

## Introduction

### Whose Problem Was the ‘Servant Problem’?

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In November 1911 the suffragist newspaper the *Common Cause* published a letter from a woman who had worked in service since the age of thirteen. Identifying herself only as ‘Another Servant’, she objected not only to hard working conditions and harsh employers, but also to the complacency of the suffrage movement. ‘Why don’t suffragists begin their reform work at home ...?’, she demanded, ‘why don’t they try in some way to relieve the monotonous life of the domestic servant? If they want equality with men, why cannot they put servants on twelve hours a day shift, like the majority of workmen[?]’<sup>1</sup> The *Common Cause* was in fact quite open to discussing the ‘servant problem’, publishing many letters from readers who were both servants and mistresses. A month later, a cook general named Kathlyn Oliver (1884–1953), who had founded the Domestic Workers’ Union almost two years earlier, wrote offering a more optimistic perspective on the relationship between servant militancy and women’s emancipation, insisting, ‘This servant agitation belongs to the feminist movement.’<sup>2</sup>

This book is about how feminists thought about domestic service, and how servants thought about feminism. It is about a moment in history when these two groups of women were sometimes united – when servants became feminists – and sometimes at odds with one another – when feminists employed servants. I examine how all of these women grappled with the question of what it meant to employ another woman to do a form of work that you yourself would rather not. My focus is the early twentieth-century suffrage movement and how it responded to a perceived shortage of competent, reliable and obedient domestic workers – what was referred to at the time as the ‘servant problem’.<sup>3</sup> *Feminism and the Servant Problem* is also a history of the British working

<sup>1</sup> *Common Cause* 9 Nov. 1911, p. 543.      <sup>2</sup> *Common Cause* 7 Dec. 1911, pp. 621–622.

<sup>3</sup> In 1911 the *Concise Oxford English Dictionary* defined this problem as one of the ‘getting and controlling of servants’; Selina Todd, *The People: The Rise and Fall of the Working Class, 1910–2010* (London: John Murray, 2014), p. 21.

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class, one that rejects masculine models of class formation to look not only at women workers but at a hyper-feminised form of work in the private sphere of the home. Feminism is therefore both my subject and my methodology, though I also aim to uncover its historical limitations and their theoretical legacies. Combining feminist history with labour history, *Feminism and the Servant Problem* examines class relations between women in the home and explores a subject matter – servant militancy in general and the Domestic Workers’ Union in particular – that has tended to fall outside both histories of the women’s movement and histories of trade unionism.

This dual interest has led me to focus mainly on the first decade and a half of the twentieth century, when both the struggle for the suffrage and working-class militancy were at their height. Following the establishment of the National Union of Women’s Suffrage Societies in 1897 and the Women’s Social and Political Union in 1903, the campaign for the vote turned more towards grassroots organising and mass protest, involving greater numbers of working-class women than ever before. Meanwhile, the New Unionism that had begun in the 1880s was gaining ground, reaching out beyond heavy industry to many female-dominated workplaces. Women workers came to play an important role in the unprecedented levels of industrial action known as the Great Unrest of 1907–1914. The suffrage and the workers’ movements often overlapped, sometimes working together, sometimes coming into conflict, and this complex relationship created fertile ground for the growth of servant agitation. It is no coincidence that middle-class anxiety about the ‘servant problem’ also peaked during these years. The relatively short period of social and political ferment with which this book concerns itself was interrupted by the outbreak of war in 1914. Most suffrage organisations suspended their campaigns, labour disputes were curtailed, and industry was radically reorganised. In particular, hundreds of thousands of women left domestic service to take up jobs vacated by men now fighting at the front. In 1918 some women were finally granted the parliamentary vote, and the disbandment of the suffrage movement is usually seen to mark the end of the ‘first wave’ of feminism in Britain. Yet live-in domestic servants remained disenfranchised until 1928, the struggle for women’s rights was far from over, and the ‘servant problem’ remained a pressing issue throughout the interwar years. The chronological scope of *Feminism and the Servant Problem* is not, therefore, intended to impose a definitive periodisation, but rather to allow for an in-depth exploration of the extraordinary amount of thought and activity relating to women’s emancipation, work and domestic service generated in the years leading up to the First World War.

I argue that the ‘servant problem’ should be understood as a distinctively feminist problem. Domestic labour was at this time invariably perceived as the work of women, whether they be housewives, servants or mistresses. The possibility of men doing their fair share was very rarely voiced even within the women’s movement. Middle-class suffrage activists were especially reliant upon servants to take responsibility for the smooth running of their households while they dedicated themselves to the struggle for the vote. At the same time, servants were also involved in the suffrage movement, and were inspired by both feminism and trade unionism to stand up to their female employers. Some of them joined the Domestic Workers’ Union, a grassroots organisation formed by servants for servants, and it is their story that forms the heart of this book. Class conflict between women is an important element of this history, as are the intellectual and political limitations of a movement with a predominantly middle-class leadership. Yet the story of suffrage and the ‘servant problem’ cannot be narrated solely in terms of the exclusion or marginalisation of working-class women. To the contrary, I have encountered servants as an active force in the movement’s history, answering back and attempting to define on their own terms feminist debates about housework, domestic service and what it meant to be a ‘free woman’.

This book argues that the ‘servant problem’ should not be dismissed as a trivial middle-class gripe but that it pointed to deeper and widespread social anxiety over rising worker militancy, the strengthening of the women’s movement and the changing relationship between the domestic sphere and the world of work. The ‘servant problem’ can be traced back to the second half of the nineteenth century, coinciding with, and in part provoked by, the entry of middle-class women into professional work outside the home and growing demands for emancipation among women of all classes.<sup>4</sup> A shortage of people willing and able to perform the reproductive labour of the home was a genuine problem, and *Feminism and the Servant Problem* asks why this situation came about and what women activists at the time had to say about it. The ‘servant problem’ consisted not just of ‘irritable mistresses’ but also ‘irritated servants’, and throughout the book I explore the problem from the perspective of domestic workers themselves: as a problem of low wages, terrible working conditions and authoritarian employers.<sup>5</sup> The employer class was increasingly

<sup>4</sup> Between 1890 and 1919 British newspapers referred to the ‘servant problem’ and the ‘servant question’ 5,118 times, its popularity as a discussion item coinciding with a peak in the number of times that women’s suffrage was mentioned. Data derived from keyword search of 602 digitised newspapers in the British Newspaper Archive, [www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk](http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk).

<sup>5</sup> Ellen W. Darwin, ‘Domestic Service’, *Nineteenth Century*, 28 (1890), 286–296, p. 287.

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confronted with the uncomfortable realisation that the ‘servant problem’ was, at least in part, driven by ever more vocal dissatisfaction among that section of the working class who resided within their own homes.

The ‘servant problem’ was of direct interest to the women’s suffrage movement not only because so many of them employed servants, but also because domestic service was still by far the most common form of work for women. Feminists were therefore compelled to consider how this problem might be solved to the satisfaction of both mistress and maid. If individual liberation from housework meant employing other women to do it, what did this imply about the scope of the feminist project? Was domestic labour inherently inferior to masculine forms of work? And if so, were women who worked as domestic servants capable of living up to feminist ideals of modern and emancipated womanhood? Many of these questions remain unresolved in the twenty-first century, despite fundamental changes to women’s role in society and their relationship to waged work and the home. One hundred years on from the events of this book, longer working hours, a diminished welfare state, the need for at least two incomes to adequately support a family and the rise of a global domestic labour market have contributed towards a new ‘crisis of care’.<sup>6</sup> Both women and men are not simply unwilling but often unable to undertake necessary housework and care for their families. This book, then, is a history of how we got to where we are today – an exploration not only of feminism’s past but also its future possibilities.

### Servants and the ‘Servant Problem’

This is my life – getting up at 6 o’clock, toiling on until 11 p.m. often later; liberty – a few hours at the end of the month ... For the sake of supporting an elderly mother and myself I am in truth a slave, like many others, to idle gadabouts whose entertainment at afternoon tea consists of talking of our ignorance and dissecting our character.

Letter from ‘Justice’ to the *Glasgow Herald* (1913)<sup>7</sup>

In 1893 the suffragist and labour organiser Clementina Black affirmed that ‘most young women of the working class dislike domestic service’.<sup>8</sup> Three years earlier, former Cambridge University lecturer Ellen Wordsworth Darwin had drawn her readers’ attention to ‘one great and

<sup>6</sup> Feminist Fightback, ‘Cuts Are a Feminist Issue’, *Soundings*, 49 (Winter 2011), 73–83; Nancy Fraser, ‘Contradictions of Capital and Care’, *New Left Review*, 100 (July–Aug. 2016), 99–117.

<sup>7</sup> *Glasgow Herald* 23 Sept. 1913, p. 3.

<sup>8</sup> Clementina Black, ‘The Dislike to Domestic Service’, *Nineteenth Century*, 33:193 (1893), 454–456, p. 454.

significant fact’, that in ‘manufacturing districts where there is ample employment’ barely any young women chose to go into service.<sup>9</sup> In 1903, the Women’s Industrial Council deemed the problem to be worthy of a ‘systematic inquiry’ and concluded that domestic service was – the title of their report – ‘An Unpopular Industry’.<sup>10</sup> Another more extensive inquiry carried out by the Council just before the First World War and published in 1916 likewise admitted that although happy servants and mistresses did exist, they were by far the minority.<sup>11</sup> While not all contemporaries agreed upon the universal unpopularity of domestic service,<sup>12</sup> historians have corroborated a growing reluctance among young working-class women to take it up. In 1881 there had been 218 female domestic servants to every 1,000 families in England and Wales, but by 1911 this had fallen to 170. Even Wales, where service comprised over 50 per cent of female employment at the turn of the century, saw a decline from 1891 onwards. In Scotland, the percentage of the female workforce in domestic service declined from around 30 per cent in 1891 to around 23 per cent in 1911. Domestic service remained the most common form of female employment, accounting for between one-third and one-quarter of all women workers in the first decade of the twentieth century. The 1911 census recorded about 1.3 million women in private service in England and Wales and 135,052 in Scotland, but demand outstripped supply.<sup>13</sup> Employers also complained bitterly about

<sup>9</sup> Darwin, ‘Domestic Service’, p. 287.

<sup>10</sup> Catherine Webb, ‘An Unpopular Industry’, *Nineteenth Century*, 53 (June 1903), 989–1001.

<sup>11</sup> C. Violet Butler, *Domestic Service: An Enquiry by the Women’s Industrial Council* (New York: Garland, 1980 [first published 1916]), p. 9. The report was based upon questionnaires drawn up by the Women’s Industrial Council (WIC); 708 replies were returned from employers, 566 from servants. It also drew upon a few hundred letters, addressed to the WIC either privately or through the press.

<sup>12</sup> For example, M. E. Benson, ‘In Defence of Domestic Service: A Reply’, *Nineteenth Century*, 28 (Oct. 1890), 616–626.

<sup>13</sup> Pamela Horn, *The Rise and Fall of the Victorian Servant* (Stroud: Alan Sutton Publishing, 1990), pp. 28, 171–172; Eleanor Gordon, *Women and the Labour Movement in Scotland, 1850–1914* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), p. 25; Carys Howell, ‘Wales’ Hidden Industry: Domestic Service in South Wales, 1871–1921’, PhD thesis, University of Swansea (2014), p. 14. Horn notes that the overall numbers of female domestic servants did not decline in this period, but rather there was a ‘dramatic slowing down in the rate of expansion’. Whereas earlier historiography suggested that the decline in the servant population was due to the emergence of more modest housekeeping practices among the late Victorian middle class, leading to a reduction in the demand for servants, there is now a consensus that demand remained high, Edward Higgs, ‘Domestic Servants and Households in Victorian England’, *Social History*, 8:2 (May 1983), 201–210, pp. 204–205; Sian Pooley, ‘Domestic Servants and Their Urban Employers: A Case Study of Lancaster, 1880–1914’, *Economic History Review*, 62:2 (2009), 405–429, p. 426.

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servants refusing to stay in their posts long term, and simply moving on when they became bored or unhappy.<sup>14</sup> Kathlyn Oliver, for example, changed jobs seven times in less than two years before she found a position that suited her.<sup>15</sup> This national picture was subject to significant regional variation, but overall contributed to a widespread sense of panic over servant ‘shortages’, and a very real problem for large numbers of middle-class women attempting to run households without adequate labour power.<sup>16</sup>

Who were these supposedly troublesome servants, and what kind of people entered domestic service during this period? The vast majority of them were women. Male servants were relatively unusual by the second half of the nineteenth century, and by 1900 only extremely wealthy families employed them in the capacity of butler or footman.<sup>17</sup> Female servants were also young (about one-third of them aged between fifteen and twenty) but literate (the beneficiaries of the introduction of state-funded and then compulsory education from the 1870s onwards). Improved standards of education were often remarked upon, and sometimes lamented, as one of the causes of a growing unwillingness to pursue domestic employment.<sup>18</sup> It nevertheless remained common practice for working-class families to send school-educated daughters into service as a way of supplementing family income.<sup>19</sup> Jessie Stephen (1893–1979), founder of the Scottish Federation of Domestic Workers, was the eldest of ten children whose father struggled to support his family on his earnings as a tailor. Her autobiography recalls how she had once accidentally walked in on her mother praying out loud to God for help with the rent arrears.

Later on, when I left school, memories like these had a decisive influence when I had to choose between taking jobs which ran between half a crown and four

<sup>14</sup> Horn, *The Rise and Fall of the Victorian Servant*, pp. 135–136.

<sup>15</sup> *Woman Worker* 4 May 1910, pp. 942–943.

<sup>16</sup> For regional variation, see Horn, *The Rise and Fall of the Victorian Servant*, pp. 32–34; Pooley, ‘Domestic Servants and Their Urban Employers’. For the tendency of census data to mask such regional variation, and the inherently flawed nature of the 1891 census data on domestic workers, see Higgs, ‘Domestic Servants and Households’.

<sup>17</sup> Wales had a higher than average proportion of male servants, with one in ten male workers employed in service between 1871 and 1901 compared with the British average of one in twenty-two, Howell, ‘Wales’ Hidden Industry’, p. 7.

<sup>18</sup> Margaret Bondfield, ‘Women as Domestic Workers’, in Ellen Malos (ed.), *The Politics of Housework* (London: Alison & Busby, 1980 [first published 1919]), 83–87, p. 84; Horn, *The Rise and Fall of the Victorian Servant*, p. 28.

<sup>19</sup> Theresa McBride, *The Domestic Revolution: The Modernisation of Household Service in England and France 1820–1920* (London: CroomHelm, 1976), p. 50; Samuel Mullins and Gareth Griffiths, *Cap and Apron: An Oral History of Domestic Service in the Shires, 1880–1950* (Leicester: Leicestershire Museums, Art Galleries and Records Service, 1986), p. 1.

shillings a week and the prospect of domestic service where board and lodging helped the money wage.

Watching his eldest daughter compelled into service was a ‘blow’ to her father, who had high hopes for his daughter when she excelled at school and won a scholarship to train as a pupil teacher. But economic necessity won out, for while she continued to live at home she was but an extra mouth to feed.<sup>20</sup>

Compulsion was an even stronger factor in the case of girls growing up in orphanages, reformatories or workhouses, who were routinely sent directly into service once they reached their middle teens. Even before entering formal domestic employment they were often used as unpaid servants in their institutional homes under the guise of ‘industrial training’. Once in service, girls from institutional care were more vulnerable to mistreatment since they lacked wider support networks and did not have a family to return to if they wished to leave a post quickly. Institutions thus played an important role in mitigating the effects of the ‘servant problem’ by ensuring a ready supply of cheap, though not necessarily willing, domestic labour.<sup>21</sup>

With greater or lesser degrees of enthusiasm, many working-class women across Britain saw domestic service as an inevitable stage of early adult life, which would end only in marriage.<sup>22</sup> Recent historiography has nuanced earlier narratives of service as a universally dislocating and isolating experience. Not all servants were young girls separated from their families and uprooted from their homes in the countryside. Although this was some women’s experience, there were also servants who took up places close to their families, or used networks to ensure they were posted near friends or siblings.<sup>23</sup> The most common form of service was as a maid of all work (often known as a ‘general’) in a household that employed only one or two servants.<sup>24</sup> This meant that although considerable variations existed between different grades of domestic worker – a lady’s maid and a kitchen-maid for example – such

<sup>20</sup> Working Class Movement Library (hereafter WCML), Salford, Jessie Stephen, ‘Submission Is for Slaves’ (unpublished manuscript), pp. 9–10, 15.

<sup>21</sup> Pamela Horn, *Life below Stairs in the Twentieth Century* (Stroud: Amberley, 2001), pp. 3–4, 90–96; Alison Light, *Mrs Woolf and the Servants* (London: Penguin Books, 2008), pp. 85–108; Lucy Delap, *Knowing Their Place: Domestic Service in Twentieth Century Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 33–35.

<sup>22</sup> McBride, *The Domestic Revolution*, p. 9.

<sup>23</sup> Pooley, ‘Domestic Servants and Their Urban Employers’; Delap, *Knowing Their Place*. For a contemporary critique of the perceived ‘isolation’ of domestic servants, see Benson, ‘In Defence of Domestic Service’, pp. 620–621.

<sup>24</sup> In 1911, 80 per cent of households employing servants employed only one or two, Horn, *The Rise and Fall of the Victorian Servant*, pp. 19–26.

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hierarchies were not particularly significant to the majority of servants at this time who had a shared experience of life as a general, or perhaps a cook or parlour-maid working alongside each other and sharing the housework between them.

Most servants were not employed by the very wealthy but by a wide spectrum of the middle classes. Jessie Stephen, for example, was employed by a concert pianist (one who needed to supplement his income by giving private singing lessons); then in the much grander household of Sir John Chisholm, former Provost of Glasgow; then by an artist called David Gould, who lived with his wife in a flat; then as a ‘daily maid’ for the secretary of a Chinese missionary society. She also joined the domestic staff in a nursing home and in a hotel, reminding us that institutional service in hospitals, colleges and schools, for example, was also an important component of the industry in this period.<sup>25</sup> The lower middle classes (shopkeepers and clerks, anyone not engaged in manual labour) also frequently employed at least one servant.<sup>26</sup> The suffragette and socialist Hannah Mitchell (1872–1956), for example, worked as a general maid for a schoolmaster’s family.<sup>27</sup> Less well-off employers might also have relied upon a charwoman to come in for a set number of hours each week, and this more casual form of domestic service was on the rise in the first decade of the century.<sup>28</sup> Millions of women in this period, therefore, would have had experience of either employing a servant or working as one.<sup>29</sup> Even single women living alone needed help with the housework, and the question of how to cater for the domestic needs of single professional ‘ladies’ was a pressing one for the suffrage movement. Kathlyn Oliver worked alongside just one house-maid as a cook general for Mary Sheepshanks (1872–1960), whose job as principal of Morley College in South London, in addition to her active support for the suffrage movement, kept her too busy to run her own household.<sup>30</sup>

One important aspect of the labour performed by Britain’s domestic servants was looking after children. In upper- and upper middle-class homes a nanny and perhaps also a nurse-maid freed up the mother from daily care of infants, whereas in lower middle-class households a single

<sup>25</sup> For domestic service in an Oxbridge women’s college, Laura Schwartz, *A Serious Endeavour: Gender, Education and Community at St Hugh’s, 1886–2011* (London: Profile Books, 2011), chapter 4.

<sup>26</sup> Girls from institutional care often went to less well-off employers such as small trades people; Horn, *Life below Stairs*, p. 91.

<sup>27</sup> Hannah Mitchell, *The Hard Way Up: The Autobiography of Hannah Mitchell, Suffragette and Rebel* (London: Virago, 1977), pp. 67–70.

<sup>28</sup> Delap, *Knowing Their Place*, pp. 35–41. <sup>29</sup> Light, *Mrs Woolf and the Servants*, p. xv.

<sup>30</sup> England and Wales Census (1911), 1 Barton Street, Westminster, London.

servant might be expected to help with any resident small children in between her other chores.<sup>31</sup> Childcare thus made up a significant element of domestic service, and yet it received very little mention in discussions of the 'servant problem'. This is probably due to the belief that the care of children was, at the very least, conceptually different from cooking and cleaning. Although it was often difficult in practice to separate out childcare from other kinds of housework, and the former undoubtedly created more of the latter,<sup>32</sup> by the turn of the twentieth century a distinction was increasingly being made between the care of children and the 'dirty' work of the home. New ideas about parenting, informed by the emerging disciplines of psychology and eugenics as well as concerns about infant mortality and the future of the imperial 'race', placed greater value and expectations upon motherhood.<sup>33</sup>

This distinction between childcare and housework was also reflected in increasingly rigid stratifications within the domestic labour force. The nurse or nanny became more professionalised by training institutions and qualifications, so that by the interwar period she was often separated from the rest of the servant class even if she hailed from the same social background.<sup>34</sup> In 1911, even women working as nurse-maids at the much lower end of the market, for the same wages they would have received as kitchen-maids, were said to view childcare as more 'genteel' than cleaning.<sup>35</sup> The 'servant' of the 'servant problem' was widely understood to be a 'general', a house-maid, a parlour-maid or a cook rather than a nanny or a nurse-maid.

The servants who feature in this book were mainly white and British-born. Before the First World War, only small numbers of Black, other

<sup>31</sup> Leonore Davidoff, *Worlds Between: Historical Perspectives on Gender and Class* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995), p. 109; Leonore Davidoff, Megan Doolittle, Janet Fink and Katherine Holden, *The Family Story: Blood, Contract and Intimacy, 1830–1960* (Harlow: Longman, 1999), p. 168.

<sup>32</sup> Ellen Ross, *Love and Toil: Motherhood in Outcast London, 1870–1918* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993).

<sup>33</sup> Anna Davin, 'Imperialism and Motherhood', *History Workshop Journal*, 5 (1978), 9–65, Ross, *Love and Toil*, pp. 21–26. New ideas about motherhood applied to middle- and working-class mothers in very different ways, and historians have debated the degree to which they were taken up and internalised by individual families in the years before the First World War; Sian Pooley, 'Parenthood, Child-Rearing and Fertility in England, 1850–1914', *The History of the Family*, 18:1 (2013), 83–106, p. 92.

<sup>34</sup> Delap, *Knowing Their Place*, pp. 108–109; Katherine Holden, *Nanny Knows Best: The History of the British Nanny* (Stroud: History Press, 2013), p. 79, chapter 4.

<sup>35</sup> This was one of the conclusions drawn from an investigation by the WIC into 'the supply and demand for nurses for small children' for which 100 servants' registries were visited across the United Kingdom; *Women's Industrial News* June 1911, pp. 95–104.

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European and Indian servants worked in Britain.<sup>36</sup> Emigration was more common than immigration, with many British servants moving to Canada, Australia and New Zealand in search of better wages and higher status.<sup>37</sup> This did not mean that ideas of race and Empire had no effect upon domestic service in Britain, where throughout the nineteenth century the working class had often been constructed as a racialised ‘other’ and Empire exerted its influence on everyday culture. The devaluing of women’s domestic labour in Britain paralleled that of male and female workers from the colonised territories.<sup>38</sup> The idealised qualities of mistresshood with which middle- to upper-class women were inculcated as a birthright – responsibility for one’s ‘inferiors’, the inherent right of command, the sanctity of service as the foundation of the nation – were central to the imperialist frame of mind.<sup>39</sup> I have not, however, come across any direct influence of colonial ideas of service in the Indian subcontinent or Africa on articulations of the British

<sup>36</sup> Caroline Bressey, ‘Black Women and Work in England, 1880–1920’, in Mary Davis (ed.), *Class and Gender in British Labour History: Renewing the Debate (or Starting It?)* (Pontypool: Merlin Press, 2011), 117–132; Horn, *Life below Stairs*, 222–246; Olivia Robinson, ‘Out of Sight and Over Here: Foreign Female Domestic Servants in London 1880–1939’, unpublished conference poster presented at the Social History Society Conference, University of Lancaster, 2016; Rozina Visram, *Ayahs, Lascars and Princes: Indians in Britain 1700–1947* (London: Pluto Press, 1986), chapter 2; Holden, *Nanny Knows Best*, pp. 83–86; Olivia Robinson, ‘Travelling Ayahs of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries: Global Networks and Mobilisation of Agency’, *History Workshop Journal*, 86 (2018), 44–66.

<sup>37</sup> Horn, *Life below Stairs*, pp. 211–222.

<sup>38</sup> Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest* (London: Routledge, 1995), p. 138; Leonore Davidoff, *Worlds Between*, chapter 4.

<sup>39</sup> Anne Summers, ‘Public Functions, Private Premises: Female Professional Identity and the Domestic-Service Paradigm in Britain, c. 1850–1930’, in Billie Melman (ed.), *Borderlines: Genders and Identities in War and Peace, 1870–1930* (London: Routledge, 1998), 353–376; Light, *Mrs Woolf and the Servants*, p. 37. Historians of colonial India have argued that ideas of domesticity and service were central to forming the identities of coloniser and colonised; Nupur Chaudhuri, ‘Memsahibs and Their Servants in Nineteenth-Century India’, *Women’s History Review*, 3:4 (1994), 549–562; E. M. Collingham, *Imperial Bodies: The Physical Experience of the Raj, c. 1800–1947* (Oxford: Polity Press, 2001), pp. 103–113; Mary A. Procida, *Married to the Empire: Gender Politics and Imperialism in India, 1883–1947* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), chapter 3; Elizabeth Buettner, *Empire Families: Britons and Late Imperial India* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); Fae Dussart, ‘The Servant/Employer Relationship in Nineteenth Century India and England’, PhD thesis, University College London (2005); Fae Dussart, “‘To Glut a Menial’s Grudge’: Domestic Servants and the Ilbert Bill Controversy of 1883”, *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History*, 14:1 (2013), n.p.; Fae Dussart, “‘Strictly Legal Means’: Assault, Abuse and the Limits of Acceptable Behaviour in the Servant–Employer Relationship in Metropole and Colony 1850–1890”, in Victoria K. Haskins and Claire Lowrie (eds.), *Colonisation and Domestic Service: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2015), 153–171.