

SETTLER COLONIALISM IN VICTORIAN LITERATURE

How did the emigration of nineteenth-century Britons to colonies of settlement shape Victorian literature? Philip Steer uncovers productive networks of writers and texts spanning Britain, Australia, and New Zealand to argue that the novel and political economy found common colonial ground over questions of British identity. Each chapter highlights the conceptual challenges to the nature of “Britishness” posed by colonial events, from the gold rushes to invasion scares, and traces the literary aftershocks in familiar genres such as the bildungsroman and the utopia. Alongside lesser-known colonial writers such as Catherine Spence and Julius Vogel, British novelists from Dickens to Trollope are also put in a new light by this fresh approach that places Victorian studies in colonial perspective. Bringing together literary formalism and British world history, *Settler Colonialism in Victorian Literature* describes how what it meant to be “British” was reimagined in an increasingly globalized world.

PHILIP STEER is Senior Lecturer in English at Massey University. He is co-editor with Nathan K. Hensley of *Ecological Form: System and Aesthetics in the Age of Empire* (Fordham University Press, 2018), and his essays have appeared in *Victorian Studies* and *Victorian Literature and Culture*, as well as in *Modernism, Postcolonialism, and Globalism* (Oxford University Press, 2018) and *A History of New Zealand Literature* (Cambridge University Press, 2016). He completed his doctorate at Duke University after being awarded a Fulbright Scholarship. He is also the recipient of a Marsden Fund Fast-Start Grant from the Royal Society of New Zealand.

CAMBRIDGE STUDIES IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY
LITERATURE AND CULTURE

General editor

Gillian Beer, *University of Cambridge*

Editorial board

Isobel Armstrong, *Birkbeck, University of London*

Kate Flint, *University of Southern California*

Catherine Gallagher, *University of California, Berkeley*

D. A. Miller, *University of California, Berkeley*

J. Hillis Miller, *University of California, Irvine*

Daniel Pick, *Birkbeck, University of London*

Mary Poovey, *New York University*

Sally Shuttleworth, *University of Oxford*

Herbert Tucker, *University of Virginia*

Nineteenth-century British literature and culture have been rich fields for interdisciplinary studies. Since the turn of the twentieth century, scholars and critics have tracked the intersections and tensions between Victorian literature and the visual arts, politics, social organization, economic life, technical innovations, scientific thought – in short, culture in its broadest sense. In recent years, theoretical challenges and historiographical shifts have unsettled the assumptions of previous scholarly synthesis and called into question the terms of older debates. Whereas the tendency in much past literary critical interpretation was to use the metaphor of culture as “background,” feminist, Foucauldian, and other analyses have employed more dynamic models that raise questions of power and of circulation. Such developments have reanimated the field. This series aims to accommodate and promote the most interesting work being undertaken on the frontiers of the field of nineteenth-century literary studies: work that intersects fruitfully with other fields of study such as history, or literary theory, or the history of science. Comparative as well as interdisciplinary approaches are welcomed.

A complete list of titles published will be found at the end of the book.

SETTLER COLONIALISM IN VICTORIAN LITERATURE

*Economics and Political Identity in
the Networks of Empire*

PHILIP STEER

Massey University



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press
 978-1-108-73585-8 — Settler Colonialism in Victorian Literature
 Philip Steer
 Frontmatter
[More Information](#)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom
 One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA
 477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
 314-321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre, New Delhi - 110025, India
 103 Penang Road, #05-06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.
 It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of
 education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org
 Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781108735858
 DOI: 10.1017/9781108695824

© Philip Steer 2020

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception
 and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements,
 no reproduction of any part may take place without the written
 permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2020
 First paperback edition 2022

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication data

NAMES: Steer, Philip, 1979—author.

TITLE: Settler colonialism in Victorian literature : economics and political identity in the networks
 of empire / Philip Steer, Massey University, Auckland.

DESCRIPTION: New York : Cambridge University Press, 2020. | Series: Cambridge studies in
 nineteenth-century literature and culture | Includes bibliographical references and index. |

Contents: Introduction: Settler Colonialism and Metropolitan Culture — 1. The Trans-
 portable Pip: Liberal Character, Territory, and the Settled Subject — 2. Gold and
 Greater Britain: The Australian Gold Rushes, Unsettled Desire, and the Global British
 Subject — 3. Speculative Utopianism: Colonial Progress, Debt, and Greater Britain —
 4. Manning the Imperial Outpost: The Invasion Novel, Geopolitics, and the
 Borders of Britishness — Conclusion.

IDENTIFIERS: LCCN 2019038893 (print) | LCCN 2019038894 (ebook) | ISBN 9781108484428
 (v. 122 ; hardback) | ISBN 9781108735858 (v. 122 ; paperback) | ISBN 9781108695824 (epub)

SUBJECTS: LCSH: English fiction—19th century—History and criticism. | Commonwealth fiction
 (English)—19th century—History and criticism. | Imperialism in literature. |
 Colonies in literature. | National characteristics in literature. |

Identity (Psychology) in literature.

CLASSIFICATION: LCC PR830.I544 S74 2020 (print) | LCC PR830.I544 (ebook) | DDC 823/.809—dc23
 LC record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2019038893>
 LC ebook record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2019038894>

ISBN 978-1-108-48442-8 Hardback
 ISBN 978-1-108-73585-8 Paperback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or
 accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in
 this publication, and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is,
 or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-73585-8 — Settler Colonialism in Victorian Literature
Philip Steer
Frontmatter
[More Information](#)

*For Sarah
and Esther
and Silas
and Joseph
and Amos*

Contents

<i>List of Figures</i>	page viii
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	ix
Introduction: Settler Colonialism and Metropolitan Culture	i
1 The Transportable Pip: Liberal Character, Territory, and the Settled Subject	35
2 Gold and Greater Britain: The Australian Gold Rushes, Unsettled Desire, and the Global British Subject	79
3 Speculative Utopianism: Colonial Progress, Debt, and Greater Britain	125
4 Manning the Imperial Outpost: The Invasion Novel, Geopolitics, and the Borders of Britishness	161
Conclusion	202
<i>Bibliography</i>	206
<i>Index</i>	222

Figures

1.1	William Light, <i>The District of Adelaide, South Australia: As Divided into Country Sections</i> (1839). Image courtesy of National Library of Australia, MAP RM 1122.	page 50
1.2	Alexander Maconochie, <i>Prison Discipline</i> (London: Harrison, 1856): 1. Image courtesy of Rare Book Collection, Lillian Goldman Law Library, Yale Law School.	65
2.1	Edwin Stocqueler, <i>Australian Gold Diggings</i> (ca. 1855). Image courtesy of National Library of Australia, PIC T273 NK10.	86
2.2	Nathaniel Whittock, <i>The City of Melbourne, Australia</i> (1855). Image courtesy of State Library Victoria, H34147.	87
3.1	“Wanganui Bridge, Wellington.” In Julius Vogel (ed.), <i>The Official Handbook of New Zealand: A Collection of Papers by Experienced Colonists on the Colony as a Whole, and on the Several Provinces</i> (London: Wyman, 1875): 195. Image courtesy of Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, N.Z., P 919.31 OFF 1875.	144
4.1	Map of Queensland, from Kenneth Mackay, <i>The Yellow Wave: A Romance of the Asiatic Invasion of Australia</i> (London: Bentley, 1895): 1. Image courtesy of Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, N.Z., P 823 MACK 1895.	178
4.2	Map B (East Friesland and the German or East Frisian Is.), from Erskine Childers, <i>The Riddle of the Sands: A Record of Secret Service</i> (London: Nelson, 1913): 13. Image courtesy of Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, N.Z., G 823.91 CHI 190-.	190

Acknowledgments

At the end of this long, long journey, all I can recall is kindness and generosity. This book originated in a doctoral dissertation, undertaken in the generative environment of Duke University, and supported by a James B. Duke Fellowship. My presence there, which still seems little short of miraculous, was enabled by the unfailing support of my teachers in the School of English, Film, and Theatre Studies at Victoria University, and in material terms by a graduate award from Fulbright New Zealand. I was sustained and encouraged throughout my time there by the hospitality and brilliance of my grad student colleagues. Of the faculty I want to especially acknowledge Michael Valdez Moses and Charlotte Sussman. Above all, my advisor, Kathy Psomiades, taught me lessons in how to write and think that I am still learning: she remains my imagined reader, and will always exemplify for me the best things in this profession. Out of my time at Duke, I also gained the inestimable friendship of the remarkable Nathan Hensley, reader of innumerable chapter drafts and provider of wise counsel at every turn, whose conceptual rigor and narrative style have brought me further in my own work than I ever imagined possible, and who remains even at this distance perhaps the best person I could ever possibly hope to meet.

The Division of English at Nanyang Technological University offered me my first job. The School of English and Media Studies at Massey University has witnessed my slow movement from dissertation to book, and I am grateful for the support provided by successive heads of school – John Muirhead, Joe Grixti, and Jenny Lawn – as well as the administrative assistance of Carol Seelye and Janet Lowe in particular. The College of Humanities and Social Sciences has provided support through a period of long leave, as well as several grants from the Massey University Research Fund for invaluable research assistants: Bonnie Etherington, Danielle Calder, and Kirsten Ellmers. The entire project was able to be rethought

and rewritten due to a Marsden Fund Fast-Start Grant, awarded by the Royal Society of New Zealand.

Early on, a period as a resident scholar at the Stout Centre for New Zealand Studies, Victoria University of Wellington, allowed me to realize that there was a forgotten colonial story to be told about the invasion novel. Near the end, a visiting research fellowship at the University of Sydney's School of Literature, Art and Media allowed me to finish the proposal. Throughout, I have been more than ably assisted by librarians at several remarkable institutions: the Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales; the Alexander Turnbull Library, National Library of New Zealand Te Puna Mātauranga o Aotearoa; Duke University Libraries; and the Massey University Library Te Putanga ki te Ao Mātauranga, who also kindly overlooked my overdue fines.

I have been incredibly fortunate to find interlocutors and encouragers around the world: Tim Alborn, Nancy Armstrong, Duncan Bell, Simon During, Ingrid Horrocks, Ian Huffer, Edmund King, Dougal McNeill, Liz Miller, John Plotz, Sarah Ross, Jason Rudy, Tess Shewry, Vanessa Smith, and Lydia Wevers. The North American Victorian Studies Association and Vcologies have proved the most stimulating and supportive of intellectual communities. At Cambridge University Press, I am so grateful to my editor, Bethany Thomas, for being willing to take a further look at the project; to the two anonymous readers who provided such valuable feedback; to Carrie Parkinson and Bethany Johnson for guiding me through the whole process; and to Yassar Arafat for overseeing the production, and Christine Dunn for astute and patient copyediting.

At the heart of it all has been family, and faith. My parents, Michael and Susan, have been unfailing in their love, encouragement, and interest from the very first. My in-laws, Des and Louise, have also been a source of great kindness on the journey. All Saints' Church has provided a spiritual home, and a community, and both have sustained this work. My wife, Sarah, has been there every step of the way, in every country and every challenge, and words cannot describe how grateful I am for her love, support, and patience throughout. My working life has been immeasurably enriched by our children, Esther, Silas, Joseph, and Amos. Probably none of you will quite believe this is now actually finished. Dedicating this book to you all is really the least I could do.

The cover image is a detail from Henry Gritten's painting, *Hobart Town 1856*, reproduced courtesy of the Australian National Maritime Museum Collection, object 00018553, purchased with USA Bicentennial Gift funds. A version of Chapter 2 was previously published as "Gold and

Acknowledgments

xi

Greater Britain: Jevons, Trollope, and Settler Colonialism,” *Victorian Studies* 58, no. 3 (2016): 436–63. It is reprinted with the permission of Indiana University Press. A version of Chapter 4 was published a long time ago as “Greater Britain and the Imperial Outpost: The Australasian Origins of *The Riddle of the Sands* (1903).” This article was first published in the *Victorian Review*, 35.1 (2009): 79–95. Copyright © 2009 Victorian Studies of Western Canada. Reprinted with permission by Johns Hopkins University Press.