither here nor there at one and the same time” (Roberson xxii). The writers are caught between gender boundaries, languages, cultures and notions of home and as a result their narratives reflect a perceptible guilt of belonging to neither one world nor another. One reaction to this guilt is to recreate and therefore maintain British identity through descriptions of British domesticity, culture and artefacts in an attempt to prevent any ambiguity. Numerous critics have claimed that women tried to recreate their own little part of Britain in India, a tendency that Janet Floyd defines as the recreation of “domestic space on foreign soil” (83). This chapter considers the power of references to British culture, lifestyle and architecture in the shaping of individual and collective identities as well as the promotion of Britain’s imperial agenda.

In the nineteenth and early twentieth century it was a common perception that the duplication of British attributes would further strengthen British supremacy in India. The lead article of the 27 September 1912 issue of *The Builder* reported:

‘If our imperialism is to be completely effective throughout the length and breadth of the Empire, the Mother Country must see to it that her national character is expressed not only in the architecture of the cities she founds, but also in the public buildings of the cities she rules’. (qtd. in Baucom 346)

On this topic, imperial architect and writer, Thomas Roger Smith (1830-1903) believed there was a direct relationship between the arrangements of space and the contours of the personality, particularly in the empire. He identified British artefacts in India, not merely as symbols of the empire, but as implements of imperial authority. In his lecture “Architectural Art in India” (1878) Smith maintained, “‘Were the British occupation of India to terminate tomorrow, the visible tokens would survive in our canals, and our railways, our ports, and our public buildings’” (qtd. in Toner 149). Smith also argued that such “‘visible

tokens” served another purpose: they ensure that the British ““remain British to the backbone in the heart of India”” (qtd. in Baucom 79-80).⁵⁷ This chapter puts forward the notion that the writer’s descriptions of Britishness are a reaction to an identity crisis triggered by encounters with India and its people. The research supports Grewal’s claims that such encounters are “central to constructions of English nationalism” (7) as they serve as a catalyst for the production of authoritative national identities and justification for imperialism. However, the study points out that whilst Britishness affords women social and economic privileges it does not automatically afford them gender privileges.

The arguments made are shaped by some fundamental questions about the making of home, away, self and “the Other”. Separation from a site defined as home has complex implications not only for understanding home, but also for the construction of a sense of self as an exile, displaced person, migrant, traveller and tourist. Whilst Britain was associated with belonging, family and home, India was associated with dislocation, uncertainty and fear. Alison Blunt argues that the British home in India was “a space of belonging and alienation, intimacy and violence, desire and fear... charged with meanings, emotions, experiences and relationships that lie at the heart of human life” (Blunt *Domicile* 5). However, studies of home have stressed that it does not have to occupy a static or fixed location and that a series of homes can coexist. Although Britain is commonly referred to as home within the women’s narratives on the national level of the homeland and mother country, India is also recognised as home, often at the more personal level of the household. This chapter considers the plurality of homes on a number of levels. It argues that the multiplicity of homes causes disorientated (con)textual identities as the writers struggle to negotiate their textual personas in India.

The chapter explores how the writers engage and textually map the self against Indian landscapes, people and culture by drawing upon and adding to the theoretical formulations of Antoinette Burton, Indira Ghose, Inderpal Grewal, Indrani Sen and Mary Louise Pratt, who all claim that the colonial space was a gendered terrain. The research substantiates Sen’s argument that British women reinvent and “empower” the self from being the angel in the house in Britain to

57. Jerry Toner debates the influence of British architecture, art and culture on British power relations in India further in his chapter “The Roman Raj” (133-161) in *Homer’s Turk: How Classics Shaped Ideas of the East* (2013).

“domestic administrator” (34) in India. Through close analysis of encounters with “the Other” the discussion argues against the idea that women are merely spectators of empire or what Ghose defines as “the myth of women’s non-involvement in colonialism” (9) by revealing how the writers’ (con)textual identities play a small, but perceptible, part in Britain’s imperial agenda.⁵⁸ In *Imperial Eyes* Pratt stresses how “seeing” the East, or in this case writing about it, is never an innocent act and that travelling is inextricably linked to imperial conquests: “Only through a guilty act of conquest (invasion) can the innocent of anti-conquest (seeing) be carried out” (66). The research demonstrates that upon reaching India the writers lose command of their own narrative of identity and maintain control by distinguishing themselves through the “othering” of India. The chapter supports Ghose’s claims that “Travel writing about the other really serves as a mirror held up to the self” (2) and that nineteenth century accounts do not offer “the ‘real India’, but India in the colonial female imaginary” (14).

The research draws upon Burton’s *Burdens of History* (1994) and Grewal’s *Home and Harem* (1996), two studies that reveal how nineteenth century female writers expose imperialistic mentalities in stereotypical constructions of India in an attempt to bolster their own attempts at emancipation. Burton’s research argues that European women appropriated imperialistic ideology and rhetoric to justify their own right to equality. Degraded images of Indian women, “symbols of a non-British womanhood to be pitied” (70), were employed as a strategy by British women to buttress their own sense of imperial duty: the “white woman’s burden” (127). Likewise Grewal, in her consideration of the interplay between “home” and “empire”, argues that manipulated images of victimised Indian women serve to further British women’s own individual and imperial campaigns: “Englishwomen see the colonies as a space to prove their capabilities and their participation in the work of the nation for civilising the ‘natives’” (62). Grewal’s research draws particular attention to constructions of beauty within female discourse as she claims that, “the aesthetic of the beautiful was implicated in very many discourses, all of which were governed by the politics of transparency and opacity, of knowledge

58. Christopher O’Reilly believes that all colonial writing, even if unwittingly at times, confirms and supports an imperial agenda. In *Contexts in Literature: Post-Colonial Literature* (2001) he writes: “On one level, to analyse colonial discourse is to study how colonised peoples were constructed, represented, even ‘silenced’ within colonial writing. They were silenced in the sense that their ‘voices’ were either absent or presented in such a way as to make them worthless or simple, a confirmation of negative stereotypes” (104-05).

and darkness” (28). Her idea that “beauty belonged to both Englishwomen and the English landscape” (32) provides a useful framework for considering the writer’s portrayals of Indian landscapes and people and to what extent the writings were informed attempts to construct an imperialist sense of Britishness.

Crucially, the following discussion determines that within Canning, Coopland, Ouvry and Tytler’s writings, representations of the self, colonised people and lands are “produced”, and not reflected. They are, to use the words of Tim Youngs, “a textual construction, an interpretation and not a reflection of reality” (*Travel* 13). Such representations are “constructs” in the sense that they were based on ideas of nineteenth-century ideologies, the Victorian imperial agenda and perceptions of India that had little to do with a genuine understanding of what was being described. Canning, Coopland, Ouvry and Tytler do not simply record what they see. On the contrary, they travel and write with purpose, agenda and preconceptions.

Angels of Imperialism

Nineteenth-century women’s travel to India is frequently understood as the means through which “the Angel in the House” could leave her British home and burst the restraints that defined British femininity. The common presumption being that when people travel they are no longer tied to the conventions and limitations of home. Within the masculine tradition travel has been routinely linked with an urge for “unbridled freedom for masculine aggression and sexual adventure” (Rojek and Urry 17). However, from a female perspective, travel has been exemplified as a search for the loosening of everyday domestic ties and responsibilities, as well as a quest for freedom and independence, hence women who travelled were often deemed “exceptional” by their ability to break from the norm. Nile Green endorses this philosophy: “Female travellers establish themselves as truly exceptional in their willingness to traverse boundaries that, arguably, ordinary respectable women in their cultures would not dare to cross” (210). Chapter One reinforced this hypothesis by revealing how identities that can be defined as new and exceptional arise whilst at sea. However, theorists of travel like Karen Lawrence, Anne McClintock, and Sara Mills dispute the

popular travel-as-freedom mythology.⁵⁹ They assert that despite the freedom of movement British women in India do not wholly escape domestic demands and the gendered hierarchy of power of their homeland. Having no legal voice and no political or economic power British women had a secondary function in India. They are seldom visible in official documents or records from the period and their position was expected to replicate their former domestic role in Britain: “women’s only avenue for patriotic contributions to the well-being of the nation and empire was via motherhood and domestic concerns” (George 98).

Canning, Coopland, Ouvry and Tytler had the complex task of establishing a space and function for themselves in areas appropriate to their gender: domesticity, religious purpose and philanthropic activity. However, even undertaking these customary roles was complicated when attempted on Indian soil. Despite being considered a regular and mundane task in Britain, the maintenance of a home in India was a complex task. Continuing with traditional British domestic duties was problematic in practical terms. They had travelled to unfamiliar surroundings and households about which they knew very little and where they faced duties different from those in Britain. Kate Teltscher highlights this by observing: “the anxieties of colonial rule manifest themselves most clearly in the home” (*India Inscribed* 145). Canning, Coopland, Ouvry and Tytler’s narratives expose this anxiety. Their identities suggest that upon arrival in India a British female domestic lifestyle was “no longer seen as idle luxury” (Sen 33). On the contrary, domestic identities are perceptively elevated from the “Angel in the House” to household manager or in the words of Sen “domestic administrator” (34) and are, on occasions, influenced by the masculine, business-like and militaristic context in which the women were residing. Such employment demanded organisation and authority thus an unwomanly voice is occasionally evident in their writings.

Writers such as Maud Diver, Alice Perrin, Flora Annie Steel and Grace Gardiner recognised the complexity of running a domestic base in India and highlighted the importance of preparation and knowledge for this role in their

59. See Karen Lawrence, *Penelope Voyages: Women and Travel in the British Literary Tradition* (1994), Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest* (1995) and Sara Mills, *Discourses of Difference: Analysis of Women’s Travel and Colonialism* (1993) for a consideration of the travel-as-freedom concept.

conduct manuals written specifically for Western women residing in India.⁶⁰ As wives and mothers they were still bound to daily rituals of domesticity that were seen as vital to the maintenance of traditional British family structures; however, in India such roles assumed a more prominent status and women arguably took a step closer to attaining “the full status of individual” (Fox-Genovese 138). Overseeing the home was now associated with skill, command and authority, qualities that Sen likens to “that of an imperial administrator” (34). In 1888 Steel and Gardiner articulated the symbolic connection between the running of a British home in India and the running of British Imperial India by claiming: “An Indian household can no more be governed peacefully, without dignity and prestige, than an Indian Empire” (9). The following analysis contemplates the transmission of the nineteenth-century colonial agenda within the women’s autobiographies. It considers how Canning, Coopland, Ouvry and Tytler reinforce the ideology of imperialism through their (con)textual identities and to what extent the elevation of domestic roles, militaristic interaction, encounters with Indian people and philanthropic activities transform their textual identities from being “Angels in the House” to being active partners of the imperial mission.

Diver asserts that “from the day she sets foot on the outward-bound steamer” towards India, the British woman “finds herself in a freer, lighter, lazier world than she has ever dreamed of” (14). For Diver, British women’s journeys to India provide freedom, relaxation and independence, characteristics that were not easily accessible or acceptable at home in Britain. Conversely, the following phase of this chapter determines that as Canning, Coopland, Ouvry and Tytler begin their life in India their (con)textual constructions of the self initially conflict with the modern, free and individual woman that Diver proposes. From her earliest days in India Canning uses her letters and journal to construct a textual persona that is subordinate and marginal. She does not reflect the freedom and independence suggested by Green and Nenzi when recounting her experiences of a local boat trip in a letter to Queen Victoria: “I did not go on deck, for I knew so well it would bore people, who mentally would say, ‘Those women are always in the way’” (Lady Canning to Queen Victoria, Feb. 24. 1856,

60. See Maud Diver *The Englishwoman in India* (1901), Alice Perrin *The Anglo-Indians* (1912) and Flora Annie Steel and Grace Gardiner *The Complete Indian Housekeeper and Cook* (1888).

RA Z 502/2). She prolongs the assembly of the self as subsidiary, solitary and minor when, only three days after her arrival she notes in her journal: “I suppose I shall never feel as fresh again as I was, just off my sea-voyage” (Lady Canning’s Journal, Bombay, Feb. 1. 1856 CP). In her private writings Canning identifies that the sea-voyage marked her most liberated status at this stage of her migration. The new context, India, has failed to provide the “freer, lighter, lazier world” (Diver 14) she might have hoped for.

As Canning and husband Charles put down roots within their new home, Government House in Barrackpore, Charlotte textually plots the new domestic space in a letter to Queen Victoria. It could be contended that Canning used her narrative to help outline a space as a “home” in order to help overcome “spatial confusion” (Hassam 61); however, Canning’s description is more focused on the boundaries and restrictions of the space which disconnect her from male occupations. Canning’s “home” was on a different level and despite there being a single staircase, her domestic base was plainly separated from her husband’s authoritative and influential work of the empire:

We are lodged in the rooms Lord Dalhousie and his daughter occupied... It is the strangest plan of house I ever saw, and the most uncomfortable. I live on the second floor, over C[harles], and they have built a winding staircase from his sitting-room to mine. But I send you a plan of the house. (Lady Canning to Queen Victoria, Aug. 8. 1856, RA Z 502/4).

Her subservient persona is further accentuated by regular frank references to her loneliness and seclusion: “I am isolated to a degree, I could never have imagined” (Lady Canning’s Journal, Calcutta, Mar. 19. 1856. CP). A month after her arrival in India Canning gives prominence to the seclusion and rejection experienced as a result of being the wife of the Governor-General of India:

nobody speaks to me voluntarily... all the people here seem so afraid of me! And look alarmed when I go & sit by them & not one man has ever voluntarily spoken to me since I came to India, except General Anson and Sir J. Colvile. All the others I have to actually send for, or if they look tractable to beckon to and speak to me & the ladies look terribly afraid. I begin to think I shall have to do my rounds like the Queen after dinner, only standing for one second is evidently thought quite indecorous here. (Lady Canning’s Journal, Calcutta, Mar. 19. 1856. CP)

Canning's remark about performing her "rounds like the Queen" has a connotation of authority, but Canning's simile possesses a cynical tone implying it was not the hands-on role that she wanted. This remark also reduces the public function of her monarch and friend Queen Victoria to that of an observer, a role that Canning clearly regards as unsatisfactory. With each journal entry and letter, she accentuates the construction of the self as an unfulfilled secluded captive: "At present my solitude and idleness are unbounded, and it is anything but cheerful... C. is all for following precedent, and my independence is quite at an end" (Lady Canning's Journal, Calcutta, Apr. 29. 1856. CP).

It is important to reiterate that Canning was arguably British India's First Lady, a role which positioned her higher than any other European woman in India. She was accustomed to large social dinners with fellow aristocratic friends in Britain. However, her new privileged role ironically marked the beginning of a segregated construction of the self as she habitually expresses her displeasure and boredom. India restricts Canning rather than releasing her and social occasions were endured rather than enjoyed:

It is provoking to feel so utterly useless, when C. is working like a horse. Mrs Anson complains that she has not even house-bills to look at! That is 'le cadet de mes regrets', but I should like to be good for something. My personal life is absolutely uneventful. Putting dimity in a drawing-room or a new mat, is about the principal event I can look forward to: or choosing 30 names out of a list for dinner, and ditto two days later, and so on three times a week... It is rather a weary time, for I am so idle! and must be so. I never knew what idleness was before, but I cannot busy myself, even with books, as I used anywhere else. (Lady Canning's Journal, Calcutta, Apr. 29. 1856. CP)

Canning depicts domestic duties such as sewing and party planning as unsatisfying and inferior activities. Her claims of "idleness" and "uselessness" imply she sought a more prominent and rewarding role in India appropriate with her prior position in Britain. Canning was Lady of the Bedchamber for thirteen years and was required to attend to Queen Victoria, and even though the duties were domestic and never very onerous, the role did carry considerable prestige and status. However, India initially diminishes Canning's utility and worth, rather than improving it.

Notably, it is only Canning's two maids, Rain and West, who she depicts as experiencing a newfound sense of exceptionality as they assumed a new position and status that they did not have in Britain:

Their carriage comes to the door every evening at six to take them out driving, but they are rather shy about it... Rain greatly delights in the command of the two trailers who work for me; a third even comes in to help, and they get through beautiful neat work in a wonderfully short time. They do no embroidery: a 'chicken-wallah' comes for that, who works as well as the Irish. Another man, called a 'pen-wallah', comes every day to carry all muslins away to be ironed: so you can imagine that the maids live like ladies. (Lady Canning's Journal, Calcutta, Mar. 11. 1856. CP)

Canning's claim that "the maids live like ladies" supports Sen's assertion that in middle-class British India "the white woman (regardless of class origins) automatically occupied a position of superiority" (10). However, within Canning's journal and letters, her own personal sense of superiority is complicated for two probable reasons. Firstly, Canning was arguably disadvantaged by her husband's role as Governor-General of India. His promotion gave her the unofficial title "First Lady of India" (M. Fowler 109), a label that brought with it both status and restrictive protocols. In a letter to her mother Lady Stuart de Rothesay, Canning confirms the limitations of her social life and her isolated position: "'A white woman on foot is almost an unknown sight... No one is intimate enough to gossip to me'" (qtd. in Hare 133). Secondly, as a woman who hitherto assumed a position of privilege as a "Lady" serving the monarch in Britain, Canning's new role in India failed to offer an advance in status and merely provided "idleness". In contrast to her maids, whose positions are elevated in India, Canning's personal sense of authority is reduced, a state that refutes the popular travel-as-freedom hypothesis.

Mills also finds fault with the travel-as-freedom hypothesis. By focusing on female travel accounts and references to domesticity she claims that those who venture outside the home are unable to loosen their domestic ties: "they are often reintegrated within the private sphere of the private/public divide... they may travel outside the home but they display all of the conventional characteristics of women within the home" (*Discourses* 34). Crudely put, "the

Angel in the House” remains an “Angel” in India; but this chapter now reveals that whilst “the Angel” and her domestic roles were deemed subordinate and minor in Britain, in India such roles were associated with elevated pride, purpose and most importantly authority. The mid-Victorian “idea of the Englishwoman as one who had rights, powers and capabilities” (Grewal 65) emerged from interactions in colonial environments. During the period of writing Britain was described as the “mother country” of colonial white communities and women’s maternal contributions were seen as important offerings to the empire. The theory also existed that white women saw indigenous people as charges that needed mothering:

women are important in the imagery of empire in so far as empire was often presented in the metaphoric guise as family, with Queen Victoria the head of the ‘mother country,’ and colonial subjects as immature children in need of discipline. (Kutzer 48)

From the beginning of Tytler’s account of her childhood in India, before her temporary move to Britain, domestic duties become the focus and maternal roles are habitually celebrated:

It was in Barrackpore when I was eight years old that my youngest sister was born. Mother used to give her to me a great deal to nurse and feed with a bottle, just such a one as babies use nowadays. So I was kept pretty hard at work, what with lessons, sewing, and looking after the baby. I was very good at it. (15)

Within Tytler’s memoir domestic images of mothering become increasingly central and celebrated. Most notably Tytler describes giving birth to a son at the height of the Mutiny, but even prior to this, she frequently assembles the self as a physical and metaphorical mother, a position that she associates with authority and esteem: “I was called the angel of the regiment as also the mother of it – I suppose the former from my love of children and the latter because the young fellows used to come to me” (69).⁶¹ As well as reflecting pride in her maternal role, Tytler also refers to being called “the angel” with equal satisfaction. The angelic image of a female saviour is reminiscent of the “Angel in the House” icon but when the angel exists in India, it is arguably a more authoritative and

61. Tytler’s words are reminiscent of the words of the philanthropist Mary Carpenter who spent many years in India: “‘In India I am regarded as the old Mother, and I am proud of the title’” (qtd. in Manton 237).

significantly elevated label.⁶² Moreover, prior to her declarations of “Angel” and “Mother”, Tytler recalls how people claimed she resembled the “Mother” of the Empire, the Queen: “I thought the Queen was very beautiful and was highly flattered when Mrs Pearce used to show me off to her friends as resembling her so wonderfully. I suppose I must have been so” (36). In her writing there is a feeling of gratification and superiority supporting the notion that women saw mothering as the better part of their identities. On the one hand Tytler’s textual persona in India can be deemed as fundamentally “feminine” and “domestic”; however, she proves that when such titles exist outside of the domestic sphere in Britain, they are accompanied by accolades and a new and exceptional sense of self.

Mid-nineteenth century India was considered chaotic and disorganised and in need of “civilising” with Britain’s imperial agenda “being to modernise and civilise what they believed to be a backward and degenerate society” (Mizutani 1).⁶³ This chapter now progresses to demonstrate that Canning, Coopland, Ouvry and Tytler’s subordinate position as women who have come from a Western patriarchal society does not preclude them from assuming imperialist subjectivity within their literature. On the contrary, the ensuing discussion demonstrates that the impulse to civilise and manage India transmits itself to the British women’s domestic space in India with several consequences. The writers’ management of Indian servants and attempts to civilise Indian people under the guise of social reform promotes Britain’s civilising mission hence assembling the women as (textually) active partners in the imperial agenda.⁶⁴ Moreover, the construction of textual personas of “manager” and “social reformer” provides the writers with their own brand of female imperialism. They promote a new heightened sense of status, jurisdiction and therefore exceptionality at a domestic level, a concept supported by George:

the imperial occupation of India allowed for the prescription of the domestic as the most fulfilling arena in which modern female subjects could operate. Hence, while in England in this period the prescription was

62. Sangeeta Ray in *En-Gendering India: Woman and Nation in Colonial and Postcolonial Narratives* (2000) considers the British colonial rule and the transmission of the “the Angel in the House” ideology in India (65).

63. The ‘civilising mission’ and Britain’s Colonial ideology in mid-nineteenth century India are debated in great depth throughout Harald Fischer-Tine and Michael Mann’s *Colonialism as Civilizing Mission: Cultural Ideology in British India* (2004).

64. The common perception that India needed civilising was famously highlighted in John Mitchell’s 1805 study: *An Essay on the Best Means of Civilising the Subjects of the British Empire in India*.

being vociferously challenged by feminists, the colonies provided a contemporary situation in which housework and home management were valuable national contributions and celebrated as such by Englishwomen. (97)

Within the ideology of Victorian British domesticity the roles women were socially permitted to assume were clearly defined, but as the next section demonstrates when feminine activities take place outside Britain the boundaries of the domestic sphere become flexible and philanthropic work is regarded with more cachet. Visiting and aiding the deprived was popular on the list of acceptable worthwhile leisure activities for middle-class women in Victorian Britain, and as Ghose asserts this inclination did not diminish when such women travelled to the India:

Many women travellers did not see themselves forced to abandon their activity in India. Instead they transferred their attention from the poor to another object of compassion – the downtrodden Indian woman. (107)

The prominent writer and philanthropist Hannah More's (1745-1833) insistence in the early nineteenth century that "the care of the poor is her profession" (qtd. in Simonton 159) helped to confirm this doctrine. India "provided the chance for some women to enter upon the work of restoring other, more damaged women to a newly conceived sphere of grace" (Riley 48). British women's compositions of Indian women, as "victimised sisters in India" (Grewal 11) in need of liberation "from the power of Indian men" (Grewal 41), were influential constructs and "were used as an argument for white women's social-imperial usefulness" (Burton *Burdens* 10). Such work was regarded as an important and authoritative role that still kept its participants securely within the realms of British femininity but allowed women to feel empowered. It was also a tool that allowed British women to convey their educated and civilised textual self at the expense of colonial people.

Canning, Coopland, Ouvry and Tytler construct (con)textual identities that point towards the role of social reformer through an interrogation of the educational methods and religious systems in India within their writings. Through this focus, the writers were not leaving the domestic sphere but

arguably extending it.⁶⁵ They were also allowing their textual persona to be presented as more educated and morally superior in comparison to “the Other”. India’s religious practices were one field that British women saw an opportunity for colonial improvement. Whilst “Christianity” was viewed “as the hallmark of civilisation and of Englishness”, India’s religions were associated “with moral, intellectual, and cultural deficiency” (Burton *Burdens* 75-6). At the beginning of Tytler’s narrative she recalls a scene she had witnessed as a child:

We saw numbers of famine-stricken people, never to be forgotten...
When my father saw them, he gave orders to the boatmen to draw near to the shore to enable him to speak to these poor people... My father offered the living food, but one and all made the same reply, “Sir, if you will give me food cooked by a Brahmin I will eat, if not I must die!”... I could scarcely have been six years old, and I said to myself ‘When I grow up to be a woman I will save all the little starving children and bring them up as Christians’ – an aspiration which never left me until thirty-three years later, when God permitted me in his goodness to carry out my heart’s desire. (10)

In this extract Tytler depicts the Indian man as a victim of his religion, and goes on to demonstrate her urge to convert all Indians to Christianity. She uses the images of the suffering colonised man and her own interest in helping him, both as a means of doing good, but also to establish herself as an authoritative imperialist.⁶⁶ This trend is emphasised when Tytler summarises the day’s events:

Thus ended the sad day’s experiences, but the result of it was the founding of my Himalayan Christian Orphanage in Simla, now known as the Mayo School, which thank God is doing so much good. Here is proof of how God in His Mercy can bring good out of evil. (10)

Tytler implies it is her responsibility to set Indians free from what she deems as an “evil” religion to experience “Christianity”, what she deems better.⁶⁷ She conveys her work as an extension of domesticity rather than as a transgression of

65. See Patricia Branca, *Silent Sisterhood: Middle-Class Women in the Victorian Home* (1975) for a study that dismisses the myth that middle-class British women were simply idle, passive and removed from the realities of society.

66. See Anna Johnston, *Missionary Writing and Empire, 1800-1860* (2003) for an analysis of missionary narratives constructed within the British Empire.

67. Joseph Bristow writes of British women in India that: “the religious and social customs of both the Hindus and Muslims confused them, and they felt that India was a conglomerate of different cultures without a stable centre” (202).

its boundaries and by doing so places her self in an authoritative role thus promoting her exceptional identity.

Burton claims that women writers “used what they and their contemporaries viewed as Indian women’s plight as an incentive for British women to work in the empire and as proof of British women’s contributions to the imperial civilising mission” (*Burdens* 8). Although Canning, Coopland, Ouvry and Tytler were travelling and writing in the decade prior to Burton’s focus, this feature is arguably evident in their accounts as they depict Indian women “as helpless victims awaiting the representation of their plight and the redress of their condition at the hands of their sisters in the metropole” (Burton *Burdens* 7). Tytler, takes on the role of a social reformer, and perhaps feminist, as she draws attention to her hope of improving Indian women’s rights. She recalls a conversation with an Indian man: “This same man, in talking about the blessings of our [British] rule, said he liked everything with it very much except one thing”. Tytler continues: “I felt curious to hear what this one exception could be. He said, ‘You teach our women to rebel against their husbands. If I find fault with my wife she says, “I will take you into court”’ (27). For this Sikh man his only tensions with British rule are as a result of the increased authority it gave Indian women and in her memoir Tytler expresses pride and a sense of achievement at this: “Does not this show that zenana teaching is sowing the seed of women’s rights even in India?’ Just imagine the audacity of a native woman in former days daring to threaten her lord and master to take him into court. Surely the world is moving” (27). Tytler expresses a sense of self-worth coupled with a tone of superiority as if she is claiming responsibility for Indian women’s social progression.

On the notion of improving the lifestyle of Indian women in the nineteenth century, Diver asserts:

The advanced woman of the West is apt to conclude overhastily that the narrow, hidden life of her Eastern sister, with its lack of freedom, its limited scope for self-development and individual action, must needs constitute her a mere lay figure in the scheme of things; a being wholly incapable of influencing the larger issues of life; whereas a more intimate knowledge of facts would reveal to her the truth that, from that same hidden corner, and by the natural primal power of her sex, the Eastern

woman moulds the national character far more effectively than she ever could hope to do from the platform or the hustings. (100-01)

Diver deems that every British woman in India has a responsibility to improve the position of Indian women, arguably a position which allows them to feel valuable in the colonial mission and thus exceptional:

every mistress of a house has, within her compound, some scope for work in this direction... any Englishwoman can find material ready to her hand, should curiosity or sympathy prompt her to take an active interest in the joys and sorrows of those sister-women whom chance has brought together within her gates. (77-8)

Within Canning's writings there is evidence of this colonial urge to help or civilise India, and particularly Indian women, as she assembles her (con)textual identity in the guise of an educational reformer.

Whilst in Bombay, Canning is asked to give out prizes at one of Bombay's pioneering girls' schools:

The natives appreciate education very much & of late a great change of opinion has come upon them with respect to the education of girls. Their schools lately established now contain upward of 700! and a distribution of prizes to these little creatures was one of the most curious sights we have seen... They delight in learning but are taken away to be married when quite children and I am not sure that they learn a great deal that is useful, but this beginning must lead to a great change in their condition. (Lady Canning to Queen Victoria, Feb. 24. 1856, RA Z 502/2)

Here, Canning constructs her textual self as an important social reformer; however, by referring to the girls as "creatures" she once again projects Indians in derogatory terms and even if unwittingly promotes her own civilised identity. The subject of women's education was something that both Canning and Queen Victoria debated and during the years following the Mutiny, Canning devoted a lot of her time to it, but even before the rebellion, whilst in Madras, she visits a mission school and notes:

the phraseology and manners of some of the missionaries is most disagreeable. All the boys seemed to have religious knowledge and doctrine at their finger-ends, and answered in the very unconstrained manner of the missionaries, using their very words: and yet one knew

they did not pretend to believe or think what they said. (Lady Canning to Queen Victoria, Feb. 24. 1856, RA Z 502/2)

Canning's words, although she did not know it, were well founded. What was happening at the Free Kirk Mission School at Madras was part of a much larger pattern of events whose consequences would soon become all too apparent in the Mutiny. In Madras she writes to the Queen about Indian women and children concluding: "How I wish that your majesty could see the most interesting part of your dominions and I often think how much His Royal Highness would delight in the study of these races of people and their curious habits and in the symptoms of improvements working in them" (Lady Canning to Queen Victoria, Feb. 24. 1856, RA Z 502/2).

In contrast to her construction of herself as a "idle" isolated recluse in her earlier writings Canning's textual persona now reflects independence and pride at her new duties: "Ever since I arrived I have tried to find out if any particular duty might be within my province and I have only found that of visiting female schools. It is an agreeable one" (Lady Canning to Queen Victoria, Aug. 8. 1856, RA Z 502/4). Canning's expression implies that she has found a new, important role or purpose in India. There is evidence that Canning began to inspect schools, as she offers detailed reports on many. One such inspection at a Central Native Girls' School run by European teachers is described in great detail:

It is very small, but well managed... 25 Christian native girls are boarders, all dressed like ghosts in white shrouds, 25 or 30 small day-scholars the same – low-caste children, not Christians but reading the Bible. I went by myself along the line of children with the teacher, making her translate to me her questions and the answers. (Lady Canning's Journal, Barrackpore, May. 3. 1856. CP)

Through these examples it is evident that Canning's new authoritative textual self is conveyed with pleasure. However, she also notes how her appearance is disruptive because of her unique identity:

Alas! My going to such places makes such an affair that I cannot do it very often. The state appearance of the carriage-and-four and body-guard makes such a sensation that it puts a school quite into fashion in the neighbourhood. I have quite made up my mind that I can only go about

like an inspector at long intervals. (Lady Canning's Journal, Barackpore, May. 17. 1856. CP)

The writers' narratives not only demonstrate the Victorian female philanthropic enterprise, they also show evidence of what Ghose defines as a specific "female gaze" meaning a way of observing the East that is influenced by the feminine identity of the observer. Ghose contends that when examining British women's travel writings what "needs to be scrutinised is the site from which women gaze, that is the positions of power in which they are located" (9). Her research claims that because British women in colonial contexts are observing from a colonial stance whilst trying to remain feminine, the British women become both observer and the observed, resulting in "a fractured gaze" (60). This chapter now adds to Ghose's claims of a "female gaze" by positing that like the (con)textual identities of the self the female writers construct, the identities of Indian people are also (con)textual in that they are heavily influenced by the context (the colonial and feminine) and "fractured gaze" in which they are written.

The Victorian British imperial ambition to survey the East meant that as colonists sought to document India's topography, flora and fauna, they also sought to classify and categorise India's people. Constructions of Indians were constituted and reconstituted in diverse ways with imperial implications. In Canning, Paget and Tytler's narratives derogatory "fractured" descriptions of "the Other" help promote the self and Britons as a collective as authoritative, modern and civilised. Crucially they perceive Indians from a colonial stance: at one level, as the exotic other and on another as the dangerous savage that needed to be controlled and contained. Through this manner of writing the women contribute to colonial discourse and the imperialist mission by persistently projecting their civilised (con)textual self against the uncivilised "Other".

The writers' constructions of Indians exist in the territory between civilisation (the British) and barbarity (the animal world). Their writings attempt to assign a place and character to every caste through detailed classification and recording. This categorising trend is evident in Tytler's memoir when she classifies Indian men as "species":

there were two species of this genus Homo. One killed his victim for what he could get out of him, if only a few coppers, the other from

religious motives. Thugs were all Hindus, and as such were full of superstitions. So the religious murderer considered, in taking the life of some lonely traveller, that he was pleasing his goddess Kali or Darree.

(24)

Here, scientific terminology is used to justify her claims and in doing so she presents her textual persona as exceptional via her ability to make “order” out of “chaos”: “The poor Indian peasant can neither read nor write, but he can listen to and believe any amount of made-up lies, with the natural result of disaffection.” (28) With a similar intention Coopland also uses scientific terms in her attempts to classify: “My husband’s bearer was a perfect specimen of a “mild Hindoo” (so much raved about at home). He was lithe and slender, with beautifully formed hands and feet, clear olive skin, well-cut features, and white, regular teeth” (10). Coopland’s focus on facial attributes can be viewed as further evidence of manipulated images of Indians that expose imperialistic mentalities. The popularity of physiognomy in the period led to the theory the face provided an accurate mirror of character: “the face became an indication of inner qualities. Within such an aesthetic, blackness as a racial category became associated with opacity, fear, and horror, and features could be read as analogous to moral characteristics” (Grewal 27).

Within her diary Coopland continually focuses on the physical features of Indians in a derogatory manner in an attempt to stress the otherness and inferiority of India to Britain: “Altogether the scene was the most striking that I had yet witnessed, and made me feel as if I were upon a different globe, and among a different race of beings” (44). Her descriptions support the colonial stereotype of the “wild-eyed” Indian warrior (Rajamannar 71) and possess an increasingly fictional tone: “The natives here were a robust, warlike set, well dressed in warm quilted lebados and trousers, and gay turbans” (36). Through references to disease and illness, Coopland subtly promotes the notion of India as threatening and precarious:

I saw some awful specimens of eastern diseases – leprosy and elephantiasis – at Shergotty... They thronged round our gharry as we were changing horses, and showed off their hideous deformities. I tried to get rid of them by throwing handfuls of rice, but they only surrounded us the more. (20)

Both Tytler's "poor Indian peasants" and Coopland's "specimens of eastern disease" add to the colonial idea of Indian people being helpless childlike victims, "half-devil, half-child" (Grewal 41), and thus in need of a Western maternal source. This idea links with Barbara Ramusack's definition of female philanthropic travellers as "maternal imperialists", a title that implies that female philanthropic work in the empire and the imperial agenda cannot be separated. She asks:

Is it possible for women from one race or ethnic group to promote effectively reforms or institutions designed to modify or improve the conditions of women of another race or ethnic group in a colonial power society that embodies such a pervasive dominant-subordinate power structure? (120)

Within Tytler and Coopland's narratives there is little evidence of a separation of philanthropy and colonial power. They comply with what Bhabha identifies as the chief goal of colonial discourse: "to construe the colonised as a population of degenerate types on the basis of racial origin, in order to justify conquest and to establish systems of administration and instruction" (*Location* 70).

Canning's descriptions are less like classifications and more like stereotypical picturesque and exotic descriptions. In a letter to Queen Victoria she writes: "The men are very often handsome and Spanish looking, Mahometans with their beards especially. Very wild figures of hill tribes are often seen" (Lady Canning to Queen Victoria, Aug. 8. 1856, RA Z 502/4). Notably, her reference to the "wild figures", presents the hidden dangers habitually present in colonist visions of India, a topic returned to later in this chapter. Writing to Queen Victoria on 23 November 1856, she states:

We met gods and goddesses in the crowd, carried on people's shoulders – horrid sort of yellow dolls of all sizes, dressed in tinsel, & invariably riding astride of peacocks with enormous spread out tails... I observed the gods all faced one way, in whichever direction they were carried – such dreadful creatures - I cannot imagine how any human being can respect them. (Lady Canning to Queen Victoria, Nov. 23. 1856, RA Z 502/6)

Tellingly Indians who possess wealth and power repulse Canning. She portrays it as grotesque and immoral, perhaps indicating that her own sense of authority was

threatened and undermined. Again Canning describes Indians using the term “creature” which gives her descriptions animalistic qualities, a notion which links with nineteenth-century colonial theories on racial anthropology and stereotypes of the “dark-skinned savage” (Trautmann 208) and “animalistic oddities” (De Almeida 220).

Initially, Ouvry’s descriptions of Indians lack the fictional and imaginative traits found in Coopland’s portrayal:

I saw a very pretty black boy dressed in a pink frock and trousers in one, the usual dress of children in India, except the common natives, whose children are generally quite naked, the men only having a piece of calico round their middle and another piece wound round their head. They talk a kind of jargon and few could understand H’s Hindoostanee. (10-11)

Her study of Indians does not possess a positive or negative tone. She does not denounce, she recounts; however, the longer she spends in India, the more negative, and imaginative her descriptions become:

we passed an elephant with three horrid looking Fakirs on it; they paint their faces, and cover their naked black bodies with wood ashes, but they are obliged to wear some covering in cantonments. By the side of the elephant was another dreadful looking creature in a Palkee, carried by bearers; the natives have the greatest respect for them. (27)

There is also evidence in Ouvry’s narrative of attempts to “improve” Indians by dressing them in British clothes: “I came from Kalka in a Janpan, a kind of chair carried by four men. We had given them each a suit of warm clothes and they looked very nice” (18). This gesture helps assert Ouvry’s and ultimately Britain’s power over four Indian men.

It is important when considering Tytler’s depiction of Indians to note that she writes her memoirs with the knowledge of the Mutiny and in her descriptions of Indians, Tytler is the most overtly negative. She states of her Indian childhood: “Certainly we had better servants, less expectations, less luxuries, and cheaper food. Everything now is doubled and trebled in price and servants are by no means as good or as faithful as they used to be” (11). She summarises Indian characteristics when a group of Indians offer her help in return for a pre-agreed amount of money: “Knowing that a native cannot tell the truth, especially when money is concerned, I did not believe a word of it and so would not give the

money, but insisted on their going on. This just shows what a powerful influence the English had in those days” (58). However, although she is critical, her approach to the civilisation of Indians is different from her female counterparts: “I have lived long enough in India to know that the native character is not at present one to be governed by laws suited to the European, and therefore it is a mistake to make such laws for them” (28). Being born in India to British parents, Tytler’s descriptions are a complex blend of association and disassociation. Her writings fulfil the imperialist agenda as they “legitimate further British rule and bolster the belief in Western cultural superiority” (Ghose 113), but in contrast to Canning, Coopland and Ouvry, she recognises the shortcomings of colonial rule. Here Tytler is torn between two nationalities, a situation that provides a new type of “fractured gaze”, a context discussed later in this chapter.

At the early stages of life in India, the only methods accessible to the writers for their nationalist contribution in India are domesticity and mothering as they assemble their (con)textual identities as “mothers of India or Indians” (Steinbach 228). However, despite this domestic and maternal focus, these traditionally domestic roles are accompanied with a new sense of freedom, independence and authority, or what Ghose defines as “a distinct emancipatory effect” (124). The domestic focus within the narratives feeds upon what Sen outlines as “the nineteenth-century colonial myth of an unchanging India” (44) and Canning, Coopland and Tytler support this myth by constructing India as a place in need of modernisation and conversion to British religion, education and women’s rights. The writers construct their textual personas as superior and project themselves as new and exceptional women in comparison to their subordinate Eastern sisters. As Grewal asserts “the idea of the Englishwoman as one who had rights, powers and capabilities... emerged from contrasts with Asian women” (65). What the writers deem to be “charitable work” furnishes them with a sense of personal empowerment unparalleled by philanthropic work undertaken back in Britain. Feminists read British women’s place in the Empire as integral to the early feminist goal of achieving independence and individualism: “the modern individual (British) woman was first and foremost an imperialist” (George 97); however, for the writers this feminist goal comes at the expense of colonised Indians.

Militaristic Identities

This chapter has thus far argued that mid-nineteenth century India afforded the four women writers under examination prospects for constructing new identities that reflect authority and exceptionality by functioning under the umbrella of domestic duty and feminine interest. The discussion now moves to show how the women sought similar exceptional identities when narrating their relationship with the British military in India, an army that was enthusiastically enforcing the ideology of separate gender spheres.⁶⁸ The women seize upon the opportunities that military contexts provide and can thus be defined as opportunistic women. The British army in the nineteenth century became increasingly professional and bureaucratic and “some of the women who had previously moved in and out of the military environment now found themselves permanently excluded” (Trustram 3). Women were deemed less capable of intelligence and rational thought than men and their absence in nineteenth-century armies excluded them from military history in its developing stages. From the 1840s onwards, the British army began to provide married quarters, but whilst this could be viewed as implicating women in military campaigns, women were increasingly segregated in a strictly controlled domestic sphere away from the rest of the army.⁶⁹

In Britain, women in married quarters had little contact with military life however, upon arrival in India, there was a disruption of these separate spheres. Moreover, British women were empowered by the fact that within the empire status was determined more by race than gender and therefore a position such as army wife was imbued with more significance, power and authority than at home. Through the conformation of certain codes and orders, and the implication of authority and status, the army wife in India entered a more masculine sphere than she had resided in Britain. As a result there was a refiguring of the so-called chain of command and British women were often thought of as honorary men to Indians and associated with masculine behaviours, a contentious position, in a time when “mannish women were regarded as suspect” (Steinbach 5). Privilege

68. Carol Cohn's recent study *Women and Wars: Contested Histories, Uncertain Futures* (2013) begins by summarising the historical separation of women and the military: “There is an old story about war. It starts with war being conceived of as a quintessentially masculine realm: in it, it is the men who make the decisions to go to war, men who do the planning, men who do the fighting and dying...women are sometimes present, but remain peripheral...they symbolise the alternative – a place of love, caring, and domesticity, and indeed, all that is good about the nation” (1).

69. Myna Trustram in *Women of the Regiment: Marriage and the Victorian Army* (1984) offers a detailed study of the domestic background of life in the Victorian army describing the lives of women who lived on the edge of the regimental community.

and authority accompanied the role of officer's wife in India and within Coopland, Ouvry and Tytler's writings, this is conveyed via the construction of unwomanly and militaristic (con)textual identities.

Militaristic roles and duties are apparent from the opening of Tytler's memoir as she describes one of her earliest memories: "my mother, with my little self and the others, three older children, marched with the troops" (5). Tytler establishes her association with the army from an early age and attempts to blur the distinction between her feminine duties of "lessons, sewing, and looking after the baby" (15) and her military knowledge and routine. With a comparable approach, Coopland is eager to define her unique status among the military social circle in India, by networking with the soldiers rather than the ladies:

After the luxury of a bath, we waited for dinner in the drawing-room, which only differed from an English one in the quantity of its lights. By this time the room was filled with hungry people, ready for dinner, an agreeable mixture of civil and military, but no ladies. A native appeared with meekly folded hands, and in a sedate voice said "Khana mez pur hi" (Dinner is on the table). (3)

Coopland expresses her displeasure at her military lifestyle, but she also highlights the authority that accompanies it: "We really had enough of soldiering at Gwalior; bugles from morning to night, and all the sepoys saluting whenever you passed them" (66). Yet, despite negative remarks, within Coopland's narrative there is mounting evidence of her increased involvement and gratification at the superiority that accompanies military involvement: "Some of the regiments were reviewed during the cold weather, and I much enjoyed watching them" (64).

Within their conduct manual for Britons residing in India, Steel and Gardiner note, "life in India always partakes of the nature of a great campaign" (21). From the beginning of Ouvry's depiction of life in India, she substantiates this theory as she constructs the self through a blend of domestic and militaristic roles. She defines the management of the domestic home in India in the manner of a military campaign, like the running of an armed operation and in doing so evokes a militaristic identity, an identity that is heavily influenced by the responsibilities and routines of an army soldier. One significant feature running throughout her narrative is that she runs her daily structure and domestic routines

to the timing of a military gun: “The gun fired again to-day. We are now able to keep true time; when there was no gun to regulate it, every one went by his own watch, and many were late for church” (33). As Ouvry adapts to life in India and her narrative evolves, a more obvious and apparent identity of army officer is assembled. Notably, she describes herself riding with the army in an unwomanly and authoritative manner: “After that we marched up the country, riding on horseback” (12). This is enhanced later, further in the diary: “whenever the road is very bad, I get out of the Gharie and ride on one of the ponies, or on H’s horse, if he is not using it. Often I have to go seven or eight miles, or even the whole march, on horseback” (31). Ouvry makes numerous references to army activities and she implicates her involvement: “Inspection. I rode out to see it” (37). Moreover, she recurrently describes her increasing participation in military life: “The 10th Queen’s Infantry arrived in the station this morning. We rode out to see their engagement” (23).

Ouvry’s references to military life become frequent and her textual persona becomes increasingly militaristic and arguably unwomanly: “We left at four o’clock to see the Artillery practice with live shells and rockets, so pretty, the latter rather dangerous and erratic in their course yet I did not fear them” (28). Ouvry’s proud declaration “I did not fear them” marks an important moment in her diary. Whilst Ouvry was eager to remain appropriate to her gender through domestic means, she now feels compelled to convey a bravery that would have been deemed unfeminine in mid-nineteenth century Britain. A quote from Maria Grey and Emily Shirreff’s conduct manual *Thoughts on Self Culture Addressed to Women* (1850) outlines the acceptable level of courage women were socially accepted to embrace:

We do not advocate any needless or unfeminine display of courage. The woman who braves danger unnecessarily, is in most cases foolish and criminal, since she has neither the agility of limb, nor the strength of nerve of muscle to enable her to cope with it... the habit of moral control is sufficient to give to women all the courage that can be required of them. (44)

In an opportunistic manner Ouvry seizes upon the army context, a setting that permits her access to a masculine world. Moreover, her courageous declaration

suggests that she eagerly embraces the dispensations it offers. On this subject Annabel Venning asserts:

From the moment she married her soldier sweetheart the army wife entered into a bargain with the military. Her place on the strength earned her certain privileges... she had to perform whatever duties were required of her and conform to a code of behaviour that infiltrated almost every aspect of her life, from her dress to her morals. (111)

Venning underlines the “privileges” that being army wife permitted, a trait that is increasingly perceptible when an army is based in colonial context. As Coopland, Ouvry and Tytler begin to settle in India they manipulate each new context to construct textual personas that become increasingly new and exceptional. Notably, the military traits that at this stage of their narratives are only slight soon start to magnify as the Mutiny begins and evolves, a concept explored in the remainder of the thesis.

Imagined Indian Landscapes

This chapter has thus far determined that Canning, Coopland, Ouvry and Tytler employ the context of India to construct textual versions of self and Other. These (con)textual identities project British women as new and exceptional whilst simultaneously reducing Indians to colonist stereotypes that endorse Britain’s imperialist vision of India as the “uncanny, disturbing, impenetrable, prehistoric, evil other” (McGillis 8). The research now advances to consider the relationship between self and space by revealing the techniques the writers employ to inscribe the Indian terrain. By examining the writers’ textual constructions of India’s landscape, flora and fauna the discussion contends that the writers use their autobiographical narratives to assemble what this study defines as “imagined Indian landscapes”, a term that derives from both Edward Said’s notion of “imaginative geographies” and Benedict Anderson’s concept of “imagined communities”. In *Orientalism* (1978), Said contends that “men have always divided the world up into regions having real or imagined distinction from each other” (39) and defines an “imaginative geography” as “a complex set of representative figures, or tropes” that are “to the actual Orient... as stylized costumes are to characters in a play” (71). Anderson’s concept of “imagined communities” derives from his study *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the*

Origin and Spread of Nationalism (1983) in which he describes the nation as an imagined political community which is “imagined” because “the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their community” (6).

Borrowing and combining both Said and Anderson’s framework, this thesis defines “imagined Indian landscapes” as complex and shifting portrayals of India that are intentionally manipulated by their authors as functional tools of self-promotion and imperial authority. Far from being static backgrounds “imagined Indian landscapes” arise out of a process involving not only observation but also imagination, in that they originate from the colonial ideology of India and gendered ideology of British women that existed in the imagination of Victorian Britons.⁷⁰

The “imagined Indian landscapes” presented by Canning, Coopland, Ouvry and Tytler promote both British imperial mastery and self-authority by conforming to what Pratt defines as “the-monarch-of-all-I-survey” methodology (*Imperial* 204), where a narrator’s gaze is all-encompassing. Pratt argues that the “the-monarch-of-all-I-survey” trope is one of the most discriminating qualities of imperialistic Victorian travel writing. She typifies the genre as a significant colonist tool whereby travellers “pretend to conquer” the landscape by rendering “momentously significant what is, especially from a narrative point of view, practically a nonevent” (*Imperial* 202). For Pratt, “nonevents” are made “momentous” through the performance of aestheticism, whereby the landscape is simultaneously “aestheticised” (*Imperial* 204) and invested with “value and significance”; in other words, when a scene is ordered in such a way as to appeal to a European viewer like a “painting” with a “background, foreground, symmetries between foam-flecked water and mist-flecked hills, and so forth” (204). Pratt emphasises that such images need to be effortlessly comprehended by a European audience, within descriptions that allow the coloniser to compare the colonised “landscape to the explorer’s home” (*Imperial* 204). By describing

70. The concept of colonial landscapes being both imaginary and a tool to assert authority is not a new concept. Paul Carter in *The Road to Botany Bay: An Exploration of Landscape and History* (1987) argues that imperial histories “reduce space to a stage” (xvi) across which events are performed. Similarly, Deborah Sutton’s *Other Landscapes: Colonialism and the Predicament of Authority in Nineteenth-Century South India* (2009) posits: “The historical landscape becomes a narrowly defined vista across which the significant actors of the imperial enterprise processed” (2).

landscapes as paintings writers become “both the viewer there to judge” and “the verbal painter who produces it for others” (*Imperial* 205).⁷¹

Grewal also provides a useful framework for analysing colonial depictions of Indian landscapes. Like Pratt, Grewal focuses on the “aesthetic of the beautiful” (28) in relation to Indian’s landscape and inhabitants by asserting that British portrayals were “governed by the politics of transparency and opacity, of knowledge and darkness” (28). Grewal suggests that defining a landscape as beautiful was “usually to suggest reasons for its domestication and colonisation” (43). Like Pratt’s “the-monarch-of-all-I-survey” methodology, Grewal argues “calling it beautiful also made it seem less alien, for it signified the possession of familiar qualities such as fertility and verdure” (43). The act of constructing beautiful, yet imagined Indian landscapes suggested that India was a controlled region, “for no object could be beautiful that did not conform to English ideals” (Grewal 44).

The following section of the chapter contends that in Canning and Ouvry’s narratives what is actually just a passive experience of “seeing” becomes “momentous” when the British women write it down and transfer the information home via letters and diaries. Their aesthetic, beautiful and “imagined” portrayals of the landscape reveal a perceptible, even if at times subtle, colonist strategy. One notable example of an aesthetic focus takes place on 29 January 1856, when Canning writes her first journal entry since reaching India:

Here we are! Really in India! It feels so very like a dream! We steamed in rather slowly yesterday afternoon, with the bay unfolding before us like a panorama, a beautiful coast, with a great expanse of high odd-shaped hills, and a good deal of green at the foot: some islands, and the town itself on one of them – the greenest. It had an air de fete in the bright sunset sky ... Crowds and crowds of natives in their white dresses, Parsees and all sorts of picturesque people, were outside and bands playing etc. The native town looked most picturesque – all open shops

71. In *Gendering Orientalism* (1996), Reina Lewis argues that nineteenth-century British women who travelled to India confronted the issue of imperialism differently to men. She views British women as cultural producers whose texts and paintings hinge on the imperialist projects that so deeply affected British identity during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. She explains that, even as cultural producers “women came to understand themselves as part of an imperial nation... they understood themselves as beneficiaries of a structure of systemic differences that placed them as superior in the divide of colonialism (in the relative privilege of the European woman traveller in the Orient” (5).

and verandahs and the strangest figures scattered about. (Lady Canning's Journal, Aden, Jan. 29. 1856. CP)

Here Canning's "imagined Indian landscape" becomes a romanticised scene. She presents her textual self as a contented traveller asserting her authority over India. Moreover, Canning's focus on the "great expanse" and "good deal of green" could conceivably be an attempt to show India's potential for colonisation, a theory that Grewal argues was prevalent in mid-Victorian female descriptions of India:

describing the rich and verdant scenery of India, and thereby showing its potential... suggests that the British must civilise this land and gain profit from it. The beauties of nature, that is, the land's potential for development, became justification for British colonial rule. (42)

Canning's recognisable use of aestheticism disarms the mystery and danger that India was so commonly associated, with an almost picturesque approach, a theory that Sara Suleri asserts as commonplace in portrayals of the East by female colonisers:

For the female as coloniser, the picturesque assumes an ideological urgency through which all subcontinental threats could be temporarily converted into watercolours and thereby domesticated into a less disturbing system of belonging. (75-76)

Canning constructs aesthetically pleasing textual landscapes decorated with colourful birds, butterflies and wild animals via an artistic focus: "the little green parrots that fly about, and settle in the tamarind tree, look like green peas, and hawks and odd crows – grey and black flutter about. Very slightly clothed peasants fill up the picture, and sometimes beautifully draped figures in white" (Lady Canning to Queen Victoria, Feb. 24. 1856, RA Z 502/2). She later adds further aesthetic traits to detailed written sketches of Indian people: "The women are most graceful in their long draperies in bold like Greek statues and of brilliant heavy colours and narrow bright borders...The little children are naked and lie bronze clinging to their mothers" (Lady Canning to Queen Victoria, Feb. 24. 1856, RA Z 502/2). Canning's artistic descriptions feature elements of the picturesque and they can also be viewed as an attempt to make the scene safe. On this trend, Baucom suggests that the picturesque: "becomes synonymous with a desire to transfix a dynamic cultural confrontation into a still life, converting a

pictorial imperative into a gesture of self-protection” (85). Notably, Canning writes:

I long to draw and so regret being unable to sketch figures when everyone is so picturesque. The land is like the richest gardens, and the views range over crops of rice, wheat, cotton and sugar cane, and wretched mud villages with their palm trees raised on mounds just high enough to escape the inundation. (Lady Canning to Queen Victoria, Dec. 19. 1856, RA Z 502/1)

It is important to acknowledge that Canning was considered by some as an artist. Writing from Balmoral on September 23 1856, Queen Victoria emphasises Canning’s artistic expertise: “What endless subjects for the drawings you must be doing, no doubt you have been very busy with your pencil, what would I give to see some of your sketches?” (Queen Victoria to Lady Canning, Sep. 23. 1856, CP). In her journal she details the environment employing artistic language and therefore asserts control over the landscape she imagines: “the world began to scamper away... with violent east wind, inky clouds and blue thunder” (Lady Canning to Queen Victoria, Feb. 24. 1856, RA Z 502/2). Notably, Canning refers to John Ruskin, British art and social critic, in the middle of one of her textual descriptions: “It is like one of Ruskin’s specimens of an ill-drawn tree” (Lady Canning to Queen Victoria, Nov. 23. 1856, RA Z 502/6). By referring to Ruskin Canning emphasises her urge to classify everything through British means, a characteristic that further fulfils Pratt’s “monarch-of-all-I-survey” trope.

Canning’s descriptions of the land are highly detailed and artistic. But to define her descriptions only in the context of a suitable feminine ladylike pursuit is to overlook the multiple meanings that her text evokes. For Canning, painting, like the act of writing is another method of asserting authority in India over its land and people. Her artistic attention to detail disarms the scene and allows her textual identity to maintain authority: “the same pale golden colour, an effect quite impossible to give, the trees like green tinsel, or green flies, or enamel” (Lady Canning to Queen Victoria, Nov. 23. 1856, RA Z 502/6). Within the Victorian imagination India’s geography was perceived as barbarian and threatening, and out of this notion came the urge and pressure to define, control and map India, to make it safe and therefore cast authority over it. Here Canning counteracts any threat by aestheticising the landscape and arguably presenting

what Suleri calls the “feminine picturesque”, a genre which allowed women to domesticate a scene in word, if not in fact (75-76).

Canning uses her depiction of landscapes as a mode to reflect imperial dominance over India, as well as her nostalgia for Britain. She again fulfils the “monarch-of-all-I-survey” form by comparing the scene to Britain, making it recognisable and safe for Queen Victoria. She focuses on the domestic space of her new home in India with a sentimental and idyllic tone:

I am getting so fond of this place. I believe it would look rather nice even as an English country-house, so marvellously is it improved by 450 yards of rose-chintz, a great many arm-chairs, small round tables, framed drawings etc, and flowerpots in number. (Lady Canning to Queen Victoria, Oct. 7. 1856, RA Z 502/5)

Here Canning constructs a typically British domestic scene that serves as a lost ideal to comfort her in uncivilised India.

It is important to recognise that the landscapes assembled on the page are not fixed portraits portraying one still image. On the contrary, they fluctuate between pictorial, picturesque, feminine spaces and wild, dull and dangerous expanses. Unlike traditional maps, these “imagined Indian landscapes” take the form of personal charts and are, like the identities under scrutiny in this thesis, (con)textual. The writer’s rhetorical landscapes arguably fit within the context of the day and its events. Notably, when Canning narrates the panorama outside of the safe domestic sphere of Government House landscapes are often awkward, restrictive and inaccessible and she initially struggles to make the scene safe:

I have been hearing an account of the beauty and merits of a hill station, Darjeeling, only about 350 miles from here but so inaccessible that it can hardly been reached in 10 days or a fortnight and a jungle, pestilential at some seasons, keeps people imprisoned in the hills rather than take the risk of a day or two in passing thro’ it at foots pace in a Palaquin. In time the railway will be within 80 miles of it and a road in making to the summit itself. (Lady Canning to Queen Victoria, Oct. 7. 1856, RA Z 502/5)

A routine feature of Canning’s picturesque descriptions is the sense that there is always a “lurking threat” (de Blij 84), a characteristic that Harm de Blij suggests

is habitually evident in colonisers' accounts of colonised landscapes.⁷² In her journal she writes: "this is really like a work of giants – a grove of gigantic columns, and piles of stones and obelisks, one 92 feet high, and courts with pillars round them, and more and more of the great pylons, all magnified even, in the bright moonlight" (Lady Canning to Queen Victoria, Feb. 24. 1856, RA Z 502/2). Her description, although aesthetically pleasing, also reveals several layers of imaginary and overpowering places made by fictional "giants". Her depictions of architectural splendours are shadowed by references to menacing towering structures made even more curious by the light of the moon. The construction and plotting of the landscape ensures that the scene is set adequately for any trouble within her narrative. The lurking danger differs crucially from the standard picturesque through a switch of perspective: there is no observing of the landscape from a distance, rather there is an experience of it from within, a context that creates danger.

In the same manner, Ouvry's diary functions as tool of colonial power by regarding the landscape with a similar aesthetic focus. She describes how "the trees looked so beautifully green and fresh" (10), whilst celebrating that "on a clear day we have a beautiful view of the snowy range" (19). At Dehra she describes the cantonment as "very pretty, everything looks green and pleasant" (33). However, lurking threats are also evident: "The road is now very bad, as we are quite out in the jungle; sometimes we have to go up and down steep little hills, then across a river, deep and wide, in the rains, but now shallow enough to ford, with a quarter of a mile of stones on each side" (31). The complex and wandering syntax and punctuation in this extract emphasises Ouvry's physical wanderings and her uncertain and fluctuating identity. Revealingly, when she praises a landscape she quickly defaces it: "On a clear day we have a beautiful view of the snowy range. The scenery of the Himalayas is certainly very grand, but I was disappointed in its beauty, perhaps I expected too much" (19). Markedly, Indian people are notably absent in Ouvry's portrayals of the Indian terrain. Her imagined Indian landscapes become, using Grewal's framework, "blank spaces that await the coloniser" (44).

72. See Harm de Blij, *The Power of Place: Geography, Destiny, and Globalization's Rough Landscape* (2009) for a detailed historical analysis of the links between world order, globalisation and landscapes.

In *The Rhetoric of Empire* (1993) David Spurr makes a similar argument to Pratt about landscape and colonial ownership, but he further posits that the “very process by which one culture subordinates another begins in the act of naming and leaving unnamed, of marking on an unknown territory the lines of division and uniformity” (4). Within Canning and Tytler’s writings the naming and labelling of flora and fauna can be regarded as a method of making the unknown familiar and marking ownership over the landscape: a subtle form of colonial administration.⁷³ It is important to reaffirm that Canning and Tytler did not travel with the sole intention to “map” and document India like writers such as Constance Gordon Cumming (1837-1924) and Marianne North (1830-1890); however, an impulse to chart and record the land, the flora and the fauna is evident within their writings.

Out of both writers Canning appears as the most purposeful in her categorising of the environment. She arguably constructs the self in the role of botanist, through the authoritative recording and mapping of plants. She writes to Queen Victoria about the initial pleasure brought about through the vegetation: “I who so much delight in plants thoroughly appreciate the beauty of the tropical vegetation.” (Lady Canning to Queen Victoria, Feb. 24. 1856, RA Z 502/2). Canning embraces not only the indigenous trees established within the grounds of Government House, but also the neighbouring wilder elements: “I have had a good deal of amusement in cutting down shrubs and opening out vistas. Such a beautiful banyan tree, like a grove, covered with creepers and orchideous plants, is now exposed to view” (Lady Canning to Queen Victoria, Feb. 24. 1856, RA Z 502/2). Notably she undertakes elaborate aesthetic descriptions of the agriculture: “The luxuriant growth in the jungly ground outside of dazzling green during the rains, is more beautiful than I can describe, and I always think of the Palm House at Kew which gives a faint idea of it” (Lady Canning to Queen Victoria, Feb. 24. 1856, RA Z 502/2). Within her letters the unfamiliar shrubs and trees are rapidly made familiar through comparisons with western flora: “mango-trees in flower exactly like Spanish chestnuts; taraminds in the style of acacias, but much thicker” (Lady Canning to Queen Victoria, Feb. 24. 1856, RA Z 502/2). Following, Pratt’s “monarch-of-all-I-survey” framework, Canning

73. See Gavin Lucas, *An Archaeology of Colonial Identity: Power and Material Culture in the Dwars Valley, South Africa* (2006) for a debate on the link between textual descriptions, maps and colonial administration (13).

makes the plants accessible to her European audience, the Queen, by comparing them to the flora widely known back in Britain. Moreover, she highlights the hybrid nature of the landscape by highlighting the blend of British and Indian styles at Government House.

It is important to note that Canning painted numerous illustrations and compiled these alongside descriptions, creating a catalogue of Indian plants within her writings.⁷⁴ Her authority over such topics was further enhanced by her meetings with the Superintendent of Calcutta's Botanic Garden, Dr Thomas Thomson, who had spent more than a decade exploring and collecting plants in the Western and Eastern Himalayas. They shared a common passion for plants and in a letter to her sister Lady Louisa Waterford she reflects her want for more knowledge: "Dr. Thomson, at the head of the Botanic Garden, is the man so often referred to in 'Dr. Hook's Himalayan Flora'. I squeeze out of him all the information I can and he is most amiable in getting plants for me" (qtd. in Hare 145). Her urge to define, classify and illustrate India's flora is recurrently emphasised:

'I wish I could send you a bough of the *Butea frondosa*, which came yesterday from the Botanic Gardens. It is a tree common in jungles on the other side of India. It always reminds me of pictures of the flames of a Phoenix Fire Office, or a fresco of souls in Purgatory... I must send home a drawing of it. I have a great wish to do a series of drawings of trees and flowers, but I have few to boast of – at present'. (qtd. in Hare 145)

Canning's explicit quest for detailed knowledge of and familiarity with the Indian landscape and its flora can be deemed as a rhetorical attempt at imperial boundary making, an endeavour that is also apparent in her accounts of the fauna.

Canning's letters continue to demonstrate a perceptible urge to classify India through reports of Indian insects, a descriptive engagement that further reveals the relationship between naming, knowledge and power. Initially, Canning's response to the insects reflects her lack of interest and detachment in the fauna:

74. 356 paintings by Charlotte Canning are currently (2014) exhibited at London's Victoria and Albert Museum within their "Topography" category.

Your Majesty once pitied me for the heat and the insects I should encounter. At the beginning of the rains sometimes the dinner table was covered with thousands of insects of all kinds as thick as in the drawers of a collection. Silver covers had to be put on all the glasses and it was a curious sight. (Lady Canning to Queen Victoria, Oct. 7. 1856, RA Z 502/5)

Despite complaining about these insects, Canning's urge to understand the fauna is progressively emphasised:

'Mr. Grote is a great amateur of scientific things, and has lately sent me a most marvellous collection of portraits of moths, grubs, caterpillars, and butterflies... they required to be looked at with a magnifying glass... If you wish to bespeak any microscopic curiosities, tell me what, and I shall ask him to get them'. (qtd. in Hare 146)

Notably, Canning asked for a collection of such insects to be assembled and sent off to the royal children for their museum at Osborne House. This first attempt failed when the specimens rotted in the intense humidity, but Canning assured the Queen that she would persevere depicting her need to classify and assert her authority over India (C. Allen 36).

For Tytler, a woman who was born in India, the naming of plants and animals demonstrates her knowledge, possession and association with the land but through different means. Unlike Canning's colonist methods of documentation and categorising Tytler portrays animal encounters as adventures, a characteristic that links to the concept of her confused sense of national identity: she is not a detached observer of the fauna, but instead an active participant. Significantly, Tytler begins her memoirs with a reference to an Indian animal: "The next excitement in my life was that of being stung by a scorpion, fortunately a little, tiny brown one... I cannot describe the awful feeling. I just screamed with terror till the servants ran to my help and dragged me out" (9-11). Though this is plainly not a positive description, it is important to highlight that Tytler describes this event in the manner of a heroic adventure. She adopts a proud tone, implying that she has a special connection with animals and therefore India. Indeed, throughout her memoirs, she reflects an ever-increasing curiosity with Tigers, but not in the manner of the "monarch-of-all-I-survey" trope. On the contrary, her descriptions do not imply surveillance, but

instead membership. Her identity is interrelated to Indian animals as she writes: “Father gave me the soubriquet of the ‘Junglee Billee’ translated as the Wild Cat” (19).

When recalling her childhood in Chittagong Tytler describes her secret ownership of a pet lizard, a large specimen called a tucktoo and narrates her father’s attempts to find and kill her beloved pet: “But tucktoo was not found, his fairy godmother evidently having warned him of impending danger” (16). By defining herself as the tucktoo’s “fairy godmother” it could be deemed that Tytler was implying colonial possession, but unlike Canning’s approach to “specimens”, Tytler constructs a relationship with the lizard that is less about boundary making and more about boundary breaking. She implies that she has a closer bond with India’s landscape than Britain’s, a concept that highlights her complex colonial identity. This complexity is further highlighted by Tytler’s practically implausible claim that she ate the first ever strawberry grown in India, a notable description of fauna, which once again takes her (con)textual identity from surveyor to participant:

The first strawberry plants that ever grew in India were grown in the Barrackpore gardens. My father and mother, with some friends went to see these wonders... Of course everyone delighted at the novel sight... all expressed the desire to be Lord Auckland to have the pleasure of eating the first Indian strawberries... No sooner had my father and his friends gone on, chatting away, than I thought I really must taste the strawberries. Accordingly, I picked and ate them both. (15)

Within her account the strawberry becomes both a symbolic and arguably sentimental object that reveals Tytler’s complex colonial identity. Being born in India to British parents she exists in a land she cannot conceive fully as her own whilst simultaneously showing curiosity for British entities. For Tytler, an aesthetic description of a strawberry, or the careful cataloguing of its growth pattern, cannot fully satisfy her control and authority over the landscape. On the contrary, Tytler resists the “imagined Indian landscape” by ingesting the strawberry and therefore symbolically ingesting Britain.

Complex Colonial Identities

Having considered Canning, Coopland, Ouvry and Tytler's confrontations and textual assembly of Indian landscapes and people, the chapter now returns to analysing the British writers' constructions of the self; however, the research now explores constructions of a collective self by contemplating the writers' efforts at assembling national identity and Britishness. The subsequent debate determines that, like the "imagined Indian landscapes" formerly studied in the chapter, references to British artefacts, culture, and traditions composed in an Indian context become powerful constructs, forming an "aesthetic idealisation" (Mitchell 6) and imperialist tool, a concept that Baucom endorses: "Englishness has been generally understood to reside within some type of imaginary, abstract, or actual locale... to control, possess, order, and dis-order the nation's and the empire's spaces" (4).

The remainder of the chapter proposes that India forms the context for the formulation of complex colonial (con)textual identities as the four writers tackle anxieties regarding the erosion of their national identity, or Britishness. The research argues that within the narratives under scrutiny British artefacts, culture and traditions become both sentimental and manipulated entities that reinforce the writers' own sense of national belonging whilst simultaneously preventing "racial pollution" (Sen 174). Canning and Coopland respond to the newness of India by drawing attention to, exaggerating and comparing India against features that unite Britons. Arguably, the more geographically detached the women become from Britain, the more they endeavour to reinforce their Britishness, an idea proposed by Imperial historian P.J. Marshall: "those who settled in the empire generally experienced a greater sense of undifferentiated Britishness than those who stayed at home" (320).⁷⁵ Robert Phillipson takes this claim further by asserting that travel evokes an exaggeration of one's own sense of nationality: "It is not uncommon for one's national identity to become more salient when one travels" (30). Whether salient or exaggerated references to British entities evoke an absent Britain or not, within a landscape that was considered "chaotic, exotic and morally regressive" (Hobson 45) they were valuable in reflecting the

75. In his examination of nationalist ideology *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse* (1986) Partha Chatterjee comments upon the need for Europeans in a colonial situation to establish the superiority of the West by asserting "the materiality of its culture, exemplified by its science, technology, and love of progress" (51).

imperialist agenda by purposefully bombarding the Indian landscape with aspects of commanding Britishness.⁷⁶

Within Coopland's narrative, there is a continued affirmation of her sense of Britishness through references and comparisons to British places, buildings and western technology. Upon her arrival in India she employs a nostalgic tendency, by comparing the landscape to Britain and stressing India's inferiority:

We missed, in the flat country, the graceful undulations and hill and dale of our own home scenery. There is no hill which you may ascend and have a good prospect of the surrounding country: you cannot see beyond the flat, dirty-looking plain, and your eye soon wearies of the extensive cotton fields, only varied by miserable native villages, with stagnant pools and open drains. (11)

Coopland describes the land as being "very wild and desolate" (20); however, Coopland's pejorative tone promptly alters to one of relief and superiority when western technology is observed: "The only civilised thing we saw was the telegraph wire... The natives have a great idea of its magical powers" (20). By stressing the positive influence of a western entity on the "wild and desolate" landscape, Coopland supports Britain's civilising mission. By relating India with Britain, Coopland, like Ouvry and Tylter, supports the "monarch-of-all-I-survey" framework, as India becomes temporarily more westernised and thus less threatening. She adopts a similar intention when she arrives on a "beautiful morning" (21) in Benares, a place that despite its "mosques, steps and ghats" (21) she proudly defines as "the Oxford of India" (22). When describing Allahab, the first station in the Upper Provinces, Coopland returns to adopting a critical tone and anxiousness about the Eastern sights: "the lefty tombs of Asiatic architecture which looked very different from an English one" (26), but within the same page of her narrative her tone returns to relief when a similarity with Britain is observed:

Our drive, however, gave me much pleasure: the military cantonments surrounded by trees, the grassy, park-like plain, the English-looking

76. Learie James indicates in *Beyond a Boundary* (1963) that the imperial officers who made it their business to lay cricket pitches on every available sward of colonial green did so not merely to divert themselves but to preserve their own identities and reform the identities of their subjects (112). The colonialists hoped the cricket field would function as a corrective metaphor of Britishness.

houses, and tastefully laid-out gardens, formed a picturesque scene, a pretty homelike station. (26)

For Coopland, to come into contact or to make a comparison with a “homelike” entity is not only to be made aware, or reminded of Britain, it is arguably to become, at least momentarily, more British. In Gwalior, Coopland’s base during the Mutiny, her “first view was a pleasing one” (44), particularly because of the Britishness of the cantonment she would be living in:

The cantonments consisted of a row of large thatched houses in compounds, like pretty, gay gardens, on each side of a wide road bordered with trees, and about a mile long. The road had an English look: the people were driving and riding about, and the pretty, healthy-looking children (so different from those of Calcutta) also riding or driving in little pony-carriages. We passed the church, which looked exactly like an English one, and is very well built. (45).

Such descriptions of ‘homelike’ sites arguably become spaces of memory in Coopland’s narrative in that they reinforce her British identity as she encounters them. With a similar approach, when she meets with a new Indian artefact, she makes comparisons with British entities, commonly depicting the Indian version as a poor replica:

We had many of the new publications, “Blackwood’s” and “Fraser’s” Magazines, and several Indian papers, “The Delhi Gazette,” “The Friend of India,” “The Mofussilite,” and a stupid thing called “The Delhi Punch,” a bad imitation of its witty namesake in England. (59)

By equating the buildings, roads and print media of India to those of her homeland Britain, “the space of return and of consolidation of the Self” (Grewal 36), Coopland is emphasising, recapturing and promoting her British persona, an identity that is in danger of being lost and remoulded into a new guise within the colonial context. Moreover, by adopting a tone of pride and pleasure at the Britishness of India Coopland supports the imperial agenda by implying that India is “inferior, passive and stagnant” (Hobson 45) and can thus be improved by the “functional, civilised and progressive” (Hobson 45) parts of British culture.

Places that have been built by the British in India, or are comparable with British locations, are essential in the composition and maintenance of Canning’s

(con)textual identity. When she arrives at her new home in India she describes it as having “a very English appearance, like the flat part of Hyde Park and the high houses to the North side” (Lady Canning’s Journal, Calcutta, Feb. 4. 1856. CP). Her new home, the Government House in Calcutta, was in fact modelled on Kedleston Hall in Derbyshire, and was built of brick covered with a veneer of plaster rather than stone, and had, as Canning noted, “the most English well-kept green park I ever saw” (Lady Canning to Queen Victoria, Oct. 7. 1856, RA Z 502/5). Like Coopland, Canning subtly supports Britain’s civilising mission and in a letter to Queen Victoria she narrates her efforts at transforming an enormous ballroom into what she defines as “the most civilised room in India”, and outlining her drawing room as “pretty and cool and English” (Lady Canning to Queen Victoria, Mar. 8. 1856, RA Z 502/3). Canning even wanted to breach long established Indian conventions regarding the layout of a home which she deemed impractical. She bemoans to the Queen that Government House’s kitchens were situated at a distance from the dining-room, with “no means of keeping the soufflés from collapsing on the way” (Lady Canning to Queen Victoria, Mar. 8. 1856, RA Z 502/3).

However, despite initially conveying pleasure and authority at all things British, Canning’s writings do suggest the beginnings of a complex colonial identity when she suggests disappointment at the excessive Britishness of Government House and implies an urge for the inclusion of more Indian features in the setting: “The Park is carefully planted with round-headed trees to look as English as possible more so than I can approve, and I am glad when Bamboos & Cocoanuts & Palms have crept in” (Lady Canning to Queen Victoria, Oct. 7. 1856, RA Z 502/5). Here, Canning criticises her new home as being overly British, but notably the Indian “Bamboos & Cocoanuts & Palms” that she desires are stereotypically idyllic and picturesque beings. Canning does not want the real “chaotic, unmapped India” (Nayar 97). On the contrary she wants an “aesthetic idealisation” (Mitchell 6) or picturesque version, a prevalent British imperial performance that Pramod K. Nayar argues, “sought to control the wild, vast, borderless and dangerous India” (97). Canning and Coopland’s portrayals of British places and artefacts serve as apt metaphors for the writers’ anxious and displaced sense of self. Within these examples, Britishness becomes abstract, but it is nonetheless purposeful as British identity is regained and preserved.

Despite the assured awareness of national identity conveyed by her published title *The English Woman in India*, Tytler's memoir reveals a more complex sense of national identity in comparison to Canning and Coopland. Tytler's (con)textual self is grappling with issues of home, nationality and difference. She is essentially torn between two different identities, cultures and futures: Indian and British. At this stage of her narrative Tytler's textual persona can be defined as a complex colonial identity; her self-proclaimed sense of Britishness does not wholly supersede her loyalty to India, the place where she was born and spent the majority of her life. Her (con)textual identity substantiates Colley's assertion that: "Identities are not like hats. Human beings can and do put on several at one time" (6). Tytler overtly demarcates herself as British, constructing herself as racially distinct from the peoples of India whilst simultaneously drawing attention to the influence of India upon her sense of self. She communicates a double allegiance that has developed out of her contact with both British and Indian landscapes, cultures and peoples, a myriad of contexts that generate a confused sense of national identity within her memoir.

The appropriation of Indian language is a vital issue in the construction of Tytler's sense of national identity.⁷⁷ Being born in India and raised with the assistance of an 'ayah', an Indian nurse-maid, an important authorial voice whilst she was growing up was in Hindustani. She recalls her earliest cries being: "Hum janta mamma chulla gia, chull gia!" (6), roughly translated as "I know Mamma has gone away, has gone away". The fact that Tytler's first words are in an Indian tongue is symbolic of her confused identity. By speaking the native tongue of the servants, over the native tongue of her parents, the influence of India on her childhood is plainly conveyed.⁷⁸ However, the meaning of Tytler's words cannot be ignored. Tytler is recounting her upset at being separated from her mother, a context that conveys a sense of displacement and loss at being estranged from her cultural foundation.

The relationship between language and identity becomes prominent again, later in Tytler's memoir, when she narrates her first memorable visit to

77. Leigh Oakes' *Language and National Identity: Comparing France and Sweden* (2001) provides a detailed discussion on the basic concepts and theoretical framework of the role language has played and continues to play in the construction of national identities.

78. Lucy Lethbridge in *Servants: A Downstairs History of Britain from the Nineteenth Century to Modern Times* (2013) points out that "children brought up in colonial outposts acquired an understanding of the country in which they now lived that was often closed to their parents, many of whom found very disturbing the spectacle of their children speaking the native tongue of the servants more fluently than English" (108).

Britain as a child. When meeting British relatives for the first time on British soil she recalls: “I was asked a hundred questions about that far-off country, and had to speak Hindustani, which I did, though not satisfactory to myself, for even in those few months I had forgotten many words” (34). Tytler adopts a satisfied tone regarding her unique identity in Britain, with Hindustani being regarded as a charming facet of her personality. However, the account is overshadowed by her disappointment at not speaking Hindustani to what she deems an acceptable level. Her frustration at forgetting Indian words signifies the pride she places on the Indian aspects of her personality, which reinforces her confused and complex sense of national identity.

Despite categorising herself as an “Englishwoman in India” Tytler communicates a sense of displacement by referring to herself and fellow Indian-born Britons as “exiles in a foreign land” (33).

Further signs of the dual influence of both British and Indian cultures upon Tytler’s identity endure throughout her memoir. She recalls having her head shaved five times to make her hair grow faster, a common tradition for Indian children, stating: “It was dreadfully mortifying to be chaffed about it by the officers, for being eleven at that time, I felt it very much” (20). However, whilst she is absorbing Indian culture and language, within her education she is taught British grammar, “Lindley Murray was my abhorrence” (15).

Tytler’s confused and conflicted sense of cultural and national identity is emphasised by her desire for British goods:

In those days of no European shops up country, there lived a very enterprising man of the name Myers, who used to carry on an extensive business during the cold season by importing a quantity of English goods... small or great, wherever there were Europeans to purchase them. Everybody, on hearing of Myers’ arrival, used to go quickly as possible to him to get the first choice of these antiquated articles, but which were of course quite modern to us. (13)

Tytler recalls one specific occasion when Myers’ arrival was particularly memorable: “father was going to break through his rules and buy me a doll, and my little brother a bugle. My joy was so great that it knew no bounds. To think I was to have a real English doll” (13). Sadly, for Tytler, her parents were unable to afford the prized toy, a context that caused her to “shed many tears over the

disappointment” (13). Tytler’s anticipation and subsequent disappointment for the “real English doll” and her classification of British goods as “antiquated articles” elevates the status of British artefacts and conveys her idolisation of British culture. By attempting to buy their daughter British goods, it could be argued that Tytler’s parents were attempting to provide her with the cultural boundaries that she seeks as a child; however, as the argument now demonstrates, she cannot shake the fact that her relationship to Britain is defined by distance.

As Tytler matures and her memoir progresses, her aspirations for all things British ceases. Her allegiance with Britain is interrupted and India becomes the land she longs for when, at the age of eight, she travels to Britain for the first time. In her writings, she conveys a tone of excitement and anticipation about the journey from India to her homeland; however, this enthusiasm is only temporary. Tytler’s textual identity adopts a new form in the new context of Britain. She converts from being “the Other” in India to “the Other” in Britain: “I was the centre of attraction as having just arrived from India. It was all so wonderfully strange to me. No animal in the zoo could have been more appreciated” (34). She continues:

No sooner had we arrived [in Britain] than the whole family came to inspect us; my brother’s hat and my dress caused a great sensation.

Judging from their hilarity and pertinent remarks they certainly had much amusement at our expense. (32)

With a comparable approach to Canning and Ouvry’s early descriptions of India, Tytler describes Britain as a visitor describes a new land: “The first fall of snow, just before Christmas, was a novel sight to us, born and brought up in the plains of India. We used to scream with delight as one flake larger than another came slowly down” (37). Nevertheless, the pleasure of being in Britain is short-lived and a conflicted sense of belonging emerges, as she grows increasingly homesick and wants to return to India: “My idea was to sell my trinkets to pay for my railway fare to London, and then to go to the Perces and beg of them to send me back to my parents in India” (45). As she narrates her days in Britain, Tytler constructs a textual persona that mimics the behaviour of an isolated prisoner. She recalls counting down the days, as she yearns for “freedom out of prison, for

such was our home” (45). She continues this construction of the self as a captive by counting down the days to her “release” back to India:

When I reached sixteen my spirits revived for I knew then that I should only have one more year to wait, so I tore up 365 pieces of paper and strung them together and hung them up on a nail in the schoolroom. Every day I pulled off one and counted the remainder to the very end.
(45)

Significantly, the concept of imprisonment for Tytler is not confined to Britain, as earlier in her narrative she recalls talking to a bird in India, saying: “Poor little bird... You and I are both prisoners” (15). Tytler’s use of a prisoner analogy in both India and Britain reflects her conflicted sense of belonging and national identity. She wants to be released, but from what and to where she doesn’t know. Her narrative presents a perceptible case of a (con)textual identity that reflects a crisis of nationality being neither here nor there. By straddling both British and Indian languages, cultures and traditions Tytler assimilates her identity to the degree that her national self can no longer be simply distinguished.

Settlement of the Self

Whilst Chapter 1 revealed that travel to India evoked the advent of identities that can be regarded as exceptional and new, this phase of the dissertation has argued that the process of settling in a new land intensifies such personas whilst also prompting a more perceptible sense of confusion to constructions of the self. In India, the writers’ (con)textual identities become a negotiation between self and “the Other”, British and Indian culture, Western and Eastern values and feminine and masculine functions. As a result of this complex encounter with different modes of living, evidence of cultural confusion are revealed, which reflect a dispute between the writers’ constructions of the self as both an authoritative unwomanly persona and subjugated feminine self. Yet, as the next chapter goes on to demonstrate, these textual personas, linked to the context in which they were written, are no more than temporary constructs. They are (con)textual identities, possessing the ability to shift and take on a new guise when a new context is confronted.

On March 1 1857, Canning noted in a letter to Queen Victoria that it was the one-year anniversary of her arrival in India:

It is difficult to believe it is a year, and yet I always feel as if it was a lifetime, & I had never been anywhere else. It is very monotonous & sometimes very dull, but not without a great deal to interest one, too, & a great deal to see with one's eyes, when one has an opportunity for looking. But day after day I ride the same way, & see the same people & the same carriages & ships & buggys & say 'How Mrs This is looking' & 'How Mrs That's horse goes,' & it is very dull. (Lady Canning to Queen Victoria, Feb. 23. 1857, RA Z 502/8)

This quotation characterises a number of issues that have been explored in this chapter. Firstly, Canning's suggestion that it has been a "difficult" year reflects the complex contrasts between life in Britain and India that the British women had to negotiate. Secondly, her declaration that it has been "monotonous" highlights the complex issue of finding a function in India. What acceptable roles were these women permitted to undertake and write about in order to avoid the boredom and imprisonment that life in India could sometimes offer? Thirdly, her reference to "Mrs This" and "Mrs That" highlights that British women were habitually beheld as a collective or negative stereotype, with few accessible opportunities for individual and valuable contributions to the empire. The overall tone of Canning's letter is of the dull existence of British women in India and the routine life that they follow. However, as Canning was writing to her monarch, the chain of events that became the Indian Mutiny had already started and a new context was looming.

March 1857 marked the beginning of the Hindu year, and it had been prophesied that the British Raj in India would endure only a hundred years. At Barrackpore and at other cantonments up and down the country, the Sepoys had already started to voice their opposition to British rule. The Mutiny was beginning and the writers' textual identities were about to tackle a new, unwomanly and even life-threatening context: war.

Chapter Three
“We must be ready to mount our horses”:
Rumours, Preparations and Outbreaks

In war, truth is the first casualty.

(Aeschylus, 525 B.C - 456 B.C)

The preceding two chapters have revealed the manifold ways that departure, travel and settlement in India contributed to the construction of transitive (con)textual identities in British women’s autobiographical accounts. Chapter One determined that the writers establish the origins of a new and exceptional woman via the composition of the self as an exclusive, proficient and authoritative traveller. Chapter Two contended that this inclination intensifies in India as the writers assemble altered forms of self and “Other” in response to encounters with India’s landscape and inhabitants. The study now advances to evaluate the relationship between female compositions of the self and the narration of the rumours, preparations and outbreaks that marked the beginning of the 1857 Mutiny. The analysis reveals how the commencement of war generates a distinguishable modification and repositioning of gendered and national identities in writings by Katherine Bartrum, Charlotte Canning, Adelaide Case, Ruth Coopland, Caroline Dickson, Maria Germon, Georgina Harris, Julia Inglis, Matilda Ouvry and Harriet Tytler.

The chapter contends that the onset of military conflict exposed the ten women to formerly inconceivable, formidable and unwomanly contexts where conventional gendered ideologies and textual constraints could be circumvented. Owing to the mental and physical trials that the siege evoked, the research reveals that the writers acquire a disorderly and paradoxical spectrum of functions in response to war such as victim, prisoner, servant and soldier. These (con)textual identities articulate an anxiety regarding the reshaping of the self as a courageous, exceptional and “militaristic” contributor of war, as the women simultaneously endeavour to uphold nineteenth century British gender codes that commanded women to be passive and domestic.

Women’s writing from the First and Second World War has received significant critical attention and female Crimean War accounts have had recent

assessment;⁷⁹ however, limited consideration has been given to how British women documented the Indian Mutiny. The ensuing two chapters intend to fill this void by scrutinising how the writers' utilise diaries, journals, letters and memoirs to respond to military conflict. The principal focus is on war's influence upon textual representations of the self. The rhetoric of war has historically been "obsessively masculine" (Darrow 152)⁸⁰, being heavily influenced by the patriarchal ideology that prescribes parameters to women's participation in combat. Women, for the most part have been denied full citizenship, remaining foreign and novel in its setting. As Gill Plain declares: "historically, the very idea [of war] has been a gendered one, founded on the emphatic cultural distinction between male activity and female passivity, combatant and non-combatant, soldier and mother" (166). Plain deems that war, like mid-Victorian Britain, has its own doctrine of separate spheres: "men by becoming soldiers, assume a higher purpose and an identity that definitively distinguishes them from women" (167). Colonel Sir Anthony Sterling, a British army officer writing from Russia during the Crimean War in June 1855, conveys the prevalent belief regarding the relationship between women and war in the mid-nineteenth century: "This is no place for ladies" (158).

Using the premise that mid-Victorian women's autobiographical writings were expected to be personal and private texts, and that "household occupations" were the only prospect for "female accomplishment" (Grey and Shirreff 56), this chapter appraises the methods by which the writers assemble (con)textual identities against the backdrop of an emerging war. Moreover, it scrutinises how women textually inscribe combat, violence and grief at a time when "modesty and simplicity should mark her demeanour" (Stodart 51).⁸¹ The accounts offer an insight into the rhetorical choices British women encountered when the siege invaded the female domestic space, thus blurring the boundary concerning a male war front and a female home front. Podnieks asserts "women's inscriptions

79. Notable texts include Ann George's *Women and Rhetoric Between the Wars* (2013), Agnes Cardinal's *Women's Writing on the First World War* (1999), Sharon Ouditt's *Fighting Forces, Writing Women: Identity and Ideology in the First World War* (1994), Helen Rappaport's *No Place for Ladies: The Untold Story of Women of the Crimean War* (2007), Georgia Reagan's *Postmemory, Feminism, and Women's Writing in the Spanish Civil War Era* (2013) and Karen Schneider's *Loving Arms: British Women Writing the Second World War* (1997).

80. See Stefan Sudink, Karen Hagemann and John Tosh's collection *Masculinities in Politics and War: Gendering Modern History* (2004) for a consideration of masculinity in the modern history of politics and war.

81. See Valerie Sanders' *The Private Lives of Victorian Women: Autobiography in the Nineteenth Century* (1989) for a consideration of the procedures and principles that women's writing had to traditionally follow in the nineteenth century.

of taboo experiences, coupled with their ‘shaping’ of stories... make women’s diaries subversive spaces” (7). The theory that female autobiographical accounts of war are “subversive spaces” is reinforced in the ensuing research as the discussion reveals that the rebellion sparked a textual conflict.

The narratives progress beyond being exclusively feminine by featuring a composite blend of domestic detail alongside comprehensive death tolls and the itemisation of weaponry in the manner of a military report, a genre solely reserved for men. However, unlike the majority of published masculine accounts, the writers simultaneously challenge and reaffirm both their national and gendered identity by featuring self-criticism on an individual and national scale. They differ from heroic and gallant accounts of the battlefield by authors such as Charles Raikes, William Howard Russell and Sita Ram Pandey⁸² and yet their experiences are nonetheless like a battle: a physical battle against disease, food shortages and Indian servants and a metaphorical battle to remain womanly despite the masculine context.

The opening epigraph “In war, truth is the first casualty”, attributed to Greek dramatist Aeschylus, is relevant to the subsequent debate as it highlights the notion that the writers purposefully fabricate and fictionalise their involvement in war.⁸³ More specifically accounts of the Mutiny become a site where British women can revise their functions and disposition in order to project the self as an indispensable and integral participant of war. For the majority of the writers under scrutiny war began at home or in the Residency in Lucknow, where women lived as a community. The strain of maintaining domestic normality and womanliness emerges as a presiding theme as their narratives become marked by a discernable disruption of patent and distinct lines between male and female functions. Under starvation conditions the writers’ doctrinal homely roles became challenging unwomanly roles such as keeping watch and seeking appropriate weapons. The writings present a complex merging of womanly and masculine occupations and textual traits. Femininity is conveyed by an apologetic anxiety and self-consciousness regarding writing about one’s

82. See Sita Ram Pandey’s *From Sepoy to Subedar, Being the Life and Adventures of Subedar Sita Ram, a Native Officer of the Bengal Native Army, Written and Related by Himself*, trans. Lt. Col. Norgate (1873), Charles Raikes’ *Notes of the Revolt in the North-Western Provinces of India* (1858) and William Howard Russell’s *My Diary in India in the years 1858-9* (1860).

83 Podnieks asserts the facility to intentionally dramatize and “rewrite” oneself is a dominant feature of the female diary: “the diary is a place where women can express themselves through narratives which conform to culturally scripted life stories, while at the same time they can rewrite them to reflect their subversive desires and experiences” (6).

proximity to violence and death. There are staunch attempts to conform to nineteenth-century gender ideologies via an emphasis on domestic obligations, household routines and the portrayal of the self as an innocent passive victim. In contrast, the rebellion also induces identities that convey British women in male-oriented roles such as soldier, military reporter and historian, functions that suggest the presence of new and exceptional women.

Robinson suggests that British women's writings of the Mutiny offer true and unembellished accounts of their roles and contributions:

These women hardly bother with the military news, which for all its terrible importance at the time soon became measured and a little still in the telling by official chroniclers, even eye-witness ones. Their journals and letters home are much more personal documents, allowed to be all that official ones were not: bewildered, compassionate, trivial, terrified, emotional – even downright disloyal... Their courage does not involve the battlefield, except in so much as their menfolk might be fighting on it.

(xivii-xviii)

Robinson views the narratives as “personal” texts by having little or no focus on military activities; however, this chapter strongly contests her claims by revealing that British female narratives of the Mutiny do, intermittently, feature attempts to provide historical and military accounts. The focus is not solely domestic and feminine; at intervals the battlefield becomes the focus. As a consequence of the amalgamation of both multi-gendered identities and paradoxical modes of writing, it can be justifiably contended that British female accounts of the Mutiny form their own distinct genre of women's autobiography.

Outbreaks of (Identity) Conflict

On May 11 1857, Hindu and Muslim sepoys massacred British residents and native Christians in Delhi, setting off a whirlwind of violence that engulfed India in the following months and created a wave of shock and anger in Britain. From early 1857, long before the cannon had started, signs that all was not well with the sepoys were visible. Some British officers perceived this disaffection and deduced that a rebellion was looming, whilst others believed that “loyal sepoys” (S. David 82) would never turn against their British masters. As a result warnings were not heeded and the rebellion that had been brewing for some months broke

on May 10. Native regiments stationed at Meerut panicked at being required to bite off the ends of newly issued paper rifle cartridges apparently greased with beef and pork fat which sepoy saw as “an attempt to break their caste as a preliminary to making them all Christians” (Edwardes 19). As a result native regiments mutinied against British rule and began murdering British officers and their wives and children in gruesomely reported events that “left a bitter and lasting wound on the British psyche” (Riddick 55).

Almost as soon as the first shots had been fired, reports from the battlefield began to filter back to Britain. The majority of these writings were by male soldiers, officers and East India Company officials such as Alexander Duff, a Presbyterian preacher in Calcutta, who reported on the “tempest of massacre and blood”, and “the mighty torrent of evil that is now rolling in fire and blood over the plains of India” (qtd. in Herbert 2). However, there was a small selection of reports by British women, who despite not being physically on the battlefield had another story to tell about the beginnings of the rebellion. It is important to reiterate that the writers investigated in this chapter were not all in the same locations across India during the first two months of the siege. As specified on the map at Appendix 1, Bartrum, Case, Dickson, Germon, Ouvry, Harris and Inglis were in Lucknow, Oudh’s capital.⁸⁴

During April and the start of May 1857, Lucknow seethed with rumours and there were minor outbreaks of insubordination. Sir Henry Lawrence assumed military command on May 19 and Bartrum, Case, Dickson, Germon, Ouvry, Harris and Inglis were moved into the Residency area along with other British women and children. The Residency precinct accommodated a Residency building and a large number of bungalows, houses, small palaces, and fortified gates. It was an especially difficult perimeter to defend, being overlooked, in part, by other buildings. The total area was about thirty-three acres. Within her diary Inglis describes the mass movement into the Residency: “The result being that this evening all the women and children were sent into the city Residency with a company of the 32nd and four guns” (10). On May 30, the insurrection erupted. Lawrence had been informed that it would begin at 9 p.m. He had just

84. For literature focused specifically on Lucknow’s role in the Mutiny see David Kinsley’s *They Fight Like Devils: Stories From Lucknow During the Great Indian Mutiny* (2002), Innes McLeod’s *Lucknow and Oude in the Mutiny* (1895) and Roshan Taqui’s *Lucknow 1857: The Two Wars of Lucknow: The Dusk of an Era* (2001)

remarked to an officer “Your friends are not punctual”, when the firing broke out (Ward 122).

Canning was based in Calcutta at the Mutiny’s outbreak and, despite her privileged position as Governor-General’s wife and her guarded and secure home, it was not a safe place.⁸⁵ There had been several months of escalating tension and strange fires broke out on 24 January 1857. Calcutta was also very close to the Barrackpore parade ground, where on March 29, Mangal Pandey of the 34th revolted against the recent actions of the East India Company. He was court-martialled on April 26 and hanged on April 28. On Sunday June 14, which is commonly referred to as “Panic Sunday” (Ward 252), British communities, convinced that troops would officially rise at Barrackpore, fled to secret hiding places. Of this event, and the response of Britons in India, Charles Canning wrote:

‘All I can say is that in my life I never came across such a set of old women – some of them with swords by their sides – as those who fetch and carry the news of this town among the clubs and gossiping ‘tiffin’ rooms of their acquaintance. It makes me ashamed of Englishmen’. (qtd. in Ward 253)

Tytler was in Delhi, 40 miles from Meerut and many historians regard the “Siege of Delhi” as the most decisive and pivotal site of the rebellion.⁸⁶ Mutineers from Meerut agreed to capture Delhi as it was devoid of European troops and would be easy to gain. The last telegram to be sent from Meerut from the Postmaster to his aunt in Agra stated: “Cavalry have risen setting fire to houses having killed or wounded all Europeans they could find” (qtd. in J. Singh 43). The affair was clearly premeditated and at four o’clock on 10 May the telegraph line between Meerut and Delhi was cut, a symbolic severance of western technology that marked a significant moment in the history of the empire. Gwalior, where Cooplund was located, was situated about 75 miles south of Agra and it was also very much affected by the events. A large contingent from Gwalior rebelled against British rule enduring fierce encounters in those initial months. The Maharaja of Gwalior was loyal to the British during the rebellion but his troops sided with the rebels who had laid their hands on the city.

85. Calcutta’s role in the Mutiny forms a large focus of Krishna Dutta’s *Calcutta: A Cultural and Textual History* (2008).

86. For a focused consideration of Delhi in the Mutiny see William Dalrymple’s *The Last Mughal: The Fall of a Dynasty* (2007).

Germon, Ouvry and Coopland's initial reactions to the onset of the hostilities draw attention to arguments and themes that are fundamental in this chapter. Upon hearing rumours regarding an impending attack on Lucknow, Germon employs her journal to recount a military conversation that she had been privy to:

Friday, May 15th, 1857. I spent the day with the Barwells of the 71st, he acting Brigade Major of Lucknow, and while sitting at dinner he told us of the horrible news from Meerut and Delhi, rather alarming news for one living alone as I was, Charlie being down on City duty. (17)

From the dawn of the Mutiny Germon assembles a complex identity. On the one hand she depicts her textual self as an authorised and knowledgeable partaker in the impending conflict. She avoids being peripheral and ignorant by suggesting her engagement in a military exchange. On the other hand she simultaneously proposes femininity by accentuating her seclusion, fear and passivity regarding the disconcerting news. Her textual identity is composite by virtue of its unwomanly militaristic dialogue and accompanying feminine fragility. In contrast to Germon, composed restraint and an unperturbed tone mark Ouvry's textual persona at the start of the siege:

We met an officer on the road who is going as quickly as possible to join his regiment; he spoke to H. and told him that the Indian army is in a state of mutiny; that one regiment had risen and murdered the Colonel, and several other regiments had been disbanded. This is a great annoyance. (84-85)

Strikingly, her diary entry lacks overt emotion or anxiety regarding her personal safety. On the contrary, Ouvry depicts the emerging conflict as an inconvenience and it could be argued that her fearlessness reflects and promotes British imperial confidence and superiority. Her text rejects cultural assumptions regarding "submissive, fragile and emotional femininity" (Mandelker 17) through her phlegmatic response. Her narrative is deficient in personal female sentiment. Coopland responds to the outbreak with an alternative approach to Germon and Ouvry:

The shadows of the "coming events" now began to cast a gloom over us, and our calm was slightly ruffled by hearing of some disturbances at Dumdum and Barrackpore, about the cartridges for the Enfield rifle.

Government had ordered mutton fat to be supplied by the contractors; but as they used pigs' and bullocks' fat, the sepoys soon found out the cheat.

(69)

Her account begins with an emotive and arguably fictional tone via the recording of “shadows” and “gloom”, yet regardless of this fervent attitude, her response to the rebellion is subsequently presented in a moderately calm and unconcerned manner by stating: “our calm was slightly ruffled”. Her approach conflicts with Cannet’s assertion that women’s diary entries should avoid “intellect” as she adds historical knowledge and conveys her self as having a proficient grasp of the events by referring in some detail to the Enfield rifle. Coopland’s textual persona simultaneously appears feminine by her initial exaggeration and melodramatic tone, yet later masculine and exceptional owing to her fearless attitude and informed grasp of martial activity.

Germon, Ouvry and Coopland’s diverse reactions to war’s onset are marked by conflicts of text and identity as the women reveal a dispute between what textual mode to adhere to and what gendered identity to construct. The rebellion proffered new contexts that women could respond to textually, but they had to respond carefully. The importance of what they should and should not write about, and how they construct the self, is evident from the onset. The women were undoubtedly under social pressure to assemble identities that adhered to the boundaries of mid-nineteenth century femininity via their “unsophisticated, innocent and passive” attributes (Skultans 23); however, they simultaneously convey a compulsion to construct identities that demonstrate “power, knowledge and space” (Norcia 144), qualities that reinforced Britain’s imperial character.

Innocent Sufferers and Domestic Soldiers

Charlotte Lindsey, a worker for the British Red Cross and the leader of the 2001 International Red Cross’ Project “Women and War”, encapsulates the universal and enduring stereotype of female capacity in warfare: “Thousands of women all over the world suffer the traumas of war – widowed, displaced, detained, separated from loved ones, victims of violence and injury” (qtd. in Gioseffi xxii). Lindsey’s assertion points towards women as sufferers of military conflict; however, she proceeds to oppose this presumption: “but women very often show

resourcefulness and resilience in coping with the loss and destruction of their lives. They do not remain victims for long” (qtd. in Gioseffi xxii).

The following discussion substantiates Lindsey’s claims by revealing how British female writers, who confront the commencement of the Indian Mutiny, shape their textual self in identities that simultaneously adhere to and conflict with two distinct ideologies. On the one hand, the writers comply with the Victorian gender ideology of women as “society’s innocents” (Kingsbury 10) in the arrangement of the self as a passive and weak sufferer and victim of war. On the other hand, the writers support the imperial ideology of Britain as a superior authority who possesses “the right and duty to lead weak nations” (Thomas 37) and the ability to “absorb almost any attack on its power” (Frankenberg 80) by depicting the self in valuable domestic functions, in the guise of a “domestic soldier”.⁸⁷ The research employs the terms “domestic soldier” and the “domestication of war” as frameworks to describe the elevation of traditional female domestic occupations from the degraded status of “women’s work” (Hakim 21) to the promoted rank of indispensable and prominent contributions of war. Female domestic duties are no longer conveyed as incidental mundane chores. On the contrary, through the guise of a “domestic soldier”, each writer appoints her textual self as an active participant, rather than submissive civilian.

Joyce Kaufman in *Women and War: Gender Identity and Activism in Times of Conflict* (2010) asserts:

Depending on the circumstances, women have four major options for responding to situations of conflict: (1) do nothing, (2) become politically active to help resolve the conflict, (3) actively participate in the conflict as belligerents engaged in violence, or (4) flee the fighting as refugees. Regardless of which option ultimately is selected, women are forced to deal with the situation in some way that requires a conscious choice. And in responding, women have agency. (1)

Whilst exploring how British women respond to an evolving siege the following research acknowledges the significance of “agency”, which as Kaufman implies, always governs responses to conflict. It recognises that the “domestication of

87. The term “domestic soldier” is borrowed from James J Kimble’s *Mobilizing the Home Front: War Bonds and Domestic Propaganda* (2006) and Jennifer Purcell’s *Domestic Soldiers: Six Women’s Lives in the Second World War* (2010).

war” is an arguably contentious and potentially risky technique employed by the female writers and that the composition of a (con)textual identity in the semblance of a “domestic soldier” is not without its complications. The narratives reveal the women’s attempts to conscientiously support Britain’s imperial authoritative presence whilst not undermining strict Victorian gender codes. The writers attempt to remain within the boundaries of mid-nineteenth century “nurturing femininity” (Crisp 168) whilst avoiding the “aggression, force and violence” (Cockburn 246) commonly observed within the masculine realm of war. Kaufman’s research posits that women respond to war by four diverse customs, but her research fails to recognise a fifth and equally significant alternative: women can contribute via the “domestication of war” by assembling the self in the form of a “domestic soldier”.

From the Mutiny’s launch Bartrum, Germon and Inglis compose their textual personas via the conventional image of women and children as “innocent and sainted victims” (Grayzel 53) of war. At the start of her memoir Bartrum shapes her textual self in the archetypal role of sufferer. She categorises her self as one of “two helpless women and two little children” (13) and reveals “I know I was never very brave, but how could I help feeling frightened at the tales of bloodshed” (7). Bartrum complies with the prevailing gender code that “women are weak; men are brave” (Eckert 23) by refraining from courageousness and accentuating her fear. In the same manner, Germon personates a perfect sufferer: “the sound of the screams of so many children – it was perfect misery. I was dying with thirst and had nothing of my own to drink – at last a lady took pity on me and gave me a cup of tea – a perfect luxury” (34). Germon’s idiom “dying of thirst” can be read as colloquial hyperbole but her choice of lexis, namely the term “dying”, gives force and intensity to her persona of victim.

Within her diary and letters Inglis likewise adopts this inclination as she collectively defines the entire British community of women and children in the Residency at Lucknow as sufferers: “The house was filled with ladies and children, and we sat down every evening to a large dinner party – a more mournful affair than which you cannot imagine” (*Letter* 11). In these examples Bartrum, Germon and Inglis locate their textual self within the grouping of “women and children”, a patriarchal ideology that equates adult female identity

with the childlike characteristics of innocence, ignorance and vulnerability.⁸⁸ Charli Carpenter considers that the “women and children” philosophy is a key constitutive of the “civilian/combatant distinction” that typecasts women in war as “especially vulnerable... innocent civilians” (14).

Within their narratives the writers continue to construct (con)textual identities that firmly locate the self as an innocent civilian. Inglis writes: “All in camp led a most trying, fatiguing, and anxious life; constant alarms and reports kept us continually on the alert, and rest was almost out of the question” (*Diary* 18). Moreover, within her letters, she refines her portrayal of the women in the Lucknow Residency by specifically defining them as a collective of prisoners: “We ladies were prisoners, never being able to go beyond the Residency gates; but we used to spend our evenings at the top of the house” (*Letter* 11). Harris too, within her diary, reflects this trend of emphasising female civilian captivity:

We are close prisoners and cannot go beyond the walls, but as all continues quite still we are hoping to be allowed this evening a drive to cantonments... now all communication between us and the rest of the world is cut off, and we know not what may be going on at other stations. (28-40)

Inglis continues to reflect the stereotypical notion of women as detained victims of war as she portrays the women in Lucknow as innocent and ignorant of the new context. Significantly, the initial noises of the conflict scare their inexperienced ears: “The evening gun rather startled us, but we heard no other war-like sounds” (*Diary* 18). Inglis’ phrase “war-like sounds” sounds simplistic and arguably infantile, an impression echoed in her diary when she presents herself and Case as naive passive onlookers:

Drove down to camp as usual. I had had a visit from John in the morning, and I did not think him at all in good spirits. Mrs. Case and I were mentioning some report we had heard about a mutiny at Peshawur, and rather laughing at its absurdity. He checked us by saying, ‘It’s no laughing matter; the most dreadful reports reach us daily. You think the crisis is past; I tell you it is yet to come.’ From that hour I seemed to

88. Alison Jaggar in *Feminist Politics and Human Nature* (1983) debates the “women and children” ideology: “Often women have even thought to resemble children. For the ancients, women, slave and children were considered to be similarly deficient in rationality, and even in modern times women and children are thought to lack the ability to look after themselves. Consequently, women and children are accorded special protection.” (256).

realise the true seriousness of our position, and could never again smile at anything I heard, feeling that, if not true then, it might be before long.

(*Diary 20*)

In *Women and War* (1987) Jean Bethke Elshtain investigates the link between gender and conflict. She contends that in warfare “we continue to locate ourselves inside its prototypical emblems and identities” (3). Elshtain progresses to assign specific gender roles to “war personas”:

Thus in times of war men and women – locked in a dense symbiosis, perceived as being who have complementary needs and gender-specific virtues – take on, in cultural memory and narrative, the personas of Just Warriors and Beautiful Souls. Man construed as violent... and woman as nonviolent, offering succour and compassion. (4).

Elshtain’s defines a “beautiful soul” as a woman in war who “protects the appearance of purity by cultivating innocence” (4) and assumed “the domestic and family affairs and the care and training of the child” (5) in contrast to the masculine “just warrior” who is “a destructive force, stern, selfish, aggrandizing” (6). Within Inglis and Tytler’s narratives characteristics of Elshtain’s “beautiful soul” are evident. Inglis depicts her textual persona as innocent and submissive by obeying male militaristic orders: “Mr. Gubbins knocked at my door, and said, ‘Bring your children, and come up to the top of the house immediately.’ I dressed myself and them, and obeyed as quickly as possible” (*Diary 20*). Inglis reinforces the gendered representation of conflict that men are protectors and women protected as she writes:

The next morning (19th), at eleven o'clock, an alarm was given that the 71st N.I. intended rising at two o'clock. The gentlemen immediately rushed out, and ladies from all parts rushed in for protection. We were all ordered, in case the house were attacked, to go into a small inner room without windows, and to remain there whilst the firing lasted. (11)

In Delhi, Tytler stresses her innocence to war and is frustrated by what she presents as female fragility: “Very foolishly I began to cry, not knowing how we were all to go to the Flag Staff Tower on the ridge” (117). She presents herself in a desperate and distressed state and like Elshtain’s concept of the “beautiful soul” she focuses on the care of her child: “I quite expected the baby and myself would die... we slept on the floor with only straw and a razai under us” (148).

On one notable occasion she describes in earnest detail her endeavours to distract her child's attention away from the fighting outside the Flagstaff Tower: "At last a bright idea entered into my head. It was rather a unique one, which was to scratch holes in my feet and tell her she must be my doctor and stop the bleeding" (149). Due to the startling nature of her description, a reader may question the validity of Tytler's account, but even if her explanation is embellished, the textual persona she constructs at this stage of war is revealing. As British men were suffering and shedding blood on the battlefield, Tytler fervently constructs herself as wounded and bleeding on the home-front. In accordance with Lindsey's claims, Tytler does not remain a passive victim for long. This act of wounding and self-harm allows her to identify with the trauma being experienced by her husband. Her revelation can be deemed as a response to her pangs of conscience at his position, but more crucially it marks an attempt to construct her textual self as a participant in the war, rather than a mere observer.

As the discussion has thus far demonstrated, British women writers respond to the outbreak of the rebellion by assembling (con)textual identities that support the "protector/protected dichotomy that represents war as masculine" and women as "weak, passive and grateful victims" (Pettman 99). The chapter now moves on to reveal that as the Mutiny evolves a more assertive, confident and commanding persona emerges as the women progress towards assuming an appropriate purpose and contribution in the conflict. As Chapter Two determined, India provided British women with increased jurisdiction in the domestic arena. They were no longer "a toiler" in the home. They had become the household manager, a concept highlighted by the broad collection of popular domestic guides for overseers of the British run home in India.⁸⁹ However, despite offering comprehensive guidance on domestic matters, these convenient and serviceable handbooks did not advise their female readers on what to do in the event of war breaking out when there was an immediate disruption of domestic routines. Indeed, as the rebellion advanced, the majority of Indian servants who assisted British women in the home departed forcing British

89. Two notable examples are: Anonymous, *A Domestic Guide to Mothers In India, Containing Particular Information on the Management of Themselves and their Children* (1848) and Anonymous, *The Englishwoman in India: Information for Ladies Preceding to, or Residing in, The East Indies* (1865).

women themselves to fill these vacant roles. As a result, war induced the materialisation of textual identities that transformed from sufferer to domestic worker. However, the women under scrutiny do not construct themselves as “servants”. On the contrary, their “domestication of war”, in the face of exceptional circumstances, can be viewed as a strategy of elevating their status within an acceptable feminine realm. The writers can be described as opportunistic as they exploit the emerging war to reveal the origins of “domestic soldiers” that furnish (con)textual identities with new degrees of exceptionality.

Within Bartrum’s memoir her textual persona transforms from passive sufferer to active labourer, by assuming domestic roles previously occupied by Indian servants: “All our servants have deserted us, and our trials have begun in earnest” (21). Due to the abandonment of her servants Bartrum tackles the “trial” of household chores, an engagement that she had not undertaken since living in Britain. Despite referring unenthusiastically to the domestic tasks as “trials” Bartrum, on the next page of her memoir, progresses to imply that she is an eager participant of such “trials”: “My time is fully occupied in nursing, and washing our clothes, together with cups and saucers” (22). Notably, she is swift to justify her pleasure and acceptance of this modification of role: “it was almost a blessing to have no servants, because it gave us so much occupation that we had less time to dwell upon our troubles and anxieties” (23). Moreover, Bartrum promotes her self as a “domestic soldier” who battles against domestic disruption as she accentuates the toil and exhaustion that her new “employment” provokes: “The rest of the day was employed in various domestic matters... I found enough to do indoors in the care of my baby and the constant drudgery of household work” (24-27). Bartrum becomes the “keeper of the domestic space”, a new context that is “valorised as fulfilling and necessary” (Grewal 25).

Germon also raises the value of household work when embracing domestic responsibility with drive and commitment. Within her diary she promotes her textual self as “domestic soldier” by supervising her husband’s domestic needs, duties which she depicts as essential components in the fulfilment of his military duties: “Saturday, May 16th. I got up soon after gunfire, and sent off Charlie’s provisions for the day, bread and butter, Mango Fool, quail and a few vegetables” (18). She draws attention to the task of constructing practical military clothing for Charlie to wear during combat: “I cut out and

made a flannel shirt for Charlie as I could get no durzie” (47). By furnishing her husband, an army officer, with food and clothing, the domestic provisions he needed to fight more comfortably, Germon constructs her textual self as an indispensable and invaluable contributor towards the British campaign in Lucknow and thus the imperial agenda as a whole.

As the outbreaks of the rebellion continue, the writers increasingly depict the self as a coordinator and overseer of domestic matters through a focus on routine, order and regularity: the “domestication of war”. They attempt to manage the daily chaos of the conflict through the management of domestic matters. Ann Romines asserts that nineteenth-century women diarists often follow what she defines as the “home plot”, meaning a narrative structure where the writer can “respond to, replicate, continue, interrogate, and extend the repetitive rhythms of domestic life” (69). The writers considered in this chapter can be deemed guilty of this pattern as they domesticate the war and attempt to make the situation safe by emphasising “the repetitive rhythms” of the domestic base. Germon delivers a report of a typical day during the early stages of the siege:

our party here is a very agreeable one – we meet at chota hazree and then after dressing, breakfast at ten – then have working, reading and music (there are some good performers amongst our party), tiffin at two, dine at half-past seven and then the Padre reads a chapter and prayers and we retire. (28)

Bartrum is notably more formal, official and concentrated in her attempts to assign routine to the outbreaks of the Mutiny:

But it is time to give a description of our daily mode of life. We were up as soon as it was light, having opened our eyes upon a large whitewashed room, containing seven charpogs (by which I mean native bedsteads), one long table, three chairs – for few of us possessed of much things... Our first occupation was washing and dressing our children and setting things to rights, for this was our sitting as well as sleep apartment; then breakfast was to be thought of. (23)

By emphasising the customs and schedule of domestic matters, against the backdrop of war, Germon and Bartrum endeavour to create systematic routine out of the chaos of the event and therefore assert some limited authority and

control over the domestic battlefield, an act that further supports imperial British authority: the ability to “absorb almost any attack on its power” (Frankenberg 80). Their aptitude for successfully managing household matters, because Indian servants had fled, is not depicted as degrading or undignified. On the contrary, stressing success, in an arena where Indians had faltered, reveals British female superiority.

By detailing the early stages of the Mutiny through domestic routines, the writers fulfil what Olney refers to as “the vital impulse to order” (3), a common act for any writer of autobiography. Within one of her letters Dickson complies with this trend of asserting order by highlighting how activities have become habitual: “we used often to drive to the camp, and spend the pleasantest part of our day with William. He generally came to dinner” (32). However, one crucial complication of emphasising a sense of routine, order and regularity is that the writers’ portrayals increasingly convey the impression that the women are blasé and unperturbed by the rebellion. By focusing on the quotidian routine, the writers’ descriptions feature no foreboding panic and fearfulness at the precarious and unpredictable threats around them.

The “domestication of war” provokes (con)textual identities that stand in stark contrast to the representations of innocent and vulnerable “women and children” previously scrutinised. Such identities conflict with the gendered “protector/protected dichotomy” of warfare. Case, Dickson, Germon and Harris make generalisations about war that lack fearful emotion. They infer a casual and composed feeling about the evolving patterns of war: “the firing generally slackens... the enemy as usual were soon driven back” (Harris 82-92). Here Harris’ apathetic tone differs significantly with her aforementioned identity of prisoner. She is now more assertive and dauntless and is therefore perceivably less feminine. Notably, Case’s references to daily routines become increasingly influenced by militaristic terms: “the sentry’s call of “All’s well” is generally the last sound I hear before I go to sleep” (23). Germon replicates this trend in her journal, as there is increasing evidence of militaristic phraseology gradually infusing her domestic remarks: “Mrs. B. had not even a change for her baby – they are still going on making our entrenchments stronger than ever and two eighteen-pounders have been put in position” (41). This blend of militaristic and

domestic detail endures and generates an identity far detached from the prisoner and victim she assembled formerly in her narrative:

The enemy began firing on us as they followed the retreating party – our gates were closed and the siege commenced. We got a cup of tea and something for breakfast as best we could sitting behind the walls to escape the balls, not that I fancy any of us had much appetite. (55)

The emergence of (con)textual identities defined as “domestic soldiers” and the “domestication of war” marks a notable rejection and consequent remodelling of traditional feminine arrangements of women as victims, sufferers and prisoners of war. Moreover, the adoption of martial terms and modes of living denotes the advent of a new range of militaristic and masculine influences, identities and modes of writing that will now be analysed in greater detail.

Militaristic/Masculine Identities and Rhetoric

As the preceding part of this chapter has observed, the dawn of the 1857 rebellion elevated the status of British women’s domestic functions as the writers promote household assignments in India as possessing greater value than they had before the war. The analysis now advances to reveal that as the Mutiny strengthens, domestic occupations are supplanted by militaristic roles and masculine functions as the writers exhibit new and exceptional (con)textual identities within increasingly composite and unwomanly modes of writing. Under the guise of “domestic soldier”, and via the “domestication of war”, female writers contested but perceptively remained within the margins of mid-nineteenth century femininity; however the generation of militaristic and masculine personas renders an explicit challenge to the safeguarding of these margins. Bartrum, Canning, Case, Coopland, Dickson, Germon, Harris, Inglis, Ouvry and Tytler confront the perception that “women are more afraid of war in both the abstract and the concrete” (142 Skaine) as they imply unwomanly participation in the conflict.

The narratives steadily reject the governing convention that women should employ “diaries and letters to express personal thoughts and emotion” (Kearney 32) as traditionally feminine interests are progressively supplanted by writings reminiscent of male military accounts. Personal dates, domestic anxieties and emotional declarations now feature alongside lists of weaponry,

fatalities and military movements. This new composite form of rhetoric stands for more than just one individual's experience, as the writers become impersonal observers and recorders of history. It marks a crucial stage in the narratives' development from being personal and private writings to being public and published texts. The discussion illustrates that during the Mutiny's commencement, mid-nineteenth century female diaries become an extremely malleable mode that can be manipulated to suit rapidly changing contexts and resolutions.

Following the rebellion's inception the writers deploy the foundations of militaristic identities, textual personas that are heavily influenced by soldierly behaviour, by drawing attention to their preparations for the ensuing conflict. Ouvry, Dickson, Bartrum and Case contest what Miriam Cooke demarcates as one of the established dichotomies of war: "men shall be active and women passive" (16). In her diary Ouvry reveals a practical and active identity as she depicts her participation in "a long and tedious march" (98) alongside male officers. Whilst adopting a similar assertive tone Dickson also underlines her resolute and primed persona: "We were ready to mount our horses at three o'clock" (29). Case's portrayal of female organisation and provision stands in marked contrast to the images of victims and sufferers formerly analysed in this chapter. There is no evidence of passive avoidance as she communicates the militaristic idiom of being "ready for action": "we always had a little bundle ready by our bedsides at night for instant flight" (9). Bartrum's preparations are markedly more startling and problematic for her status as a woman: "I kept a sword under my pillow, and dear R. had his pistol loaded" (10). By possessing a weapon, an unquestionably unwomanly trait, Bartrum challenges the mid-Victorian gendered ideology that defined British women as "half-angel, half-child" (Grewal 41).

Inglis and Case reinforce the notion of women being soldierly participants, rather than civilians, by equating British women in the Residency in Lucknow to a soldiers' "mess", pointedly employing a male military term to label a female domestic space. Inglis writes:

We organised a sort of mess, composed of ourselves and two other ladies with four children, and made ourselves as comfortable as we could under existing circumstances... All hands were at work in strengthening our

position, making entrenchments, barricades, & etc, and laying in provisions. (8-9)

Later within her diary Inglis repeats the term and thus reinforces the notion of a “mess” as she outlines domestic conditions in more detail:

We had a scrambling breakfast, and finding that the present mode of living was likely to last for some time, we determined on organising a sort of mess, instead of being entertained by Dr. and Mrs. Ogilvie, who had always occupied the Residency house with Sir Henry. Kind and hospitable as they were, they could not arrange comfortably for so many. I asked Mrs. Radcliffe and Mrs. Boileau, 7th Cavalry, with their six children, to join us, and made my khansamah (butler) cater for the party. All approved of the arrangement, and it certainly was much pleasanter. (26)

The language of war is discernable in Inglis’ labelling of breakfast as “scrambling”; she conveys mealtimes as a battle, a struggle that could be overcome by successful domestic management. Additionally, by comparing the Lucknow residency to “the enclosed and exclusive world of an officer’s mess” (Harries-Jenkins 4) Inglis suggests a developing sense of a unity between the women. William C. Westgard contends that “Army mess halls reflect rank consciousness rigidly” (12) a notion that is sustained in Inglis’ and Case’s portrayals of the female “mess” at the Residency. This newly formed clique, like its male counterpart, required leaders and figureheads, positions that stressed authority and superiority, and thus exceptionality.

Within her diary Case also refers to the organisation of women into a company in the Lucknow Residency and comparably employs the term “mess”: “We now form a little mess of our own, Mrs. Inglis having the management of it, and we are, in consequence, much more comfortable” (21). Crucially, Case defines Inglis as the “manager” of the women’s mess, a position of command and an example of the elevation in status of female domestic occupations in war. Notably Inglis makes no reference to her role of “manager” in her writings. On the contrary, Inglis is self-effacing by asserting that it was in fact Case who was the authoritative “superintendent” of the “mess”: “To Mrs. Case we owed it that our small room was always kept nice and tidy, for she had the superintendence of its arrangements” (*Diary* 104).

On occasions Inglis does assemble her textual self in an authoritative guise and in doing so goes against the Victorian adjuration for women to “suffer and be still” (Rigney 30).⁹⁰ She draws attention to an instance when she and Case actively supervised other women, following information received from a male officer, (Case’s husband): “Colonel Case, who was far from being an alarmist, advised our having a bundle of necessaries ready, in case we might have to leave our present quarters suddenly. We followed his advice, and communicated it to the other ladies in the house” (*Diary* 15). Inglis also constructs a persona of message-bearer or correspondent in the Residency as her husband John provides her with military intelligence which she subsequently distributes to the “mess”: “About twelve o’clock I received a note from John telling me all was over for the present. I was most thankful to see his handwriting, as my anxiety on his account had been great. All crowded round me to hear the news” (*Diary* 21). Inglis furnishes her textual self with a tone of exceptionality by revealing her participation in martial conversations and is even privy to news from Sir Henry Lawrence, British commissioner of Oudh: “I sat next Sir Henry; he was very grave and silent. He told me that he considered the annexation of Oude the most unrighteous act that was ever committed” (*Diary* 11). Significantly, Inglis’ narrative voice regularly oscillates between “I” and “we”, a technique that confuses the reader regarding her actual involvement in military affairs and which, even if unwittingly, elevates her status: “Sir Henry Lawrence, rode up in a state of great excitement, and said: ‘I want you and your regiment directly.’ We turned our horse’s head and drove home as fast as possible, sending every 32nd man we passed to his barracks” (*Diary* 13).

Case distinguishes her textual self from the other ladies of the Residency by implying that she possesses an intuitive knowledge of the siege:

The ladies scarcely knew that things looked so dark and gloomy as they really did; but I must confess my fear on the subject was more roused by the serious way in which I used to hear dear William, who was always bright and cheerful under any circumstances, talk over affairs with Colonel Inglis, than from what I read in the papers. (1)

90. The phrase “suffer and be still” was coined by Sarah Stickney Ellis, author of *The Women of England: Their Social Duties and Domestic Habits* (1838) and *The Daughters of England: Their Position in Society, Character and Responsibilities* (1842) and other popular works on femininity.

In contrast to her aforementioned obedient and passive persona, Case constructs an identity that is somewhat rebellious as she disobeys orders given by an officer: “We were told that we must be ready to mount our horses at three o’clock on Sunday morning, as we were to go with the regiment into cantonments” (3). Case challenges the prevalent Victorian perception of women’s passivity by ignoring a male directive and implies that she is self-sufficient by venturing to visit Inglis: “At last I could bear the waiting no longer, so mounting my horse, and taking my syce with me, I went over to Mrs. Inglis in the next compound” (5). The identity of an insubordinate and rebellious woman is also evident in Tytler’s memoir as she disobeys military orders in favour of seeking companionship with her female acquaintances:

a note came from Mrs Holland saying, ‘Come over to our house.’ I wrote back that I could not do so as my husband had told me not to leave the house unless he sent for me... I knew I must leave, so in spite of my husband’s admonition I left the house, never to see it again. (117)

Tytler augments her militaristic self by conveying her expert knowledge of the siege following her settlement in the barracks: “The first night we passed in the barracks. All the soldiers’ wives and their husbands surrounded Mrs Gardner and myself asking us a thousand questions as to what had taken place on the memorable 11th of May” (140). Moreover, like Bartrum, Tytler reflects no anxiety regarding the spoiling of femininity when she refers casually to her ownership of a weapon: “Of course they saw we were well armed, even to the four women with their knives” (137).

Germon proposes her soldierly identity by indicating her involvement in military conversations that feature unwomanly themes: “several of the 32nd officers (joined us) while we were all sitting in the garden discussing why the hanging is stopped” (39). By openly discussing and subsequently writing about “hangings”, a violent act of retribution, Germon subverts feminine etiquette. Germon recurrently refers to “we” when writing about the soldiers’ actions and her use of alternating pronouns generates misperception by inferring that she is undertaking masculine military tasks herself: “we took it by turns to watch for one hour” (55) and “we fired a number of shrapnel into the house without dislodging them” (60). Revealingly she repeatedly describes her domestic movements within the Residency using militaristic terminology: “We were soon

equipped and ready to mount our steeds” (4). She too relates her defence preparations and weapon selection in an unperturbed unwomanly manner:

About nine I went to bed taking care to have my dressing-gown close to me – also an Affghan (sic) knife (a kind of dagger) close to me also... We went to bed in peace, Charlie with his double-barrelled gun loaded with a charge of shots by the bedside – he says it is much more useful than a bullet for it would disable several, whereas a bullet might miss altogether. My weapon is the Affghan (sic) dagger – just suited to me not being too large or heavy for me. (20-23)

Significantly Germon cultivates her military persona by proudly drawing attention to her growing ability to distinguish artillery: “we fired on them and the attack then commenced and the firing was very sharp - shell, shrapnel, round shots, gingalls and musketry – I can now distinguish each” (77-78).

Progressively, the writers accentuate their unique and exceptional personas by stressing their fearlessness. Germon employs hyperbole purposefully, when she proudly declares in the midst of gunfire, “I don’t think I ever slept sounder in my life” (18). She recurrently draws attention to her robust self-sufficiency, undermining the mid-Victorian cultural stereotype of female fragility. She portrays herself as being more able to cope than other British women in the Residency: “I went over to spend the day at the Gubbins’. I found them in an awful state of alarm, talking of these murders at Delhi and wondering if so and so had escaped. Miss Nepean had a violent sick headache from the fright” (18). In contrast to Miss Nepean’s “violent sick headache” Germon simply defines her self as being “quite uncomfortable” (19). Germon proudly narrates compliments and strengthens her independent status when she writes: “Captain Wilson complimented me on remaining in my house all alone during the panic and Charlie is pleased with my having done so” (23). Furthermore, she portrays her textual self as superior and unique when she receives special dispensation from the rules that governed the female “crowd” in the Residency: “Dr. Fayerer gave us notice that we might go back to his house for he thought it safer than the Residency with that crowd – it seemed Paradise to get back again and I had a lovely bath” (37). Conceivably Germon’s most telling comment at this stage of her narrative occurs towards the end of June, before the Mutiny developed pace: “I did not like the men to see me frightened” (43).

Bartrum and Canning also display their mounting bravery. Bartrum boldly declares: “I don’t feel afraid of the cowards” (4), whilst Canning, expresses her audacity by declaring to Queen Victoria: “There is no reason for alarm in this part of the country” (Lady Canning to Queen Victoria, May. 19. 1857, RA Z 502/10). Notably, she is particularly critical and condemnatory of fearful Britons:

The panic here becomes very foolish. Revolvers are bought by everyone, and the Freemasons and clerks, and employees of all kinds, want to be formed into regiments and yeomanry. There is not the least cause of fear here, and it is absurd to see how people who ought to know better set an example of fear, which must have a bad effect on natives. (Lady Canning’s Journal, Calcutta, May. 19. 1857. CP)

Canning is irked by the undercurrent of panic and proudly remarks: “Some people come and ask if we go to sleep every night in the Fort, or if we have a hundred Europeans to guard us. We do everything as usual” (Lady Canning’s Journal, Calcutta, May. 19. 1857. CP). By emphasising her bravery to Queen Victoria and declaring “We do everything as usual” it could be reasoned that Canning is reinforcing Britain’s imperial authority, and suggesting directly to Britain’s monarch that the imperial rule remained unthreatened despite the ensuing Mutiny. In her study of identity and ideology in colonial India, Chowdhry asserts:

The white heroine is shown as a person in her own right. Described in the publicity handouts as a ‘brave woman’ who followed ‘the brave men.’ She knows the hazards of life in a colony like India, but willingly backs the male enterprise wholeheartedly... This image of bravery and steadfastness was upheld both for white men, who were made to feel proud of her, and as an example for other white women in Britain. (76)

Chowdhry intimates that the transmission of brave British women in imperial discourse served a key function in the promotion of Britain’s imperial agenda. Her research provokes the question: do female constructions of brave women who contribute to imperial agendas counteract transgressions from British gender ideologies back in Britain?

The writers’ (con)textual identities convey bravery and defiance to such an extent that their valiant responses to war can be deemed fictive and fabricated.

Canning is again insistent that the rumours, preparations and outbreaks do not inconvenience her: “I pass my days much as usual and often draw the fruits and flowers” (Lady Canning’s Journal, Calcutta, Jun. 6. 1857. CP). Germon conveys a similar “business as usual” approach by writing: “we sat down to dinner laughing and talking, quite a merry party” (31). Moreover, she describes an evening spent in the midst of gunfire without any perceptible alarm or anxiety: “Our party sat on the veranda singing songs and glees... the round shots were whizzing overhead” (64). Most strikingly, Harris conveys the warlike features of their new lifestyle as a mere nuisance: “If it were not for the fear of enemies, which we cannot help feeling, I should enjoy this out-of-door, picnicking-life excessively, in spite of all the inconveniences and roughing it we have to put up with” (185).

This amendment of (con)textual identity from victim to militaristic participant is replicated in the women’s modes of writing as they struggle to preserve the personal nature and domestic focus associated with female autobiography when documenting an advancing war. Whist undergoing a crisis of textual persona, they simultaneously experience a crisis of textual intention as their writings fluctuate between texts written for the self, an audience and an imagined reader. The dominant perception in the mid-nineteenth century was that women’s autobiographical writings were “ordinary texts” (Sinor 90) that should narrate personal thoughts and private journeys. They were anticipated to address simplistic, trivial matters, an opinion reflected in Hampsten’s warning: “Nothing happens in the diaries kept by nineteenth-century women” (qtd. in Sinor 129). She advises: “The first purpose of private writing... is less to persuade or inform than it is, in the words of the sixteenth-century critic Sir Phillip Sidney, to ‘strike, pierce, and possess the site of the soul’” (qtd. in Sinor 129). Hampsten’s claims give prominence to the notion that women’s autobiographical writings were personal and private texts merely composed for the self to read. However, this chapter now contends that the establishment of the 1857 siege generates a conceivable alteration in the British women’s approach to their written discourse.

As news of the Mutiny breaks, the writers convey a distinct awareness that the content of war does not sit comfortably within the boundaries of nineteenth-century femininity and modes of writing. The statement that “war is man’s affair” (qtd. in Cooke 2), made by Hector to Andromache after the Trojan

wars, is imitated in the writers' numerous criticisms and anxieties at narrating war's events. Case and Harris acknowledge that the masculine values of war do not conform to the principles of female rhetoric. Case writes: "the sensations I felt as I sat quietly on my horse are perfectly indescribable" (5).

Correspondingly, when she attempts to describe violence, she notes: "The coming and going, the talking, the bustle... baffle all description... words could never make any one understand all that we have undergone" (149). Case subconsciously recognises that she writes within specific societal constraints and conceivably undertakes strategic self-censorship. In the same manner, Harris notes: "I cannot describe our horrible state of anxiety, alarm, and gloom" (2). She later emphasises that "it would be impossible to describe the state of apprehension we are in and the gloom that hangs over us" (10-12). Harris struggles to balance her necessity to convey information and her obligation to conform to mid-Victorian literary decorum as she records: "I have really felt too downcast to write, having only horrors to record" (45).

Notably, Harris conveys shame and self-reproach regarding the new subject matter of war when she addresses one of her diary entries to her "Darling Mother": "I am so grieved for your anxiety- but you cannot be saved from hearing about it... I am so loath to leave off writing and say bye; but what more can I say? We are all well, and in as good and brave spirits as we can be" (10). On one occasion, when a day's events have been particularly distressing, Harris notes:

I could not bear not to write, this day of all others, when we have so many thoughts and recollections in common... How I grieve for the heart sickening anxiety I know you will all suffer on account when the terrible news this mail will take home reaches you! It seems so cruel to add to your great sorrow by telling you of our danger. (36)

These self-conscious declarations and attempts at self-censorship are arguably acts of self-preservation helping the writers to remain womanly. They comply with an idea fostered by Sidonie Smith, who regards the diary as a form in which the woman is "culturally silenced" (43), because she is both marginalised by her choice of text and the ideologies of her cultural foundation.

During the very early stages of the Mutiny the private and personal methodology remains the prevailing technique engaged by the women, apparent

via copious references to intimate specifics and private references. Indeed the writers initially employ their diaries and journals as a personal calendar where they incorporate individual references to personal dates alongside reports regarding the progressing war. In her journal, Germon records: “Tuesday, July 14th. Dear John’s birthday” (63) and “Wednesday, August 26th. Dearest Mother’s birthday” (84). Case also sustains a personal approach: “To-day is little Johnny’s birthday; he is four years old to-day, poor little fellow! It is not a very happy birthday for him. We must only hope that the next one may be in England” (95). The personal and private system is also recognisable in the writers’ habit of abbreviating names. Germon only refers to her husband “Charles” (17) once by his full name. From then on, he is referred to as “Charlie” (89) and then subsequently as “C” (120). Uniformly, both Harris and Ouvry employ this approach as Harris condenses “James” to “J” (16), and Ouvry refers to her husband throughout as “H” (70). Such initial abbreviations and personal references indicate that the writers were maintaining a personal and private approach, yet, as the Mutiny evolves, there are signs that the writers’ intentions alter. Their narratives progressively emerge as being written for a wider audience with the addition of military particulars, features that conflict with the conventions of mid-nineteenth century female autobiography: “singular, autonomous, and private, as distinct from public and communal” (Giltrow 157).

Randall Jimerson believes that when female diarists write about war they feel they are making history (56).⁹¹ The objective of “making history” and writing for posterity is most discernible in Canning’s writings. She is exclusive in the thesis as the sole woman whose writings explicitly indicate that she was given official orders to document war. It becomes apparent that she was charged with compiling information for the Queen, a situation that Victoria herself suggests in one of her letters:

My dearest Lady Canning, Over and over again I had intended to thank you for your two kind and most interesting letters... I am now anxious to tell you that I wish you would write to me every six weeks – whether you hear from me or not, as it seems else so long not to hear from you. I must likewise remind Lord Canning that I have not heard from him yet – his

91. Fox-Genovese observes, in her study of women’s wartime writing, that during conflict women “one after another, begin implicitly to write for posterity- to write in support of their cause and to justify their ways to God, to each other, to their enemies, and to the world” (346).

Predecessor used to write to me sometimes every two or three months.

(Queen Victoria to Lady Canning, Jul. 5. 1857, CP)

The Queen wanted to be regularly informed regarding “the state of the Country – our relations with the Native Princes, the finances and improvements” and was critical that Lord Canning had not yet written. Despite reassurance from Charlotte that her husband, the Governor General, would “not fail to avail himself of Your Majesty’s gracious permission to him to write” (Lady Canning to Queen Victoria, May. 19. 1857, RA Z 502/7), the Queen had to wait seven months before she heard from him. To make up for her husband’s silence, and to appease the Queen, Lady Canning adhered strictly to her wishes and became her personal reporter, a unique context and opportunity that shaped her exceptional identity.

Canning’s letters to Queen Victoria present scant evidence of the “casual, fragmented jottings” (Bloom 23) traditionally associated with women’s autobiographical writing. They are instead crafted, organised and coherent reports. She demonstrates her comprehensive grasp of the circumstances as she dispenses the knowledge that she has gathered in an attempt to report efficiently to Queen Victoria:

Madam, This mail will take to your Majesty some very sad accounts of the strange and terrible outbreaks in the last 9 days at Meerut and Delhi. Lord Canning would have wished much to write to your Majesty himself but the telegraph messages which reach him incessantly, often several in an hour, on which he has to act and write his orders at once, will I fear not leave him a moment before the departure of the mail today. As yet few details have been received of all these sad events. (Lady Canning to Queen Victoria, May. 19. 1857, RA Z 502/7)

Accounts of the affair came directly from the General who had come to detail them to Charles Canning at Government House, and then Charlotte set it down in her letters to the Queen:

The obnoxious cartridges were withdrawn and Sepoys told to find grease for themselves, but the notion that their caste was to be broken, and that they must become Christian, spread widely. At least that is the pretended grievance and many most ridiculous stories were invented to support of the rumour. One being that Lord Canning signed a bond to your Majesty

that he would make them all Christian in 3 years. (Lady Canning to Queen Victoria, May. 19. 1857, RA Z 502/7)

Canning reveals a preoccupation with detailing events in the manner of a masculine and military account and by portraying events directly to the monarch she was in reality, and not just textually, being unique and exceptional.

The contentious act of reporting military news is also apparent in Inglis' letters to Britain. In the opening of her letter she asserts her intentions:

I shall begin my history from the 17th of May... I have come to the determination of commencing an account of all that has occurred since we last had the happiness of corresponding – a sad and anxious time for all of us... I shall begin my history from the 17th of May. (3)

Inglis' narrative promptly adopts a masculine and militaristic tone through her method of reporting: "Every day news arrived from the district of mutinies and murders, and at the same time letters from Sir Hugh Wheeler, earnestly craving help, which, alas! It was not in our power to give" (10).

Germon's journal also avoids the traditional female autobiographical approach as she documents decisive conversations between military men:

I found Charlie had been with Sir Henry Lawrence who was making admirable preparations in case of a rise here. Charlie said the old man was seated resting on a watercourse in the garden with quite a party around him, he telling them all he knew but advising them to spread the bad news as little as possible and then he consulted them about precautionary measures. (18)

Germon's narrative transforms towards a militaristic reports via the precise cataloguing of numbers, facts and figures related to siege: "there were 300 Europeans, 9 guns and an 8 inch howitzer" (53). Tellingly she updates or adjusts her journal when she recalls a military feature that she deems significant and commences many of these textual updates with the words "I forgot to say" (33). Bartrum too places emphasis on the importance of communicating news, but there are situations that she initially defines as too difficult to write, as if recognising the limitations of her gender: "I cannot write much this time, and at the present moment the hearing is so overpowering that it makes even writing difficult" (7). Yet, on the same page of her diary, she goes on to write about events regardless of the noise: "Nothing must prevent my writing" (7). This

phrase reveals the importance that Bartrum places upon documentation. Harris too also stresses the complications but also the significance of writing despite the conditions: “my hand trembles so I can hardly hold the pen” (33).

Harris exemplifies the urge to record and update her narrative with militaristic precision: “4 p.m – Since writing to you this morning such awful news has come” (1). Increasingly she begins her diary entries with “news” updates: “There is no news to-day from any place” (19), and “Day after day has brought only bad news” (45). On occasions her entries are merely a few words, in the style of a news bulletin, without any personal or domestic comment: “Tremendous fire kept us up all last night” (84). Coopland even goes as far as to quote long paragraphs from military telegraphs (82) and extracts from her husband’s military correspondence within her diary to convey accurate military details as her narrative, like those of Harris, Germon and Canning, increasingly rejects the traditional personal and private nature of a diary. Through this process of writing the women reject “the autobiographical requirement of a unified individual life story” (Marcus 34). On the contrary, their accounts become a combination of personal and public information obtained from multiple sources.

The militaristic identities and masculine modes of writing that surface during the progressing war contrast significantly with the womanly, fearful and emotional personas that permeated when news of the Mutiny broke. During the initial days of the siege, death is narrated with sensitivity and sentiment.

Coopland communicates her guilt at writing such violent content:

I could relate many horrible things that happened to people whom I knew, and describe how they were killed but I wish to spare the feelings of their friends at home. This I know, from authentic sources, that people were mutilated in the most frightful manner: a friend of mine saw two ladies in Calcutta who had had their noses and ears cut off. These facts are doubted by many people in England. A natural aversion from dwelling upon deeds of atrocity and human sufferings, renders sensitive persons reluctant to credit horrible facts, and disinclined to hear of the miseries of even their own countrymen. They exclaim, “Oh, how dreadful; but don’t tell me! I can’t bear it!” But the truth must come home to them at last.

(73)

Despite initially claiming her inability to write about the horrors of the event, Coopland markedly contradicts herself by narrating in detail the cutting off of ladies' "noses and ears". Moreover, she criticises people in Britain who, unlike herself, are unable to hear such news, transmitting the idea that war has changed the limitations of her autobiographical content.

With a similar approach, Germon also initially emits remorse at writing such gruesome content: "They brought a frightful account of the atrocities committed there – too barbarous and inhuman to be mentioned" (41). Yet, paradoxically, her writings, like those of Case, proceed to cite such atrocities in rather graphic detail:

we heard there that Mrs. Chambers, wife of the Adjutant of the 11th Native Infantry, had been murdered at Delhi by a butcher out of the bazaar, but that the wretch had been afterwards caught by some sweepers and roasted alive... Thursday, June 11th. The atrocities committed at Seetapore are beyond belief – a whole heap of babies was found, the poor little creatures just bayoneted and thrown on a heap. (22-42)

Here the writers assemble the self as traditionally feminine through admitting guilt and anxiety; however, as the rebellion evolves, this sentiment and condolence is progressively substituted by matter-of-fact and passionless accounts of death.

Case, Tytler and Harris are unemotional and therefore unwomanly in their portrayals of fatalities and murder. Case writes: "Lieutenant Grant, of the 71st Native Infantry, was betrayed and cruelly murdered, receiving many wounds... he was cut to pieces" (17). Employing a similar tendency, Tytler narrates death in a detached and dispassionate manner:

a bullock car arrived from the city, bringing all the dead bodies of our poor officers of the 54th... The cart with the bodies remained on that spot until our return in June, by which time they were only skeletons, and were buried behind the Tower, where there was a tomb (125).

Perhaps, remarkably, due to her role of Chaplain's wife, Harris' narrative is the most controversial, owing to its graphic content. Within her diary human deaths are detailed with discernible violence and indelicate description. She recurrently uses phrases such as "cut to pieces" (33) and "butchered" (125) and discloses how "the poor babies snatched out of their parents' arms, and cut to pieces before

their eyes” (12). In one notably entry she recounts how a soldier’s “head was completely smashed, and nothing but the mask of the face left” (112). Her use of indelicate expressions and harsh terms reflected in references such as: “good news... a round shot struck and killed the trio” (123) are undoubtedly unwomanly and point towards a provocative (con)textual identity. Harris and her fellow writers project their textual personas in both a manner and a textual mode that had been traditionally off-limits in Victorian Britain. It is only the context of war that permits these new (con)textual identities.

Cooke argues that female “war telling” is a “modern” phenomenon and that women “are no longer passive readers of such stories. Nor are they passive protagonists... they have become active writers” (2). She underlines the current perception that women’s war writing is a recent trend, a notion that this chapter has refuted. British women’s accounts of the Indian Mutiny have been revealed as complex and transitive forms, but despite the complications surrounding their composition, they prove that their authors were indeed “active writers”. The term transitive aptly summarises the nature of the women’s writings at this stage of the siege as their constructions of both self and narrative alter from feminine towards increasingly masculine forms. The chapter now advances to show that it is not solely women’s gendered identities that are transformed by the rebellion. The writers’ sense of national, individual and communal identities also endure change, alterations and revisions as the Mutiny evolves.

Communities and Landscapes of War

It is commonly acknowledged that the eruption of the 1857 rebellion had a decisive impact upon “the ways in which Britishness was defined against Indian otherness” (Dawson 80). The siege represented “a searing trauma” (Barczewski 241) to British imperial attitudes, with events marking a large-scale national identity crisis for Britons both at home and in India who perceived the rebellion as “a treacherous act of irreverence against what many still imagined as Britain’s ‘gentlemanly’ and ‘benevolent’ imperialism” (Yekani 20). However, whilst those in Britain were articulating anxiety that “the safety of the Empire was imperilled” (Kaye 197), the British writers scrutinised in this study replied to war’s outbreak with a spirited and dedicated awareness of colonial authority and

communal British identity via the juxtaposition of British solidarity and Indian anarchy.

By examining the impact of war upon textual identities of British “Self” and Indian “Otherness”, the chapter concludes by revealing how the formation of a British war community within autobiographical writings is complemented by the textual construction of India and its people as a deceitful, barbaric and threatening stereotype. Whilst the women’s pre-Mutiny writings support the notion of Britain “as the remover of darkness and mystery” (Grewal 49) via philanthropic tendencies and the hope of civilising India, writings composed during the Mutiny’s commencement project India as incapable of change via stereotypes of “unreformable savagery” (Reitemeier 113). Anxiety regarding India’s “Otherness” is matched by a patriotic rhetoric of Britishness in the women’s textual constructions of the self. Their autobiographies progressively articulate British nostalgia and jingoistic sentimentality in the formation of a British wartime community as well as in references to “home”.

On the issue of the Mutiny’s impact upon transforming ideologies of Britain and India, Kate Teltscher asserts “the reassuringly familiar scene was shattered by the rebellion of 1857” (*India/Calcutta* 193). Indeed, the environment that had previously been described in terms of its aesthetic, exotic and intoxicating charm takes on a more threatening demeanour during the events. Chapter two determined that the writers’ pre-Mutiny compositions of India are “imagined Indian landscapes” that employ elements of the picturesque alongside the suggestion of concealed threats. This chapter now reveals that the rumours, preparations and outbreaks that form the commencement of the 1857 rebellion evoke new versions of “imagined Indian landscapes” in which formerly concealed “threats” are revealed through equally imaginative techniques.

Sharpe proposes: “when the uprising erupted in 1857, the British found themselves without a script they could rely on... the anticolonial uprising represented could not be understood” (58). Sharpe’s research draws attention to the national identity crisis experienced by Britons at home and abroad whose imperial authority was so publicly shaken. Within the female writing under investigation, this identity crisis is arguably tackled via textual references to British places, memories and artefacts that accentuate a renewed unshakeable awareness of British co-identity and authority. Within her memoir Bartrum refers

to Britain in a sentimental and nostalgic manner as recounts the British women's conversations in the Residency:

we talked together of bygone days, of the happy home in England where our childhood had been spent, bringing from memory's stores tales to cheer the passing hour, and thinking of loved ones far away: of the father that knew not as yet that his child was a captive in a foreign land: of the bright band of sisters and brothers who formed the household circle. (24)

Notably, for the first time in her memoir, Bartrum recalls those at home in Britain and in doing so regenerates her sense of Britishness. She juxtaposes the image of a child in "the happy home in England" against the image of a child as "captive in a foreign land". This distancing technique irrevocably separates Britons and Indians and reinforces the colonialist ideology of "the familiar (Europe, the West, 'us) and the strange (the Orient, the East, 'them')" (*Orientalism* Said 43). Moreover, by presenting British women in the guise of children, she reinforces the perception of British innocence in opposition to Indian corruption. Bartrum's diary reveals a sense of patriotic satisfaction by defining the community in the Residency as a "bright band of sisters and brothers", a designation that suggests that the British remain "bright", and therefore positive and strong, despite the threatening war around them. In this brief account of female exchanges Bartrum conjures a perceptible sense of Britishness. Moreover, the communal (con)textual identity that she reveals can be deemed as an attempt to reinforce Britain's imperial authority.

Through allusions to British fauna, technology and literature the writers reaffirm their national identity and superiority whilst reinforcing the "us and them" philosophy. With a comparable disposition to Bartrum's aforementioned nostalgia, Ouvry's textual persona takes consolation, in the midst of the outbreaks, from seeing flowers which she recognises from Britain: "I walked alone, the ground carpeted with beautiful flowers of every description, and I recognised several choice English flowers which made me smile" (97). Ouvry's small but significant reference to British fauna symbolically reinforces the presence of Britain's imperial authority over the Indian landscape. Despite the ensuing conflict, the "English flowers" serve as a reminder of Britain's colonial dominance; the recreation of "domestic space on foreign soil" (Floyd 83).

Markedly, three of the writers make reference to the electric telegraph that had been erected by Britons in India only months before the rebellion. Harris proudly writes: “The news came by electric telegraph” (1) whilst Inglis and Coopland also draw attention to British technological intelligence confirming their pride and alliance with Britain. Inglis declares: “Telegraphic messages were exchanged twice a day” (5), whilst Coopland praises British technology for providing Britons in India with necessary bulletins: “the news, by means of the telegraph, was all over India” (81). Like Ouvry’s reference to English flowers, the telegraph provides a proud reaffirmation of British authority by serving as a signifier of colonial control over the Indian landscape and a vivid symbol of imperialism.⁹² References to telegraph usage during the early stages of the war are conceivably mentioned by the women to reinforce the notion of Britain’s steadfast dominance by emphasising the mastery of Britain’s technology in comparison to India’s perceived underdevelopment. As a result, the destruction of the telegraph, a situation examined in the next chapter, is commonly defined as an “attack on the symbols of colonial authority” (Hoveyda 76).

Significantly, both Harris and Germon refer to hearing a reading of British novel *Guy Mannering*: “Dr. Partridge read *Guy Mannering* to us while we worked” (Germon 47). It is likely as they were both in the Residency in Lucknow that they probably read the same copy or overheard the same reading but this intertextual reference to this 1823 British novel is rather fitting to the warfare surrounding them and serves as another symbolic indicator of their Britishness and a critique of India. The novel’s protagonist Harry Bertram is kidnapped as a boy by the smuggler Dirk Hatteraick and carried off to Holland. As he matures Bertram is ignorant of his true British identity and brought up under a Dutch name, Vanbeest Brown. When he reaches adulthood, Bertram travels to India and enlists in the army under Colonel Guy Mannering. In India Bertram falls in love with Mannering’s daughter, Julia, but India has affected Mannering’s judgment and he imagines that the attentions paid to his daughter are intended for his wife. He challenges Bertram to a duel, seriously wounds him, and leaves him for dead. The Sir Walter Scott novel fits rather fittingly with

92. John Clark Marsha in *The History of India: Volume 3* (1867) stresses the authority that the electric telegraph was associated with in India: “Lord Dalhousie was fully justified in affirming that the electric telegraph in India might challenge comparison with any public enterprise which had been carried into execution in recent times, among the nations of Europe and America” (445).

the 1857 rebellion as a result of its themes of identity conflict and the negative impact of India upon British sensibilities and violent conduct. Harris and Germon's reference to the novel functions as a moral tale for their situation in India. They will not permit India to destroy their respectable and honourable British identity in the way it did that of *Guy Mannering*.⁹³

Britishness and a sense of collective identity are further enhanced through the suggestion that Britons in wartime India are a distinct community and family. Sen contends that in several *Mutiny* novels female authors recurrently depict Britons in India as "a cohesive group in conflict with a large, hostile, 'native' population" (94). Sen's model of "a cohesive group" can also be applied to female autobiographical writings. As formerly revealed, Bartrum refers to her companions in the Lucknow Residency as her "brothers and sisters" (5). Moreover, she accentuates this awareness of family cohesion when she writes: "on that first night we slept fifteen in one room, packed closely together... A sudden blow has fallen upon us: the first of our little band has been taken away. Poor Mrs. Hale died today" (17-25). In a similar way to Inglis and Case's aforementioned "mess", the definition of the Lucknow community as a "little band" suggests a collective identity. Moreover, it has militaristic undertones, giving more authority and status to the group. Markedly, all of the writers examined who reside in Lucknow are complimentary about the British female community that is gathered, declarations that reinforce the feeling of British solidarity. Case highlights this prevailing tone of camaraderie:

William came to breakfast and dinner, so I am as happy as I can be under the circumstances. With Mrs. Inglis and her three dear boys, we are a cheerful little party... In the evening, whenever we can, we go into the camp and spend, at any rate, one happy hour with our husbands. (8)

As formerly evaluated, Inglis' domestic management includes numerous declarations of praise by the British women. In addition to these examples Harris also writes: "It is such a rare thing in this country to find ladies interesting themselves about the poor women and children; but the Inglises, from what I hear of them, must be excellent people" (17). These compliments of Inglis' achievements as manager of the "mess" and leader of the "little party" not only

93. See Jane Millgate's *Walter Scott: The Making of a Novelist* (1987) for a concise but informative summary and analysis of *Guy Mannering* (77).

endorse British camaraderie but also promote the link between domestic and colonial authority in reaction to the emerging war.

The employment of collective pronouns is another mechanism by which a community is invoked. The individual narrative voice previously used in Harris' narrative is perceptively supplanted: "We are so well prepared we could hold our own against any number of the enemy" (62). Comparably, Inglis asserts, "we were daily expecting to hear of a large army marching against us, and our force was a very small one" (11). Harris and Inglis' use of first person plural pronouns may appear inconsequential on its own, but the fact that it emerges for the first time during the Mutiny's beginnings arguably indicates solidarity and a communal (con)textual identity.

Whilst the writers disseminate a united sense of British community in retaliation to the unrest, they simultaneously communicate their anxiety and anger regarding the rebellion via altered, controlled and "imaginative" versions of India's landscape and people. The writings in this chapter prove that depictions of Mutiny landscapes must be read as careful colonial constructions that are greatly prejudiced by racial stereotypes, an idea supported by Brantlinger. He contends that British rhetoric exacerbated public impressions of the war via the consolidated imaginings of Britain and India as a set of binary oppositions "good and evil, innocence and guilt, justice and injustice, moral restraint and sexual depravity, civilisation and barbarism" (*Rule* 202). Undeniably the siege stimulated a perceptible alteration in British women's textual portrayals of India, as previously camouflaged and mysterious hazards come to the fore. The writers unveil India as a new set of "imagined Indian landscapes" which, like their predecessors explored formerly in Chapter 2, are equally exaggerated and profoundly manipulated by war's context and the physical and mental demands of their authors.

Primarily, at the start of the rebellion, the pre-Mutiny propensity for assembling the Indian landscape through aesthetic means is prevalent. The writers' portrayals, like their own textual identities, perform as carefully controlled and strategic "colonist tools" that continue to employ what Pratt defines as the "monarch-of-all-I-survey" methodology. The writers' "imagined Indian landscapes" endeavour to depict India as a safe and stable site still under unwavering British rule and with further potential for "domestication and

colonisation” (Grewal 43). Despite the warfare in her vicinity in Lucknow, Germon’s narrative initially establishes an idyllic, secure and placid backdrop on which to set her version of the Mutiny:

It was a lovely moonlight night and never shall I forget the scene. The panorama of Lucknow from the top of the Residency is splendid and down immediately below us in the compound we could see the great guns and all the military preparations... I shall never forget the night, the moon, the stars were so brilliant overhead, looking so peaceful in contrast to the scene below... Every hour the sentinels were calling out, “All’s well”. It was certainly more a scene from a romance than real life. (35)

The “splendid” panorama and “peaceful” skies above the Residency disarm the threat of the emerging war. Moreover, the “great guns” instead of sullyng the serenity of the scene perform as a comforting signifier of Britain’s authority over the landscape and consequently the escalating conflict is, if only temporarily, defused. By dubbing the scene as more like “a romance than real life”, Germon herself draws attention to the concept of an “imagined Indian landscape” and her manipulation of the environment for her colonist vision of events.

When describing the view from the Residency Case similarly writes:

The view from the top of the Residency is truly beyond description. It is beautiful, and in the early morning, when the sun begins to shine on the gilded mosques, and minarets, and towers, it is like a fairy scene. The whole of this vast city spread out before one, and on all sides surrounded by beautiful parks and magnificent trees, forms a panorama which it would be difficult to see equalled in any other part of the world. (21)

Like Germon, Case makes an analogy with an abstract and fantastical site by comparing the view to “a fairy scene”. Harris too, romanticises the Lucknow geography: “I never saw a more beautiful panorama, the whole of Lucknow spread out below us, with its innumerable fine buildings, gardens, gilded domes and tall minarets – it was an enchanting sight, and the air so fresh and lovely” (27). By denoting to the Lucknow scenery as a “romance,” a “fairy scene” and as being “enchanting”, Case, Harris and Germon subconsciously accentuate the imaginative nature of their Indian landscapes. Such constructions can be perceived as an attempt to preserve the notion of Britain’s colonial rule over

malignant and controllable India.⁹⁴ The writings support Grewal's suggestion that "beauty suggested a controlled region" (44). However, the discussion now reveals that as the rebellion gradually evolves the writers are incapable of prolonging this scenic ideal. The sights and sounds of the siege begin to encroach on their picturesque portrayals. They lose control of their landscapes, as Britain is simultaneously losing control of its empire.

The writers conjure up the notion of "the calm before the storm" as they stress the silence and stillness of the picturesque landscape before warfare invades the panorama. Within her diary Ouvry notes: "There was a lovely sunset, which tinged the distant hills with a fine purple hue, the whole range being beautifully reflected in the river, while beyond, the snowy mountains. All was still and peaceful" (95). Dickson's depiction, perhaps more prominently, evokes a tranquil, yet paradoxically tense atmosphere: "After dinner we went to the top of the house. A more beautiful, clear evening, I never saw. The stillness all round was such as I shall never forget" (29). Ouvry and Dickson's accounts seem fictional by employing a tension indicative of a form of foreshadowing whilst Inglis' reference to the still and silent landscape adopts a more apparent ominous and premonitory tone: "Day was just breaking; hardly a sound broke the stillness of the hour, for no bugles or drums were allowed to sound in order that our time of march might not be known; and a sort of awe crept over us, giving us presentiments of evils to come" (10).

Dickson supplements her foreboding approach with a rather bizarre account of an Indian bird at their Sunday service which she views with superstition: "As the service began a large bird, the size of an owl, hovered over our heads in a melancholy way" (28). Later Dickson constructs her textual self as intuitive by inferring that the bird signifies a premonition regarding the ensuing conflict: "one of those large birds I mentioned in the beginning kept hovering over my head... I am not superstitious, but this bird made me feel uneasy" (48-49). This ominous mood is further endorsed by Case who notes: "The scene at this time was truly curious. The moon was shining brightly" (5). Harris likewise employs the moon to accentuate a sense of foreboding unease:

94. See Michael J. Franklin's *Romantic Representations of British India* (2006) for a study of the impact of Orientalist ideology on "romantic" and "Romantic" depictions of India 1750-1850.

Soon all was quiet, and the fright we had was caused by the Mussulmans having seen the new moon, which terminates their long fast the Ramazan and commences a great festival. At the first glimpse caught of the moon they fire off a feu de joie. (25)

As the war advances, and their texts progress, the previously disguised and loitering threats rapidly emerge through emotive and dramatic descriptions:

On going out into the verandah, we distinctly saw the firing, and saw one bungalow after another set on fire, and blazing away with tremendous fury. The stillness in the city was very remarkable; not a sound was heard. The sight of the burning bungalows was awful, and we could do nothing but watch the flames with beating hearts, and listen tremblingly to the booming of the cannon. (Case 16)

With a similar approach Germon describes the new landscape and its “warlike” appearance: “such a scene – when we drove up to the Residency, everything looked so warlike – guns pointed in all directions, barricades and European troops everywhere – such a scene of bustle and confusion” (27-28). Like the scene she is describing, Germon’s syntax structure becomes revealingly complex and erratic. In distinction to the aesthetic panorama previously presented, there is now a sense of disorder and turmoil that she is unable to assemble tidily on the page. For Bartrum the war makes the Residency in Lucknow unrecognisable and thus uncontrollable: “When we entered the Residency, it presented a scene of the utmost confusion, so that I could scarcely recognise it to be the same place I had seen a year before” (15).

The writers also reflect their fractured (con)textual identity through transforming descriptions of the climate. Pre-Mutiny sun-drenched and tranquil scenes are now strikingly contrasted by outbreaks of negative and even life-threatening weather that, through its embellishment and exaggeration, can be deemed a crucial component in the writers’ Mutiny forms of “imagined Indian landscapes”. Upon hearing news of the conflict Ouvry writes: “Soon after our arrival, a most terrible storm of wind and dust came on, and we were afraid the tent would not stand such violence” (85). Here Ouvry’s apparent use of pathetic fallacy becomes a strong force in reflecting her tense textual persona. With a similar approach, Coopland describes an advancing storm to accompany the advancing war:

the great heat did not commence till the end of April, and was at its worst during May and June. The first warning we had of the coming heat was a curious phenomenon in the shape of a dust-storm. Suddenly one afternoon a violent wind came on, filling the air to a great height with fine dust, rendering it almost dark... I was struck with the grey, lurid look of the sky: the trees looked dry and withered. (80)

The powerful effect of pathetic fallacy is further enhanced by the writers' personification of weather with the sun being recurrently defined as an "enemy". Germon and Harris identify the sun as one of the most prominent dangers to the British in the rebellion. Germon writes: "a letter came from Colonel Wiggins at Cawnpore with a list of those killed... their greatest enemy had been the sun - many ladies and children had died from it" (50). For Case, even India's insects are presented as being part of the Indian campaign: "The flies here are a perfect plague; one can scarcely eat one's breakfast, dinner, or anything without being attacked by millions of them" (102). By using the word "attacked" she implies that the insects are, in the same way as the Indian mutineers, part of the war. At a basic level, her writings suggest that at the start of the rebellion all things that are Indian are dangerous and destructive towards Britons.

The writers' altering and "imaginative" perceptions of India manifest themselves most apparently in their depictions of Indian people. As posited in Chapter 2, before the Mutiny the narratives contribute to Britain's imperial agenda of civilising India through assessments of India's religious, education and gender arrangements; however, the rebellion's inception marks a mounting discernment that the civilisation of India was now impossible, a point emphasised by Mary Procida: "the fears and mistrust arising from the Mutiny led to a greater social distancing" between Britons and Indians (17). In the initial days of the rebellion, Case's first reference to Indians is one of negativity and apprehension, reflecting what Patterson defines as the "chronic mistrust of Indians" (41):

When they left us it began to get rather late, and towards dusk we felt uncomfortable, especially as we passed the Iron Bridge, a place always very much crowded. We fancied the people we saw looked fierce and sullen... I cannot express how thankful we felt when we drew up at the door of the Residency. (15)

Here Case's mistrust is targeted towards Indian strangers, but in contrast, her first reference to known Indian servants emphasises native loyalty:

We were soon equipped and ready to mount our steed; our good and faithful servants doing their best to make us as comfortable as they could.

The ayah had our tea and bread and butter as nicely brought in as if we had been going out for our usual morning's ride. (4)

In the same manner, and at the same juncture of the Mutiny, Germon describes her relationship with her servants, in equally optimistic terms. She is keen to stress that her relationship with her Ayah is firm and that she still maintains authority: "My ayah also came and seemed overjoyed to see me and it was agreed she and family were to have a home in the bazaars" (25). Moreover, when a servant watches over her whilst she sleeps, she admits: "I don't think I ever slept sounder in my life" (18). However, throughout her account there are hints at her growing distrust: "Charlie's company had sent his salaam and would send up two sepoys to guard my house at night. I hesitated but agreed at last to have them, thinking I had better not show any want of confidence in them" (21).

Bartrum, Harris and Inglis also convey this progressing mood of unease and mistrust. They nullify what Herbert defines as the "nostalgic myth" of "the harmonious, affectionate relations between Indians and their European masters" (72). Bartrum asks "who can trust these natives now, when they seem to be thirsting for European blood?" (3), whilst Inglis carefully contemplates her proximity to presently loyal Sepoys:

I had a small room to myself with the children — a great comfort; but I did not quite like having a Sepoy of the 4th Oude Infantry as a sentry outside my door, which had no fastening. These Sepoys were most mild-looking men, and used to amuse themselves during the day by playing with the children. I used to watch them, and could hardly fancy they were murderously inclined. (*Diary* 12)

Harris draws further attention to her altered perception of Indian Sepoys by emphasising the "social distancing" of self and "Other" and her anxiety regarding an adjustment in power relations:

The natives have all such a defiant, impertinent manner, as if they know their power, and turn round and scowl at us as they pass... the Sepoys seem to be faithful and well behaved at present, though, of course, no one

can feel confidence in them... never again can a native army be trusted.

(10)

Moreover, in her description of her own household servants, Harris' account lacks the loyalty expressed by both Case and Germon: "We expect soon to be without attendants, and a good riddance it would be" (47). Harris is highly critical of Indians and collectively defines them as "bloodthirsty villains", (3) "wretches", (13) and "arrant cowards" (43). She emphatically states: "You can only rule these Asiatics by fear: if they are not afraid, they snap their fingers at you" (4). Progressively she demonstrates her complete mistrust: "people are now being taught by sad experience that no trust can be placed in one of the [Indian] race" (49).

It is important to note that both Canning and Tytler's perceptions of Indians stand apart from those of the other writers. This is largely because Canning's privileged role offered her a different experience of the rebellion. Being born in India, Tytler's relationship with Indians during the early stages of war reflects her conflict in allegiance. She details mainly positive stories of servants: "Poor old Dabi, one of the most faithful servants, who had been in the family for thirty years, ever since he was a coolie boy of sixteen cried for three days and wouldn't go" (130). On another occasion she writes: "The ayah of the chaplain's family, on seeing the 3rd Cavalry men, warned her master of something being wrong, and soon all the officers in the station were out with their men, to coerce the mutineers" (113). Canning too, is noticeably more positive of Indians than the other writers: "other smaller neighbouring Rajahs have shown excellent feeling" (Lady Canning to Queen Victoria, May. 19. 1857, RA Z 502/10). She displays little of the mistrust articulated by her fellow writers: "The bodyguards, fine tall picked men, with three or four medals apiece, are, I am sure, entirely trustworthy, and they laugh at the cartridge stories" (Lady Canning to Queen Victoria, May. 19. 1857, RA Z 502/10). In contrast to depictions of "bloodthirsty villains", Canning refers to Indian actions as "folly": "Sepoys are the most tractable good people... but any fear that religion or caste shall be tampered with, can always excite them to every possible folly" (Lady Canning to Queen Victoria, May. 19. 1857, RA Z 502/10). It is crucial to highlight that the Queen made it plain in a letter to Lady Canning that she could sympathise with those whom she regarded as "her sepoys":

There is a dangerous spirit amongst the Native Troops... a fear of their religion being tampered with is at the bottom of it. I think that the greater care ought to be taken not to interfere with their religion – as once a cry of that kind is raised... there is no knowing what it may lead to and where it may end. (Queen Victoria to Lady Canning, Jul. 5. 1857, CP)

To complement the Queen's concerns, Canning writes to her with several instances of honourable behaviour executed by Indians:

I am told of some marvellous escapes. Some officers actually had to swim the Jumna helping the poor ladies across as they fled the massacre at Delhi... Mrs Greathed at Meerut was saved by her Ayah who begged her not to run away ... Another Ayah saved the three poor babes of a Mrs Hamilton. (Lady Canning to Queen Victoria, Jun. 5. 1857, RA Z 502/11)

Here Canning assembles her (con)textual identity as an astute and rational colonist, yet, as the next chapter reveals, this initial positivity and confidence in Indians is short lived, as she and her fellow writers move on to depict all Indians as barbaric and their surrounding landscapes as savage and wild.

War Personas

The diaries, journals, letters and memoirs considered in this chapter serve as a case study to show how mid-Victorian British female writers respond textually to the start of war, national conflict and gender crises. The focus on textual personas provides a unique understanding of women's self-representation practices when they begin to experience war. The chapter has highlighted the (con)textual and composite nature of the writers' textual identities. The commencement of the rebellion has been shown to be accountable for the disruption of already volatile feminine identities, as the writers construct substitute, fresh and multifaceted personas and transmit a fusion of sorrow, despair, authority, independence, anger, activism and criticism depending on the context in which they write. Through their narratives the writers convince themselves that unwomanly behaviours were acceptable and necessary and that domestic roles were vital components of the war effort. Their textual identities fluctuate between feminine and domestic, and masculine and militaristic, an occurrence that was accounted for by the conflicting demands of war.

At the end of June 1857, in a letter to Queen Victoria, Canning writes: “I have often tried to think ‘the worst is over,’ but worse still comes” (65). Unfortunately for Canning, and her fellow writers, the rebellion was only just beginning and, as a result, their textual identities still had several crises, dangers and contexts to face.

Chapter Four

“An attack is going on while I am writing”: Accounts of the Mutiny

In the world's broad field of battle,
 In the bivouac of life,
 Be not like dumb driven cattle:
 Be a hero in the strife

(Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, “A Psalm of Life”, 1838)

This chapter considers the textual personas assembled by Katherine Bartrum, Charlotte Canning, Adelaide Case, Ruth Coopland, Caroline Dickson, Frances Duberly, Maria Germon, Georgina Harris, Julia Inglis, Matilda Ouvry, Georgina Paget, and Harriet Tytler in India during the central months of the Mutiny, July to December 1857. Chapter Three revealed that the commencement of war generated a paradoxical range of (con)textual identities such as passive victim, “domestic soldier” and soldierly participant. By focusing on the shifting and contentious nature of such personas, the investigation determined that the rebellion’s launch opened doors to both literal and imagined functions otherwise denied to British women in the mid-nineteenth century. This chapter expands upon this theory by proposing that at the height of the Mutiny new contexts of war prompt new and exceptional personas to intensify. War, a context universally complicated by “the dualities of man/woman, war/peace” (Cooper 10), becomes the provocation for unique, unwomanly and militaristic identities and rhetoric. The discussion reviews female autobiographical narratives alongside theories regarding the relationship between war and femininity, acknowledging that women’s participation in and textualisation of military conflict in the mid-nineteenth century was compounded by gender anxieties and reservations about the legitimacy of female interpretation.

The twelve narratives confront assumptions regarding Victorian female capacities and capabilities within the context of war. The nineteenth century battleground was assumed to be an exclusively male locale, a “forbidden zone” for women (Acton 57), with females expected to remain at the periphery or “in a nursing or auxiliary role” (Reed 144), as symbols of the home-centred ideals that male soldiers were fighting to preserve. Only four years before the Mutiny began Florence Nightingale and her band of nurses “had to fight the enormous gender

battle that had made women's work in the Crimea so frowned upon" (Rappaport 229). Letters by British military officers in the Crimean war reveal the prevailing feeling of hostility towards women in a war setting. Captain Fred Dallas of the 46th regiment wrote in January 1855 regarding his aversion to Frances Duberly who was in the Crimea during the conflict:

I am sorry to hear the Mrs Duberly is a friend of Susan's as she is a female of whom I have the greatest horror... Almost the last time I saw her, she was quietly looking through a Lorgnette, at the whole of her regiment being blown to pieces... We were there, sad spectators of it on duty, what she was there for, Heaven knows! What a mistake women make thinking to excite men's admiration by not being womanly. (78)

Women who lived within war's boundaries and flaunted their participation in its proceedings were commonly regarded as "unnatural" (Plain 168) and "unwomanly" (Aleksievich 1). Indeed several critics have contemplated the theory that women, because of the gender constraints of their social sphere, can never successfully participate in or document conflict. Van Devanter asks: "What could a woman possibly have to say about war?" (qtd. in Acton 56), whilst Margaret Higonnet, on the subject of combatant writing, inquires: "Can authentic words be found by a woman?" (205).

These questions call attention to the demands of external and self-censorship that British women writers of the 1857 Mutiny had to negotiate. In the preface to her published diary Inglis exemplifies the pressures generated by the mid-Victorian gender dichotomy, by overtly exposing a self-consciousness regarding the legitimacy of her Mutiny narrative: "I quite feel that an apology is due from a woman who at this time ventures to write about the Indian Mutiny of 1857 and 1858, or the events connected with it" (1). The twelve narratives disclose anxieties about describing the Mutiny's infamous "surreal horror and violence" (Herbert 2008) in the voice of a Victorian woman, and in doing so accentuate the nineteenth-century contention that not all signatures have the same legal status.

The discussion returns to and reiterates a point made formerly in the thesis: British female constructions of self and "Other" are not merely shaped by gender, they are also governed by Britain's imperial agenda. As British women in colonial contexts, the twelve writers are observing war from both a colonial

and feminine stance, resulting in what Ghose defines as “a fractured gaze” (60), a status that further undermines the legitimacy of such accounts. The rebellion disrupted the established hierarchical structures of authority in India, whilst Britons felt “conscious that the Mutiny has exposed their vulnerability as a privileged imperial elite” (Parsons 225). Within the narratives this vulnerability precipitates itself through declarations of revenge, pride and patriotism. Moreover, there is an attempted reinforcement of Britain’s imperial agenda via extremist ideologies of race and nation:

India presents a magnificent field for work, with a prospect of vast and noble results; and it is impossible not to feel the deepest interest in everything connected with it; but if we desire to maintain our supremacy, it will not be enough to vindicate our mastership by force of arms: we must also prove our moral superiority, and make that superiority an evident and incontrovertible fact. (Duberly xvii)

This example, taken from Duberly’s narrative, draws attention to the intensified polarity between self and “Other” that is prevalent across the war accounts. The writers imply that Britons were truly united against Indian enemies and crucially the Indian nation as a whole.

The research reveals that gender constraints and colonialist sentiments result in fragmented compositions of war, an approach that substantiates Jane Marcus’ view that “writers of war produce pieces of texts, like parts of a body that will never be whole” (128). The writers employ complex strategies to balance their necessity to speak and their obligation to uphold cultural and literary boundaries.⁹⁵ They were recording, in the apparently private mode of female autobiographical narrative, a situation that was powerfully indelicate in its facts and undeniably public.

By July 1857 circumstances in India were beginning to cause grave concern for Britons. In Lucknow Indian soldiers started shelling British forces on 1 July on the eastern flank of the Residency. Commander Sir Henry Lawrence was killed almost immediately, and control and leadership passed to Colonel John Inglis of the 32nd, husband of Julia. On the same day the official Siege of

95. Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar in their study of nineteenth century women writers, *The Madwoman in the Attic* (1979), consider the problems of female authorship: “she must come to terms with the mythic masks male artists have fastened over her human face... by identifying her with the ‘eternal types’ they have themselves invented” (16-17).

Delhi began. A hurried force of 4,000 British officers had succeeded in taking ownership of a ridge overlooking the city, but when faced by over 30,000 mutineers, they were too weak to attempt to retake the city and the British began to suffer dramatic losses. July was also the first month when news of the revolt, which began in Meerut on Sunday 10 May, finally reached Britain. However, it took several weeks before the British press took the threat seriously. On 4 July *The Saturday Review*, in an optimistic tone stated, “The British authorities have met the emergency with equal strength and wisdom, doing the thing best to be done with promptitude and vigour... with as little flurry and perturbation as if they had been arranging the details of a festival” (1). Numerous reports conveyed the situation as trivial, until 25 July when *The Spectator* dedicated three pages to what was now being called “the war in India”. *The Spectator’s* coverage was also significant in that it voiced suspicion regarding British military capabilities, marking the first public concern regarding Britain’s feasibility in sustaining authority: “While we have been hanging upon the next Indian mail to tell us whether or not the mutiny has been extended or suppressed, a much larger question has arisen, whether our Indian empire is to be retained or abandoned?” (775).

The Mutiny spawned a reassessment regarding the function of the British in India. It gave rise to transformation on a huge scale as the East India Company was eventually abolished in 1858 and rule was assumed directly by the British crown. The ensuing chapter contends that the events of 1857 also provoked a small-scale transformation within the narratives of twelve British women whose (con)textual identities of self and “Other” experienced a (textual) uprising of their own.

(Domestic) Battlefields of the Mutiny

On 11 May 1857 *The Bengal Hurkaru*, a newspaper for Britons in India, depicted the gravity of the developing Mutiny via domestic imagery: “when mutinies break out in our domestic establishments – enter our houses, and penetrate even our wardrobes – it is plain that something must be done” (1). This example is one of numerous British and Indian media reports that linked British domesticity and the rebellion; a strategic trend that Blunt argues symbolically “conveyed the threat posed to Britain’s control” (406). The relationship between the Mutiny and

literary images of British domestic destruction has obtained some critical attention, yet scant consideration has been accorded to British women's autobiographical interpretations of domesticity during the events and their equally strategic qualities. Instead of considering how domestic destruction communicated "threats" to British authority, the ensuing part of this chapter reveals how British women's constructions of domestic "battles" can be deemed as textual attempts to transmit Britain's unwavering supremacy.

The research substantiates Karen Schneider's contention that "the domestic battleground is the most fundamental, illuminating, and potentially transformative site of conflict" (6) by determining that despite not battling on the frontline, British women's (con)textual identities battle on the home front. The chapter builds upon the formerly considered theory of female textual personas as "domestic soldiers" by contending that in the main months of the siege the female writers construct the domestic base as a "domestic battlefield" where writers could fulfil gender obligations whilst simultaneously elevating domestic roles to the status of national importance and thus exceptionality.

It is important to note that the metaphor of nineteenth century domesticity as "a battle" was prevalent even in pre-Mutiny Britain as household manuals or what Margaret Horsfield rebrands as "cleaning propaganda" (25) promoted the best tactics to win "the battle against dirt" (Simonton 94). Leonore Davidoff promotes the domestic war metaphor further by highlighting how Victorian housework was viewed as "a battle, with the housewife waging war on dirt and chaos, and the dirt and chaos constantly attacking her" (87). However, despite its existence on British soil, this chapter reveals that when used in the context of war, in a colonial setting, the domestic/war metaphor becomes a more strategic tool in British women's autobiographical accounts. For the writers, narrating the "battle" with housework in wartime India becomes a method of elevating private female textual identities to the public world of military occupation. The Mutiny arguably empowers British women's textual personas by yielding an opportunity to expunge the "Angel in the House" stereotype of a "bloodless and famished creature, born of men's needs, not women's" (Stansell 466).

The female writers textually respond to the height of the Mutiny by transforming the domestic space from a site where British women "managed" Indian servants to a site where British women "battled" domestic roles with

resilience and solidarity. In her diary Germon reacts to the disappearance of Indian servants from the Lucknow Residency with a composed yet robust approach:

When we awoke we found our servants had bolted excepting my kitmagur and Mrs. Barwell's and one or two ayahs - the Fayers had not one servant left, so we were obliged to get up and act as servants ourselves and do everything except the cooking - even to wash up the plates and dishes, etc., and perhaps it was a good thing, it kept our thoughts from dwelling on our misery. (58-59)

Germon suggests that British women were compelled to assume the roles of "servants"; however, instead of conveying domestic occupations as inferior and subordinate roles, she accentuates their functional capacity at distracting the female assembly in the Lucknow Residency from their womanly fears. She refers to Harris' husband, the chaplain, who had drawn up rotas for the women to follow: "Mr. Harris arranged all our duties up to this time" (59) implying that all the women were employed to assist with the domestic maintenance of the Residency. In her diary the Residency behaves as a base for domestic operations, yet Germon initially constructs her textual self as more resilient to toil than others. She protests that there were many British women yet to undertake a domestic task: "I, Mrs. Anderson and Miss Schilling were the only ones who had done anything" (59) and supplements her tireless and thus unique identity by drawing attention to her extra duties: "Mrs. Harris and I had to boil kettles in addition to our morning's duties" (86).

Harris also focuses on her newfound domestic obligations with a comparable pragmatic and hardy approach. Yet, in contrast to Germon, she conveys a sense of pride at the developing sense of "female camaraderie", a context which Dalia Gavriely-Nuri contends is one of the most "appealing aspects of war" (109): "We are all obliged to put our shoulders to the wheel and divide the work between us" (Harris 80). Harris' employment of the colloquial idiom "put our shoulders to the wheel" exaggerates the physical nature of the domestic work and thus emphasises the relentless show of civilian resilience she strives to project. Indeed both writers draw attention to their physical exertions and "hands-on" occupations as Germon declares: "I felt quite knocked up after

my morning duties” (60) and Harris proclaims “I never was so busy in my life” (106).

Significantly the writers’ new domestic responsibilities provide Coopland with an opportunity to defend the perceived negative stereotype of “idle, useless” (Grewal 25) British women in India: “In these “dens” we performed all the necessary acts of life: cooking and eating, dressing and undressing, sleeping and sitting up... A lady’s life in India, however, though very luxurious, is not so useless and frivolous as some imagine” (174-84). Here Coopland adopts a defensive tone whilst simultaneously conveying gratification and self-worth at her new post. She expresses notable satisfaction at British women’s ability to turn the Residency in Lucknow into a home: “after we had been settled there, and had learnt to look on it as our home for some time to come, everything was arranged successfully” (169-70). Although it could be perceived that Case supports the gendered myth that “Men own houses, women create homes” (D. Russell 142) the colonial wartime context arguably elevates the status and importance of creating homes. Like Germon and Harris, Case challenges the stereotypical wartime image of “women remaining passively at home, waiting patiently” (L. Forster 230) by projecting action and permanency, qualities that played a small but symbolic part in endorsing British colonial authority.

In “Women, War and Transition” (1995) Judy El-Bushra and Cecile Mukarubuga assert that the maintenance of female domestic stability is a complex task for women in the context of war:

When change gathers pace and turns into the turmoil of war, women’s capacity to carry out this buttress role is constrained by the stresses that they themselves come under during conflict, creating tensions not only for women themselves, but also for the whole society. (16)

Such “stresses” and “tensions” are indeed revealed in the British women’s Mutiny accounts as the “domestic battlefield” is habitually portrayed as a complex site that is their duty to defend: “Our life was a most wearisome one; the heat was very great. It was impossible to read much; but we occupied our time in making clothes for the refugees, and this employment was a comfort to us” (Inglis *Diary* 31). Inglis emphasises how the adoption of servants’ roles provides solace and, more crucially, how British women performed these tasks with more proficiency than Indian servants:

There were a few dhobies (washermen) inside; but they did not wash any better than we did, having no soap; and they charged exorbitant prices, four shillings for a dress, so we did not often employ them, and the occupation of washing was rather an amusement for us. (*Diary* 150-151)

Notably she conveys pity for a British woman who is unable to embrace and contribute towards the domestic campaign:

I paid Mrs. Cowper a visit in the evening: she was very sad and despondent, and I did my best to cheer her. She was confined to her bed - most trying at such a time, when active employment was the only means to keep one's mind at rest and to prevent one's brooding over our position. (*Diary* 88)

In these examples Inglis does not wholly reject the “Victorian conception of women as spiritually pure domestic guardians” (Honey 95) but she arguably redefines the ideology to one of moral, civic and national importance.

The rebellion invokes a symbolic “professionalising” of traditional feminine tasks, which suggests that the writers’ (con)textual identities acquire a new “rank” in war. The narratives propose that the roles of nurse, housemaid and servant are vital wartime contributions, a trend that positions the self as an active participant of war. In her diary Harris assembles her textual persona in a variety of feminine roles depending on the context of the day and proudly accentuates her dexterity at switching between new identities: “I am now head nurse as well as housemaid” (89). After a baby has died, Harris indicates that it was her responsibility to ensure the baby was taken away from the mother: “I was obliged to go in and ask her to part with it” (102), a compassionate yet serious role that she conveys with calm efficiency. Most significantly, Harris claims to have nursed the famed British General and administrator Sir Henry Lawrence on his deathbed. She notably refers to him as “My patient, Mr. Lawrence” (84) and provides regular updates regarding his health: “I have been nursing him today” (79). Her diary features a description of Lawrence’s final hours, in which she implies her contribution towards his peaceful death: “he had breathed his last: his expression was a happy one” (79). By defining her textual self as “nurse”, Harris embraces an already respected female occupation, but as Ellen Davidson Baer contends, in times of conflict nursing is associated with “valour, status and recognition” and as a “patriotic contribution to the war effort” (351). Moreover,

Harris conveys her exceptionality by referring to her nursing of a key military figure in India.

Bartrum, Case and Dickson construct the domestic site of the Lucknow Residency as a battlefield by voicing more emotional distress at domestic conditions than at the violence and death occurring on the battlefield. Case makes few impassioned references to the fierce warfare, but she emphatically documents domestic conflicts with more distress and concern: “Poor Vokins died yesterday. We managed to get four tablecloths washed, but they do not look much better than they did before they went” (180). Case conveys more sorrow when describing the horrors of domestic struggles, than she does when she reflects on death: “This has been a sad day. I have never felt more weary and depressed since we came into this place. I do not know how we are to get on much longer. I gave up taking sugar to-day, and we are using our last piece of soap” (213). With a similar manner she later writes: “The want of exercise and air, and the difficulty of keeping one’s clothes or anything else tolerably clean, are great trials to those who have never suffered from such evils before” (124), a perceptively shocking statement in light of the violence taking place just outside the Residency gates. Notably, Case recognises that her domestic complaints are trivial, “but truly they are trifles in comparison with the great trials so many breaking hearts have lately had to undergo” (24), yet she remarkably returns with a similar domestic concern later in her diary:

We were saying to each other yesterday, how surprised people in England would be to hear how long we have been without bread, butter, vegetables, or eggs... Many people without milk or sugar, and all seem to be suffering from a scarcity of soap, which is worse than all, I think. (87)

Bartrum too reflects concern regarding the desire for soap with a similar emphatic anguish writes: “We are in such distress because we have used all our soap, and it is impossible to obtain any” (50). Although Case and Bartrum’s soap anxieties may appear marginal, they should not simply be dismissed as trivial, private details. Instead they should be read as evidence of the significance British women placed on the effective maintenance of a domestic site in wartime India.

Cooke and Woollacott contend that the ideology of separate spheres endures even in times of war: “War engages all for a while: the men at the front, the women on the home front” (76), a comment that draws attention to how all

women engage with war, even if only via domestic means. During July to December 1857, the British writers under scrutiny turn to domesticity to strengthen their individual and colonial position in the hierarchy of war. Chapter 3 revealed how identities of domestic sufferers and victims symbolised the threat to British authority; however, this discussion has shown how identities of domestically efficient British female comrades were even more strategic in conveying female domestic authority and in turn British authority in India. In the accounts under scrutiny the “literary portrait of passive, meek, long-suffering angels” (Langland 79) is redefined as a textual portrayal of active, assertive, “domestic soldiers”.

Heroic, Unwomanly and Militaristic Participants of War

In her study *Battle Cries and Lullabies: Women in War from Prehistory to the Present* (2000) Linda Grant De Pauw asserts: “no matter how heroic and ‘manly’ a woman may be, conventions will deny her gallantry and emphasise her nurturing qualities and sensitivity. He is stalwart and brave; she is cute and angry” (17). Grant De Pauw contends that in war women are invariably denied access to masculine and militaristic identities, a contention that the subsequent part of this chapter refutes. The research has thus far determined that the Mutiny provided new contexts for British women writers’ to construct (con)textual identities that can be branded as “domestic soldiers”. The study now expands upon this theory by proposing that, at the height of the rebellion, new and exceptional personas intensify as the British women under scrutiny assemble the self in the shape of a militaristic participant in war. By locating their textual personas within military functions, and by uttering heroic claims and fearless declarations, the writers manipulate the opportunities of war to depict the self in an unwomanly guise that emphasises their exceptionality.

Duberly is arguably the most apparent of the twelve writers to wholly reject “the angel in the house” motif in her Mutiny account. As formerly identified, prior to the rebellion she gained limited public attention regarding her involvement in the Crimean War. Joseph Cummins in *Great Rivals in History: When Politics Gets Personal* (2008) condenses her story:

When Lord Raglan announced that under no circumstances were women to accompany the men from the staging area in Turkey to the Crimea –

and even paced the dock to make sure this order was enforced – Mrs Duberly snuck aboard Cardigan’s own ship disguised as a Turkish woman. Once in the Crimea, she became one of the first women to view modern war close up... and later wrote about it in her book *Journal Kept During the Russian War*. She was close enough to see a lot of death and dying: ‘Even my closed eyelids were filled with the ruddy glare of blood,’ she wrote memorably. (196)

On August 13 1859 *The Spectator* claimed that “The Crimean medal had been almost in her grasp and not to have possessed it after all had been a disappointment” (18). It is pertinent to note that Duberly’s Crimean text was subject to some public ridicule following its publication, a point considered in more detail in Chapter 5. Queen Victoria famously refused to accept the book’s dedication and “she was frowned upon by London society... - genteel women did not accompany armies like so many camp followers” (Cummins 196).

Duberly’s prior encounter with military conflict has an indisputably significant impact on the (con)textual identities she assembles in her narrative during the main months of the Indian Mutiny. As a survivor of the Crimean war, and the only renowned British woman in India to have faced previous warfare, Duberly gives prominence to her experienced, exceptional and unwomanly status throughout her account. She trivialises the ensuing warfare in India by equating it with the events she observed in the Crimea, which she interprets as more severe: “The firing on the town struck us, who were accustomed to the rain of shot at Sebastopol, as remarkably slack” (73). She supplements this propensity by establishing her textual persona as an educated authority on war:

The stern schooling of the Crimea had taught us to make light of difficulties, and although even at this early stage of the march, we were glad to halt for two or three days, we nevertheless looked forward to the future without fear or anxiety. (45)

On several occasions Duberly refers to her celebrity status amongst Britons by narrating instances when she is recognised and appreciated for her exploits in the Crimea:

The guests, about seventy in number, were nearly all strangers to me; and after dinner devoted by the ladies to the exclusive enjoyment of each other’s society, I heard the question asked across the room, “Which is

Mrs. Duberly?" and was loudly replied to by, "There she is, sitting on the sofa, in pink," with the comment from a third of, "Oh! Is that the Crimean heroine?" - while two young ladies shifted their chairs, in order to take an inventory of me at their leisure. (25)

Here Duberly accentuates her exceptionality within her diary by not contesting the title "Crimean heroine". Moreover, by employing the term "inventory" to describe a conversation with other British women, her textual identity becomes business-like and distinctively unfeminine.

Arguably the most striking allusion to Duberly's pre-Mutiny exploits in war occurs when she meets Rani Lakshmi Bai, "the Rani of Jhansi", Queen of the Maratha-ruled state of Jhansi:

Mrs. Jervis mentioned that I was the Englishwoman whom the Ranee (sic) had heard of as having been with the army during the Crimean war; and her inquiries proved that she was familiar with the leading events of the campaign... One thing struck me: when in conversation with the Ranee (sic), she asked rather eagerly if I had ever been actually present at a battle. And on being answered in the affirmative, she fell back in her chair and sighed. A whole lifetime of suppressed emotion, of crushed ambition, of helplessness, and weariness, seemed to be comprehended in that short sigh. (40-41)

Duberly's reference to the Rani's "suppressed emotion" and "crushed ambition" suggests that the Indian Queen admired, and was perhaps even envious of, Duberly's prior experiences of war. As a result the account reinforces the colonist stance that Western women were superior in comparison to their "victimised sisters in India" (Grewal 11). Although the Rani may have given the impression of disbelief at Duberly's proud confession, it is pertinent to note that the Rani did indeed experience her own physical battle and thus infamy, later in the rebellion.

As events intensified across India the Rani instructed the Jhansi army to fight against the British. On the 17th June 1858 in Gwalior a fierce battle ensued, and the Rani was grievously wounded. Since she did not want to be captured the Rani asked an Indian officer to end her life. These events form an iconic story that has subsequently led to her portrayal as "a singular figure in the gallery of heroes" in Indian history (Roy 238). Duberly acknowledges the Rani's death

later in her diary with no overt sentiment: “The Ranees of Jhansi killed” (144). In his 1890 history of the Mutiny Malleson wrote: ““Whatever her faults in British eyes may have been, her countrymen will ever remember that she was driven by ill-treatment into rebellion, and that she lived and died for her country”” (qtd. in Edwardes 111). Although Duberly does not propose it herself, by describing her prior interaction with the Rani in such detail, in a text published after the Mutiny, it could be perceived that Duberly was implying that her Crimean experiences influenced the Rani to act upon her “crushed ambitions”, to encounter war directly and thus tackle a context habitually beyond womanly realms.

All through her writings Duberly’s textual identity remains closely aligned with the male officers she travels with. Notably she defines the 1800 miles on horseback alongside her husband and his troops as “our Indian campaign” (29), and her diary tenders no distinction or dividing line between the manoeuvres that she and the male officers participate in:

Satisfied, however, with the report of an easy march for the morrow, I endeavoured to compose myself to sleep. As we were to descend the ghaut, and pass over more rough ground, the reveilles did not sound until half-past three; and when parade sounded at about twenty minutes after four, we mounted and groped our perilous way to the front of the column, where we remained until the first streak of dawn, when we commenced the descent. (58)

Duberly’s account undoubtedly contests the perceived notion of “two separate and gendered spheres of war” (Grayzel 7) as she unapologetically positions her textual self on the frontline rather than the home front. She acknowledges that the trek “was sharp work and no mistake” (72) and recounts how some male soldiers suffered and died as a result, in distinction to her resilient and determined self:

Three days before our arrival at Bheelwarra we buried the first man who died during our march. He had long suffered from depression of spirits - a sure forerunner of disease in this climate - and died of dysentery while being carried on the line of march. (64)

Duberly’s soldierly identity is propounded further when she narrates her physical relief at being presented with a masculine military coat by the officers, as once again the symbolic line between man and woman is blurred: “the thick cloth cape

of a regimental cloak offered some protection when in my saddle” (46).

Markedly, the uncertainty of the march generates a tone of excitement rather than womanly fear in her diary: “The next morning our ride was more exciting still for our guide lost his way” (42).

Throughout her narrative Duberly’s textual self persists in being distinctly unwomanly, possibly denoting how she had been unconditionally hardened by her Crimean encounter. She pronounces her optimism for British vengeance by employing strikingly indelicate, violent and thus unwomanly vocabulary: “I can only look forward with awe to the day of vengeance, when our hands shall be dipped in the blood of our enemies, and the tongues of our dogs shall be red through the same” (26). Furthermore, when Duberly narrates an episode when she picks flowers, a traditional feminine performance, she masculinises the event via a threatening and thus unconventional description: “As the shades of evening gathered around us, we walked towards the mountain - tearing our feet with thorns and filling our hands with flowers” (49).

Across the texts unwomanly identities are pronounced via the writers’ attempts to delineate war as an adventure or initiation, made the more so by its horrors, which are magnified rather than minimised. In her diary Case’s (con)textual self challenges the gender-based expectations of war by communicating a fearless tone when recounting events: “wonderful escapes are so frequent here that one hears them related without feeling much astonishment” (228). Harris also calls attention to the unabashed exhilaration aroused by war’s context: “it was very exciting listening to the sound of the battle going on so near us” (159). She promotes her textual self in an unorthodox guise by declaring: “It is very tantalising knowing nothing positive” (158), and even communicates displeasure when she remarks: “no adventure to record” (186). In notable distinction to the preliminary wartime identity of victim and sufferer, the writers presently assemble the self as nonchalant and unperturbed by military conflict. They draw attention to the continuation of pre-Mutiny social occasions in their texts in descriptions that perform as symbols of Britain’s imperial strength, wartime camaraderie as well as unwomanly fearlessness. In her diary Ouvry assembles a jaunty and contented persona when relaying a mid-Mutiny social function: “I went to the Saunders’ party and Dr. Trevor Lawrence drank tea, and we played vingt-en-un as Willie said, to drive away thought” (122).

Correspondingly Coopland gives an account of a British wedding that takes place at the height of the Mutiny, a retelling that strategically conveys British robustness and comradeship:

Shortly after, a young lady was married to a gentleman in the Uncovenanted (sic) Service, in our hall. It was a very gay wedding considering the circumstances: the bride was in a veil and lace dress, attended by brides-maids in pretty bridal attire; and after the ceremony, they pitched a tent on the terrace, and had a dance and supper, to which they invited all the officers. (199)

Germon's interpretation of a mid-war social gathering is conceivably the most startling: "Our party sat in the verandah singing songs and glees and it made me quite melancholy for the round shots were whizzing overhead and no one could tell but that the next might bring death with it" (64). Moreover, later she notably articulates surprise regarding the normality maintained by some Britons: "Mr. and Mrs. Huxham came in the afternoon so well dressed you would fancy there was no siege" (84).

There is scant evidence of the "Victorian angelic woman" (Golden 153) or the prevailing notion that "women were weak, passive, mindless and powerless" (Winter 51) in the autobiographical writings as the female authors proffer brave unwomanly retorts to military hostilities. In her journal Germon heightens her unshrinking persona by uttering: "Soon the attack became tremendous all around us - round shot flying in all direction, musketry on the roof of our house incessant - strange to say I never winced or closed my ears" (67). Germon appropriates a self-satisfied tone regarding her courage and suggests that she had been acclimated to war, by drawing attention to her indifference to the firing: "The enemy threw several shells. I went nevertheless to Charlie's quarters and had a cosy evening with him" (113).

Case, Dickson and Harris also assemble the self as unemotional and untroubled by the relentless shelling near the Lucknow Residency. Case acquires a composed authorial voice when she writes, "A round shot fell in our court-yard to-day, close to the head of one of the goats, but fortunately did not hurt any one" (161). Correspondingly, Dickson projects courageousness in response to the impending warfare and her undaunted identity is accentuated through her use of hyperbole: "At first the fire was continual, night and day. To give you an idea

how incessant it was I must tell you, that when it ceased we quite missed it, and felt almost uncomfortable” (52). Strikingly, when Harris comes close to losing her life, she narrates the event via a reserved and unexcitable tone, thus reinforcing her unwomanly self: “a bullet went through the leg of the chair I was sitting on; it just glanced upwards and struck me on the side, but having expended its force on the chair, I was not hurt” (144).

Remarkably, giving birth in the midst of the Mutiny is revealed via non-colourful language and an untroubled tone, with such events receiving only brief attention in the writers’ narratives. Within her diary Case plainly writes: “Mrs. Stephens was confined last night, but the child was born dead” (88), and “Mrs. Ouseley had a little boy this morning, and Mrs. Barwell yesterday” (144). Harris even uses an indirect statement to recount a new birth, underlining its plainness: “E. presented Charlie with a small son” (97). Notably, Tytler and Coopland give birth at the height of the rebellion, and remarkably both writers make no reference to being pregnant in their narratives until their babies are actually born; even then, their portrayals are brief and minor. Tytler writes one sentence on the delivery: “My baby was born with dysentery and was not expected to live for nearly a week” (147). Strikingly, Coopland does not make reference to the moment she gave birth, but merely writes: “I had now an additional source of care and anxiety in my baby” (205). Lorraine Code states: “the view that ‘feminine’ emotions conflict with ‘manly’ reason has been a powerful silencer of women’s emotions” (164). Code’s theory could arguably explain why British women fail to address the fear of war and the sentiment associated with childbirth within their war writings. If the writers sought to project the self as a rational and intelligent participant of war then (con)textual identities had to reject feminine emotion and sentimentality.

Whilst Tytler and Coopland suppress emotions concerning childbirth, Inglis makes light of contracting smallpox, regarded by British medical officers as “the scourge of India” (Arnold 95). Inglis writes:

There was service today at a place called the King’s Hospital, but I could not go. Some suspicious marks appeared on me, and I was pronounced to have smallpox. Not pleasant news, at such a time especially. I was most anxious to be moved, to prevent the infection spreading, and John promised to have a tent prepared for me. (*Diary* 39)

Inglis' composed declaration that it was "not pleasant news" is overshadowed by her courageous concern that she does not infect others. Markedly, when Inglis does refer to feeling unwell, she overshadows it by mentioning someone whose suffering she deems greater: "I felt very ill all day. I missed our good old doctor Scott very much; but he was at this time dangerously ill himself, and not expected to live" (*Diary* 39).

The absence of palpable concern and scant attention paid to pregnancy and personal ailments could be owing to the writers' guilt about complaining of physical trials at the same time as their husbands were fighting and dying on the battlefield. Their unconventional portrayals strategically shape the writers' constructions of the self as unwomanly and thus substantiate Cohn's assertion that women "are not just wars' victims" (52). Significantly, whilst ill with smallpox Inglis still portrays herself as fearless and heroic by alluding to herself in a faintly militaristic guise: "The greatest excitement and consternation prevailed. I could remain in bed no longer, but posted myself at the window" (145 *Diary*). Despite suffering with a life-threatening illness, Inglis' focuses on the thrill and adventure of war and thus heightens her unwomanly (con)textual identity despite being so close to death.

Markedly, the writers reject feminine emotion even when documenting the death of a loved one. The writers present unsentimental and unembellished accounts of warfare and indelicate recitals of violence and death. In her diary Bartrum recounts witnessing death in a sober and undemonstrative manner: "I was standing by the door with baby, looking out into the courtyard at a little girl playing with a round shot, when she was struck in the head and killed instantly" (30). With a comparable attitude Case writes: "The bodies of two young ladies were seen lying dead in the street, as if just killed, but who they were, or where they came from, I cannot learn" (206), and "A lady (Mrs. Dorin) was killed to-day while sitting in her room in Mr. Gubbins's house by a bullet through her head" (107). Case overtly challenges mid-nineteenth century codes of etiquette in her portrayal of death by employing indelicate expressions and appearing unresponsive to the bloodshed: "Little children of all ages were cut up into pieces and roasted before their parents' eyes" (207).

Germon too exhibits little or no overt sentiment regarding Mutiny deaths. Her narrative complies with what Elshtain defines as the masculine approach to

war: “a style that is deliberately cool, attempting to exclude overt emotion” (226). Germon writes: “Mr. Vickers came in and reported he had seen the bodies of Mrs. Christian and the two Miss Jacksons lying in the road. The night passed quietly” (41). Notably, Germon routinely details deaths within brackets, a technique that implies the regularity of death: “(Miss Palmer had her leg taken off by a round shot this day in the Residency – she only survived it one day)” (57). Germon’s reports of British fatalities appear increasingly apathetic via her employment of euphemisms: “Another day without a word of news good or bad, even gentlemen begin to croak” (49). Here, Germon’s application of a euphemism could be deemed as a feminising technique allowing her to write about death in a time when “death was considered obscene” (74 Tamplin); however, her tone is distinctly unsympathetic and thus unwomanly. Her approach conflicts wholly with the sensitive and tactical euphemisms that Marlene Ann Arieno contends were prevalent in the nineteenth century: “An individual does not die but passes away, breathes his last, leaves the world behind, or joins his Maker” (101).

It is a common perception that writing can offer an outlet for emotion during war: “Give a feeling a form and it will cease to hurt” (qtd. in A. Smith 8) wrote Irene Rathbone as she tried expel the pain of war. However, as thus far demonstrated, within British women’s Mutiny accounts there is a perceptible reluctance to focus on traditionally feminine emotion. Angela Smith considers that the rejection of emotion is an inherent trend in women’s war writing: “Often it is the excitement of the war which comes across instead; the promise of something different... other emotions are less apparent” (8). One noteworthy and striking example of the denunciation of feminine emotion is Case’s failure to write regarding her husband William’s death. Both Dickson and Inglis submit the circumstances of William’s mortality in their diaries. Dickson writes:

the month of June ended very sadly, and the 30th of June threw Adelaide into the greatest grief, for she that morning had to mourn the loss of him who had made her so happy for five years. Colonel Case was killed in the disastrous action at Chinuhut, of which by-and-bye... William was shot through the heart... Poor Adelaide and Mrs. Inglis stood at a window watching the sad scene. (45-50)

Inglis also recounts the event:

I could see the flashes of the muskets, and on the opposite side of the river could distinguish large bodies of the enemy through the trees. Mrs. Case came up to me at this time, and said, "Oh, Mrs. Inglis, go to bed; I have just heard Colonel Inglis and William' (her husband) are both safe." I said, "Why, I did not know Colonel Case was out." A few minutes afterwards John came in, he was crying; and, after kissing me, turned to Mrs. Case, and said, "Poor Case!" Never shall I forget the shock his words gave me, or the cry of agony from the poor widow. Mrs.

Polehampton took her into her room and tried to tranquillize her. (45-46)

The death of Case's husband marks a notable disruption and silence in her diary. William's death occurs on 30th June, and Case does not return to writing until 5th July. Significantly in her first journal entry after the event, she makes no direct reference to William and in marked contrast to Dickson, she only writes: "There is so much sorrow and suffering around us, that there is scarcely time to indulge in private grief, but deeply I know you will feel for me" (78). Case does not refer to the circumstances of her husband's death and tenders little personal grief. Notably, Inglis' suggests that Case was suffering from "suppressed grief": "Mrs. Case still very ill. Dr. Scott said she was suffering from suppressed grief; she had exerted herself so much after hearing of her husband being killed, and nature could not be resisted any longer" (*Diary* 77). Notably, unlike Dickson, Case does not express any obvious obituary or short biography about William. Her diary contradicts Herbert Tucker's assertion that "letters, diaries and journals of the period provide ample evidence of 'chronic grief'" (121). On the contrary, the death of Case's husband is marked by a new and palpable preoccupation in her writing methodology: the precise recording of militaristic events.

Case dismisses the "personal experience" (Boynton 191) anticipated in a mid-Victorian female diary by engaging principally with the accurate detailing of military proceedings and thus her diary progressively endorses Margo Culley's theory that:

widowhood is among several events that create a discontinuity in a woman's life - she ceases to be the persona she was before her husband's death. Through keeping a record of her life story, a woman could maintain continuity and community. (8)

Case attempts to counteract the “discontinuity” evoked by William’s death by maintaining “continuity” via the exact chronicling of military events. She appears preoccupied with giving the times of events in the style of a soldierly account and updates her journal entries as and when things happen: “10 p.m - We have just heard that a letter has arrived for Sir James Outram” (243). With similar propensity she later writes: “I hear that an attack is expected to-night; they are certainly firing a good deal, but as yet (10 P.M.) there is nothing” (276). Case reinforces the notion of “continuity” by recurrently returning to past events of the rebellion that she neglected to document earlier but must presently record. On 5 July, she writes: “I forgot to mention that on Wednesday the 1st July... the fort was blown up” (85). There are occasions when her diary entries feature a few words as she appears preoccupied with listing the facts, figures and details of the conflict: “At this present time, there are 800 wounded in this garrison, and 410 women and children” (219). Tellingly, Case is frustrated when she has nothing new to write: “As usual, I begin with the same remark, No news!” (130) suggesting that the absence of military content is disruptive to her attempts at maintaining “continuity”. In her most noteworthy example Case stresses the significance of maintaining “continuity”, and thus her narrative, no matter what is occurring around her:

An attack is going on while I am writing and I cannot help thinking what would be the feelings of any lady suddenly transported from quiet, peaceful England to this room, around which the bullets are whizzing, the round shot falling, and now and then a loud explosion, as if a mine were blowing up, which I think is almost worse than all the sharp and fast fire of the musketry. (148)

Following her husband’s death Case’s (con)textual identity contradicts the prevalent philosophy of Victorian female widowhood: “grief became their constant companion” (Jalland 193). On the contrary, Case emphasises the importance of British female resilience and “continuity” in war, which in turn promotes the resilience and “continuity” of Britain’s colonial rule in India.

Grant De Pauw deems that the rejection of overtly feminine emotion in writings about war is a contentious and damaging tendency:

In a traditional war story the male heroes do the fighting and embody the martial virtues. Their reward for suffering hardship and risking their lives

is a woman's love, all the admiration, compassion and provision of creature comforts that are associated with the image of wife and mother.

Focusing on women in any other role spoils the story. (17)

Through allusions to their militaristic mode of living the British women writers under scrutiny indicate their entanglement in military manoeuvres and in doing so construct unwomanly and militaristic (con)textual identities. These textual personas essentially "spoil" Grant De Pauw's framework of a traditional war story, whilst simultaneously "spoiling" Victorian Britain's framework of mid-nineteenth century femininity. The writers assemble the militaristic identity of soldier via implied involvement in and proficiency of militaristic conduct, activity and terminology. Primarily militaristic references are moderately subtle and conceivably incidental, but progressively such allusions are more palpable and purposeful. Harris alludes to British women's exploits within the Lucknow Residency using militaristic colloquial idioms: "we were all hurried down to the lower regions in double-quick time" (88). Even when relating her domestic accomplishments Harris employs martial parlance: "I superintend" (141), "I took possession" and "my private retreat" (137). Within her diary Coopland correspondingly reveals soldierly behaviour by recounting her use of passwords: "We had to pass several sentries, whose challenges Major Macpherson answered; but sometimes we forgot the password, and we had to wait till Mrs. Innes remembered it. The first night it was "Oxford," and the next "Putney" (147). Coopland supplements her militaristic identity via her textual rendering of the women as fearless participants with proficient defensive plans: "We all stood up close together in a corner of the hut; each of us took up one of the logs of wood that lay on the ground, as some means of defence" (125).

Compatibly, Germon's (con)textual identity emulates the actions of male soldiers: "After dinner whilst we were sitting in the long veranda room a call was passed from outside, "Stand to your arms", and the gentlemen went off... and I at once went off to fetch the things I should require" (76). Her journal becomes distinctly embedded with militaristic phraseology and vocabulary. Whilst carrying a cup of tea, Germon falls down some steps and sprains her instep: "It got very bad so Dr. Partridge recommended my fomenting it with hot water and laying it up, so I was *hors de combat*" (62). Here, perhaps Germon uses this phrase, "*hors de combat*" translated as "out of the fight", because of its

colloquial meaning; however, by employing the term “combat” she conceivably locates her domestic injury within the militaristic margins of the Mutiny.

Militaristic and unwomanly identities are additionally evident via the writers’ proud validations regarding their newfound knowledge of the masculine world of war. Dickson’s militaristic identity is revealed through her fresh acquaintance with weapons: “We soon learnt to distinguish our guns from theirs” (53). Employing a similar tendency Coopland relates her familiarity with weapons and more crucially her new aptitude for using them: “My husband’s rifle was kept loaded (I learned to load and fire it), as we were determined not to die without a struggle” (111). Likewise, Inglis reveals her ability to differentiate between the sounds of combat within her diary:

This morning at six o’clock we were startled by an explosion, which our now practised ears knew at once to be a mine blowing up, the prelude to all the enemy’s attacks, and succeeded, as usual, by sharp musketry firing and cannonading, the latter not so heavy as usual. (122)

Inglis supplements this construction of the self as experienced in warfare by emphasising how unaffected and unafraid she presently is:

A species of attack took place at midnight, and the firing was very heavy. We were really getting quite accustomed to these little incidents, and if it had not been for my anxiety on John’s account, I should often have slept through the heaviest cannonading (*Diary* 132).

Notably, Inglis emphasises her own and Case’s exceptional personas by proposing that they possess a more expert understanding of warfare than other women in the Residency: “Our servants declared today that they heard distant guns. Mrs. Case and I strained our ears, and fancied we heard them too, but no one else did” (*Diary* 105). Likewise Harris implies that the other ladies are less able to cope with the rebellion than she when she defines them as “the ladies who are delicate” (90).

Elshtain argues that in war “men fight as avatars of a nation’s sanctioned violence. Women work and weep” (3), an assertion that contends that like mid-nineteenth century Britain, war had and still does have its own ideology of separate spheres. However, this chapter has thus far demonstrated that the boundaries of such spheres were disrupted in India in 1857 by a small gathering of British female writers. These women refuse to be bound by war’s

“prototypical emblems and identities” (Elshtain 3) and instead manipulate war’s context to assemble heroic, unwomanly and militaristic constructions of the self. British women of the Indian Mutiny have chiefly been represented as “passive victims” (Webster 121); however, this analysis has challenged this assumption by revealing that British women writers construct new and exceptional (con)textual identities which contentiously embrace the altering contexts and opportunities of war.

A British Female Wartime Gaze

Jean Gallagher claims that women writers document war via a specific, female tendency to omit certain details and fictionalise accounts, a disposition she defines as “the feminine gaze”:

The gaze refers to a female observer’s physical act of looking – or refusing to look – at wartime visual objects... and to the visual or verbal representation of that act for a reading or viewing audience. The gaze is continually subject to the various forces that constitute war-time visibility and subjectivity and that attempt to direct or constrain the act of looking and the interpretation of visual experience. (7-8)

Gallagher’s research posits that the “forces” of gender and nationality habitually compound female interpretations of war. Her investigation supports Ghose’s analysis of Victorian travel writing in which she similarly contends that British female compositions of colonial India are governed by “a female gaze” (1). This chapter now concludes by building upon both Gallagher and Ghose’s claims by revealing how British female constructions of mid-Mutiny India are shaped by Victorian ideologies of war, gender and Britain’s imperial agenda, an amalgamation of “forces” that undermine the legitimacy of such accounts.

Writing about war as a mid-nineteenth century British woman was compounded by complexities concerning the authenticity, validity and acceptability of female interpretation.⁹⁶ In the majority of autobiographical writings considered in this study, female writers claim authorship within the “very male, very military, and very narrowly defined terrain” of war (Hanley 6)

96. Tim O’Brien contends that the process of writing about war is never straightforward: “In any war story, but especially a true one, it’s difficult to separate what happened from what seemed to happen... The angles of vision are skewed... The pictures get jumbled; you tend to miss a lot. And afterward, when you go to tell about it, there is always that surreal seemingless, which makes the story seem untrue” (78).

whilst propagating anxieties regarding the problematic nature of their writings. The struggle to reshape the self without endangering gender conventions is revealed via apologetic and conscience-stricken declarations. The narratives transmit undercurrents of shame and tension attesting that war is an incontestably tendentious field for women writers. Carol Acton defines war as a “Forbidden Zone”:

Male writers rarely question the validity of their position as observers of and hence witnesses to war. Women writers on the contrary... are hyperconscious of their presence in The Forbidden Zone where their “seeing” is complicated by their ongoing struggle to establish the legitimacy of their non-combatant perspective as well as by cultural constraint on what and how they see and what they reveal. (57)

With Acton’s hypothesis in mind, it can be contended that British women’s accounts of the Mutiny are, to all intents and purposes, “forbidden texts”.

As revealed in Chapter Two, Harris, for the most part, articulates the commencement of the rebellion via a remarkably unwomanly focus on the surrounding violence. She employs phrases such as “cut to pieces” (33) whilst criticising military movements in a condemnatory tone: “there never was a more mismanaged affair” (35). However, the discussion now contends that there is a brief but perceptible disruption to this unwomanly approach in the main months of the Mutiny, when her authorial voice subconsciously recalls the “forbidden” nature of war’s content. This disruption in style is revealed following Harris’ meeting with an unnamed British man who was also writing about the Residency in Lucknow: “I believe he is writing a book, and an account of the gallant fellow’s emotions at the sight of the ladies and children will form an interesting page of his volume, for it was indeed a most striking and affecting scene” (155). In her diary Harris recognises that the context of British women in a wartime dwelling would make for an “interesting page”; however, remarkably, following her encounter with the male writer, Harris’ narrative temporarily becomes unsophisticated, minimal and more stereotypically feminine. There is a perceptible “dumbing-down” in the technical detail and confident tenor of her account, suggesting that the encounter with a male author has induced a sense of doubt and incapability that was not apparent before. Harris’ self-assured voice dissipates as she writes: “I am quite ignorant of the localities, I cannot attempt to

describe the movements which have taken place” (159). She refers in an uninformed and simplistic manner to “the big guns” (160), in marked contrast to her earlier specialist reference of “a twenty-four pounder” (37). Harris’ meeting with a male writer evokes a temporary alteration of her textual persona as she recognises the limitations of her gender, and fleetingly supports Case’s assertion that “no woman is equal to the task” (iv) of writing about war.

Within a letter to Queen Victoria, Canning also briefly expresses conventional womanly unease about describing the “The Well in Cawnpore”: “I cannot write to Your Majesty all the horrors we have to mourn over” (Lady Canning to Queen Victoria, Aug. 10. 1857, RA Z 502/14); however, paradoxically within the same letter she contradicts this prior declaration and advances to describe events in some detail: “The Cawnpore massacres were the worst of all... All were thrown down a well” (Lady Canning to Queen Victoria, Aug. 10. 1857, RA Z 502/14). Her reference to Cawnpore contradicts her previous anxiety regarding the detailing of unwomanly events, but it is important to remember that Canning was responding to a request for information from her monarch, due to Lord Canning’s silence, a position that single-handedly made her exceptional. As a result, Canning was arguably ungoverned by traditional modes of female writing. She was fulfilling a masculine duty at the request of a monarch, a position that pardoned her from the societal systems that restricted the other writers.

Across the twelve narratives the female writers tender evidence to support Herbert’s claims that “the Mutiny was a crucial episode in the formation of modern British national identity” (18). The rebellion disrupted the established hierarchical structures of authority in India. Britons felt “conscious that the Mutiny has exposed their vulnerability as a privileged imperial elite” (Parsons 225). Within the texts this vulnerability precipitates itself via the interconnected but opposing constructions of British self and Indian “Other”. The rebellion becomes the stimulant for the promotion of unambiguous imperial difference as the writers portray their textual self as part of a unified, valiant and resilient British nation that stands in opposition to barbaric, wild and enemy India. There is an attempted reinforcement of Britain’s imperial authority via references to British patriotism, camaraderie and revenge alongside extremist ideologies of India’s race and nation.

The writers, through powerful constructions of their own national self-image, categorise Britons both in India and back in Britain as a single people, an occurrence that supports Sonya Rose's assertion that in war "communal identities are forged as people take action together and as they deploy cultural tools to manufacture a sense of we-ness" (10). A sense of "we-ness" is revealed in the Mutiny accounts via the writers' focus on British traditions, buildings and artefacts. Case articulates Britain's resilient authority by declaring that despite the chaotic warfare surrounding them "the Union Jack is seen flying from Allumbagh" (272). Moreover, she makes several significant allusions to the irrepressible success of British technology: "The telegraph, works from the top of the residence" (275). With a similar propensity Paget attempts to reinforce Britain's cultural superiority by drawing attention to the dominance and triumph of British engineering:

The railway carriages and engines, and nearly everything connected with the line, are English, including the post and rail-fence and gates; but very un-English were the voices... The railway at present ends here; but great works are in progress, by which it will be carried in a tunnel through the hills, and form a connected line all the way to Poona. (70-71)

By stating, "great works are in progress" at the height of the rebellion Paget promotes the robustness of Britain's imperial agenda. She plainly promotes colonial confidence that the Mutiny will not ultimately disrupt Britain's civilising mission in India. However, in all the anxiety and turmoil the arrival of one of the wonders of Western technology passes almost unnoticed, a situation noted by Canning in her journal on 5 July: "At any other time, the first lighting of gas in India would have made a great sensation... It was done on this evening, and a crowd of natives assembled at each lamp-post, the lamplighter hurraing as the light flared up" (Lady Canning's Journal, Calcutta, Jul. 5. 1857. CP). In these examples the telegraph, railway and oil lamp serve as "cultural tools" that evoke colonial superiority in the midst of war. They are the marks of an "expanding imperialist venture" (Ray 53), in which India's territory can be enhanced, a colonist stance reinforced by Duberly in the preface to her diary: "Before any real good can be effected in India, that country must be brought nearer to England" (xvii).

National unification is also demonstrated through strategic references to British food. In contrast to the hybrid blend of both British and Indian foods consumed before the Mutiny, the writers presently depict Indian food as inferior, a tendency that Priyam Manisha defines as “colonial oppression” (112). Paget expresses the relief induced by the consumption of British food: “I need not dwell on the delights of again sitting down to a well appointed English dinner” (60). Notably Germon reveals pleasure when she meets a British cook, “Mrs Need”, who provides her with a traditional British dish of “roly pudding”, which although is made using Indian ingredients is greatly enjoyed:

Charlie came as usual – dinner today was roast mutton but as there was very little we opened a tin of salmon and Mrs. Need (an English woman who cooks for us, our only two kitmutgars having bolted) made us a roly pudding of attah and suet – to us a perfect luxury. (83)

Indian food is conveyed as an objectionable replacement to British cuisine within Harris’ diary: “we can get no bread or butter, so chapattis are the disagreeable substitute” (82). In the midst of war, the serving of food culturally specific to Britain serves as an important symbolic device in forging a distinct British identity uncorrupted by Indian influences.

The writers accentuate the importance of upholding their British faith during the war, as religion becomes increasingly symbolic of imperial authority and morality. In her diary Duberly praises British attempts at converting Indians to Christianity, remaking “the Other” (the colonised) into the image of the Self (the coloniser), and its importance for the imperial project as a whole. On this theory William Cavanaugh points out “the very conception of religion was a tool in removing native Indian culture and Indians themselves from the exercise of public power” (91). Duberly recognises that in order for British imperial authority to effectively outlive the rebellion, Britons must follow Christianity more stringently:

The Company's rule has done many good things, although not as many as it might have done; nor was their system free from grave faults: but as for civilising, and educating, and converting the natives of India, we must first set an example of consistent Christianity ourselves... when we throw our Christianity, and consequent superiority, in their teeth on every

occasion, we must recollect that we are dealing with a people whose religious faith actuates them every hour of the day. (xvii)

Duberly's words point to the post-Mutiny expansion of Christianity. Like Paget, she reveals colonial confidence that the war will not ultimately disrupt Britain's civilising mission. Both Paget and Germon draw attention to the comfort that British religion provides in response to the adversities of war. Paget expresses contentment at setting foot in a church built to British design: "It was a great pleasure again to find ourselves within the walls of a church" (87). Within her diary, Inglis accentuates how in the midst of war, Christian religion provides her with necessary comfort and more crucially the ability to face the enemy:

We felt sure the enemy must get in, when the most terrible death awaited us. We sat trembling, hardly able to breathe, when Mrs. Case proposed reading the Litany, and came with her sister and knelt down by my bedside; the soothing effect of prayer was marvellous. We felt different beings, and, though still much alarmed, could talk calmly of our danger, knowing that we were in God's hands. (60-61)

Notably when Germon is unable to attend church she still endeavours to recognise the day, thus confirming her religious and national identity: "I always try to get some clean things to put on on Sunday as one way of recognising the day" (83).

The Mutiny arguably engenders a new and inflated sense of British community within the autobiographical writings. The British women assemble a collective British (con)textual identity that creates a perceptible enmity between self and "Other" via prominence on allied cooperation, the notion of an extended family and what Dora Apel defines as "community-building camaraderie" (49). In her diary Harris calls attention to the bonding effect of war by defining one of the other women in the Residency in Lucknow as "my siege cousin" (98). Harris also promotes national homogeneity by recurrently employing the phrase "our siege": "Three months to-day since the battle of Chinhut and commencement of our Siege" (128) and "Our siege is as close as ever" (126). A sense of female domestic camaraderie is evoked by Inglis as she implies that both Case and Dickson were "communal mothers" to her children in their shared space in the Residency:

they were of the greatest help and comfort to me. They bore so patiently the many discomforts and annoyances attendant on being shut up in a small room night and day with three small children, and were always ready to amuse, nurse, or work for them. (*Diary* 104)

Whilst their husbands battle together on the frontline, Case, Dickson and Inglis battle together on the home front. Case, who is also equally praising of Inglis, reinforces the notion of wartime bonding and community by employing the metaphor of family: “It is impossible to tell you how kind Colonel and Mrs. Inglis have been to us. They have insisted on our considering ourselves as part of their family, and in such times as these how doubly valuable are kindness and sympathy” (79). John Hawkins, in his study of army and family in conflict, asserts: “At its broadest symbolic level, a “family” consists of those who cooperate with and trust each other” (98). By employing the model of family, the British women promote unity, cohesion and a common cause. The metaphor of family was also strategic as it pitted the wholeness and moral civility of Britons against “the uncivilised and barbaric” Indian (Chowdhry 40), thus supporting Britain’s imperial ideology.

Valerie Sanders argues that autobiographical forms “which most people would regard supremely as the narrative of an individual life... became, for some Victorian women, the story of a generation, a slice of representative life in a specific period” (11). Within their narratives the writers, in compliance with Sander’s theory, on occasions turn their focus from the self to the identity of the community around them to present a “communal narrative”, a collective and arguably joint response to the events. John Letts, creator of the world’s first commercial diary in 1812, instructed owners ““use your diary with the utmost familiarity and confidence; conceal nothing from its pages nor suffer any other eye than your own to scan them”” (qtd. in Amigoni 27). During the Mutiny a large portion of the women writers go against this instruction, as there is an actual or implied multiple authorship to their texts which in turns projects the notion of a unified British community. This theory is substantiated in Case’s journal as she allows her sister-in-law (Dickson) to write on her behalf when she is too ill to do so: “Adelaide being too ill to continue her journal, I do so for her, till she is well again” (96). The women appear to write on rotation, as Case returns to writing when Dickson is ill: “Poor Carry has not been well... I am

getting better, though not very strong; but am able to resume my journal again” (104). Through this shared authorship both Case and Dickson indicate a belief that it was vital to make a record of events, no matter who the author.

Both Germon and Harris allow their husbands to read their diaries, and recount this in their texts. Germon plainly declares: “Charlie came over and read my journal” (69) without further elaboration. By allowing her husband to read her journal, her narrative instantly appears a less personal account, as there is the suggestion that Charlie may have been checking, censoring or even contributing information for its content. Similarly, in Harris’ narrative, we learn that her husband James reads her diary, but in contrast to Germon she clearly defines her husband’s contribution:

James, in reading over my journal, is quite affronted because I have omitted to record that since the 30th of May, the night of the meeting in cantonments, he has gone to bed in his clothes, or rather has not gone to bed at all. (157)

Harris is not apologetic to her husband or reader in this passage for omitting such information, and in fact she only reveals James’ contribution by retelling of his irritation, therefore she does in a sense maintain authority over the diary. Here, as in Germon’s text, there is a sense that James was checking the information that she detailed, perhaps with the intention of creating a communal record or with an eye to publishing, a context that would dramatically conflict with Germon’s original intentions of creating a personal and private account.

Inglis’ diary features vast multiple page contributions by masculine military figures, which she introduces at regular occasions: “Captain Birch thus describes the expedition...” (40). This intertextual trend continues as she includes letters by her own husband as well one by Captain Robert Tytler, husband of Harriet. In the preface to her published diary she acknowledges the counsel she was given by Colonel Birch: “I have been materially assisted by his aide-de-camp, Colonel Birch, now commissioner at Simla, who has given me the use of his notes taken during the siege” (Preface). Perhaps by offering masculine contributions and mutual observations in the midst of their account, the writers deemed that their narratives would possess more credibility and be viewed as “true” accounts of war if they were ever to be published, thus eschewing Samuel

Hynes' belief that female war writing is always "about failure, a woman's unsuccessful attempt to enter the heroic world of war" (158).

The writers' attempts to strengthen Britain's imperial authority via references to British artefacts, camaraderie and community are complemented by a distorted vision of the colonised Indian landscape. In his historical account of the Mutiny, Fremont-Barnes argues that the Indian landscape was altered drastically by war: "the landscape had become a semi-desert. Over this scene of devastation, under a fierce sun, hung the repulsive stench of rotting animal carcasses and rebel corpses" (71). At the height of the rebellion the writers' compositions of India do, in compliance with Fremont-Barnes' assertion, become noticeably more menacing, wild and threatening. Like their pre-Mutiny constructions, such descriptions should still be defined as "imagined Indian landscapes"; however with the stimulus of a war between the colonised and the coloniser, these landscapes become significantly more exaggerated, manipulated and thus imaginary in the main months of the siege.

Whilst the writers' pre-Mutiny accounts revealed efforts to civilise Indians and control the Indian landscape, their mid-Mutiny accounts depict India as beyond the limits of salvation. As a result, the "imagined Indian landscape" becomes both a literal site of conflict (meaning the location of a war) and a symbolic site of conflict, as the writers amplify the conflict between their moral and superior British self and the corrupt and inferior Indian "Other". The writer's pre-Mutiny narratives offer arguably moral landscapes: green, prosperous and full of flora and fauna. However, their mid-Mutiny landscapes are infertile, sterile and bleak. They possess what Grewal defines as a "Gothic opacity" as they become an "area of darkness... unknown and perceived as mysterious" (26). Within her diary Case declares how "Everything is damp and wretched-looking" (201), whilst Ouvry similarly writes: "the country was singularly barren" (106). Bartrum too assembles the Indian environment as an ominous, gloomy and dreary landscape:

We wander through the deserted houses around, most of which have been burnt to the ground: there are very few in Cantonments still standing. The church still remains, though most of the tablets have been torn off the wall. The scene of desolation which the place presents is very sad: so many happy homes having been utterly destroyed in the past year. (61)

She acknowledges how her interpretation of the landscape has transformed from her pre-Mutiny vision: “How changed the scene from this day three years ago, when all looked so bright and fair; now I am alone, and there are few in this strange land to care for me” (57).

With a similar approach Inglis conveys how the rebellion has altered her perception of the environment as she describes the view from the roof of the Lucknow Residency:

Miss Dickson, the children, and I always slept on the roof of the house; the nights were very pleasant in the open air, and the view of the city and country round very beautiful. Everything used to look so calm and peaceful, it was difficult to think it could ever be a scene of war; but looking down into the Residency garden, we could see the guns placed in position ready to be used at a moment's notice, and the soldiers sleeping amongst them. John generally had his bed placed there also, as his presence prevented false alarms. In the distant country we could constantly see large fires blazing, and imagined that they were signals.
(*Diary* 32)

Inglis' description of the landscape is littered with threats, risks and hazards, and she reflects her altered textual identity of an educated participator in war as she analyses the land in terms of the likelihood of further attacks. Germon reflects the chaotic disorganisation and lawlessness in India by focusing on the destruction and scarring of the landscape: “I was perfectly thunderstruck to see it such a mass of ruins, not a portion on either side of it that is not riddled with round shot and bullets – the veranda all knocked down, it is impossible to tell there had been one” (103).

Coopland's mid-Mutiny landscape is correspondingly bleak and aggressive and she adds to the notion of an “imagined” India by personifying the moon:

The moon (which had now risen) looked calmly down on our misery, and lighted the heavens, which were flocked with the myriads of stars, only occasionally obscured by the smoke of the burning houses. Oh the sight of that moon! How I longed that she would hide her brightness behind some cloud, and not seem to look so serenely down upon our misery.
(121)

Coopland is not alone in her employment of imagery associated with light and dark. However, whilst Coopland hopes that the moon would hide “her brightness”, the dominant trend across the texts is the want of light, a trend that Diana Dimitrova argues was a dominant form of colonial imagery: “The purported agenda of colonial governments was to bring light to the dark nation” (174). On the same topic George supports this theory by suggesting that the fear of darkness and “metaphor of letting English light into dark Indian homes is popular with several writers of colonial texts” (119). Moreover, Elizabeth Baskers circumscribes the light/dark metaphor further by claiming that “dark, darkness and night are associated with barbarity, ignorance, violence and horror... while light and dawn suggest hope and redemption” (191). Within Case’s diary darkness is indeed associated with anxiety and danger whilst light is related with hope and safety: “Oh, how glad we were when the first peep of dawn was seen: our courage feels renewed when daylight appears” (81).

The aversion to Indian darkness is further exemplified by several of the writers who describe a partial eclipse of the sun.⁹⁷ Descriptions of the partial eclipse on Friday 18 September evoke a disorderly, menacing and alarming tone, as the eclipse takes on symbolic associations as the writers employ the light/dark metaphor. For Bartrum, Harris and Inglis the eclipse of the sun symbolises a temporary and metaphorical eclipse of their optimism and faith as it triggers superstition and unease. Bartrum details the event with a figurative approach: “A partial eclipse of the sun; the natives foretell a famine. To many of our weary hearts, sunshine has been eclipsed for a long, long time; but who knows how soon it may appear again?” (42) Bartrum later indicates that she feels that a British famine has indeed been caused by the eclipse as she writes: “Now, however, there are so many to feed that famine as well as war and pestilence stare us in the face” (49). In the same manner Harris responds to the eclipse with an apprehensive and superstitious tone, employing the connotations of the light/dark metaphor:

97. David Platten in *Michel Tournier and the Metaphor of Fiction* (1999) considers the effectiveness of the “eclipse” metaphor in fiction. He writes: “In Plato’s Republic the sun also appears, only to disappear. We cannot look directly upon it, on pain of blindness. The nearest we get is the rare sighting of an eclipse. In one of those moments that seems to invite intentionally the deconstruction of his own narrative” (71).

There was a partial eclipse of the sun between nine and ten this morning. The natives look upon it as a bad omen, and predict a famine, which, as the successor of war, is not unlikely to happen. (113)

Inglis too refers to the prophecies linked to the eclipse and implies that there may be some truth to the omen by detailing a military attack that succeeded the eclipse:

There was a partial eclipse of the sun at 10 a.m., which, I dare say, the natives, who are very superstitious, regarded as an omen. A piece of one of our shells burst in our courtyard today, and brought down a good deal of brick and rubbish. (*Diary* 149-150)

Descriptions of the eclipse and the employment of the light/dark metaphor can be deemed as further support for Britain's imperial agenda as the writers highlight the "the connection of whiteness with purity and darkness with evil" (Grewal 37), an opposition that Grewal argues "played an important role in the racial underwriting of Western colonialism" (37).

The demarcation of mid-Mutiny "imagined Indian landscapes" as bleak, dark and beyond the realms of civilising is supplemented by the composition of Indians as a savage and barbaric collective that were incapable of redemption. As Terry Ellingson contends: "1857 had raised interracial tensions to a new peak of intensity and left the defenders of racial equality and human rights in a state of virtual paralysis" (273). Stephanie Barczewski similarly identifies the influence that the rebellion had on Anglo-Indian relations: "The Indian population, it had long been assumed, would gradually become 'civilised' through contact with the British, but the Mutiny caused a reassessment of this idea" (136). Within the women's narratives there is palpable evidence of this "reassessment" as descriptions of loyal, kind servants are wholly replaced with descriptions of uncivilised, savage and barbaric enemies.

The sympathy, trust and friendships that have been previously alluded to in Chapters 2 and 3 of this study are notably eroded and replaced by hostile and threatening portrayals. Coopland, who was previously concerned about the safety of her servants, writes: "I was much struck with the conduct of our servants – they grew so impertinent. My ayah evidently looked on all my property as her share of the plunder... she always watched where I put my things" (109). Case too is pessimistic and critical of Indian servants: "We got a few things washed

to-day for the first time; the dhobey could not iron them, and though we gave him the soap he charged enormously” (106). Within her diary Inglis recalls a conversation connected to her growing dislike of her Indian Sepoys within the Residency: “I said to John I wished we had no natives inside, but he checked me by answering, ‘Do not say that; we could not hold the place without them - they out- number us.’ It was a fearful reflection” (133).

Increasingly the writers’ descriptions of Indians take on exaggerated and imaginative traits, through references to Indians as subhuman savages. Case refers to the Mutineers in animalistic terms as she writes: “Only fancy being within only a few hundred yards of creatures” (103), and with a similar tone, Germon refers to an Indian as a “wretch”: “Mrs. Chambers, wife of the Adjutant of the 11th Native Infantry, had been murdered at Delhi by a butcher out of the bazaar, but that the wretch had been afterwards caught by some sweepers and roasted alive” (22). Coopland correspondingly conveys Indians using barbaric imagery: “the sepoy again returned howling and raging like wild beasts” (124). Notably Coopland constructs the Indians as devils and demons: “They seemed to take pleasure in their mad work, for their wild shouts of laughter mingled with the crackling of the flames” (121). Through these constructions the writers emphasise the progressing distance between Britons and Indians and the opposition between civilised and savage races. Harris emphasises the savage stereotype by portraying Indians as cannibalistic “bloodthirsty villains” (99). Furthermore, she describes them in nonhuman terms by referring to them as “little spirits” (101) and “like demons” (173). She constructs Indians as uncivilised and barbaric by describing them as “wild” (194), and when defining an Indian Sepoy’s wife, she writes: “His wife, a most violent woman... was perfectly distracted and wild” (56). In the same manner Paget adopts this animalistic tone: “The little creatures had long hair” (67). She details “wild-looking savages” and refers to “About a dozen other little imps” (75)

Through their descriptions of Indians as animalistic savages, as figures of “opacity, fear, and horror” (Grewal 27), the women were in turn emphasising their cultured and civilised self. They were supporting the notion of the binary opposites of savage and civilised and therefore validating Britain’s colonial rule. The narratives reveal how the Mutiny firmly entrenched the writers’ opinions

that India, “the exotic, so European in its opacity, allure, and evil” (Grewal 49), was now a hopeless cause and incapable of being civilised to British standards.

Exceptional Writers of the Rebellion

Jean Bethke Elshtain argues that historical accounts of women in military conflicts are subjugated by identities that devalue female contributions: “these identities are underpinnings for decision and action, nonetheless real for being symbolic – they entangle us in webs of anticipated actions and reactions” (3). Elshtain’s research draws attention to the gendered model of war, but she recognises a major pitfall of accepting this framework exclusively: “These paradigmatic linkages dangerously overshadow other voices” (4). This chapter has attempted to counteract the gendered framework of war by shedding light on British women’s “other voices” relating to the Indian Mutiny.

Although the focus has remained on the textual identities within the narratives, rather than the female authors who produce them, the chapter has revealed that when women write about war their identities can go beyond the stereotype of passive victims so readily proposed by critics. By looking beyond the narrow focus of the literal battlefield and examining domestic spaces such as the Lucknow Residency, the chapter has revealed how the rebellion becomes the provocation for new and exceptional versions of the self that subvert the prevailing “Angel in the house” stereotype. The writers assemble unwomanly and thus contentious identities and rhetoric at a time when women were expected to be “dutiful, innocent and sheltered” (Thompson 38). This discussion has revealed that writing as a Victorian woman about war in a colonial context is undeniably manipulated by gender ideologies and Britain’s imperial agenda, and therefore the writings must be read through a specific female and colonial “gaze” in order to decipher the strategies the women employ.

The dissertation now advances to consider the aftermath of war and its impact upon the writers’ textual personas. The next and final chapter of this thesis asks: How do women writers negotiate their freshly assumed new and exceptional identities when war ends and they are presented with the fresh context of a war-post society that possessed an insatiable appetite for personal accounts of war?

Chapter Five

“It was done at last”: Post-War Anxieties and the Process of Publication

I shall be a sort of Bashi-Basouk (sic) when I get home – defiant of all laws conventional or fashionable – and then how the women will fall upon me like vultures over a mortally wounded man.

(Letter from Frances Duberly to Selina Marx, Crimea, 1855)

This, the penultimate chapter of the dissertation, is devoted to the close examination of post-war textual identities, the process of publication and the public response to published Mutiny writings by Katherine Bartrum, Charlotte Canning, Adelaide Case, Ruth Coopland, Frances Duberly, Maria Germon, Georgina Harris, Julia Inglis, Matilda Ouvry, Georgina Paget and Harriet Tytler. The research has thus far reviewed two interrelated components of each narrative, identity and place, and has revealed how twelve British women writers exploit fresh and transient circumstances to construct new and often contentious (con)textual identities: textual personas that are strongly marked by context. Chapters One to Four have exposed how writers employ travel, residency in India and military conflict to communicate new and exceptional textual identities within autobiographical writings. This chapter now progresses to answer a systematic and consequential question: what happens to such identities, and the narratives they are featured within, when war is resolved?

Focusing on the resolution of the Mutiny, subsequent episodes in India and the pursuit and process of publication the discussion contends that whilst travel, settlement and war gave rise to constructions of authoritative and unwomanly identities, the suspension of war generates textual personas that convey perceptible anxieties associated with returning to pre-war normality. The opening epigraph of this chapter, written by Duberly near the conclusion of the Crimean war, calls attention to the concerns and tensions that female war survivors faced in the mid-nineteenth century. “Bashi-Basouk” (sic), a reference to the infamous disobedient and disruptive soldiers of the Ottoman army, emphasises the notion that war has left an indelible, ineradicable and arguably “unwomanly” mark upon Duberly. By comparing women “at home” with “vultures” Duberly dissociates herself from other British women therefore

highlighting her exceptional nature. Moreover, by likening herself to a “wounded man” she acknowledges that female war participants were often targets for extensive criticism and ridicule in mid-Victorian Britain.

By the end of 1857 British soldiers had been able to gain ground. Lucknow was retaken on 14 March 1858 by the British army led by Sir Colin Campbell. The last rebels were defeated in Gwalior on 20 June 1858, thirteen months after the Mutiny in Meerut. On 8 July 1858, a peace treaty was signed and the war officially ended. In an attempt to safeguard British rule in India Queen Victoria wrote “A Proclamation to the Princes, Chiefs and the People of India” (1858). The royal statement, which claimed that Britons would ““respect the rights, dignity, and honour”” of Indians (qtd. in Dutt 234), called for peace, yet the ensuing months and years proved that in reality this was an implausible expectation. The Mutiny had initiated a perceptible rise in racial consciousness and extremism, with Britons collectively seeking revenge and wanting to ensure that Indians were not placed in positions of power or influence again. The rebellion had altered attitudes towards British rule in India. The entire administrative strategy for controlling the country was assessed and the East India Company was forced to hand over control to the British government.

The aftermath of the Mutiny marked a distinct transformation of context for the twelve writers considered throughout this dissertation as they journeyed from the immediate horrors of the rebellion to Britain, a society filled with “consternation, anxiety and anger” (Rastegar 43). The prestige, independence and management opportunities that pre-Mutiny India had afforded, as well as the unwomanly militaristic roles induced by the siege, no longer existed. However, the prospect of publishing personal accounts of war offered a new and equally contentious avenue for female survivors. Publishing proffered another male-dominated context and, like the war they had just survived, it was likewise fraught with complexities.

In 1858 Britain was a nation “virtually obsessed with the Indian Mutiny” (Nayder 31) and indeed war in general as memories of the Crimean conflict remained fresh in the public imagination. Britain was experiencing what Herbert defines as “Mutiny trauma” (208) and as a consequence there was a perceptible appetite for war stories. However, post-Mutiny Britain remained a society with strict gender codes that attempted to exclude women from public discourse and

therefore, despite the public's desire for personal accounts from the battlefield, female war writings remained contentious. The ensuing research aims to demonstrate that the journey from private to published text was overshadowed by post-war anxieties. Moreover, a detailed evaluation of published book reviews of the Mutiny accounts illustrate that publication provided one final battle for the twelve women considered throughout this dissertation.

This chapter does not profess that the female writers' post-war identities and experiences of publication are identical or that men do not suffer post-war transformations.⁹⁸ It appreciates Susan Grayzel's assertion that "the myriad circumstances of war affect each individual in unique ways" (1). However, the discussion does contend that there are consistencies that affiliate British women's post-Mutiny writings, the process of publication and the public's response to them. Ultimately the research illustrates that the (con)textual identities that travel, war and publication facilitate are shaped by a shared range of agendas related to gender, national identity and imperial authority.

"Old Campaigners"

Chapters Three and Four substantiated the theory that war proffered favourable contexts for transformations of womanly identity: "The real opportunity for planting seeds for transformation is during wartime, in conditions of conflict" (Schroven 48).⁹⁹ More specifically, the research revealed how war empowered women to transcend conventional gender boundaries via implied association with, and participation in, habitually masculine and militaristic exploits. The analysis now contends that the conclusion of the siege stimulated an additional disruption for women's textual identities, as they battled to integrate their freshly acquired exceptional textual personas into a post-war society. Sheila Meintjes draws attention to this disruption by asserting that women routinely undergo a supplementary conflict of identity following war's end: "after the conflict is before the conflict" (3). The subsequent discussion determines that British

98. Anita Schroven in *Women After War* (2007) considers that men also struggle with identity in post-conflict societies "In many societies men are believed to be the main economic providers for and decision makers within the family. Due to destruction caused by war, men can often not fulfil these ideals and experience stress, loss of control and respect. In these situations, some men become violent or depressed, inhibiting them even more with regard to adjusting to the new post-conflict situation" (54).

99. Sharon Oudditt's *Fighting Forces, Writing Women: Identity and Ideology in the First World War* (2004), Sonya O. Rose's *Which People War?: National Identity and Citizenship in Britain* (2003) and Frans Coetzee's *Authority, Identity and the Social History of the Great War* (1995) all focus on the theory that war impacts largely on social, national and gendered identities.

women's textual personas disclose post-war anxieties regarding the restoration of womanly traits. Whilst their (con)textual identities explicitly communicate relief regarding war's end, they simultaneously reveal tensions regarding the alteration of wartime identities. Through this trend the writers tender one final multifaceted construction of the self.

Gabriele Zdunnek claims that women's wartime achievements are rarely acknowledged, but are instead predominantly "trivialised" by society (qtd. in Schroven 52). Through their narratives the female writers initially avoid this trivialisation, by attempting to preserve the textual guise of a fearless, adventurous participant. Within her diary Germon communicates the resolution of the rebellion as an exciting escapade, by defining it as "the end of the adventure" (132). Her tone conflicts wholly with the "privation, shock, and mourning" (Boucicault 318) that was arguably imprinted upon the British psyche. Similarly, Ouvry's diary communicates a surprising compulsion for more "excitement": "We used to talk a good deal of what we should, could or ought to do in the event of a night attack, but I do not think we came to any very good conclusion; for myself, I almost wished that we might be attacked just for the excitement of the thing" (146). Ouvry preserves her wartime "unwomanly" persona by fortifying her newly established intrepid self:

I feel rather courageous at beginning a long journey in such times as these, for the first time alone... and when I am put down in a native village with at least a hundred men standing round my dhoolie, and not a European within twenty or thirty miles, I feel there would be nothing to prevent them attacking me if they wished it, but, somehow, I do not feel afraid. (131)

Ouvry reveals her transformation from the fearful and passive civilian evidenced during the outbreaks of the rebellion by accentuating her efficiency, independence and lack of post-war male guardianship: "I was perfectly alone with only the native driver. I had but one servant and I had sent him on with the luggage to wait for me at the station. I now got on very well" (150). At this stage Germon and Ouvry's post-Mutiny personas can be deemed as implicit attempts to secure the "rights they won on the battlefield" (Schroven 50), or in their case the "domestic battlefield", a trend that Anita Schroven argues as intrinsic in women's post-war identities.

Kaufman argues, “when conflict ends, women are expected to return to the private sphere, the home, reinforcing the traditional gender identities, roles, and imagery” (131). However, across the narratives the writers contest this expectancy by endeavouring to prolong militaristic and thus unwomanly identities via the composition of the self as an adept and hardened veteran of war. Case transmits her proficient grasp of martial principles by appraising military decisions: “The management of the troops here in the action the other day seems to have been very bad, and severe comments are made of the officer in command” (316-17). Germon illustrates her combative expertise by recounting the praise offered by a male sailor: “He congratulated me on getting out of Lucknow” (122). Moreover, she accentuates her combative skills by alluding to her brave strategic movements:

It became pitch dark and then we were left to our own devices - how we were ever to get on none of us could tell. At last I decided my best plan was to load my pony with my bundle of bedding and walk myself and the rest of my baggage must take its chance. (123)

Canning also sustains her unique and exceptional identity, by implying her involvement in an enquiry requested by Queen Victoria to establish the manner and degree that British victims of the rebellion had suffered: “Your majesty was anxious to know on what evidence the worst stories of horrors and ill treatment of English women were founded” (Lady Canning to Queen Victoria, Jan. 9. 1858, RA Z 502/30). Canning communicates her proficient grasp of the war via her quest to identify the truth and prevent the rumours that had been publicly circulating:

People on the spot say the stories going about are not true of that place but happened elsewhere... Those who have gone from place to place never find evidence of the horrible treatment that everyone here believes... there is not a particle of credible evidence that the poor women have been ‘ill used’ anywhere.’... I am not sure how much of this evidence will be made public. It was asked for confidentially and it ought to be clear and conclusive or it may bring down a controversy likely to do more harm than good by stirring the subject – but still the gross misstatements must be contradicted for absurd. (Lady Canning to Queen Victoria, Jan. 9. 1858, RA Z 502/30)

Canning also stresses her post-war authoritative self when she is invited to confer medals for bravery to British officers. In contrast to her pre-Mutiny identity, who was ready to “follow like a dog” (Lady Canning to her sister Louisa, Jun. 1856, I.O.O., MSS. EUR D661) and felt “so utterly useless” (Lady Canning’s Journal, Calcutta, Apr. 29. 1856. CP), Canning now emerges as a valued participant:

I must tell your Majesty of a humble military spectacle in which I bore a part... I was to present colours to the Calcutta Volunteer Infantry and Cavalry. I gave them on horseback reciting my speech... My cortege would have been brilliant enough for Your Majesty for I had 5 Generals and staffs in attendance – Sir Colin, Gen. Mansfield, Gen Wyndham, Gen Garret and Gen Low, the member of the council. I am told 20000 people were present and the moral effect of this little force being seen is supposed to be very good. (Lady Canning to Queen Victoria, Nov. 10. 1857, RA Z 502/23)

Following war’s close the writers initially reveal a perceptible hesitation at restoring their textual personas to traditional feminine and less prestigious identities. They emphasise the notion that encountering military conflict has perpetually altered their identities: they are not the same people they were before the rebellion began. Within her diary Harris makes allusions to feeling “new” when invited to a male military space at the rebellion’s end: “received an invitation to the Artillery mess, which made quite new creatures of us” (172). Inglis’ (con)textual self accentuates the unwomanly characteristics that war has induced by revealing her “hardened” capacity for observing blood:

Mrs. Bruere’s ayah was carried past our door to-day, wounded in the eye. To extract the bullet, it was found necessary to take out the eye - a fearful operation - and her mistress actually held her while it was being performed. It was astonishing how accustomed, I will not say hardened, one had become to sights which once even to talk of would have sickened one. We were, alas too familiar with the sight of blood to turn away from it. (*Diary* 195)

Inglis refuses to conform to traditional feminine conventions, focusing attention on her superior bravery in comparison to other women: “After remaining six weeks at Allahabad, I began to contemplate a journey down by land. Brigadier Campbell offered me an escort, and I tried to get some other ladies to join me,

but they seemed disinclined to venture” (*Diary* 224). Notably when there are domestic issues that would usually concern women, she declares: “Undressing was out of the question, but we were becoming old campaigners, and ceased to care about these trifles” (*Diary* 312). Inglis’ definition of herself and the women in the Lucknow Residency as “old campaigners” is a highly significant moniker. At the age of 25, Inglis presents her textual self as “older” than her years, once again implying that war has matured her. Moreover, her employment of the term “campaigners” reinforces the notion of British women as active participants of the Mutiny. Likewise, Ouvry reinforces her “hardened” and transformed identity by indicating that she and her husband do not even recognise each other following the rebellion’s close: “Soon afterwards my husband entered the tent, he had just arrived by train; he did not know me till I came up and spoke to him, and I thought him looking altered and tired” (152).

Bartrum, Canning, Tytler and Inglis extend their new wartime identities by drawing attention to British children’s new and altered post-war personas. Bartrum reveals how her own baby is habituated to warfare: “Left the Dil Koosha Palace in carts which had been provided for us: a rough kind of travelling for poor baby, but he has been accustomed to hardships” (58). Inglis similarly conveys her son’s acclimatised identity in her diary:

Johnnie’s quick ears detected immediately when a bullet fell, and he would run and pick it up whilst it was warm. It was curious to see how the children’s plays and amusements harmonised with what was going on around us. They would make balls of earth, and, throwing them against the wall, would say they were shells bursting. Johnnie fell down one day, and getting up very dusty, said: “‘They’ll say I have been mining.’ He often asked, ‘Is that the enemy or us firing?’ They slept soundly in the midst of the heaviest cannonading, and never appeared frightened. (144)

Canning also focuses attention on the repercussions of warfare upon children’s identities: “It is touching to hear of a baby [of] 2 years when it heard the evening gun at Calcutta [fired at six] asking ‘Mama is everybody killed’. Shot and bullets were the poor little things’ playthings” (89). Tytler’s baby, who was born in the midst of the Mutiny, has only known war, a point she emphasises in the

concluding pages of her memoir. She labels her son a “baby hero”, adding a sense of prestige to his birth.¹⁰⁰ Curiously, she even names him after the Mutiny:

Shortly after we got a little settled in our new quarters, in the palace, I felt it was time to have our baby boy christened, for he was over three months old... The soldiers, who were devoted to the baby, were heard to say the morning he was born: ‘We shall have victory now that this baby has come to avenge the deaths of the murdered children.’... Of course before our baby was baptised there were many discussions as to what we should call him. The soldiers wanted him to be called Battlefield Tytler. I felt that would be a dreadful name to give the poor child, so I compromised that matter by naming him ‘Stanley Delhi-force.’ My husband had been reading to me Marmion just before the Mutiny and, recollecting Marmion’s last words, ‘On, Stanley, on’, it struck me as being both pretty and appropriate... They all prophesied great things for the baby hero and left us to rejoice with thankful hearts. (171-72)

The end of war is traditionally associated with peace and resolution, but for female Mutiny writers there is a perceptible anxiousness regarding the return to pre-war routines. On this topic Schroven argues that when war has finished “women may face pressure to fulfil social expectations, some of which may (re)establish traditional ideas” (49). As well as detailing prototypical relief and celebration, Bartrum acknowledges how the return to pre-Mutiny life is complex: “It seemed strange to be in a comfortable house again and to have a room to myself: I could scarcely understand it. I could not realise the feeling of rest and security after all I had passed through” (61). Inglis also stresses how the return to customary and conventional living was not completely associated with positive feelings: “Finding myself once again in a comfortable house, with all the appurtenances of civilisation around me, made me feel quite strange” (*Diary* 227).

The preceding discussion has determined how British women writers attempt to preserve new and exceptional (con)textual identities that were

100. The naming of children after war was also a feature following the Crimean conflict when “there was a flood of girls named Alma and Florence; boys were given the dubious honour of Sebastopol... Cathcart and Raglan.” (Rappaport 238). The naming of babies was a common post-war feature in the mid-nineteenth century. It was associated with jingoist pride and camaraderie as Rappaport states: “these children and the names they were given were the pride not just of the public back home, but of those ordinary soldiers who campaigned out in that remote and forgotten place” (238).

stimulated by war. However, as this chapter now reveals, the women were about to be reunited with fellow Britons who represented a society that was tentatively trying to re-establish norms and stabilise its authority. The writers' autobiographical writings, the new textual personas constructed within them and the prospect of publication did not essentially support these attempts and as a result further anxieties were inevitable.

(Gothic) Heroes, Heroines and Villains

In February 1897 *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* published a review of fiction spawned by the Mutiny. An anonymous critic analysed the popularity of the rebellion's themes:

The events of that time seemed to provide every element of romance that could be desired in a story. Valour and heroism, cruelty and treachery, sharp agony and long endurance, satiated vengeance and bloodthirsty hatred, were all present. (219)

The review rationalised why the Mutiny was an event of such significance in the colonial imagination, by highlighting its "romantic" qualities and antithetical structures. Undeniably, fictional, autobiographical and media reports of the event proffered a catalyst for the rethinking of British capacities in India, provoking national concerns regarding the fragility of Britain's colonial authority: "The word [Mutiny] suggests that what should be an obedient group has become a disobedient crowd" (Kerr 59).¹⁰¹ India was not the benign and obedient nation it was predominantly thought to be. It had become, as Baucom aptly defines, an "imperial crisis zone" (252). The *Blackwood's* review also draws attention to how post-Mutiny fiction subscribed to the "romantic" genre via the employment of binary oppositions between irrational, violent and immoral India, and rational, composed and honourable Britain.

Both Robert Druce and Laura Callanan make a link between "romanticised" Mutiny fiction and the popular Gothic genre. Druce argues that the bias of the Western Mutiny novel is inevitably towards the Gothic: "to accounts of often lurid and long-drawn-out betrayal, the murder and mutilation of men, and the rape of women and children" (19). Callanan focuses more on

101. See Krishan Kumar *The Making of English National Identity* (2003) and David Armitage *The Ideological Origins of the British Empire* (2000) for two recent studies on the role of empire in the rise of British nationalism.

what she defines as “Gothicised landscapes” within Mutiny fiction: “A key trope of the Gothic... is the site of the ruined, inadequate, or dangerous home” (123). Their research focuses solely on fictional accounts, but both studies highlight that an engagement with elements of the Gothic genre allowed nineteenth-century Mutiny writers to convey Britain’s anger and disorientation following the largest challenge to its colonial authority in India via “consciously stylised” (Callanan 122) accounts. Britain did essentially emerge as the winners of the rebellion and heroic accounts transmitted home all assisted in the construction of “Heroic Britain”, where “heroic physiognomy and attributes such as ‘pluck’, ‘dash’ and ‘gallantry’ became the vernacular” (Chakravarty 147), but within these accounts Britain’s imperial ideology was shown to be tainted.

The ensuing phase of this chapter builds upon the work of Druce and Callanan by arguing that features of the Gothic genre, the fiction being read “at home”, conceivably influenced British women’s post-Mutiny autobiographical narratives. The research does not argue that the accounts are categorically Gothic, but instead proposes that the writings are swayed by a popular literary mode being read in Britain, which offered fitting qualities to convey a post-war society. The accounts are temporarily “gothicised” rather than being Gothic. It reveals how the writers strategically, rhetorically and therefore “imaginatively” reflect Britain’s post-war colonial nervousness via the projection of (con)textual identities of self and “Other” that draw upon “boundaries and binaries”, qualities that Katrin Althans claims are intrinsic in Gothic literature (11). The narratives employ the gothic stock characters of “heroes, heroines and villains” (Georgieva 88) as they pit Britain’s victorious, civilised and heroic soldiers against India’s wild, threatening and barbaric people, a trend that subconsciously exposes the instability of British rule. Their post-Mutiny “imagined Indian landscapes” are equally rich in Gothic potential, substantiating what Patrick Bridgwater defines as Gothic spaces: “solitude, silence; the lightless, soulless, mindless, lifeless, the unearthly and uncanny” (505). The ensuing phase of the chapter aims to substantiate Callanan’s claims that post-Mutiny accounts of self and “Other”, whether fictional or autobiographical, are “consciously stylised” (Callanan 122) accounts.

Bartrum, Canning, Coopland, Harris, Inglis and Ouvry’s employment of features of the Gothic form can be explored via their textual composition of

British women as heroines of the Mutiny. On the one hand, the (con)textual identities the women construct wholly conform to the stereotype of Gothic heroines via their representation of women as passive victims “separated from the men they love” (Winter 66), “imperilled by all sorts of dangerous forces” (Helland 158) and undergoing “the persecutions of a diabolical, usually racially tinged, villain” (Herbert 259). On the other hand, the writers’ accounts reveal “heroic heroines” that contest the boundaries of the Gothic heroine by emphasising British female independence, authority and resilience in their post-Mutiny accounts. In both examples the writers’ constructions are arguably governed by mid-Victorian gender boundaries and Britain’s imperial agenda.

Images of the Gothic heroine are evidenced in Inglis, Harris and Case’s post-Mutiny accounts of the infamous Well at Cawnpore, a site where over one hundred British women and children were killed, stripped of their clothing and thrown into a well. It was an iconic episode that created a sense of fever in British consciousness:

Cawnpore was not merely a matter of military affront: it stuck deeper than that. It was all that was most vicious about the Mutiny stripped bare: the first time that women of England had ever been slaughtered in the history of battle. The British response was a tribal one. (Robinson 98)

Notably, the three writers visit Cawnpore together on the same day, six months after the fatal events, and there are identifiable trends across their accounts which serve as justification of British retribution and the need for strict leadership over India. Harris describes Cawnpore as “this fatal place” (177), and upon arrival at the well she contrasts her courageous mid-Mutiny identity by accentuating her feminine fragility: “I never, during the whole siege, more thoroughly realised such an extreme sense of nearly-impending danger, and how very close death might be” (178). Palpable influences of the suffering Gothic heroine are prominently revealed by Case, who following her visit to Cawnpore writes: “the fearful scenes so lately enacted against good English women depressed and saddened us altogether” (308). She recounts the events with specific focus on the suffering of vulnerable female captives, qualities that comply with the gender-specific roles in the Gothic framework:

At half-past four o’clock, Carry and I walked with Mr. and Mrs. Harris to see the place where all the poor people who were murdered here

maintained so fierce a struggle with the fiends outside. I could not have believed, had I not seen it, that their abode had been so wretched. They were shut up here for twenty-one days... In some places there were scraps of writing on the wall, describing their sufferings. In one place Caroline found the following words, "Dear Jesus, send us help today, and deliver us not into the hands of our enemies!" Poor things, how excruciating must have been their agony... When one sees the place where these poor creatures were shut up, the wonder is that any one ever lived to get out of it. Very many indeed did, and the only place in which they had to bury them was a well, into which the bodies were thrown at night!!! (313- 316)

Here Case's construction of violated English women wholly conforms to the Gothic heroine ideal: a female who suffers "aggression, murderousness, sadism, and destructiveness... by an aloof and overpowering villain" (Gonda 147). Moreover, her account has deeper symbolic significance. Case's "gothicised" heroines arguably take on the figurative embodiment of Britain's contravened imperial authority and offer a supreme rationale for revenge against Indians.

In contrast to Harris and Case, Inglis contests the "the gothic heroine as passive and persecuted" (Botting 131) in her depiction of Cawnpore. On the contrary, she collectively delineates murdered British women as brave "heroic heroines". Notably, she communicates pride that they did not express typically feminine emotions when faced with death, an undoubtedly dubious contention:

If the truth could be recorded, many a noble deed of heroism and self-denial was enacted here, and many a weak one waxed strong through faith; and it was consoling to remember that not a tear was shed nor a groan uttered. (218)

Inglis' account suggests that British women presented courage and arguably unwomanly endurance, qualities that simultaneously contradict Victorian constructions of femininity, whilst reinforcing British "moral superiority and supremacy" (Metcalf 323). With a comparable approach, Canning expresses pride at the performance of British women during the rebellion. In a letter to Queen Victoria she is committed to portraying British women as a fearless and courageous community:

They lived in small parties together and hardly ever went out of their doors and were so busy with their children and their household work that they hardly knew the full extent of their peril and the present moment was engrossing to them... Poor Mrs Cowper is the only one I have heard of who never got used to the sound of the firing. The others all say they were accustomed to it and many say the silence when it stopped was awful. (Lady Canning to Queen Victoria, Feb. 9. 1858, RA Z 502/33)

Despite claiming that their duties were mainly “domestic”, a point that many would likely dispute, Canning draws attention to the heroic nature of British women in a letter to a female monarch, and in doing so preserves the notion of female exceptionality. Notably, she represents Britons collectively as victors, rather than survivors: “A royal salute has just been fired and the ships in the river are all dressed to welcome the landing of the first of the Lucknow Heroes and Heroines” (Lady Canning to Queen Victoria, Feb. 9. 1858, RA Z 502/33). Likewise Coopland insists on the collective heroism of British women in Lucknow: “they were at last safe on their way home, after the long trial which they had so heroically and patiently borne” (243).

The presentation of Britain as a “heroic, victorious, dominant nation of heroes” (Georgieva 162) can also be construed as evidence of Gothic influence. Ann Tracy in *The Gothic Novel* (1981) regards attempts to strengthen national identity as inherent in the genre: “the search for one’s origins, identity, and family connections is certainly one of the commonest quests in Gothic fiction and may be seen as an attempt to impose order upon a chaotic environment” (10). By accentuating a firm sense of national co-identity, the writers present an idealised view of British identity, a vilification of the enemy and thus attempts to regain the balance of power that the outbreak disrupted. Bartrum constructs her textual self as part of a united community and expresses pride at British kindness and civility:

I can never feel sufficiently grateful for the universal kindness and sympathy I received during my short stay in Calcutta. The hand of friendship was held out ever by strangers, and everything was done to alleviate our sorrow and distress. Most nobly did England respond to the cry of the widow and orphan. (65)

For Coopland, departing the Lucknow Residency is conveyed with regret at the breaking up of the strong community that had been formed between British women:

I could not agree with Shakspeare [sic] that “parting is such sweet sorrow,” for it was with keen regret and swelling hearts that we bade good-bye to kind friends whom we might never see again... I now reflected on the past, and thought, what a good thing it was, that we, who had been so heavily afflicted, were thrown together amongst others all more or less afflicted by the same cause, instead of being left selfishly to brood over and cherish our sorrows, in which case we might have succumbed, and perhaps lost our reason. But living in a constant state of anxiety, we were compelled to mix with others and sympathise with them; which opened our hearts, and made us feel less desolate. (248-49)

Within her diary Inglis describes being introduced to Bartrum, who had been in Lucknow in a separate part of the Residency. Notably, her description focuses on the heroic and exceptional nature of the women, as well as the charitable manner of the female British community:

The day before General Havelock’s force arrived, Mrs. Bartrum heard that her husband, a doctor, was with the force safe and well. She dressed herself and child as nicely as possible under existing circumstances, and sat waiting in trembling joy and anxiety for his approach; but in vain — he never came; and at last the sad news reached her that he had been killed outside the Residency gates. She had one little child with her, dreadfully weak and thin, but she hoped it would live to get home, as it was her only comfort; but even this was taken from her, for the little fellow died in Calcutta. All they ate was cooked by their own hands, and they had even to collect and chop wood to make their fires, and each had a young baby to attend to. These poor women must indeed have endured great hardships... I believe a very kind spirit pervaded the garrison, and many noble and self-denying acts of charity were performed. (225-26)

In these examples, the narratives arguably perform as mediums to express Britain’s collective and consolidating efforts to control and make order of India’s harsh and chaotic post-Mutiny landscape. They can be regarded as attempts to

reinforce British supremacy whilst also complementing Gothic accounts of massacre and cruelty.

In contrast to the writers' post-Mutiny constructions of the self as "gothicised" heroine, "heroic heroine" and partner of cohesive Britishness, their (con)textual identities of India, the perceived "Other", are marked by the dark and mysterious in encounters that proffer valuable ground upon which to comprehend the Mutiny's events and to justify acts of revenge and Britain's continual rule. Their constructions of India can also be perceived as heavily influenced by the Gothic genre in that "the Gothic is marked by an anxious encounter with otherness... the supernatural or monstrous manifestation, inhabiting mysterious space, that symbolises all that is irrational, uncontrollable and incomprehensible" (Anolik 1). The post-Mutiny order was based on binary oppositions and the strict separation of self and "Other", qualities that are reflected in the estrangement between British and Indians within the women's narratives.¹⁰² Anolik claims "the Gothic represents the fearful unknown as the inhuman Other" (1), a model that is palpable in Coopland's post-Mutiny writings. She habitually portrays Indians as a primitive and savage race:

The principal street is paved with flags, and was crowded with natives, who looked at us with an "evil eye"... I could not help thinking how short a time it was since the road we were travelling was thronged with bloodthirsty wretches panting for more blood and plunder. (243-52)

Coopland's "gothicised" "Other" is based upon ideas of racial otherness as she represents India as wild, uncontrollable and thus in need of a stable imperial ruler:

We also passed the Seiks' camp: these men are so dirty that they were obliged to be kept outside the walls; they certainly looked very wild, sitting in groups round their fires, the light flashing on their brigandish swarthy faces, kakee uniforms, and strange, fantastic weapons: they were cheering themselves by singing wild, but not unmusical, melodies. (266)

Coopland's textual persona refutes the traditional stereotype of Victorian female compassion by evoking no sympathy for Indian Mutineers who are awaiting their death:

102. Robert Miles in *Racism* (1989) claims that in "the immediate aftermath of the Mutiny the Indian was represented increasingly as deceptive, fanatical, and cruel. The image of the scheming, blood-thirsty Oriental was widely articulated" (83).

The sepoy, chained together in couples, and manacled, were coming down the steps into the boats. They looked a wretched, miserable, dirty set, and the clanking of their chains had a dismal sound. The captain of their vessel, a Yankee, said he would “break them in.” They were to clean out their “dens” or “hutches” on board, and eat bacon or anything, regardless of caste. (303)

Notably she displays no feminine delicacy when documenting her observations of Indian deaths that occur near Christmas, and in doing so preserves her wartime “unwomanly” persona. Moreover, her focuses on “curses and vendettas” (Snodgrass 61) are features that Mary Ellen Snodgrass claims are ubiquitous in both Gothic and Colonial Gothic texts:

On Wednesday the 23rd the Nawab of Jhujhur was hanged. He was purposely put to death before Christmas-day, to show our contempt for the natives, who had threatened a rising on that day... we bribed the executioner to keep them a long time hanging, as we liked to see the criminals dance a “Pandie’s hornpipe,” as we watched the dying struggles of the wretches. (268)

Coopland’s narrative lacks the pre-Mutiny philanthropic and charitable tone found in many of the writers’ texts. At the core of her post-Mutiny writings lies the discursive binary of colonial master and indigenous subject: “They all looked impudently at us, as though they thought we had no right here. Oh how I detested them, and longed to turn them all out of Delhi!” (263). She emphasises her annoyance that Britain had lost authority and respect from “natives”: “The natives were all gaily dressed with bright turbans; and they had an impudent, self-satisfied expression on their faces, very irritating to us, when we remembered the merciless and cruel deeds so lately enacted here by their brethren” (253). Notably, when she is offered Indian security it is rejected: “We had been allowed the great favour of a guard of two sepoy; but thinking they were not the most faithful guardians in the world, we dispensed with their attendance” (248).

Canning is the only writer out of the twelve who shapes India and its inhabitants in a predominantly neutral manner following the Mutiny. Her letters to Queen Victoria reveal little evidence of the Gothic and racial subjectivity that Howard Malchow defines as “the image of a savage opposite” (44). However, it

is important to recognise that her experience in the palace in Calcutta was drastically different from those who were in the Lucknow Residency. She was also now wife of the first Viceroy of India, a role that, following the Mutiny, Queen Victoria had conferred on Charles Canning. Charles' new position required him to establish and maintain "internal tranquillity" (qtd. in Dutt 234) between Britons and Indians and within her letters to the Queen she arguably supports her husband's ambition. She states that her own company of bodyguards had to be disarmed just in case they rebelled, and notably she is concerned about their feelings: "I do not want them to be affronted" (Lady Canning to Queen Victoria, Feb. 9. 1858, RA Z 502/33). Instead of focusing on the insurgents, she praises the sepoys who did not rebel: "The faithfulness of the sepoys in the garrison will always be one of the most astounding passages of the Mutiny. They used to talk to their former comrades across the street and ask after their own families" (Lady Canning to Queen Victoria, Feb. 9. 1858, RA Z 502/33).

Notably, Canning expressed displeasure at the punishments being inflicted on the mutineers: "The number of offenders to be brought out and punished is too fearful to think of and it will be long before that dreadful task ceases... there is great exasperation felt by many against all who have brown skins" (Lady Canning to Queen Victoria, Sep. 10. 1857, RA Z 502/17). However, crucially this sentiment is not followed in her journal when she writes: "Let us be severe and punish" (Lady Canning's Journal, Calcutta, Sep. 25. 1857. CP). This utterance implies that her public assessment (meaning her opinion expressed to the Queen) differs from her private opinion (found in her journal).

The writers' constructions of Indian landscapes can similarly be compared in terms of their Gothic qualities and their projection of "Otherness". "The heroes and heroines of the [Gothic] genre find themselves at the mercy of a dangerous and exotic colonial subject... and dragged into the wilds of the colonial landscape" (Callanan 137). Whilst pre-Mutiny landscapes are described as "a fairy scene" (Germon 21), post-Mutiny sites are associated with death, desolation and ruin, features that become central to the reflection of colonial anxiousness and unrest. For Harris, her pre-Mutiny illustration of the "fresh and lovely" air is now juxtaposed by a categorisation of India as a "fatal place" (177). In her diary Harris details "such a sad scene of desolation" with "blackened ruins

of what was once beautiful” (180). Case similarly reveals the landscape via its desolate and wild qualities:

At last we arrived at Cawnpore, and nothing could look more wretched and miserable than this dreadful place as we came in by the light of the moon. The burnt bungalows, the broken gates, the remains of gun carriages, trees lying on the ground with their leaves and branches completely stripped off. (308)

This construction of the infamous Well at Cawnpore stands in stark contrast to her aforementioned portrayal of India as a “scene from a romance” (35). On the contrary, India is now a site of drama and tragedy:

The scene of ruin, devastation, and misery which presented itself to our eyes when we got out I never, never shall forget. To describe it would be impossible; but the horrors of war presented themselves with full force in the mass of shattered buildings and dilapidated gateways through which we passed. (289)

Here, Case’s focus on ruins, decay and the instability of the landscape serve as emblematic representations of Britain’s changing view of India and its colonial rule as a whole.

David Lowenthal analyses the symbolic qualities of ruins sites:

Exemplify[ing] the transience of great men and deeds, the consequence of depravity, or the triumph of justice over tyranny, ruins inspired reflection on what had once been proud and strong and new but was now decrepit, corrupt, degraded. (148)

Lowenthal’s research points towards the use of ruins as spatial metaphors, and in the case of British women’s post-Mutiny writings, ruins can be deemed to denote Britain’s “decrepit” rule, and India’s “corrupt” and “degraded” nature. Markedly, Ouvry expresses sadness at the destruction of British buildings, which using Lowenthal’s terminology, are examples of “great men and deeds” and “what had once been proud and strong”: “I never beheld such a sense of desolation as met my eyes during the drive; the cantonments are a heap of ruins; on each side as you drive along you see nothing but burnt and roofless bungalows” (139). Harris too reflects this trend: “There is not a house left standing; it is enough to make one cry to look at the blackened ruins of what once were beautiful bungalows”

(180). Ouvry transmits undercurrents of fear about her position in Indian via her post-Mutiny ruins:

I reached the Dak Bungalow at Meerut late in the evening, it looked so solitary and dismal, while some large fires I saw in the distance made me think of burnings bungalows, and a great noise and “tom tomming” in the Bazaar did not tend to make me feel more comfortable, quite alone in this place, where the first horrors of the mutiny were enacted. (136)

Coopland also supports the notion that India was corrupted and degraded, by describing the post-war chaotic scene in Delhi and accentuating its wild and disorganised nature: “The encampment reminded me of the descriptions I had heard from officers of the Crimean camp, so bleak and wild looking was it, with tents pitched all about, and little mud huts” (250). Her landscapes are chiefly associated with death as she writes “We passed many skeletons of camels and bullocks” (252). Coopland even personifies the buildings to add to her negative portrayal: “We stood on the bridge, the silence only disturbed by the whirr of a bird’s wing, and looked on the dark water, on which were cast deep shadows from the frowning fortress and high banks” (262). Crucially, she refers to Delhi as the “City of Horror” and reflects her anger and desire for revenge:

We soon took a last view of the “City of Horrors.” I could not but think it was a disgrace to England that this city, instead of being raised to the ground, should be allowed to stand, with its blood-stained walls and streets, - an everlasting memorial of the galling insult offered to England’s honour. Many would forget this insult; but it cannot, and ought not to be forgotten... Delhi ought to be razed to the ground, and on its ruins a church or monument should be erected, inscribed with a list of all the victims of the mutinies. (278-9)

Coopland’s post-Mutiny “imagined Indian landscape” articulates a justification for the punishment of Indians and the continued need for British rule as she firmly establishes her textual self as part of an authoritative ruling nation.

The aftermath of the rebellion evidently induces opposing imaginings of heroes and villains, and self and “Other”, within British women’s autobiographical texts. Moreover, within these arguably “gothicised” accounts, “imagined Indian landscapes” become a symbolic site of Indian betrayal and British sacrifice. Such constructions simultaneously tendered jingoistic pride, but

as Sarah Bilston asserts, “jingoism disguised an intense anxiety about the future of British rule” (130).

This discussion has revealed that British women’s post-Mutiny accounts strategically expose British apprehensions regarding the rebellion’s challenge to imperial authority via binary constructions of self and “Other”, “imagined Indian landscapes” and unwomanly appeals for British vengeance, all of which appear influenced by Victorian Gothic trends. The Gothic-inspired content of the writings might also point towards the literary appeal of British women’s Mutiny accounts when they were published after the rebellion.¹⁰³ Female Mutiny accounts subconsciously exploited the feelings of anxiety regarding “the fragility of British presence in the subcontinent” (Gilmore 180) that were widespread in Britain, a point that both writers and publishers may have been aware of when determining whether female Mutiny accounts were worthy of publication.

Anxious Departures

British women’s (con)textual identities and modes of writing crossed symbolic thresholds during the thirteen months of the Indian Mutiny. Fresh contexts gave rise to new versions of the self. However, whilst the writers suggest that war had indelibly transformed the self via proud declarations of being “old campaigners”, their post-Mutiny personas concurrently convey perceptible anxieties associated with returning to pre-war normality. The writings reveal a renewed awareness that female behaviour is bound by specific protocols outside the context of war and thus departure from a war setting and readjustment to normality in either Britain or India is revealed as a challenging endeavour.

Such anxieties are plainly evidenced in the opening epigraph of this chapter, in which Duberly worries about her adjustment to “conventional” modes of living after the Crimean War and Britain’s reaction to her transformed identity. It was also discernible when British nurses, dubbed the “Crimean war heroines” (Burton *Imperial Turn* 98), returned home from Russia: “What had been romantic and uplifting during the imperial crisis now threatened to disrupt the domestic and social orders” (Swanson 6). War “allows for the possibility of female heroism on a national scale” (Swanson 36), but when war ends women’s

103. Malchow considers that “the Indian Mutiny... contributed to the emotional appeal of a text that presented the Other as a rebellious, ungrateful child that owed its very existence to a white male patron” (37).

unwomanly identities are habitually reversed as opportunities for new and exceptional identities are lost.

The narratives demonstrate that the end of the Mutiny and departures away from war landscapes triggered alterations in the formerly unwomanly features found within their writings. The writings convey self-doubt and unease as their authors are unable to sustain the new and exceptional (con)textual identities that war induced. Harris, Ouvry and Coopland's post-war writings reflect adjustments and anxieties via the "dumbing-down" and oversimplification of formerly complex and specialised militaristic knowledge and vocabulary. Harris reacts to the conclusion of the Mutiny using unsophisticated military terms that stand in stark contrast to her former technical references: "Our troops have had success to-day; but as I cannot remember the names of the places they have taken, and am quite ignorant of the localities, I cannot attempt to describe the movements which have taken place" (159). Harris' declarations convert from being informed and intuitive during the rebellion to ignorant and unwise in war's aftermath: "I could not distinguish anything" (159). In discernible contrast to her prior use of specialist terminology such as "nine pounders" (37), Harris now writes with a superficial approach: "The big guns have been at work incessantly" (160). Despite being exposed to military contexts, and having gained new insights into army vernacular and procedures, Harris' wartime "accomplishments" presently appear forgotten, relapsed and are perhaps deliberately suppressed. In contrast, she accentuates the traditional female penchant for emotion and passivity by declaring how "one felt inclined to lie down and die from fatigue and exhaustion" (171-172), a rare moment of fragility in her account.

Coopland, whose wartime persona reported how Britons "had their noses and ears cut off" (73), a contentious declaration, now acknowledges prevailing gender codes by making direct reference to the limitations and boundaries of her sex. In marked contrast to her detailed military discussions with soldiers during the war, she is now too feminine to talk to officers:

At times I met officers going down the country; but ladies and etiquette are too closely allied to allow of my speaking to them: between gentlemen there is a kind of freemasonry, which is very pleasant, and indeed needful in a wild country with no Europeans near you. (290)

Despite previously praising the achievements of women in Lucknow and demarcating them as “heroines”, Canning’s post-Mutiny writings reflect a fear about British female fragility in India. She had heard that some of the officers recently arrived from Britain had been permitted to bring their wives out, and she is very critical of this decision, indicating her belief that women were unlikely to cope:

No one can imagine how wretched it will be in the crowded hotels, with all sorts of people passing through... They never will see their husbands until the country is completely settled, and they will not hear from them much oftener than in England, and it is most improbable that they will have a chance of nursing them if wounded. (Lady Canning to Queen Victoria, Jan. 9. 1858, RA Z 502/30)

The narratives support Penny Summerfield’s assertion that female post-war identities habitually convey an awareness of “discontented marginality” (237) as women writers of the Mutiny attempt to negotiate their textual self within the acceptable boundaries of mid-Victorian Britain. Whilst wartime roles and responsibilities permitted the writers to construct new and exceptional (con)textual identities with pride and satisfaction, post-war feminine personas are markedly conveyed as mundane and unsatisfactory. Tytler reflects her post-war boredom by detailing her husband’s suggestion that she paint, a traditional feminine hobby:

He [Robert] wanted me to have some amusement in those monotonous days after the siege, so I got some bamboos and fixed up a sort of scaffolding in the shape of a circle six feet in diameter and six feet high... I had never painted a landscape in my life, and I don’t want to again. (169)

Coopland also attempts to paint a post war landscape, and like Tytler she indicates that this task is banal and unfulfilling. Post-Mutiny feminine activities do not provide the same amount of excitement and adventure as war did: “The sketch being quite finished I went to my husband and said ‘Now what am I to do?’ ‘Oh don’t ask me,’ was his reply, ‘I have too much to do with my office of work to think of anything else’” (293). These brief but noteworthy instances highlight the idea that British women writers positioned their textual self in less satisfying positions after the rebellion, a theory that supports Schroven’s

assertion that after war women “have new and different hopes and expectations” (55).

The (con)textual identities under scrutiny reveal a distinguishable modification from being an active participant in war to a passive observer at the rebellion’s completion. The identities of “manager” (Case 21) and “superintendent of arrangements” (Inglis *Diary* 104) are displaced by textual personas redolent of docile victim and isolated sufferer. The denial of feminine reactions to death and grieving during the Mutiny, “silences that symbolise the denial of the impact of war” (Damousi 7), are remedied in their post-war accounts. In her diary Bartrum presently composes herself as an isolated victim in mourning: “I have lost my kind friend Dr. Darby, who has been wounded; and they say he will not recover. He promised to take care of me on the journey to Calcutta, but now I am utterly friendless” (53). Bartrum continually reinforces her post-war loneliness, implying that she misses the wartime sense of community that the rebellion afforded British women: “so I was again left alone; the night was so cold, and poor baby could not get to sleep amid such confusion... I looked out and found out I was quite alone in an open plain” (55). The unwomanly normalisation of death and lack of mourning in her mid-Mutiny account is now juxtaposed by expressions of emotional reflection and grief:

We found a number of letters today, many from dear Robert, written during our captivity, and many English letters also, but it makes my heart sad to read them. His poor mother does not know that she has lost her son; she still trusts that he has been “shielded in the day of battle.” I know how all their loving hearts will feel for me when they shall hear of my sad bereavement. (57)

Bartrum also reinforces her and her son’s identity as sufferers, and Inglis’ traditional feminine compassion, by referring to the health and care of her baby:

Mrs. Inglis was so kind to me today and made me some arrowroot for baby, who is far from well; but I trust the voyage down the river will do him good... The effects of that dreadful siege are now being felt by him, and it would grieve you to see the little sufferer; but I trust that the sea voyage will renovate his strength, and that before he reaches England he will be quite a different child. (62-67)

Markedly, upon arriving to safety following a treacherous trek from the Lucknow Residency, Case's textual persona transforms from heroic woman to fragile victim: "I was the first awake, and I could not help thinking, as I lay there and looked around me, what a strange position we poor unfortunate creatures were all placed in" (292). She describes her fatigue in an emotionally heightened way, and implies that she too is a physically wounded victim of war. Moreover, despite her aforementioned emphasis on writing no matter what the occurrence, "An attack is going on while I am writing" (148), Case now "battles" to write, a further indication of the symbolic restoration of feminine fragility.

I was suffering greatly from a swollen ankle, and was altogether so tired and knocked up that I could scarcely move a step... I was so completely tired, that when I went to bed I got into such a high state of fever I could not sleep... The last five days I have been so ill I could not continue my journal. (327-30)

Case finally expresses the fear and desperation of military conflict that was omitted in her wartime writings: "It really seems as if we never should get out of our difficulties; fighting seems to follow in our train, or rather, I should say, to precede us wherever we go" (306). Significantly, Case's textual identity journeys from being active "superintendent of arrangements" (Inglis *Diary* 104) in the Residency to being a passive "lady" who seeks the protection of male officers: "Nothing can be more perfect than all the arrangements made here by the authorities for the ladies" (327).

Whilst the outbound sea-voyage, settlement in India and Mutiny involved a physical movement away from home and a symbolic movement away from gendered responsibilities and expectations, the homeward journey offered only a return to the norm, a context that is perhaps reflected in the writers' conspicuous anxieties at the prospect of a homebound journey. Bartrum and Inglis' final preparations for departure from India are preoccupied with detailing sadness about parting from friends and the knowledge that they were part of a unique wartime community that could not be replicated in the same manner back in Britain:

We are to sail to-morrow and are almost ready, but there is so much to be done at the last, and so many kind friends to see to bid farewell to. Lady Canning came to see us all today. We have sent all our things on board,

and then heard that we were not to sail until the 12th. I went on board in the evening with baby. (69)

Within her diary Inglis recalls saying goodbye to Case and Dickson, who with her had made up a strong and resilient trio in the Lucknow Residency:

At Alexandria I parted with Mrs. Case and her sister; they were a great loss to me. We had lived together, since our trouble commenced, upon the most intimate terms of friendship, cemented, as I may truly say, by mutual kindness; for if, as they say - and I am too pleased to hear it to deny it - I was enabled during that sad time of bereavement to be of some comfort to them, I myself owe them much gratitude for their unvarying kindness to me and my children... They are, and ever will be, two of my best and truest friends. (224)

Notably, the final pages of the female accounts are not marked by hopefulness, relief or a sense of liberation at surviving a war and travelling homeward. On the contrary, accounts of post-Mutiny departures are underpinned by a tone of anxiety regarding the future: "Sailed for Calcutta and bade farewell to the land where all I best loved had found a resting place. And now, Lord, what is my hope?" (Bartrum 72).

The final pages of Coopland's diary feature a marginal and secondary (con)textual identity via her frustration regarding life onboard. In contrast to the organised, methodical and routine-led domestic base that the ladies managed in Lucknow, the ship, being led by men is described in terms of its disorder and chaos, a context that symbolises her anxieties at returning to the "real world" outside of war:

Everything was in confusion on board; not the least order or method were observed. The captain said that all the cabins were engaged, and pointed out a bench, about two feet wide, running round part of the saloon: "This is your share," he said, pointing to a chalk line marking out about six feet of the bench, with my name chalked on it. I must say I was taken aback, even after my experiences of fort life; for this space was all the accommodation for myself, baby and dhye. (301)

On the last page of her diary Inglis describes her arrival in Southampton: "Ten days brought us to Southampton, from which place I had started for India in 1851; and in a few hours time I was welcomed home by all dear to me. The past

seemed forgotten” (240). On the last page of her published narrative Inglis makes a crucial reference to the past being “forgotten”, however, could Inglis and her fellow Mutiny writers simply forget and close the page on the new and exceptional contexts they had encountered in India? Although their physical wanderings had ended, the ensuing phase of the chapter proves that their textual wanderings had not.

The Victorian Appetite for War

In 1865 John Ruskin spoke to an audience of soldiers at the Royal Military Academy in Woolwich declaring ““There is no great art possible to a nation but that which is based on battle”” (qtd in Adams 86). Ruskin’s words aptly communicate the emerging appetite for war and its literary products prevailing in mid-nineteenth century Britain. Both the telegraph’s invention in 1832 and upgraded railway connections enhanced the speed of news coverage from battlefields across the globe. A well-established system of newsgathering was established and war stories were transmitted to Britain at a greater pace and in enhanced detail than ever before. “The drama of battle” (Spiers 87) gripped imaginations and there was a “wider public familiarity, and empathy” (Reed 135) with the British Army’s affairs abroad and an intensifying desire for comprehensive accounts of conflict. *The Lady Newspaper’s* 22 December 1855 review of Frances Duberly’s Crimean narrative *Journal Kept During the Russian War* (1855) articulates the mid-nineteenth century preoccupation with war writing:

Almost any story, if told by an eyewitness of the feats and incidents of war, is certain to be popular in present day. War – “horrid war” – occupies the thoughts of every one. Dr Mackay, who used to be a violent peace-man, and boast about the “good time coming,” has begun to write battle songs; the most peaceful members of the community have seamed a warlike attitude; the very children in the street play soldiers, and act over their mimic battles. The subject is all absorbing, and we cannot well hear too much of it. (390).

The Times of 27 October 1854 declared that Britain had become “engrossed by the mighty issue” (6), a pertinent sentiment to consider when reviewing the contentious publication of Victorian female war narratives.

The prevailing appetite for war writing was largely owing to the novelty of obtaining more comprehensive accounts of combat than ever before. Modern-day war reporting began during the Crimean conflict. Three men, William Howard Russell of *The Times*, Edwin Lawrence Godkin of the *Daily News* and G.L. Gruneisen of the *Morning Post*, gave accounts of a war in which the Russian Empire fought the French, British and Ottoman alliances. Prior to this, editors would reprint letters from leading military men in the battlefield. Such letters were generally focused on promoting positive public relations and were thus wartime propaganda, rather than authentic accounts conveying the day-to-day verisimilitude of war. In contrast, Russell sent vivid eyewitness dispatches to *The Times* whetting the public appetite for first hand comprehensive accounts that conveyed the experience of frontline warfare. Russell, who was “with the Army but not of it” (Russell 7), provided unprecedented access to the realities of the conflict, regardless of whether such realities were logistically dangerous or politically embarrassing. He asked of his editor ““Am I to tell these things, or hold my tongue?”” (qtd. in Williams 108), a query revealing his apprehensions regarding self-censorship. Prince Albert called him ““that miserable scribbler”” (qtd. in Russell 8), an acknowledgement that many felt Russell’s pen should be censored. Russell endeavoured to “tell the truth” (Williams 108) and consequently his dispatches were littered with harsh judgments regarding the government’s mismanagement of the war. The power of Russell’s pen cannot be underestimated; his “vivid, critical, and above all, compassionate dispatches” (Crawford xxi) aroused public anger regarding inadequate preparations, wretched living conditions and poor administration.¹⁰⁴

The publication of first hand war accounts within the popular press meant that newspapers became a public sphere where Britons could confront their government’s failings. To placate growing resentments the government supported the departure of Florence Nightingale and thirty-eight nurses to the conflict and sped up construction of the Grand Crimean Central Railway. Moreover, it is largely deemed that Russell’s derogatory comments were a

104. In its leading article of 12 October 1854, *The Times* observed: “Every man of common modesty must feel, not exactly ashamed of himself, but somehow rather smaller than usual, when he reads the strange and terrible news of the war... the British Government has not even found linen to bandage their wounds” (6).

contributing factor in the fall of Lord Aberdeen's government in 1855.¹⁰⁵ The Crimean War marked a new dawn in the documentation of and civilian interest in martial combat. It became, as *The Times* of 5 May 1854 declared, "the people's war" (8).¹⁰⁶

The influence of frontline war dispatches was also felt in literary responses to the conflict. Poet Laureate Lord Tennyson wrote "The Charge of the Light Brigade" on 2 December 1854 as a direct result of reading Russell's version of the battle at Balaclava in *The Times* in which occurred the legendary phrase "some one had blundered" (1). Despite alluding to what was essentially a British military disaster, the poem offered a dignified and romantic depiction of war as the "the province of gallant heroes" (Waller 7) as the "unbearable cruelty of war was thus depersonalised" (Rommel 113). Like Russell's frontline accounts, Tennyson's poem effectively became a public and political rhetoric, popularising and commemorating war within mid-Victorian minds a decade before the Mutiny began.¹⁰⁷ Literature embraced what Brenda Colloms defines as "the military mood of the nation" (193). During 1854 and 1855 at least twenty-five plays, dealing with some aspect of war were licensed for London theatres. Scores of published military reports, letters and diaries portrayed Britain's involvement. Moreover, the conflict also incited a vast array of war-themed novels and non-fiction by politicians, clerics, soldiers and travellers as Harold Raugh in *The Victorians at War, 1815-1914* (2004) summarises:

The courage, as well as the foibles and everyday life of the stalwart British soldier, was memorialised by writers and poets. War artists painted exquisite scenes of heroic military operations and battles that were displayed in salons and in royal exhibitions. Military subjects were popular in the area of sheet music and songs, and advertisers frequently used on their products logos and symbols depicting leading military commanders and battle scenes. (232)

The literary outpouring resulting from the Crimean War served to demonstrate that war writing was not only popular but also highly influential.

105. During the Crimean War the average daily circulation of *The Times* leapt by a third, from 42,500 when war broke out in 1854, to 58,500 within the year.

106. Russell's colleague, Edwin Lawrence Godkin, wrote after the war: "I cannot help thinking that the appearance of the special correspondent in the Crimea... led to a real awakening of the official mind. It brought home to the War Office the fact that the public had something to say about the conduct of wars and that they are not the concern exclusively of sovereigns and statesmen" (Godkin 34).

107. See Stefanie Markovits' *The Crimean War in the British Imagination* (2009).

The British nation was consumed with images of battle and the dissertation now moves to consider whether female writers of the Indian Mutiny took advantage of this prevailing fixation with war when pursuing the publication of their autobiographical writings. By examining the response to notable exemplars of women's war narratives written before 1857, together with the sales figures and literary reviews of female Mutiny accounts, the proceeding work evaluates the popularity and reputation of female war writings in the period. It examines how the public responded to female autobiographical writings of war and the textual identities of self and/or other constructed within them.

War and 'The Woman Question'

The two-year-long Crimean conflict provoked "an imaginative interpenetration of home front and battlefield" (Markovits 3), but its events also prompted discussion regarding the nature and repercussions of female participation in warfare, a debate that had implications for female writers of the Mutiny only three short years later. In his *Times*' dispatches Russell's picturesque style and glowing narratives encouraged a patriotic and somewhat romanticised depiction of heroic British soldiers. However, whilst the nation was "negotiating ideas of heroism and patriotism" (Markovits 2) via the glorifying of the common soldier, the events in Russia also generated a heroine of war: Florence Nightingale. It became a war "in which women, so long confined to the domestic sphere, finally found an active and indispensable role as nurses" (Rappaport 2) and leading this band of intrepid women was Nightingale. Her presence in the Crimea defied Victorian gender roles, whilst simultaneously reaffirming them. Sentimentally personified as the Victorian ideal of nurturing femininity, Nightingale was envisioned as the "lady with the lamp", but her presence in the Crimea also provoked controversy. To some she was the epitome of unwomanliness via her self-imposed deployment to a battlefield. She stimulated much debate over nursing as a profession for women and the female suitability for enduring what Queen Victoria labelled a "bloody war" (Benson and Esher 170). The iconic image of Nightingale as a war heroine conflicted with Patmore's "Angel in the House" published only a year before fighting began. Nightingale became, as

Kristine Swenson asserts, “a central figure in discursive battles over the woman question” (20).

It is important to acknowledge that women existed in a variety of roles in the Crimea – as nurses, officers’ wives, nuns and even as British lady tourists who came “to see the fun... as amateurs who enjoyed the war as a spectacle in a specifically touristic sense” (Keller 12). Even Queen Victoria claimed to be filled with “atavistic longings to don shining armour” (qtd. Rappaport 12). Women were not only present in the Crimea, but they were also writing about war in the mode of journals, letters and later memoirs. On this topic, Rappaport claims that some women “may well have got a better view than the frustrated correspondent of *The Times*” (74). *The History of The Times* (1951) claims that Britain employed its first female war correspondent in 1859, when their resident correspondent Henry Wreford fell ill and his sister took over the task of reporting on the war between France and Italy (283).¹⁰⁸ However, a detailed review of newspapers and private letters reveals that female writers of the First Anglo-Afghan War (1839-1842) and the Seventh Frontier Wars (1846-1847), as well as the Crimean conflict and Indian Mutiny, had their private letters detailing eyewitness accounts of war published in newspapers long before the Italian War of 1859, thus preceding Miss Wreford’s formal employment by several years. In such circumstances private accounts of war written to family and friends entered the most public of writing spaces – the newspaper.

The publication of female letters in newspapers during the Crimean war implies that the mid-Victorian public were intrigued by women’s war writings. Publication enabled women to interject their own views and contributions regarding events into a wider arena. However, passing comment on such masculine topics contravened the Victorian convention that women should not exercise authority publicly, therefore not all female accounts of war were welcomed. Some were irritated by a woman’s interference in foreign masculine affairs implying that they did not write in a ladylike manner, or were “untrained and unfit” (Peterson *Letters* 57) for the task. Sarah Richardson synthesises the anxiety linked to female involvement in foreign affairs: “Women who engaged in

108. See Robert Wilkinson-Latham, *From Our Special Correspondent: Victorian War Correspondents and their Campaigns* (1979), Barbara Onslow, *Women of the Press in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (2000) and Anne Sebba, *Battling for News: Women Reporters from the Risorgimento to Tiananmen Square* (2013) for considerations regarding the beginnings of and formality of female war reporting.

political activities on the international scene were aware of the thin line between acceptable participation and improper behaviour which could lead to public humiliation” (157).

Until the outpouring of female Mutiny texts the publication of female war narratives was a comparatively novel thing, bar three notable examples: Lady Florentia Sale’s *Journal of the First Afghan War 1841-42* (1843), Harriet Ward’s *Five Years in Kaffirland; With Sketches of the Late War in that Country, to the Conclusion of Peace* (1848) and Frances Duberly’s Crimean narrative *Journal Kept in the Russian War* (1856). Examining the public response to these three pre-Mutiny texts valuably establishes the climate for women’s war writing in the period shortly before the 1857 rebellion. Moreover, the proceeding discussion provides a sense of whether the female Mutiny writers’ decision to publish autobiographical writings of war was courageous or misguided.

Lady Florentia Sale (1790-1853) was the wife of Brigadier Sir Robert “Fighting Bob” Sale, commander of the garrison at Jalalabad during the First Anglo-Afghan War (1838-1842). Lady Sale witnessed the revolt at Kabul and was held hostage with other British women as one of the “the Kabul Prisoners”, by the Afghan leader Akbar Khan, from February 1842 until their rescue by British forces in September of the same year. Despite the poor conditions of her captivity Sale recorded her experience in a journal that she kept safely in a bag tied round her waist. Her journal, published by John Murray in 1843, provides an account of the disastrous 1842 British retreat from Kabul. Her account specifies the military events leading up to the retreat, the conditions of her imprisonment and is surprising for its open criticisms of the gross mismanagement of the conflict.

Sale’s reports of the massacre are stark and violent. She describes “a road covered with awfully mangled bodies, all naked” and witnesses “camp followers, still alive, frost-bitten and starving” (34). *The Spectator* of 13 May 1843 refers to Sale’s “air of masculine firmness” (18), evidenced in extracts such as “the smell of the blood sickening; and the corpses lay so thick it was impossible to look from them” (34). Notably, there is no ladylike sentimentality at the events and Sale’s tone is one of determination: “I knit socks for my grand-children but I have been a soldier’s wife too long to sit down tamely, whilst our honour is

tarnished... A woman's vengeance is said to be fearful; but nothing can satisfy mine" (215-17).

For the most part she comments on passing events with the utmost calmness and self-possession. Lines such as "There was firing of guns all day long" (161) and "Earthquakes as usual" (99) epitomise Sale's stoical acceptance of the surrounding hardships. Most remarkable is her account of her wounding: "I had fortunately only one ball in my arm; three others passed through my posteeen near the shoulder without doing me any injuring" (20). Sale overlooks her own physical sufferings and instead focuses attention on the mismanagement of the war, reflecting on the commanders' "plundered supineness" (51). She contributes subtle disparagements such as "It is a great pity that Gen. Pollock's force does not move up" (171) as well as more overtly criticisms: "No military steps have been taken to suppress the insurrection, nor even to protect our only means of subsistence" (55). Moreover, her journal upholds British imperialistic sentiments via statements such as "do not let us dishonour the British name by sneaking out of the country, like whipped Pariah dogs" (214).

Even before the publication of her journal Sale received some public attention as *The Times* published copies of her letters as a means of keeping the public abreast of the situation in Afghanistan. One letter, printed on April 21st 1842, is from Sale to her husband which, according to *The Times*, was "widely circulated in the highest political circles" before its publication and "elicited the greatest admiration of the undaunted spirit, the collected judgement, and vigorous language of the writer" (4). The letter, written much like a journal entry, features excerpts that provoked British imaginations by presenting a glimpse of real war: "'8th Instant. – We had an alarm at 4 o'clock. The enemy attempted to take the fort back again... we are all in high spirits, and look forward to your arrival'" (4). *The Times* claimed "Lady Sale has earned a reputation which will be remembered" (4) and her letter, among other reports, enabled her later published work to have such wide exposure and strong sales.

Journal of the First Afghan War 1841-42 became a bestseller in 1843 with John Murray publishing four editions totalling over 7,500 copies in its first year. Her narrative was deemed as having great historical value, being the only comprehensive account to survive, a notion supported by Corrine Fowler: "Sale's Journal was an important source for definitive historical accounts of this war"

(6). Revealingly, an advertisement at the rear of Harris' 1858 Mutiny diary announces the availability of the 8th Edition of Sale's journal thus highlighting its popularity.¹⁰⁹ Sale was regarded as the first female war celebrity and following the hostage crisis became "an acquaintance of Queen Victoria... a media sensation" (Dartnell 326).¹¹⁰ Linda Colley in *Captives: Britain, Empire and the World, 1600-1850* (2002) summarises Sale's unique celebrity status: "To the early Victorian public, Florentia Sale would indeed become a heroine, the first British woman ever to achieve nationwide fame in connection with her own contributions to military action overseas" (352). Newspaper reviews of her journal point towards "a feeling of admiration for the notable character of the writer" (*Hampshire Advertiser*, 22. Apr. 1843, 1), with *John Bull Magazine* eliminating any sort of critique from their review: "This is a work to be read, rather than criticised" (1. May. 1843, 267). *The Calcutta Review* of 1 June 1846 directly compared the journal to a male military account, further emphasising the high regard for Sale's writings: "Few works have ever excited a more lively interest than the narratives of Lieutenant Eyre and Lady Sale; few works have been more extensively circulated and more greedily devoured" (428).

Sir Robert Peel, when addressing Parliament on the subject of the Afghanistan war, stated "I never should excuse myself, if, in mentioning the name of Sir Robert Sale, I did not record my admiration of the character of a woman who has shed lustre on her sex – Lady Sale, his wife" (Peel 178). Sale's courage was "immortalised in society portraits and in circus performances" (Morgan 166), but she remained modest throughout and in her journal dismisses the public praise she had acquired in the British press: "Nothing can exceed the folly I have seen in the papers regarding my wonderful self" (408).

In a decade when "the confinement of women to the domestic sphere and their exclusion from the public world" (Davidoff and Hall xvi) was the norm, it is perhaps surprising that Sale was embraced in the manner she was. Newspaper reviews bare little disapproval regarding Sale's writings and high book sales reveal the public's interest in her account. *The Quarterly Review* of May 1843

109. Publisher John Murray, who later went on to publish several of the Mutiny journals, was known for his acquisition of autobiographical, military and travel writings. Henry Curwen in *A History of Booksellers: The Old and the New* (1873) acknowledged that "Murray, skilled as any pilot in watching the direction of the wind, turned his attention to the publication of travels and expeditions – the very book for a fireside afternoon" and had "another great hit in Lady Sale's Journal" (195). It was considered "the last important work that Mr Murray published" (Smiles 507).

110. The 1844 *Illustrated Companion to Lady Sale's Journal* featured an approved dedication to the Queen.

teasingly writes: “we cannot help breathing the wish, too late, that she had been commandant at Cabul (sic)” (17). Notably, there is no criticism or concern regarding Sale’s interference in unfeminine topics. The reviewer points towards her “masculine energy” whilst calling her account “deeply affecting and womanly” (17). She was admired by the public and defined as “the heroine of modern days” (*Metropolitan Magazine*, 1. May. 1843, 5) and therefore it can be contended that her popularity paved the way for future female war accounts.

The appeal of Sale’s account is most likely due to her status as a hostage or captive, a context that evokes sympathy. Indeed her account provides the classic literary model of a narrative of captivity: imprisonment, escape and survival. The mid-Victorian audience embraced the sensationalistic tale of imperial adventure and hence Sale avoided criticism for being unfeminine. Michelle Burnham in *Captivity and Sentiment* (1997) considers the appeal:

Captivity narratives... generate sympathy for their captive figures by emphasising the disruption of the family, the destruction of maternal ties, the helplessness of physical torture, and the sometimes murderous violence of the captors. (123)

Captivity narratives provide, as Dartnell surmises, a context in which “terrorism is spectacle-entertainment-participation” (326); they follow a pattern that links the stories of the “Kabul Prisoners” of the Afghanistan war and the “Ladies of Lucknow” in the Indian Mutiny. Both incidents prompted public concern, anger and sympathy and their shared qualities offer a reasonable indication as to why female writers of the 1857 rebellion decided to publish their private writings: stories of captivity, escape and survival are appealing.

Harriet Ward (1808-1873) is another notable forerunner to the female writers considered in this thesis. Ward accompanied her husband, Captain John Ward of the 91st Regiment, to South Africa in May 1842 onboard the Abercrombie Robinson troop ship during the Frontier Wars (1842-1847). However, unlike Lady Sale, Ward was already a notable writer before her war encounter. During her long literary career she wrote “journalistic articles, short stories, poems, novels, accounts of journeys and military activity, autobiography, biography, and typographical description” (Letcher 1). Despite her wide generic range, it is Ward’s war writing that marks her as a controversial woman writer. From the early 1840 she became a regular contributor to *The United Service*

Journal and Naval and Military Magazine that appeared each month in the mess room of British services at home and abroad. Valarie Letcher claims there is evidence that she was an anonymous correspondent for *The Times*, but that she was “unlikely to have been paid for this except with the gifts of a vase and a grand piano” (10). Many of her initial writings regarding the military were published under the pseudonym “the daughter of all soldier” (Letcher 7), a reflection of the prevailing anxieties linked to female composition. Ward herself defined the process of female publication as “the thorny and difficult path of authorship” (*United Service Magazine*, Oct. 1840, 224).

Like Lady Sale’s writings only five years earlier, Ward’s 1848 account of the Seventh Frontier War (1846-7) was incredibly popular and ran into four editions. However, unlike Sale, *Five Years in Kaffirland* attracted mixed reviews. The writings transmit a conflict in style. On the one hand Ward writes like a conventional Victorian woman with concern for the aesthetics of the landscape: “an amphitheatre of hills and mountains... gorgeously illuminated by the rays of declining sun... beside which the comet, in strange contrast, spread its long and fiery tail” (61-62); however, Ward’s writings become progressively more critical of the political climate in South Africa and she discloses her assessments of the war’s mismanagement:

We are told that the Kaffir war excites but little interest in England. Let us see what her people will say when they ascertain that the expenses of this war amount to nearly three millions of money! ... As fast as England makes money by one conquest, she fritters it away in mismanaging another. (237-8)

Letcher asserts that throughout her journal “she [Ward] finds her voice, she also discovers in herself a resistance to many of the colonial, patriarchal, racial and sexual assumptions of the time” (2).

Notably, the editor’s preface to the published journal attempts to make a direct comparison between Ward and Sale’s wartime experiences:

The presence of an English lady in the wilds of Africa (like that of Lady Sale in another quarter of the globe), - exhibiting in her own person an example of courage and fortitude under privation, - must certainly have been attended with its good effects on the minds of the gallant fellows who served during the campaign. (vi)

Pointing out a link between the two ladies' experiences did not permit Ward to avoid public admonishment. She achieved a formidable reputation and was widely condemned for publishing her views on imperial policy and voicing her dissatisfactions so openly. *The Athenaeum* criticised Ward's "intemperate and extreme opinions" (15. Dec. 1849, 1266). *John Bull Magazine* considered:

Mrs. Ward, who is already favourably known to the public as an authoress, wrote her journal not improbably with a view to its passing ultimately through Mr. Colburn's hands into those of the British public; for it contains many remarks and discussions which would scarcely have found their way into a diary intended only for the writer's own use. (20. May. 1848, 326)

She was accused of being "riveted on the exciting and novel scenes around her" (Stowell 156). *The Eclectic Review* unsympathetically wrote: "We wish, for the authoress's own sake, and for the sake of the public, that the lengthy speculations and dissertations on colonial policy had been omitted. Without this, the volumes would have formed pleasant and instructive reading" (Jul. 1848, 173).

Ward was offering judgments in a time when "women's unsuitability for political debate" (Richardson 136) was still the prevalent opinion and the reviews drew attention to her unwomanliness:

Mrs Ward, unhesitatingly plunging into the vortex of colonial politics, sketches out a plan for the better preservation of peace and tranquillity... She indulges in the expressions of sentiments which, to say the least of them, are unfeminine. When we open a work professedly written by a lady, the wife of a British officer, we expect to find in it some evidence of a woman's pen. (*The Eclectic Review* Jul. 1848, 163)

In a similar manner to Lady Sale's narrative, Ward is critical of the military's tactical errors and presents violent events in stark detail, but there is one crucial difference between the narratives that undoubtedly impacts on the public's response: whilst Sale "experienced" war as a prisoner, Ward merely "observed" war and thus did not directly suffer.

The notion of British women suffering as captives in a foreign context had a deep effect on the British psyche in the mid-nineteenth century. Such stories served as a form of imperialist propaganda. Sarah Carter considers that "captivity narratives serve to turn public opinion against the "hostiles" and

promote sympathy for the victims of these outrages” (23). The contrast in reviews between Sale and Ward’s work raises questions related to British women’s war writings in the period: was it only acceptable for women to write publicly about war if they had suffered? Was Sale only labelled a heroine because she had also been a victim?

The final notable pre-Mutiny female war account is the Crimean War narrative *Journal Kept in the Russian War* by Frances Duberly, whose later writings regarding the Mutiny have been assessed throughout this dissertation. Married to Henry Duberly, paymaster of the 8th King’s Irish Hussars, her journey to the Crimea was steeped in controversy. She followed her husband to Russia at her own expense and famously disobeyed Lord Lucan who “forbade any woman to leave Scutari” (Sweetman 81). She was there through her own willpower and resourcefulness and disguised herself to avoid detection. Duberly recounts how “Lord Lucan, who was there, scanned every woman, to find traces of a lady; but he searched in vain, and I, choking with laughter, hurried past his horse into the boat” (73). In contrast to the philanthropic contributions of Florence Nightingale and Mary Seacole, Duberly defines her Crimean experience as “an adventure” (137) and thus historians have associated her with “war tourism” (Cross 30) rather than being an unassuming officer’s wife.

She had a unique position in the Crimea as one of the few women at the front in Balaclava. Her journal reveals how she was told of military attacks and movements ahead of time, thus being in a prime position to witness and document the action in her journal. Whilst *The Time*’s journalist Russell offered a comprehensive overview of the unfolding events, Duberly was skilful at capturing the moment with extracts such as: “A note was put into my hands from Henry... ‘Lose no time, but come up as quickly as you can; do not wait for breakfast’” (116). Her writings feature courageous and undoubtedly unfeminine declarations related to the immediate battle: “From the forts of Sebastopol the shot and shell came hissing every two minutes. I could not but feel a high degree of excitement, and I think it was not unnatural” (102). Duberly was also in a principal position to write about the gossip circulating in the British camp and gives details of how “various rumours are afloat” (61). It is important to note that Duberly never mentions Nightingale and Seacole in her journal, perhaps revealing that she considered the two women as rivals for the British public’s

appreciation. Rappaport considers that Duberly wanted to be viewed “as a gutsy lone woman in a violent man’s world” (200).

Duberly’s Crimean narrative was published in time for Christmas, in December 1855, less than three months after it was written. It sold so well that a second edition appeared the following spring. The first part of her journal was sent to her sister Selina on 2 July 1855 and her brother-in-law Francis Marx became her editor. In the preface she states: “When this Journal was first commenced I had no intention whatever of publishing it” (4), but this is misleading as she mentions her plans to do so to her sister in a letter of 28 August 1854, well before the army arrived in the Crimea: “since I knew I was to publish, the book has been a task instead of a pleasure” (MS 47218). Duberly realised the importance of speed in publication and wrote in a panic to Marx saying she must “cut in before anybody else. It must be dedicated to the Queen” (2. Jul. 1855, MS 47218). Like Sale and Ward, she had already had a taste of literary fame, with one of her letters being published in *The Observer* and she most likely hoped that there was a ready audience for her published journal. However, like the reception to Ward’s narrative, the public’s response to her text was very mixed and Queen Victoria famously refused the dedication proving that despite Sale’s earlier success, female war accounts still ran the risk of public criticism.

One positive review from the American magazine *Godey’s Lady’s Book* referred to Duberly as “A new heroine of the Crimea” stating that “Miss Nightingale does not wear the laurel alone” (Vol. LII, May. 1856, 466). Duberly had read some of the reviews even before a copy of her printed journal reached her in the Crimea and was “as much surprised as I am delighted, at the popularity of what I feel is a very stupid book” (MS 47218). She wrote to her sister Selina on its success: “For my opinion of it – I think it too scanty – with too many ‘I’s & Me’s’ ... Curiosity has sold it, I suppose” (MS 47218). Favourable reviews complimented her for exhibiting “the vicissitudes of camp life before Sebastopol” and her ability to “give the reader on the whole a better idea of the state of affairs” (*John Bull*, 5. Jan. 1856, 11). The journal was praised for having greater value than “more elaborate works and even blue books” and her literary style was applauded:

the writer, endowed with the quick eye that belongs to her sex, and gifted wit the power of a lively gossiping pen, transplants the reader into the midst of the camp, and keeps him there as a kind of second-hand eye witness of all that is going forward. For a companion of military travel commend us to Mrs. Duberly. (*John Bull*, 5. Jan. 1856, 11)

The Lady Newspaper praised Duberly's "day to day" approach:

The book is intensely interesting, and deserves a large circulation. It is simply and presently written, and has that air of truthfulness about it which we might expect to find in a journal which was literally kept from day to day". (22. Dec. 1855, 390)

The Morning Post of 5 February 1856 alluded to Duberly's bravery and resolve: "Nothing daunted... no personal danger or inconvenience appears to have subdued her courage, or to have weakened her determination to follow her husband and share his fate" (6). They considered that "no apology is necessary to justify its appearance... the author has suffered no event of interest to escape her quick and observant pen" (6). *The Morning Post* acknowledged that:

such a work should have been written by a lady is a matter of curiosity, but the interest of the reader will be evoked still more when he has an opportunity of appreciating the circumstances of difficulty and danger under which it was produced. Mrs Duberly is a soldier's wife, and a true-hearted woman. (6)

Rather astonishingly *The Morning Post* concluded their review by alluding to Duberly's status as an author and potential future works, as if paving the way for her *Mutiny* text: "She writes with a fluent and graphic pen and the reading portion of the public will hail with pleasure the appearance of another work from the same source" (6). Duberly did not need much prompting as her 1859 account of the *Mutiny* demonstrates.

Although a handful of positive reviews emerged Duberly's war text also evoked great criticism. *The Examiner* of 29 December 1855 labelled her a "comic Lady Sale" (4), a comment suggesting that she was poorly attempting to replicate Sale's literary success. *The Examiner's* review was highly disparaging, criticising Duberly's preoccupation with her horse "Bob": "The real hero of this Journal of the great siege, which includes the whole eventful year of struggle, is Mrs Duberly's horse Bob... But is there nothing but horses in Mrs Duberly's

journal? Well – very little” (4). It refers to her military comments rather patronisingly as “a touch of war” and determines that: “To permit the publication of this journal... surely was an error on the lady’s part, or that of her friends” (4). Moreover, *The Examiner* alludes to the nineteenth century perception that a female diary is a private text not for public consumption by questioning Duberly’s decision to publish:

It tempts the world to judge her by her diary; and, of lady writers not accustomed to express the depths of their own nature in writing, how few there are who would not have reason to feel aggrieved at the intrusion of any stranger’s eye upon their journal. (4)

The Examiner labelled her as “a woman of high spirit” with “vaulting ambition” and called her account a “literary indiscretion” (4).

The Examiner’s full page review angered Duberly and her private letters reveal her upset: “Never, never, was anything half so sharp – so cruel, so bitter, so scurrilous – Even all your kindness and that of the Spectator, Athenaeum & Press, for which I am so grateful, has been and ever will be unable to efface those pages” (MS 47218). *Punch Magazine* of 2 February 1856 lampooned Duberly via a cartoon “The Diary of Lady Fire-Eater” (47). They ridiculed her role in the Crimea:

She went to Sebastopol as a lady at home goes out shopping, simply for the amusement of the thing. ... There was the excitement of the danger too, that made the shopping all the more delightful. ... it was entirely a disinterested excursion, undertaken as a passé-temps, out of pure love for the sport – as something to talk about when the day’s adventures were over. (47)

Despite its attempt at humour, *Punch Magazine’s* allusion to Duberly’s “love for the sport,” when the sport is war, conceivably explains the public’s disapproval of her writings: she did not suffer. Like Ward, she did not undergo a personal trauma or direct suffering. In contrast, Duberly’s writings reflect a tone of exhilaration at the surrounding war, an unladylike response that would have certainly shocked a mid-Victorian reader.

The context of war took Sale, Ward and Duberly beyond the accepted boundaries and norms of behaviour for women in the mid-nineteenth century, but it is their experiences during war and their decision to publish their private

writings that created controversy. The mixed reviews of their writings suggest one important condition regarding the Victorian appetite for female war narratives in the fifteen years leading up to the 1857 Mutiny: the public responded more favourably to female victims of war rather than female war tourists or critical observers of war.

The concept that it was acceptable for ladies to publish, as long as they had suffered, is relevant to the twelve writers considered in this dissertation. The Indian Mutiny was a war that endorsed the theory that British women were victims of “a barbaric attack on innocent white women” (Mills, *Gender*, 36), and thus the writers’ experiences of imprisonment, escape and survival may have influenced their decision to publish without fear of rebuke. The preface to Duberly’s Mutiny account, published only four years after her Crimean narrative, appropriately supports this notion:

I venture to put before the public a faithful record of the services and sufferings of one portion of the army occupied in the suppression of the mutiny; I trust that I shall be pardoned if occasionally I am tempted to touch upon points which may seem beyond a woman's province. (xv)

Publication

At the end of the Crimean conflict Britain had been alerted to the realities of modern warfare and “once roused, there was no turning back on the tide of British public enthusiasm” (Rappaport 5). In May 1857, only fifteen months after the conclusion of the Russian war, rumours of a Mutiny in India began to surface. Britain reaped the rewards of the communication systems established during the Crimean War, thus a successful format for modern war reporting was already in place. The Mutiny became “a modern war of propaganda” (Bayly 319), with pervasive newspaper reports compressing the event into “simplistic oppositions between good and evil, victims and villains” (Brantlinger *Rule* 206). As Brantlinger suggests, “No episode in British imperial history raised public excitement to a higher pitch” (199). Consequently, the rebellion became the favoured subject of British publishers.¹¹¹

111. In a review of the Mutiny-inspired play *The Sepoy Revolt* at Liverpool’s Adelphi Theatre, the British weekly newspaper *The Era* wrote: “The Indian mutiny is spreading throughout this country to an alarming extent, and many a peaceful ‘temple of drama’ has been transformed into a ‘theatre of war’” (31. Jan. 1858, 6).

The rate and speed of the first pool of Mutiny writings was unprecedented and published accounts generally fell into one of two categories. There were the comprehensive linear narratives written by historians comprised of an amalgamation of primary sources. Military reports, dispatches, political papers, letters, diaries and newspaper articles were fused together in an attempt to present a continuous chronicle of the rebellion. In June 1857, less than two months after the first uprising at Meerut, army officer, military historian and *Times* correspondent George Bruce Malleson (1825-1898) wrote the first part of *The Mutiny of the Bengal Army: A Historical Narrative*. His account formed the first of many historical synopses of the rebellion.

Alongside the outpouring of historical narratives came the publication of personal “local accounts” (Chakravarty 19), autobiographical writings by British civil and army officers and wives, composed within the generic mode of journal, letter and memoir. In contrast to the aforementioned chronological reviews, personal accounts were largely inspired by “on the spot” material and contexts, presenting the experience of war rather than a sequential overview. Moreover, because the Mutiny was spread across north and central India, personal accounts offered a glimpse of the local action witnessed by their narrator.¹¹²

Male Mutiny accounts focus largely on the day-to-day progression of the rebellion. Regular entries recount private conversations associated with military strategy, graphic descriptions from the battlefield and political commentary regarding the war’s wider implications. Jerome de Groot argues that published diaries are appealing because they “are history in the raw” (34), and indeed publishers’ records and literary reviews attest to the public’s appetite for male Mutiny diaries in the period. *The Examiner* of 17 July 1858 declared: “Our interest, and the interest of the public in such records as these will, for some time to come be inexhaustible” (4). Newspaper reports alluded to the notion that “the public are by no means tired of hearing the story” (*The Morning Chronicle*. 31. Aug. 1858, 6); however, as this dissertation now moves on to examine, what if “the story” was written by a woman?

112. Notable examples by male authors include William Edwards’ *Personal Adventures during the Indian Rebellion in Rohilkund, Futtegarh, and Oude* (1858), Robert Patrick Anderson’s *A Personal Journal of the Siege of Lucknow* (1858) and Henry Harris Greathed’s *Letters Written During the Siege of Delhi* (1858).

For the twelve female writers considered in this dissertation the decision to publish personal narratives of war was most likely a complex and contentious one. Catherine Delafield argues that the publication of a woman's diary required a "complex negotiation between the self and society" (39). Moreover, the context of war, "the province of men" (O'Brien 147), would have further complicated the writers' anxieties. Mary Jean Corbett suggests that Victorian women faced "terror about publicising the self" and "a gendered discomfort with public exposure" (58). Lady Sale, Harriet Ward and Frances Duberly had challenged these presumptions and arguably paved the way for female war writers. However, the mixed criticisms their accounts attained reveal how it was still contentious for British women's diaries and letters to enter the marketplace in the period. Only a year before the Mutiny began English poet Elizabeth Barrett Browning sent a heated reply to a correspondent who sought to publish her private letters. Browning declined the request and in response emphasised her distaste for what she called the "fashionable diet" for publishing female autobiography (qtd. in Corbett 57). Browning's response is symptomatic of the strict codes of Victorian literary decorum that prescribed boundaries between private and public modes of writing.

Perhaps justification for the publication of female accounts of the rebellion rests in the public attention, sympathy and celebrity status that survivors from the event acquired. Journalists, historians and politicians stressed the "military honour and British heroism" (Thomson 151) of military figures with Brigadier-General John Nicholson and Major General Sir Henry Havelock cast "in a chivalric mould" (Richards 23) and sculpted as "Mutiny celebrities" (Herbert 141). In contrast, female survivors of the Mutiny were portrayed in a dual guise as both heroines and sufferers, as "victims offering courageous resistance" (Sen 99). They had been "out of place, under threat, and suffering privations and dangers" (Blunt 421) and newspaper reports had drawn attention to their plight. The *Illustrated London News* reported: "the privations endured by the heroic garrison, and particularly by the ladies, were fearful" (9. Jan. 1858).

Published accounts by male officers and civilians also contributed to the public's perception of female survivors. Sir Colin Campbell in *A Personal Narrative of the Siege of Lucknow* (1858) painted a vivid picture of the suffering endured as he described the "ladies – tired, weary, hungry, and with blistered feet

and hands” (50). Martin Gubbins in *An Account of the Mutinies in Oudh* (1858) boldly declared: “Never... has the noble character of Englishwomen shone with more real brightness... Far from being in the way, they were ever a source of comfort and help to us” (206). The glorification of women takes an arguably fictitious tone within Anderson’s narrative. He romanticises the death of British women by accentuating their courage and claims that “they all met death in the calmest manner possible... the ladies were on their knees, with their arms across their breasts, and their eyes fixed towards heaven” (48).

At the conclusion of the rebellion sympathy and admiration for “the Angels of Albion” (Robinson 1) reached a climax, as the women, many of whom were now widowed, were unequivocally regarded as “heroines”. Unlike the Crimean War when “the women who served and suffered with their regiments... received no special consideration and care” (237), female Mutiny survivors acquired some fame. Perhaps society had heeded Florence Nightingale’s post-Crimean plea: ““Let not the wife and child of the soldier be forgotten”” (qtd. in Richards 94). One notable account in the *Daily News* entitled “The Arrival of the Lucknow Heroines at Calcutta” reported:

The black dresses of most of the ladies told the tale of their bereavement, whilst the pallid faces, the downcast looks, and the slow walk, bore evidence of the great sufferings they must have undergone both in mind and body. (17. Feb. 1858, 5)

One of the writers considered throughout this thesis, Julia Inglis, attained iconic status in the aftermath. She was invited, as a representative of the Lucknow survivors, to meet Queen Victoria and in the press was referred to as “Lady Inglis, of Lucknow celebrity” (*The Aberdeen Journal*, 19. May. 1858, 3). *The Lady’s Newspaper* wrote of the event at Buckingham Palace: “the Queen listened with the most intense interest to the story of the sufferings and heroism of that gallant band who so nobly sustained their country’s honour and renown during a period of almost unexampled danger and distress” (24. Apr. 1858, 265). *The Belfast News-Letter* printed an anonymous poem dedicated to Inglis entitled “The Lady of Lucknow: on the arrival in England of Lady Inglis” (9. Apr. 1858, 4). Moreover, a letter published in *The Englishwoman’s Review* asked;

Having read a well-merited eulogium on Lady Inglis... I am intended to ask a question relative to the other ladies, who, as well as Lady Inglis, are

so inseparably connected with the memorable siege of Lucknow... What has been done for them or their families to testify that England is not unmindful of their truly heroic conduct? (15. Jan. 1859, 44)

Representations of British women as both victims and heroines fuelled public interest in their individual stories, a response that may well have influenced both authors and publishers when assessing whether British women's writings of the rebellion were publish-worthy texts.

The event of a female private narrative becoming a published and thus public text exposes tensions associated with self-representation in the majority of Mutiny accounts analysed in this dissertation. Apologetic declarations, denial of liability and the employment of strategic pseudonyms convey female apprehensions about being rebuked for unwomanly expressions and an attempt to comply with the mid-Victorian ideal of a private and modest woman. Harris' diary was the first full female account of the Mutiny to publically emerge in April 1858, only five months after she left the Lucknow Residency. Records show that the journal was posted from Allahabad on 14 December 1857 to a family member in Britain who delivered it to the publishing house of John Murray in London. Although Harris did indeed sign a publishing agreement (*Murray Publication Arrangement Ledger*, MS.43194), there is no evidence to prove that she personally instigated the publishing process herself.

The title, *A Lady's Diary of the Siege of Lucknow: Written for the Perusal of Friends at Home*, tactically absolves Harris from admonishments. Her employment of the essentially anonymous pseudonym "a Lady" is an astute choice. The pseudonym, when juxtaposed alongside "siege", draws attention to Harris' feminine identity. It is a form of authorial masking, alerting the reader to her status as an amateur writer and hence discharging her from the same level of criticism reserved for male authors. The title also stresses that the diary was not intentionally penned for a public audience, but for "friends", a disclosure that satisfies the prevailing literary ideal that women were only authorised to write for the self or for "an audience of family and friends" (Boynton 40). The preface plainly states that it was not the sole decision of Harris to publish her work, though this claim could be fabricated in an attempt to safeguard her femininity:

As no lady's diary has hitherto been given to the public, the friends of the writer have thought that it might interest others, beyond the family circle,

to communicate additional information on a subject in which the British nation feels so deeply an interest (iii).

Perhaps one motive for pursuing publication was financial gain, particularly for those women who were now widowed. Although few payment or sales accounts survive for the publishers under scrutiny, those that do exist prove that some of the women earned reasonable amounts by publishing. Harris' arrangement with John Murray was for 3,500 copies to be published on a half profit share basis. The book was priced 4s. 6d. and records show that her income was £98 16s. 2d. in the first year (1858), £34 5s. 8d. in 1859 and in 1865 she received £6 11s. 107 copies remained on hand at that time and 100 were remaindered for a total of £15 4s. to which she received half (*Murray Publication Arrangement Ledger*, MS.43194). Harris' husband, the regimental chaplain, would have most likely received a modest stipend, within the region of £40 per annum (Burley 39), and therefore Harris' compiled income of £133 1s. in the first two years of publication was relatively high by comparison.

Case's Day by Day at Lucknow was the next female account to be published in June 1858 via an arrangement with Richard Bentley (1794-1871), "Publisher in Ordinary to the Crown" (*Richard Bentley Agreements*, MS 46617, f.179). Bentley had a long established reputation for publishing works on naval and military history and went on to publish several titles related to the Mutiny. Like Harris, Case reveals anxieties about her personal writings becoming public discourse. Within her preface she emphasises how the decision was not taken lightly and attempts to discharge herself from open blame: "I have listened to the suggestions of my friends rather than to the dictates of my own judgement... and it is not without a struggle in my own mind that I publish the following account" (iii). Case reiterates that her journal was written with "no view whatever to publication" (iii) and attempts to justify its public appearance by stressing that it was wholly to satisfy the public's interest in the plight of the Lucknow survivors. She hopes that by "submitting the following pages for public inspection" she "might partially gratify the curiosity of those who have sympathised" (iii-iv).

Case's preface provides a typical example of the apologies, justifications and appeals for leniency that pervade the majority of the British women's Mutiny accounts:

As I do not aspire to the ambition of an author, I feel that I shall be exempted from that criticism which invariably attends works of a more pretending character. It cannot but fail (for no woman is equal to the task) to do justice... to the gallant defenders of Lucknow. (Case iv)

The disclaimer that “no woman is equal to the task” and overt rejection of the label “author” are astute efforts by Case to exonerate herself from criticism regarding the unwomanly content of her journal. By drawing attention to the public’s sympathy and recalling the “gallant defenders of Lucknow” it could be argued that Case accentuates her status as a female victim and survivor, in the hope that the reader will suspend negative judgements related to female public expression.

Bartrum’s narrative, *A Widow’s Reminiscences of the Siege of Lucknow*, was described by *The Athenaeum* as “the saddest of all the tales of suffering and sorrow relating to the Indian Revolt,” (2. Apr. 1859, 449) when it was published by James Nisbet & Co in December 1858. It was a curious choice for the publisher whose catalogue before the rebellion was dominated by religious texts, but arguably an indicator of the emerging popularity of Mutiny texts.¹¹³ A lack of archival material related to Nisbet & Co means there is limited information concerning the process of publication and her financial remuneration; however, some assumptions can be proposed by scrutinising the front matter of her published text. Bartrum published her “reminiscences” anonymously, employing the pseudonym “a Widow” in her title. However, the dedication “Sacred to the memory of Robert Henry Bartrum... and Robert Spilsbury Bartrum, only child of the above... and Katherine Mary, his wife” (iv) subtly discloses her identity.

On the one hand, by defining herself as “a widow” Bartrum alerts the reader to her status as a victim of the Mutiny, a context that arguably invokes compassion and therefore leniency. However, being “a widow” also had serious connotations in the period and its usage so boldly within the book’s title could be considered contentious. The process of mourning in Victorian Britain was shrouded in the protocol of “private grief” (Jalland 302). The prevailing expectation was that that mourning should not be paraded ostentatiously and that “grief should be safely relegated to the private sphere, separated off from the

113. Following the release of Bartrum’s narrative James Nisbet & Co went on to publish several Mutiny accounts including Alexander Duff’s *The Indian Rebellion: Its Causes and Results* (1858) and M.A Sherring’s *The Indian Church during the Great Rebellion* (1859).

public world” (Hockey 101). Therefore the event of a private text marketing itself as “a widow’s” account risked breaching social etiquette. The preface states that it was published “at the desire of her friends, to give in simple truthfulness a detail of those domestic occurrences which fell immediately under her own observation during the siege of Lucknow” (v). This declaration minimises Bartrum’s responsibility for the text from the outset and can be perceived as an attempt to placate a mid-Victorian reader.

Coopland, who like Case was widowed in the events, was next to publish her narrative, *A Lady’s Escape From Gwalior*, in February 1859. She made an arrangement with Smith & Elder, a company with a vested interest in the situation in India, being the publishers of *The Overland Mail* newspaper that provided home news to India.¹¹⁴ Coopland’s publishing agreement with Smith & Elder is rather surprising as the ledger reveals that Coopland paid the company to print her work. Although this was not unheard of in the period, it is interesting to note that Duberly, who also published with Smith & Elder, did not personally pay for printing, although she did have an established literary reputation. Coopland made an arrangement whereby she paid £100 for the printing of 750 copies to be sold at 10s. 6d. with her receiving 5s. for every copy over 200 sold within 2 years (*Smith & Elder Publication Arrangement Ledger*, Ms.43194, 36).

Coopland’s book was pitched at both lending libraries and individual purchasers, but unfortunately no sales figures survive to reveal how successful the book was and no personal correspondence exist to clarify the reasoning behind the sales arrangement. Coopland’s financial agreement with Smith & Elder undoubtedly reveals her commitment to the publication of her text, a sentiment that stands in contrast to the conscience-stricken declarations about publishing found in Harris, Case and Bartrum’s narratives. It might also suggest that Coopland had more confidence in her text than Smith & Elder and was therefore willing to take a risk by self-funding the process. It is worth noting that extracts from Coopland’s dairy had been sent to her father-in-law in Britain in July 1857 and were printed only a month later in *The York Herald* in the midst of the conflict. The newspaper stated that the extract would convey “the particulars

114. Alongside their literary business Smith & Elder also provided banking services to Britons in India via an arrangement with the old East India Company, but the rebellion terminated this lucrative arm of their business: “the Indian Mutiny in 1857 was costly for the Smith, Elder partners: in one weekend of rebellion and repression, many of the firm’s customers (and debtors) were killed, and afterwards the old East India Company was replaced” (Howsam 19).

of the mournful event” (22. Apr. 1857, 10) to their readers, a statement that perhaps increased Coopland’s confidence in her writing ability. Notably, there is an underlying tone of conviction in the front matter that is not expressed by those women that had published Mutiny works before her. Coopland’s preface offers a rather brief and somewhat insincere apology:

I hope no one will think me unfeeling in writing what follows: it must be obvious to all that I cannot do so without great pain; but I think that Englishmen ought to know what their countrywomen have endured at the hands of the sepoys... Some men think that women are weak and only fitted to do trivial things, and endure petty troubles... but there are many who can endure with fortitude and patience what even soldiers shrink from. (116-17).

Coopland does communicate brief anxieties by emphasising the “great pain” of writing about war, but her comments regarding women dominate the preface. She argues that the stereotype of women as “weak” is unfitting and that in war there are occasions when women are more masculine than the men themselves. However, whilst her praise is chiefly for the British women she documents, it could be deemed that Coopland is pleading for more praise for British female writers whose accounts of war offer much more than the “petty troubles” and “trivial things” that female autobiography is habitually associated with.

Duberly, whose Crimean narrative was considered formerly in this chapter, was undeniably aware of her celebrity status and alludes to it within her Mutiny writings when she is referred to as “the Crimean heroine” (25). Despite accompanying her military husband, Duberly was essentially a “war tourist” and unlike the other writers considered throughout this dissertation, her decision to publish was likely made before she set off to India in October 1857. Upon her return to Britain in 1858 Duberly made an arrangement with Smith & Elder for the printing of 1000 copies with her receiving 3s. 6d. for every copy over 400 sold within 3 years. (*Smith & Elder Publication Arrangement Ledger*, Ms.43194, 39). No sales or payment accounts survive but a private letter to her sister Selina reveals that her Mutiny account was not as popular as her best-selling Crimean journal: “For myself, I did not expect it to sell well, as India is too far, people do not care or trouble themselves about this war as they did about the Crimea” (Add Ms 47218).

Unsurprisingly, Duberly does not write anonymously, nor does she employ a pseudonym.¹¹⁵ Much like her Crimean writings, which ignore the presence of significant numbers of British women in the Crimea, Duberly's preface fails to acknowledge any prior Mutiny narratives. She proposes that her account is the only coherent record so far published:

As little idea can be gathered from the disconnected letters published in the newspapers of the daily adventures and occupations of soldiers engaged in an active campaign in India, I venture to put before the public a faithful record. (v)

Perhaps mindful of *The Examiner's* earlier caricaturing of Duberly as a "comic Lady Sale" and *Punch Magazine's* mocking cartoon "The Diary of Lady Fire-Eater", the preface proceeds with a short plea for leniency: "I trust that I shall be pardoned if occasionally I am tempted to touch upon points which may seem beyond a woman's province" (v). However, Duberly's self-deprecating tone is swiftly usurped by examples of the self-assured and immodest comments that can be found across her writings. Duberly's preface is notable for its lack of sympathy or dedication for those killed in the uprising. In contrast, Duberly offers political advice on drawing India and England "closer together" (v): "My proposal is to give every officer every seventh year to himself... England would be our lungs, the old blood would be aerated, and new life, health, and strength thereby sent flowing vigorously to every corner and extremity of our empire" (vii). Duberly reveals little anxiety about publishing and it is significant that she shuns the routine construction of female Mutiny survivors as victims.

It is noteworthy that Canning did not publish her letters or journal related to the Mutiny. They remained private until after her death when Augustus J. C. Hare published *The Story of Two Noble Lives* (1893), an account of the lives of Canning and her younger sister Louisa. Canning's decision not to publish could be owing to several anxieties. Firstly, as "a lady" and the wife of the First Viceroy of India, it may have been perceived as an unwomanly and improper attempt to seek publicity from private writings. Secondly, Canning's husband Charles was "much criticised for being too lenient" (Paterson 115) in the Mutiny

115. Smith & Elder refer to the reputation Duberly established from her Crimean publication when marketing her Mutiny account: "Now Ready, post 8vo., with two Maps, price 10s. 6d. cloth, Campaigning Experiences in Rajpootana and Central India during the Suppression of the Mutiny in 1857-8. By Mrs. Henry Duberly. Author of "A Journal kept during the Russian War" (*Morning Post*, 20. Jul. 1859, 1).

and was trying to put the event behind him and a publication by his wife might have been counterproductive. Perhaps another reason for Canning's privacy might rest in her awareness of Amelia Murray (1795-1884). Amelia Murray was a fellow woman of the bedchamber to Queen Victoria, whom Canning worked alongside for two years from 1853. In 1855 Murray travelled to Cuba and the American South and observed the slavery situation, which she wrote about in lengthy letters sent home to Britain. In her writings, later published as *Letters from the United States, Cuba and Canada* (1856), Murray took a pro-slavery position, supporting the masters rather than the slaves. Murray received huge public rebuke and Richardson claims that it was not the act of writing that caused controversy for Murray, but "the fact that she included her opinions" (157). This thesis has shown that Canning also had strong political views about Britain's relationship with India, and although Canning's opinions would have not caused the same controversy as Murray's pro-slavery comments, it is probable that she decided to keep her views private for fear of similar rebuke. The public response to Murray, like the earlier reactions to Ward and Duberly, again reinforces the risk that Mutiny writers were taking by publishing their private writings.

The study now moves to its close by reviewing the public's response to the published narratives that have been analysed throughout this dissertation. The chapter concludes by considering whether the British women writers' status as heroines, victims and sufferers enabled them to avoid criticisms of being unfeminine or whether the (con)textual identities they construct within arguably unwomanly writings were deemed as a breach of gender conventions.

The Public Response

This dissertation has hitherto evaluated the textual repercussions of relocation and war whilst demonstrating that new and unwomanly contexts provide a temporal platform for British women to question the parameters of their written identity. The work has established that the (con)textual identities constructed in British women's accounts of the 1857 Mutiny reflect an anxious struggle to restructure the self without endangering mid-nineteenth century gender conventions. As the thesis moves to its conclusion, it is pertinent to review the mid-Victorian response to these published writings, and the identities constructed within them. The discussion attempts to gauge whether the writers' narratives

were deemed contentious or were in fact admired for being authored by survivors, a context that supported Britain's very identity as an imperial power. The research considers whether such accounts were judged as unwomanly and were therefore targets for ridicule and chastisement, or whether the public's appetite for Mutiny stories and sympathies for survivors granted female writers dispensation from the gendered conventions that governed society and literature during the period

After the rebellion Britain experienced what Herbert defines as "Mutiny trauma" (208), a state of shock and outrage regarding revelations of cruelty against British women and the wider implications of a ferocious challenge to Britain's civilising mission. The events "brought images of empire home to Britons like no other event of the century, thereby revealing the fragility of British imperial rule to a generation of Victorians for whom the power of the Raj had appeared untouchable" (Burton *Empire* 259). The rebellion was viewed as a colonial insurrection against imperial rule and more crucially, in the British imagination, as "a crime against all of British womanhood" (Kent 217). Personal accounts published in the war's aftermath "electrified the British public, searing the British imagination" (Kent 217). Britain responded with sympathy and affection for Mutiny survivors and, as *The Westminster Review* in October 1858 demonstrates, survivors' published narratives were treated with leniency and compassion making them exempt from the social rules governing other texts:

Books on the Indian revolt are not to be treated like the deliberate productions of peace and leisure. They are like the communications of a friend whom we thank for telling us what he knows, and never think of finding fault with for not telling us something else. (334)

The Westminster Review's claim highlights a central issue to be explored in the ensuing section. By examining reviews of both male and female Mutiny narratives that appeared in British newspapers and Indian English language publications in 1858-59, the upcoming research intends to evaluate whether the horror of the rebellion elicited such sympathy in the British imagination that British women's Mutiny writings were perceived as too recent and raw to condemn and were therefore evaluated with leniency and compassion.

Critics have shown how mid-Victorian newspapers had the ability to activate influence on their readers, particularly in times of real or imagined

threats to national instability. They bore “the role of public letter and public conversation” (Splichal 2) and became “the grandiose unification of public mind” (qtd. in Clarke 318). Aled Jones in *Powers of the Press: Newspaper, Power and the Public in Nineteenth-Century England* (1996) questions “whether the press reflected or created public opinion” (87), an enquiry that exposes the strength of influence that newspapers arguably possessed. The relationship between the Indian Mutiny, Britain’s press and the British imagination has been the focus of comprehensive studies by Gautam Chakravarty, Pramod K. Nayar and Eugenie Palmegiano, but scant attention has been paid to literature reviews of Mutiny narratives that appeared in newspapers, their significance and what they reveal regarding the prevailing ideologies of post-Mutiny Britain.

In 1858-59 British newspapers became a main vehicle for revealing Britain’s post-war anxieties and book reviews of Mutiny accounts contributed to that vehicle. Audrey Ann Fessler argues that “Victorian literary reviews were a form of social practice that attempted to reproduce the dominant ideologies of the period” (9). The following research corroborates this theory by demonstrating that literature reviews of British women’s Mutiny writings were inflected by Britain’s post-Mutiny agenda: “an unwavering belief in the justness and legitimacy of [British] governance in the subcontinent” (Goswami 80).

Lisa Rodensky argues that it is difficult to encapsulate “what constituted a review” (130) in a Victorian newspaper, but that the dominant format involved “long extracts stitched together with minimal commentary” in an attempt “to render a judgement on a work’s artistic and moral value” (130). Reviews tended to include, “in addition to critical judgement and analysis, considerable plot summary and occasional excerpts” (Meem 15) and their purpose was to increase interest in a text and to critique a work’s artistic merit. However, an examination of literary reviews of Mutiny accounts reveal that instead of a providing a traditional assessment of the style and content of a text, mid-Victorian reviewers exploited the appearance of a Mutiny narrative to pass comment on the events in India and by doing so reinforce mid-Victorian imperialist sentiments.

It is important to recognise the sheer number of Mutiny texts that emerged in the period. On 7 June 1858 *John Bull Magazine* announced the release of three Mutiny narratives within the same week. The public, and as a result book reviewers, were bombarded with new accounts almost weekly, yet

instead of suggesting that the subject was overdone, reviews published soon after the event habitually commence by praising each new work for feeding the public's appetite. A review of J.E.W Rotten's *The Chaplain's Narrative of the Siege of Delhi* (1858) in *The Economist* illustrates this recurring sentiment:

We look to despatches for the simple announcement of the events,... to history for the more detailed military achievements that fill other portions; but to books of this description for those records of individual feeling and conduct under circumstances of individual trial which form by far the most interesting part of the subject to the general public. (24. Jul. 1858, 817)

John Bull Magazine lauded the literary outpouring by declaring: "we are now beginning to make our way towards of a complete history of that remarkable event": (11. Sep. 1858, 587). *The Morning Chronicle* of 31 August 1858 asserted: "the public are by no means tired of hearing the story. Every narrative has something new and fresh, describing details which, if minute in themselves, are highly interesting, and not devoid of importance" (6). Each fresh account was deemed meaningful as *The Standard's* review of Anderson's journal confirms: "The story of the siege is not complete without it" (13. Mar. 1858, 1). In their review of Case's journal *The Hampshire Advertiser and Salisbury Guardian* asserted:

It will be long before English readers will be weary of the tale to be told by men and women belonging to the rescued garrison of Lucknow. A worthy narrative of that unparalleled struggle would become a classic in the language... the narrative of the siege is of perennial interest. (24. Jun. 1858, 4)

Likewise on 1 March 1859 *The Calcutta Review*, in its review of Bartrum's "reminiscences", emphasised the growing number of female Mutiny texts and commended the outpouring:

Many may think, and perhaps rightly so, that of books on Lucknow and its siege no more are wanted, that that great event has had every form and phase of it painted and filled up in every colour. Every class and variety of action and suffering have been recorded... It may be thought that such works as those of Mrs. Harris, Mrs. Case and the Polehamptons have rendered this little record unnecessary. Still we willingly want it. (250)

The reviews testify to a public appetite for insight and a quest for first-hand morsels of information. It was a desire that British publishers were eager to satisfy, a context that conceivably elevated the status of female autobiography for a short period.

Women's diaries and letters were often "castigated rather than celebrated" (Steinitz 109) upon publication or thought of as unfeminine or obtrusive. To publish meant entering the public realm, but literary reviews reveal how female survivors of the Mutiny largely escaped this ridicule. Apart from one noteworthy exception, *The Economist's* critique of Duberly's Mutiny writings, the reviews disclose mounting enthusiasm for female accounts. Instead of obtaining criticisms regarding private writings becoming public or being unwomanly in content, it is the perceived personal "realism" of the writings that is viewed as their most appealing feature.

The Examiner focuses on the honesty of Coopland's narrative: "There is nothing clever in this book; its merit is its truth" (19. Mar. 1859, 180). It is valuable to recall that Coopland's account is one of the most graphic in its employment of violent detail. Extracts such as "the poor wretch was literally blown into atoms, the lookers on being covered with blood and fragments of flesh" (233) are commonplace. However, the reviewers ignore Coopland's unwomanly content and instead compliment her truthful portrayal:

This is one of the most graphic of many accounts... Horrors are given in a detail of terrible minuteness... every sensation is so perfectly given, the feelings and successive horrors hour by hour are so distinctly delineated, that the reader is more actually present, and shares in the misery to a degree we have rarely seen equalled in any work, whether of history or fiction. Truth is stamped on every line. (*The Morning Chronicle*, 1. Apr. 1859, 6)

The Daily News compliments Duberly's attention to detail and skill in selecting appropriate material: "Mrs. Duberly possesses in perfection the feminine faculty of quick and accurate observation; but she qualifies it with a preference of important matters to those trivialities which are apt to beset the female mind on its travels" (19. Aug. 1859, 2). *The Daily News* proceeds with its praise of Duberly by endeavouring to define the female adeptness for close observation: "I have heard ladies who, having passed each other in the course of a morning drive

have been able to describe minutely every point of an elaborate toilette, though the period of observation could not exceed five seconds” (19. Aug. 1959, 2). The focus on truthfulness, whilst ignoring unwomanly and conceivably contentious content, suggests that female Mutiny writers were able to circumvent charges of unfeminine conduct. The narratives are not met with the derision or disapproval that women’s autobiography frequently attracted. The unprecedented access to the rebellion that British women tendered was too tantalising to dismiss or critique.

The Economist’s review of William Edwards’ account commences with the words “This is not a book to be criticised, at least by English critics” (7. Aug. 1858, 874), a sentiment that suggests that the author should be safeguarded because of patriotic loyalty. The belief that Mutiny accounts should not be assessed in the conventional way is implicit across the reviews of both male and female narratives. The evaluations illustrate the powerful influence of “public anger and outrage” (Mangan 33) that was prevalent in Britain. Notably, there are few criticisms regarding the style and approach of the writings. Reviewers instead turn their attention to the political context surrounding the narratives. *The Spectator* of 11 September 1858 illustrates this in their evaluation of Martin Gubbin’s *The Mutinies in Oudh and the Siege of the Lucknow Residency* (1858). They judge “the most important portion” of his account as “the political discussions it contains” (1013). Likewise *The Economist’s* review of Cooper’s accounts declares: “We have made no attempt to give an account of the narrative of this book, but have rather wished to exhibit the main practical qualities of the Punjab administration” (31. Jul. 1858, 845). *The Economist* considered that the Mutiny narratives as a whole “owe their interest to the importance of the subjects which they treat, rather than to any literary merit they possess” (24. Jul. 1858, 817).

The literary reviews of female works also convey a similar sentiment with regards to shielding authors from criticism as a result of sympathy and patriotism. *The Economist’s* review of Coopland’s narrative features an anxious tone when attempting a critique:

We would say something, also, of the tone that runs through the whole, but we fear to be wanting in charitableness ourselves if we accuse one

who has suffered so much at the hands of the natives of India of a want of charity towards them. (2. Apr. 1859, 368)

The Calcutta Review opened its review of Duberly's work by criticising her style, "we look in vain for any connected narrative". However, the reviewer hastily alters his tone as he backpedals on his previous comments:

Her style is that clear, unaffected English, which women seem to have wrested from the lords of creation, faithful, spirited, and totally free from exaggeration... Mrs. Duberly possesses in perfection the feminine faculty of quick and accurate observation. (1 Dec 1859, lxxi)

The reviewers reinforce the point that the women writers were amateurs and should therefore be exempt from customary criticisms. Curiously, it is the writers' lack of literary skill that is praised. *The Examiner* concludes its evaluation of Bartrum's writings by stating, "the story tells itself, there is no skill required or employed in this narration" (15. Jan. 1859, 5). In a review of Case's writings *The Athenaeum* considered, "Few will read without sympathy this unaffected, irregular, and thoroughly feminine narrative, helping to complete and fill up the outlines of the Lucknow history" (3. Jul. 1858, 13). *The Morning Chronicle* compliments Case's journal because it is "written without any attempt at literary ornamentation" (31. Aug. 1858, 6).

The reviews are significant in illustrating how both male and female Mutiny narratives produced negative images of India, racial stereotypes and affirmations of British superiority. Both the Mutiny narratives and the reviews themselves were shaped by and arguably helped shape patriotic sentiment in Britain, becoming part of the nation's post-Mutiny imperialist transmission. A review of Greathed's published letters in *The Examiner* asserts that "the spirit of an Englishman shines through them so distinctly, that we could direct a foreigner to no book in which he might better learn what English soldiers are, and why they are invincible" (13. Nov. 1858, 724). *The Economist* uses a review of Charles Raikes's *Notes on the Revolt in the North-Western Provinces of India* (1858) to praise all the Mutiny literature and their authors: "We have here another of the valuable and interesting books which are among the fruits of the great mutiny of 1857. The men who write them deserve a hearty welcome... they are an honour to our country" (14. Aug. 1858, 901). The reviews reflect the mid-Victorian "popularisation of the army and their wartime mission" (Spiers 88) by

discussing “the most conspicuous deeds of heroism” and “admiration of the British soldier” (*The Economist*, 24. Jul. 1858, 817).

With a comparable approach the literary reviews of female writings draw attention to the bravery and heroism of Britons. They promote the “good conduct and superiority of British character” (Richards 31) in an attempt to counteract the threat of imperial collapse. *The Morning Post* takes advantage of an assessment of Case’s journal to highlight British strength and courage: “It is perfectly surprising to observe what an amount of suffering was bravely endured by our fair countrywomen and their brave defenders, whose frequent sallies in their defence are here recorded” (22. Jun. 1858, 6). In a praising review of Case’s narrative *The Athenaeum* declared: “Every word in the volume appears genuine. It is a book of a hundred anecdotes, every one illustrating the tremendous character of the conflict waged, and the wondrous bravery, not of the garrison only, but of the besiegers” (3. Jul. 1858, 6). *The Calcutta Review*, in its assessment of Duberly’s writings, concludes: “never in history or fable did man dare, or suffer more with high heart and unflinching spirit, than was dared and suffered in that year by men and women of the Anglo-Saxon race” (1. Dec. 1859, lxxi). The reviews reveal the broad cultural effects of the Mutiny and how Britain’s very identity as an imperial power was at stake. A notion illustrated in *The Morning Chronicle’s* review of Coopland’s work: “Though India may be a safe home, can it ever be a happy one?” (1. Apr. 1859, 233).

There is no mention of the stereotypical memsahib “the Englishwoman – idle, sexual promiscuous, and immodest” (Roy *Civility* 123). On the contrary, the reviews romanticise women in a manner that fits the mid-nineteenth century idealised view of British femininity: “maternal... natural and emotional creatures” (Felski 39). *The Calcutta Review’s* critique of Bartrum’s diary is particularly admiring of women by drawing attention to the traditionally feminine roles they undertook: “like a true Englishwoman she set herself to put things right, to assist others, to take charge of motherless orphans, and generally to be useful where and as she could” (1. Mar. 1859, 258). The review goes on to celebrate the motherly image she projects: “we can picture that mother as she described herself putting her child to sleep and sitting beside him to fan away the mosquitoes (sic)” (259). They continue their glorification of British women by praising her role as a doting wife; “her husband was ever her thought, and there

is no scene more natural and touching or more exquisitely and simply told in the book” (260). *The Calcutta Review* emphasises the mood of sympathy for Mutiny survivors and shows its charitable side when reviewing Bartrum’s style: “It is a work as free from extravagance as it is full of natural simplicity, as truly beautiful in that simplicity as it abounds with lessons of God-given fortitude and noble English womanliness” (260). By ignoring the unwomanly and contentious parts of the female Mutiny accounts and drawing attention to constructions of “noble English womanliness” pitted against “the ruthless haste and cowardly disorganisation of the Mutineers” (*The Calcutta Review*, 1. Dec. 1859, lxxi), the reviews conceivably provoke support for Britain’s punitive mission in India.

All of the women explored in this thesis, who published in 1858-59, acquired positive and appreciative reviews with one notable exception: Frances Duberly. Duberly, the only woman who had previously published a wartime narrative, did not experience the Mutiny as a captive in the Lucknow Residency. Nor did she suffer the hardships experienced by those women who escaped “in great uncertainty and danger” (Coopland 88) across Central India. On the contrary, Duberly observed the Mutiny, in the same way she observed the Crimean war, as a war tourist. Her textual identity resists the guise of sufferer and victim and she is instead portrayed as someone who readily embraced the adventure that war presented. Some reviews were commending of her actions and writings. *The Illustrated London News* called her book a “consecutive and minute... animated, truthful account” (20. Aug. 1859, 178), whilst *The Morning Post* labelled Duberly as “an intelligent spectatress (sic) of the fight”, describing her account as “a lively and interesting narrative” and acknowledging how “a female, going through such toils and bracing such dangers, is invested with the interest of a heroine” (25. Aug. 1859, 3).

The Friend of India branded Duberly as “A Lady Campaigner” and hailed the fearlessness that her narrative reveals:

As a Military record of campaigning experiences, it is not very valuable; but as a new instance of courage, and to a certain extent of female powers of observation, it will interest the reader. Why should not women throw off the trammels of an artificial civilisation, and return for a while to larger life?... The courage which ‘braved’ the Crimea and made literary

capital out of it, may as well 'brave' Central India also in this used up
Nineteenth Century. (8. Sep. 1859, 845)

The Daily News compared Duberly's Mutiny writings against her Crimean text and praised both titles:

In the extant literature of the Russian war Mrs. Henry Duberly's dashing journal holds a high position; and her new book of experiences gathered in Indian campaigning is worthy a place besides her chronicles of the Crimea. (19. Aug. 1859, 2)

However, *The Daily News* also acknowledged the unwomanly style and content of Duberly's writings:

The vigour of both books is remarkable; and the second will no doubt, as did the first, provoke a few objections on the score of masculine feeling and phraseology... The authoress makes no compromise with facts as they strike her vision, and is a Rosa Bonheur among the "graphic" writers of her sex. (19. Aug. 1859, 2)

The comparison with Rosa Bonheur (1822-99), a nineteenth century artist who "challenged codes of femininity" (Lewis 63) and "rocketed to fame with her distinctly unfeminine choice of subject and self-presentation" (Lewis 103), alludes to both the popularity of Duberly's work, but also to the controversial nature of her texts.

It was *The Economist* of 8 October 1859 that took the most offence to Duberly's publication. In a review, not dissimilar to *The Examiner's* scathing attack on her Crimean narrative, *The Economist* opens with a sarcastic reference to Duberly's unwomanly ambitions and attempts at fame:

Mrs Duberly has not rested content with the laurels she gathered in the Crimea. She has since sought for fresh fields of excitement and glory in India; and if the Crimean medal has been denied to her by unappreciating (sic) Englishmen, she may at least hope for the "decoration" of an Indian Prince. (1125)

The Economist acknowledged the "patient endurance of the women in the garrison" but firmly emphasised that Duberly was not herself a captive and in fact chose to travel to India after the Mutiny had commenced and thus cannot be judged in the same manner:

For Mrs Duberly we have a certain degree of admiration, as a woman of singular courage, and strength of will, and of some ability, but beyond this we cannot go... We do not admire ostentatious heroism, and have not much sympathy to spare for needless and self-imposed privations. (1126)

The review is critical of Duberly's presence in a conflict, a judgment that supports the prevailing view that army wives were "an annoying encumbrance" (Rappaport 37):

On opening Mrs Duberly's journal we endeavoured to free ourselves from a certain uncourteous (sic) and perhaps prejudiced feeling, that a lady was out of her place on the line of march and in the field of battle, yet its perusal has given us no cause to alter our first impression, and we lay it down at length with a strengthened conviction that, however courageous and energetic a lady may be, she can be nothing but a simple encumbrance to an army on active service. (1125)

Like the judgements made on Harriet Ward's war writings, there is a similar sense that women should not cast opinions on political issues outside of their realm: "We allude to the judgement of men and measures scattered throughout her journal. Opinions formed hastily, and often without sufficient grounds, or at best from a necessarily limited and partial view of the whole plan of war". (1126)

The Economist's cutting review supports the chief argument that has run throughout the concluding part of this chapter: the status of captives and victims permitted British women writers exemption from negative judgements related to female public expression, whilst war-tourists were merely unwomanly. *The Economist* asserts that

neither the army in the field, nor the critics at home, would have reason to welcome its [Duberly's] publication if it should inspire the wives of other gallant officers with emulation of her achievements, or with desire to share in her literary fame... If the fruits of feminine campaigning are the publishing to all the world of privately expressed opinions and judgements either well or ill-founded - a retailed version, as it were, of mess-room talk - the less we have of it in the future the better. (1126)

It is also valuable to consider that the negativity towards Duberly may be due to the timing of her publication She published after Case, Bartrum, Harris and Coopland and there is sense that her writings came too late and that the sympathy

that was profuse immediately after the conflict's end had faded in the latter half of 1859. *The Calcutta Review* of 1 December 1859 considered that:

The public mind had sympathy and interest for all; all were early read, but we know now nearly all that we care to know. The host of narrative and journals from soldiers, civilians, chaplains, and ladies... exhaust the strategy, the tragedy, the heroic deeds... The autograph of Mrs Duberly has come too late... She has nothing very new, or very clear to impart.
(lxxi)

Post-War Anxieties

This chapter has shown how the conclusion of the rebellion did not mark the end of the road for the narratives considered in this thesis. Whilst the end of the Mutiny elicited initial relief and emotional declarations that “It was done at last” (Germon 134), the discussion has revealed that post-Mutiny India, journeys back to Britain and the process of publication provoked further anxieties and provided new and exceptional contexts for female writers to negotiate.

In 1865 Paget published *Camp and Cantonment*, a detailed and lengthy journal of the Mutiny, but in contrast to the compassionate and charitable tone found within reviews published in 1858-59, Paget's narrative was met with a notable lack of interest. *The Examiner's* review reveals the adjustment in the public's concern in female Mutiny accounts:

India and the Indian Mutiny has literally been done to rags, so that except for private circulation, Mrs. Leopold Paget's work, it is much to be feared, will not meet with any very remarkable attention. As a literary production little can be said of it... *Camp and Cantonment* is altogether worthless. (3. June. 1865, 4)

The contrast in responses between Paget's review in 1865 and the earlier reviews considered formerly corroborates the fundamental premise of this chapter: the Indian Mutiny marked a unique and critical point in the history of the British Empire when women's autobiographical writings were judged in ways that had not been before and would not be for several decades: they were exceptional texts.

The chapter, and this dissertation as a whole, have revealed that the writings of twelve British women are far from “worthless”. On the contrary, they

provide an exceptional example of a unique context when mid-Victorian British women were permitted and even commended for constructing new and exceptional (con)textual identities without being reproached for endangering gender conventions.

Conclusion

The world is a bundle of roads. Follow them and you will find everything: life and death, misery and happiness, tears and consolation, adventures and love.

(Sebastiano Vassalli, *La Chimera*, 2008)

This dissertation has identified and evaluated a distinctive and engaging body of autobiographical writings related to British female responses to travel, migration and war in the mid-nineteenth century. By examining the relationship between context and textual identity, this thesis has evaluated how travel, experiences in India before and during the 1857 Mutiny and the process of publication provided unstable contexts for disruptions, negotiations and re-creations of the self. The research has drawn attention to the techniques by which twelve women writers contest, alter and redefine their textual personas within diaries, journals, letters and memoirs. By reflecting on the politics of location and identity, the discussion has argued that the writers assemble textual identities that can be defined as new and exceptional due to their unwomanly, unique and often contentious characteristics. The thesis has ultimately revealed how “movement was truly unsettling” (Kearns 457) for mid-nineteenth century women writers, and more crucially how different contexts induce (con)textual identities: textual personas that are strongly marked by the context in which, or in some cases of which, they write. The study stands by its initial claims, that the writings are by no means identical. Nor has the research argued that historically all women document travel and war in a similar manner. However, it has established that there are shared characteristics that link the women’s accounts of the Mutiny together. There are dominant trends associated with the transmission of gender and national identity that make British women’s Mutiny writings distinct from masculine, fictional and media responses to the rebellion.

The narratives have enabled an investigation into the complicated choices that female authors had to make in order to narrate travel and war in a century when female identity was primarily linked to place and when women were expected to satisfy “the Angel in the House” methodology. The Victorian principle of “separate spheres” located domesticity and the home as women’s

realms, contexts that stood in stark contrast to the public spheres of colonial India and military conflict, sites that were principally deemed as the province of men. Moreover, travel was still chiefly regarded as a masculine pursuit and hence was “no place for a lady”. Consequently, the British women writers examined throughout this thesis had to negotiate the complexities and legitimacies of their position as observers and commentators of three challenging and primarily unwomanly contexts: travel, India and war. Via the close and chronological scrutiny of textual encounters in “forbidden zones” (Borden 1), this thesis has demonstrated that the writers’ narratives reveal a complex and continual “battle” to establish the authority of their perspective as well as evade cultural limitations on what and how they reveal both self and “Other”. The research has continually drawn attention to the multitude of agendas with which the women write, acknowledging that as British women in colonial contexts they were observing from a colonial stance whilst trying to remain feminine. The context of being both the observer and the observed has been established as an underpinning authority across the writings examined.

Chapter One considered the origins of the private writings as well as illustrating how travel and sea-voyages to India were laden with multiple opportunities for the textual metamorphosis of the self. The sea served as an active stage on which new, unwomanly and on occasions maritime identities are revealed, as the writers begin to break ties with conventional British feminine ideologies. The chapter revealed to what extent the writers exploited the openness of the seascape to reshape their personal narratives and the identities within. Travel towards India was shown as a stimulus for the creation of a new self in an authoritative, dominant and assured guise. However, crucially the writers did not “drop the anchor” and steady these identities. Instead it was “anchors aweigh” as their textual personas, like the sea around them, fluctuated and shifted as they prepared for yet another transformation of the self upon arrival in India.

Chapter Two revealed how the women negotiated settlement in India and argued that the writers commenced a continuous remapping of spaces, redrawing of boundaries and redefinition of both self and “Other”, denoting British and Indian identity, depending on the context in which they wrote. The research argued that by entering the public world of the military, attempting

domestic management and social reform, the writers cautiously sought independence, authority and thus exceptionality via the elevation in status of traditional female functions. The narratives analysed were attested to reflect a relentless struggle between embracing newness and unwomanly contexts whilst not overtly endangering British gender boundaries. The chapter also revealed that their perceived constructs of Indians and both Indian and British landscapes were demonstrated to be multi-layered “imagined” entities, so much so that on the same page of a diary, letter or memoir they often simultaneously depict people and landscapes through multiple and often paradoxical strategies.

The main emphasis has been on the textual identities assembled by the writers, but their depiction of the British Empire has provided a welcome reminder that Victorian women were themselves active agents of imperialism and that their writings, despite seeming personal and private from the outside, contributed towards mid-nineteenth century colonial discourse by producing representations of the “Other”. Marnia Lazreg claims that “At the heart of the feminist project between the East and West, is a desire to dismantle the existing order of things and reconstruct it to fit one’s own needs” (81). She asserts that women manipulate foreign landscapes and people to suit their own requirements, a theory that this dissertation has corroborated. This “dismantling” began in Chapter Two, but was fundamentally evidenced near the thesis’ conclusion via a comparison of the writers’ pre- and post-Mutiny portrayals of India, compositions that expounded a dominant argument in the thesis: the writers construct and thus manipulate “imagined Indian landscapes” to reflect their altered perceptions of India.

In Chapters Three, Four and Five the Mutiny was shown to be infinitely more than a journey from peace to conflict and back to peace again. It was, for the women considered in this dissertation, a disruptive, eventful and controversial event. The writers risked upsetting mid-Victorian gender conventions simply by being there, even without writing and publishing about it. Yet, this thesis has demonstrated that the writers embraced this risk by permeating the boundaries of a militaristic and masculine sphere. They did not produce one fixed persona on the page. On the contrary, their responses and textual identities are multifaceted and fluctuate with the changing phases of the conflict and in response to their own experience or those around them. However,

what emerges in their autobiographical texts is that the writers strove to participate “textually” as close to the frontline as a female writer could get. They embrace the upheaval of leaving one life for another, and therefore one textual persona for another, and continue with the negotiation of their (con)textual identity as war develops. The writers claim unwomanly roles and occasionally depict the self as “domestic soldier” rather than a mere domestic helper. They express pride when others around them identify them as brave leaders and “heroic heroines”; however there are occasions when their focus on unwomanly themes, such as violence and death, leads to apologetic and guilty undertones as the writers recall the limitations of their gender.

Chapter Five drew special attention to the process of publication and the public response to the narratives at the Mutiny’s end. The research demonstrated how the conclusion of the rebellion marked the beginning of the public journeys of the narratives. The discussion revealed that the process of publication proffered one last and challenging context for female writers to negotiate. A thorough assessment of the literary reviews published in newspapers, magazines and periodicals in the period attested that the Mutiny was a unique context when mid-Victorian British women were permitted and even commended for constructing new and exceptional (con)textual identities.

Schroven argues that “women’s participation in war can take many forms” (47) and this dissertation supports her assertion. Although the study has determined that unwomanly, exceptional and unique personas are present, it has also revealed that the women do not completely reject traditional feminine roles. Instead household maintenance, food collection and preparation are presented as important contributions to the wartime effort. The feminine domestic sphere, which forms the base for much of their participation, may suggest that there was little or no substantial transformation of gendered textual identity during war, but this thesis has demonstrated that domestic duties are shrewdly manipulated in such a way that they supplement the growing construction of exceptional (con)textual identities.

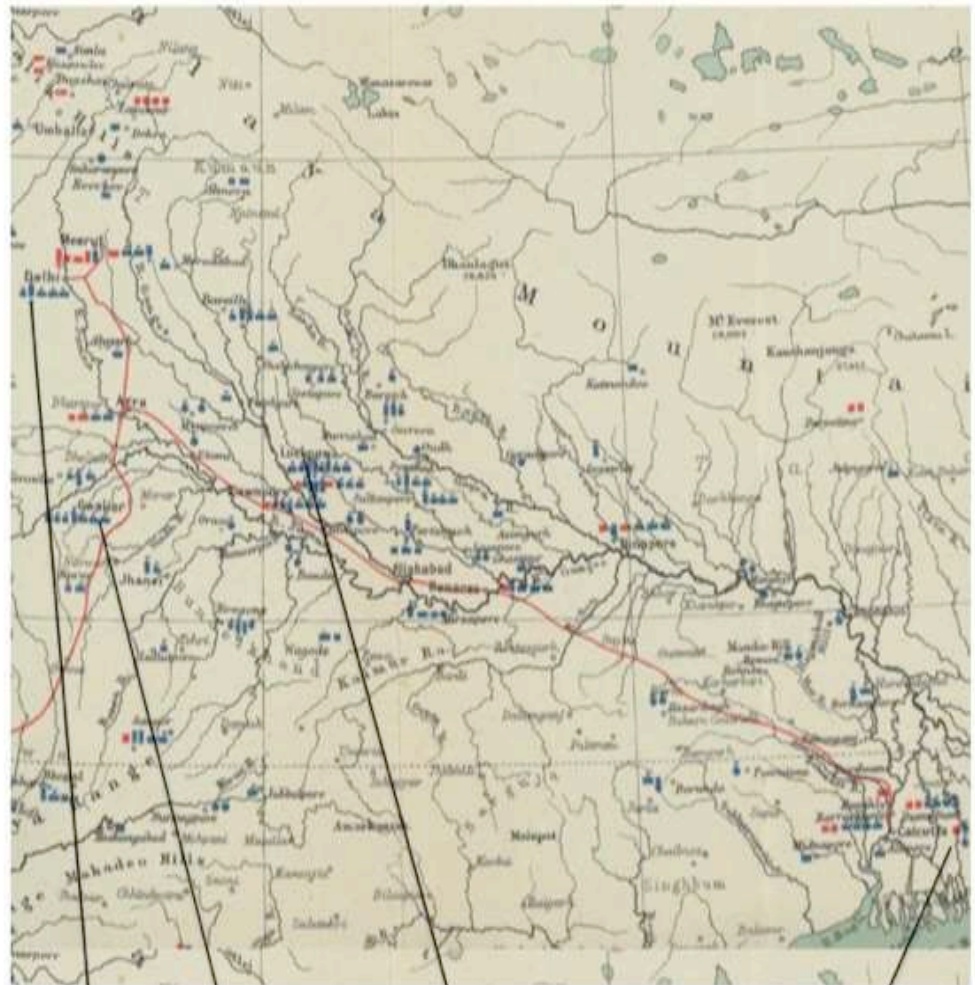
This dissertation has devoted special attention to British women’s autobiographical accounts of the Indian Mutiny because they have thus far been relatively neglected in studies of the event and in literary criticism. It is hoped that this study presents a selection of writings and theories that will generate

debate and stimulate further inquiries regarding British women, travel and the Indian Mutiny. The term and theory of “(con)textual identities” could deliver a useful framework for both travel and autobiographical theorists who seek to define the link between travel, writing and the self. Furthermore, the expression “imagined Indian landscapes” may provide a useful designation for Western descriptions of colonial India. This dissertation’s employment of the label “domestic soldier” might also proffer a thought-provoking theory for the small but growing body of analysis on women’s “domestic” war diaries.

By posing and answering questions, the thesis has highlighted more areas of study that are worthy of future research. Frances Duberly and Charlotte Canning’s writings deserve their own individual studies. Duberly’s encounters in the Crimean War and Canning’s experiences as Queen Victoria’s lady-in-waiting are contexts that justify much further analysis of their Mutiny writings. A more thorough comparison of the twelve female narratives against male autobiographical accounts of the Mutiny would undoubtedly provide a thought-provoking study. Moreover, an evaluation of the writers’ accounts alongside Victorian media reports of the Mutiny could offer stimulating debates.

The contradictory nature of the opening epigraph to this conclusion highlights the paradoxical range of (con)textual identities that have been identified and analysed throughout the thesis. Through their textual portrayals of travel, relocation and war, the twelve writers reviewed do indeed narrate “life and death, misery and happiness, tears and consolation, adventures and love”, sometimes all within the space of one page of their narrative. Yet, it is the writers’ dexterity in describing fresh, unconventional and often contentious contexts that is most striking. Whether what they were saying was “imagined” or not, they predominantly delivered it in a new, exceptional and often highly surprising manner.

Appendix 1: Map
Locations of Writers during July 1857



Harriet Tytler

Ruth Coopland

Katherine Bartrum
Adelaide Case
Caroline Dickson
Maria Germon
Georgina Harris
Julia Inglis
Madeleine Ouvry

Charlotte Canning

REFERENCE NOTE

BRITISH TROOPS COLOURED RED

NATIVE TROOPS COLOURED BLUE

☞	CAVALRY REGIMENT	☛	DETACHMENT
—	INFANTRY REGIMENT	▲	MUTINEER
☛	INFANTRY COMPANY	◊	DISARMED
☛	ARTILLERY	—	RAILWAY

Grand Trunk Road —

*Frances Duberly did not arrive in India until 1 October 1857
*Georgina Paget did not arrive in India until 1 December 1857

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