Empire in British Girls’ Literature and Culture
Critical Approaches to Children’s Literature

Series Editors: Kerry Mallan and Clare Bradford

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Empire in British Girls’ Literature and Culture

Imperial Girls, 1880–1915

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Series Preface

The *Critical Approaches to Children’s Literature* series was initiated in 2008 by Kerry Mallan and Clare Bradford. The aim of the series is to identify and publish the best contemporary scholarship and criticism on children’s and young adult literature, film, and media texts. The series is open to theoretically informed scholarship covering a wide range of critical perspectives on historical and contemporary texts from diverse national and cultural settings. Critical Approaches aims to make a significant contribution to the expanding field of children’s literature research by publishing quality books that promote informed discussion and debate about the production and reception of children’s literature and its criticism.

Kerry Mallan and Clare Bradford
I had a strange fixation with reading the acknowledgements pages of books I consulted during my doctoral research. For one, acknowledgements pages were an insight into how scholarly work was done, a record of just how many people contributed to any monograph. And, voyeuristically, they provided a peephole into the lives of scholars who seemed like celebrities who could not be imagined doing mundane things outside the ivory tower like scrubbing mould from the shower tiles. When I began this research, I could not imagine how I would ever amass enough people to thank on such a page in the future. Surely enough, the process of three years of doctoral research and almost three years since has seen my network of scholarly friends and colleagues expand.

Dr Clara Tuite has consistently gone beyond the formal requirements of a PhD supervisor, providing critique (encased within a diplomatic velvet glove), support, and encouragement. Not to mention an inordinate number of references and pep talks. Also at the University of Melbourne, Professor Stephanie Trigg and Professor Ken Gelder provided valuable comments during my candidature. My thesis examiners, Professor Sally Mitchell and Professor Mavis Reimer, have also fostered my continued development as a scholar, and this monograph has been improved as a result of their reports. Dr Terri Doughty kindly provided me with her essay on Bessie Marchant in advance of its publication. Dr Kristine Moruzi has been an ideal friend and colleague during my PhD candidature and throughout the postdoctoral journey. Her ongoing encouragement and pointed questioning of chapter drafts have not only kept me thinking positively in spite of academe’s trials but also improved my scholarship.

In the time since my graduation, I have been swept up in the warm embrace of the children’s literature team at Deakin University, Melbourne. Dr Liz Parsons, a tornado of support, drew me into a world of opportunity and collegiality that could not possibly exist elsewhere. If the sheer magnitude of Liz’s scholarly assistance can be reduced to a cake, then Professor Clare Bradford is the royal icing on top. I am indebted to both Liz and Clare for offering me teaching roles and extremely valuable opportunities to engage in collaborative work. Both Clare Bradford and Professor Kerry Mallan at Queensland University of
Technology, as series editors, were instrumental in bringing this monograph to fruition. I am also grateful for the chances I have had to work with and for other fine scholars including Professor Barbara Creed, Professor Jeanette Hoorn, and Dr Elizabeth Bullen.

With gratitude, I must also acknowledge the editors and publishers of publications in which earlier versions and segments of some of these chapters have previously appeared: Chapter 2 in *Childhood in Edwardian Fiction: Worlds Enough and Time*, edited by Adrienne E. Gavin and Andrew F. Humphries (Palgrave Macmillan); Chapter 3 in *The Lion and the Unicorn*; Chapter 4 on E. Nesbit in *ELT: English Literature in Transition, 1880–1920* with thanks to Robert Langenfeld; and Chapter 5 in *Limina*, with thanks to the Editorial Collective; and Chapter 6 in *Victorian Settler Narratives: Emigrants, Cosmopolitans and Returnees in Nineteenth-Century Literature*, edited by Tamara S. Wagner, by kind permission of Pickering & Chatto.

As I learned in reading acknowledgments pages, long-suffering family members should be mentioned in closing. It is important to place these people at the end, as a well-structured sentence should emphasise its most vital element just before the full stop. My mother and father, Julie and Brian Smith, have given everything to help me through school and university, sacrificing all the while so that I was never denied any opportunity. This book would not exist without them and all that they have taught me. The final shot at compensating attention-deprived family members must be directed at the academic author’s partner, who has suffered the laptop intruding on all attempts at watching television and materialising on supposed holidays. Thank you, Chris, for your love, for feigning interest in Victorian girlhood, and for enduring the constant presence of academic work at home. I couldn’t do this without you. And I wouldn’t want to either.