

Re-creating England: the settler and his homecoming in the work of G.A. Henty 1832-1902.

Using ‘an English field and hedgerow’, as ‘the imagery of Paradise’ (Byatt 117) may have been the resort of the explorer, but to the settler in the fiction of G. A. Henty, England became the dream which he dreamt into reality. In this article I investigate the imagined England in the work of G. A. Henty. The article begins with a brief introduction to Henty and his work, placing the idealisation of England in an historical context. Examination of the texts Out on the Pampas (1871) and Maori and Settler (1886) is followed by an historical example of the settler in the person of Samuel White Baker in order to demonstrate the indistinct boundary between fiction and reality in the settler’s view of England. The article concludes with the settler’s homecoming.

Introduction

G. A. Henty (1832-1902) was a nineteenth century English writer of adventure stories primarily for boys. As one of the first English war correspondents, Henty’s career spanned a period of imperialist expansion. In the second half of the nineteenth century, between 1850 and 1900, Britain was involved in approximately one hundred and eighteen colonial wars, ranging from expeditions to suppress uprisings to major conflicts, such as the Crimean or Boer wars¹. Henty was present at most of the major conflicts, reporting for his newspaper ‘The Standard’, and gaining experiences and material he was later to incorporate into his stories. His work is predominantly critiqued in the twentieth century as realistic historical fiction² and his central character became the ideal British boy, created by Henty to act as an example to his readers³.

Henty’s historical stories span a time period from 1250 BC to 1900, with almost fifty per cent of them based on incidents in the nineteenth

¹ Information taken from L. R. N. Ashley, G. A. Henty and the Victorian Mind (San Francisco, London and Bethesda: International Scholars Publications, 1999) 83 - 87.

² See for example Guy Arnold, Held Fast for England: G. A. Henty Imperialist Boy's Writer (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1980). and Hugh Walpole, Reading: Being One of a Series of Essays Edited by J. B. Priestley and Entitled: These Diversions, ed. J. B. Priestley, vol. 1926 (London: Jarrolds, 1926).

³ See for example the Preface to G.A. Henty, Sturdy and Strong: Or How George Andrews Made His Way (London: Blackie and Son Limited, n.d.).

century.⁴ Although the majority of Henty's stories are based on wars or battles, he wrote four stories that could be categorised as 'settler' stories as they focus on settlement in the colonies or they include settler life alongside an account of a particular battle. In this article I will focus on two particular stories. The first is Out on the Pampas: or the Young Settlers (1871) and the second Maori and Settler: a Tale of the New Zealand War (1891)⁵.

The majority of Henty's stories begin in England and the circumstances of the hero are defined, locating him in a precise, problematic situation which becomes the springboard for his adventures. The story concludes with the homecoming of the hero. There are of course exceptions and the hero is not always male, but most of the stories follow this pattern. The settler stories are no exception and I have chosen OP and MS because they demonstrate the structure clearly.

A .S. Byatt has noted that if an Englishman is abroad he will revert to descriptions of the English countryside if he wishes to describe paradise. She also notes that if he is at home, that is in England, he will describe his travels to his fellow Englishmen in terms of the exotic equating to paradise. (117) In both cases, 'paradise' becomes 'the other', that which is not experienced in the contemporary situation, or his imagined perception of place. At this point it would be helpful to outline briefly some background to the idealisation of the English rural landscape and way of life. The idea of the pastoral idyll is deeply embedded in the English psyche and can be traced from early literature, for example the fourteenth century Piers Ploughman (1362-1400) linked to the land and the cycle of the seasons, through William Shakespeare's 'This other Eden, demi-paradise ... This blessed plot ... this England,' (384 - 85) but the nineteenth century distillation of the idealised England was crystallized in the preface to William Blake's poem 'Milton' (1804) (generally known as the hymn 'Jerusalem') as he imagined 'England's mountains green' in divine terms as the idealised 'Holy City.' Blake starts with the image of 'England's mountains green' and continues:

⁴ Information from Gordon Berlyne, Hugh Pruett's Henty Companion (Royston: The Henty Society, 1997) 44-6.

⁵ The other two stories are G.A. Henty, The Young Colonists: A Story of the Zulu and Boer Wars, New edition ed. (London: Blackie and Son, 1897). and G.A. Henty, A Final Reckoning: A Tale of Bush Life in Australia (London: Blackie and Son, n.d.).

...

And was Jerusalem builded here
Among these dark Satanic Mills?

...

I will not cease from mental fight,
Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand,
Till we have built Jerusalem

In England's green and pleasant land. (108)

Blake juxtaposes the dark satanic mills of the industrial revolution and England's green and pleasant land in graphic contrast, creating an oppositional image which became increasingly fixed as the rural way of life declined and cities grew. In the social upheaval in every area of life that resulted from increasing urbanisation, the idealised conception of rural England provided an image of stability and happiness that became more idealised as more people became divorced from it. A parallel can be found in the idealisation of rural and family life found in the Biedermeier literature and art that emerged in Germany at a time of political instability and uncertainty.⁶ The idealisation of rural England coincided with the growth of scientific interest in natural history. Texts such as Gilbert White's Natural History of Selborne (1789) draw together the myth of the idealised English countryside as 'the badge of (English) identity' ((BBC)) and the scientific observation of all aspects of the natural world, to create 'an idealised vision of nature and life in step with nature'. White is cited as a forerunner to the Romantic view of nature and man as part of it. ((BBC))

The question is therefore raised as to the nature of the real and the imaginary, which, when applied to the historical story accentuates the indistinct nature of 'the borders of Fairyland' as this blurred area of the borders of the real and the imaginary may be called. It is perhaps significant that 'somewhere on the borders of Fairyland there was a nice country village, in which lived some nice country people', (MacDonald, "Cross Purposes" 143) a description which illustrates clearly how the real and the imaginary become

⁶ I am indebted to Ute Dettmar for opening this parallel pattern up to me in her paper at a Norchilnet symposium in Copenhagen, November 2005.

easily synthesised in the image of the ideal community in an idealised countryside.

Henty's Settler Stories

In his discussion of the distinction between history and fiction, Roger Seamon notes that Hayden White 'shifts the idea of history toward the idea of fiction, and this weakens the distinction between them. (207) White himself pushes the concept further when he writes individuals can be taught to live 'a distinctively imaginary relation to their real conditions of existence,' (x)⁷, thus drawing the imaginary and the real closer together to meet in the single point of a life story. In the case of Henty's settler stories the fictional existence of the characters does not detract from the reality found in his descriptions of the practicalities facing settlers who, at the time Henty was writing (1865 – 1902) were embarking on journeys to the colonies, as Henty informs the reader later in Out on the Pampas (Out on the Pampas or the Young Settlers 9). From 1869, the numbers of emigrants grew rapidly. Organisations such as Barnardo's and Quarrier's, established to provide homes for orphaned children, formulated a policy whereby children were sent to the colonies, firstly Australia, then South Africa and Canada. They believed this would give the children the opportunity to begin a new and better life.⁸

Leon Garfield's statement that in the writing of historical fiction 'it is the business of the artist to make the commonplace marvellous' (742) is not altogether fulfilled in Henty's first settler story Out on the Pampas: or The Young Settlers (1871). This was Henty's first story for young people and does not read as fluently as his later novels. His mixture of fiction and reality is not interwoven, giving the impression that he might have lifted paragraphs on the performance of practical tasks from a boy scout manual had such a volume been in existence when he wrote (which it was not.)⁹ Henty's settler, with his inherited 'badge of English identity' in the form of an imaginary idealised English countryside sets out from his homeland in the hope of rectifying the

⁷ Derived from Louis Althusser's discussion 'On Ideology' Louis Althusser, "On Ideology," Critical Theory: A Reader, ed. Douglas Tallack (London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1995) 307.

⁸ Information on child emigrants can be found in Gillian Wagner, Children of the Empire (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1982).

⁹ Baden-Powell's Scouting for Boys was published in 1908.

difficulties facing him in England. OP begins with Mr Hardy meditating on what is to become of his family. His two boys, Charlie and Hubert aged fifteen and fourteen respectively would need to be 'placed' in the professions if they remained in England, a prospect that not only needed money but also opportunity, and, as Mr Hardy pointed out, referring to England, "the fact is, we are altogether too crowded here." (Out on the Pampas or the Young Settlers 2) The idea of emigration as the solution to the problem stemmed from three years spent by Mr Hardy in the United States, where 'the love of adventure had taken him to the far west' (Out on the Pampas or the Young Settlers 2,3). The family included two girls, Maud aged twelve and Ethel, eleven. The names of Henty's fictional children were those of his own children¹⁰, an instance of 'the conflicting claims of the imaginary and the real' which White observes are mediated by narrativity. (267) For the children, preparations for departure include, in embryonic form, all the ingredients Henty believed to be important in the formation of the character he later developed into that recognisable ideal, the Henty hero. The two most important accomplishments necessary for a useful life in the colonies were, firstly, practical skills, such as carpentry, farming, horse riding, sewing and cooking, and secondly, language acquisition. For the Hardy's, this meant learning Spanish as they were bound for the Argentine Republic. (All the stranger then that the first subject in their existing studies to be dropped was Latin "which will be of no use to you.") (Out on the Pampas or the Young Settlers 7). Throughout OP, Henty's writing is predominantly descriptive of tasks to be done. He does however drop into direct reader address on points of historical or practical information, which sits awkwardly in the narrative and gives the impression of a teacher addressing a class, for example, Henty describes the effect of the Hardy's decision to emigrate on the community in which they live and in which Mr Hardy had grown up. He abruptly breaks off to inform the reader, 'Emigration in 1851 was far less common that is now, and the interest was proportionately greater'. (Out on the Pampas or the Young Settlers 9). Henty then continues his account of the progress of Charlie and Hubert. This tendency is particularly marked in OP, in which his technique is

¹⁰ See Arnold, Held Fast for England: G. A. Henty Imperialist Boy's Writer 8.

frequently awkward. The voyage to South America focuses on the motion of the ship and the techniques used to overcome seasickness. The pleasurable part of the voyage is described as such in one paragraph as Henty's stated intention is 'to relate the adventures of our young settlers upon the Pampas of La Platte'. (Out on the Pampas or the Young Settlers 24)

This hasty arrival in the country chosen for settlement contrasts with the emphasis in Henty's Maori and Settler: a story of the New Zealand War. Written in 1886, it is historical by less than twenty years and the story includes an account of the second Maori rebellion in 1870. A brief examination of the opening chapters of MS, will not only foreground the progress made in the crafting of the story, but also emerging patterns echoed in Henty's other novels and the boys adventure story in a wider context, both in England and in other countries. The first of these motifs is that of the financially embarrassed family, the second is a more exclusive focus on the abilities and character of the son to retrieve the situation. Often this focus is because the father has died leaving the family with no income, as in A Final Reckoning (1889). In MS it is because the father, Mr Renshaw, 'was, in fact, an eminently impractical man, weak and easy in disposition, averse to exertion of any kind, and without a shadow of the decision of character that distinguished his son'. (Maori and Settler: A Story of the New Zealand War 14) As if this were not enough to define him negatively, his interests are abstruse and antiquarian which aligns him with the Casaubons¹¹ of this world, and by implication, quite unsuited to participate in the 'real' matter of life. Not surprisingly, when he received news of the failure of the bank in which his inherited money was held, 'Mr Renshaw was completely overwhelmed ... and had taken to his bed'. (Maori and Settler: A Story of the New Zealand War 16) Hence all the decisions and practicalities fell upon his son, Wilfred, who, together with his mother and sister, fortunately both 'clear-headed and sensible women', (Maori and Settler: A Story of the New Zealand War 14) is able to take matters in hand and arrange for the family to emigrate to New Zealand. It is worth noting here that Henty's portrayal of women is predominantly positive. Examples other than those in OP and MS can be found in Clotilde, Young Carthaginian

¹¹ George Eliot's character in Middlemarch who spent his time amongst dusty books and took no notice of his young wife. George Eliot, Middlemarch (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1965) 33.

(1887), Kate, A Final Reckoning (1889) and Polly, The Ranche in the Valley (1892).

In contrast to the brief account in OP, the voyage to New Zealand comprises almost seven chapters of the story and includes a variety of adventures, most of which involve danger in the form of attack and rescue, either at sea or whilst in port en route. The main result of the inclusion of such adventures is that by the time the ship reaches New Zealand, the reader is well acquainted with the main characters involved in the action of the remainder of the story especially with regard to how they are likely to behave, as Henty might say, 'in a tight spot'. Although there is little account of activities of a quieter kind during the voyage, there is a retrospective reference to 'the plan we decided upon on board the ship' (Maori and Settler: A Story of the New Zealand War 202). In an earlier note, the external narrator had explained to the reader that,

During the voyage the Renshaws had amused themselves
by drawing a plan of their proposed house ... and
Wilfrid had determined to adhere to it as much as
possible. (Maori and Settler: A Story of the New Zealand War 195)

This comment was referred to again when Wilfrid's parents, Mr and Mrs Renshaw, and his sister Marion, came to the house when it was sufficiently whole for them to live in it. During the voyage, key friendships had been made, all of which provided aid in the initial tasks of finding suitable land to buy, the best way to commence building and the purchase of the necessary equipment to set up the farm. From the initial stages through to the establishment of the homestead, the planning, building and development is focalised through the settler in terms of creating and preserving a piece of England. Examples include the first sight of the land, which, it is explained 'was taken up only last year by a young Englishman' who 'had chosen his farm specially for that bit of scenery'. (Maori and Settler: A Story of the New Zealand War 178). 'That bit of scenery' is described in language that holds echoes of Shakespearian pastoral plays, as if to evoke images of rural England. For example:

After riding for a few minutes further the trees opened,
and they found themselves in a glade sloping down to
the river. A few acres of land had been ploughed up

and put under cultivation. Close by stood the hut, and beyond a grassy sward, broken by a few large trees, stretched down to the river. (Maori and Settler: A Story of the New Zealand War 189)

Unfortunately the young Englishman had died after an accident in which a tree fell on him, leaving the ‘that bit of scenery’ free for the Renshaws to purchase. The Englishness of the scene is then spelled out by Wilfred who observes “I am sure father and mother will be delighted with it. As you said, it is just like a piece of park land at home.” (Maori and Settler: A Story of the New Zealand War 190) Although there is no reference to this conversation earlier in the story, the foundation for the possibility of such a conversation has already been laid in the explicit remark that “father and mother will be delighted with it “, the implicit reason for their ‘delight’ being “it is just like a piece of park land at home. “ At this point, the appropriateness of A. S. Byatt’s image of the ‘thinning of the membrane’ as characteristic of the indistinct line between fiction and reality in the writing of historical fiction (15), is demonstrated by the characters’ perception of the ‘imaginary relation to their real conditions of existence’. (White x) This interweaving of fiction and reality is reinforced when the two men who had accompanied them from England arrive for the first time. One of them exclaims:

“Why it is like a piece of England, Master Wilfrid! That might very well be the Thames there, and this some gentleman’s place near Reading ... When we get up a nice house here, with a garden around it, it will be like home again.” (Maori and Settler: A Story of the New Zealand War 195)

The persistent English fantasy of the country cottage with a garden around it is still as strong in the twenty-first century as it was in the nineteenth and was epitomised in the twentieth century by J. R. R. Tolkien in his creation of Bilbo Baggins’ home in the Shire (the inspiration for which was rural Warwickshire, the English county adjacent to Worcestershire. (Carpenter and Tolkien 230, 35)) English children’s literature is awash with other examples of the idealised English countryside, notably A.A. Milne’s Hundred Acre Wood in Winnie-the-

Pooh¹² and Kenneth Grahame's creation of the Mole's home, Ratty's riverside home and a pre-industrial societal structure in The Wind in the Willows.¹³

The first reaction of Wilfrid's mother, Mrs Renshaw, when the family arrive at the location is "This is indeed a sweetly pretty spot, and looks ... like a park at home." (Maori and Settler: A Story of the New Zealand War 200), emphasising the association of the possibility of present happiness in relation to 'their real conditions of existence' (White x) with the re-creation abroad of the idealised image of an English rural home. Continuing the evocation of English pastoral associations, the family agreed that the name of the place should be 'The Glade'. 'And so it was settled, and success to The Glade was thereupon formally drunk in cups of tea'. (Maori and Settler: A Story of the New Zealand War 204)

Henty's South American settlers, the Hardys, progress through a similar set of events. Having reached the Argentine, with, as we noted, few incidents to disrupt the voyage from England, the two boys set out to enclose the acquired land 'out on the pampas' and to build a house for the family. In this story they are accompanied by their father, a more positive character than Mr Renshaw in MS.¹⁴ Mrs Hardy and the two girls are brought up by steamer as soon as the house is habitable. Their first task is to give the place a name. Mrs Hardy's contribution to the discussion is to suggest the name of a place in England called Mount Pleasant, thus establishing at the outset the link with the imagined ideal English home.

The approval of the suggestion was general, and amid great applause it was settled that the house and estate should hereafter go by the name of "Mount Pleasant". (Out on the Pampas or the Young Settlers 66)

The Englishness of the name is strengthened by its association with Bunyan's Beulah land, or 'pleasant land', the resting place for Pilgrim's family in the

¹² Winnie the Pooh - any edition

¹³ Wind in the Willows – any edition. Also in the twentieth century John Betjeman's poems fed the image of an idealised England "An cobbled pathways lead the eye To cottage doors and hollyhocks." (Essex, 1960).

¹⁴ Mr. Renshaw did turn out alright in the end, exposed to fresh air and outdoor work "he looked better and stronger than (Wilfrid) had ever seen him before, and spoke with a firmness and decision quite new to him." G.A. Henty, Maori and Settler: A Story of the New Zealand War, New Edition ed. (London: Blackie and Son, 1911) 328..

second half of The Pilgrim's Progress', a text almost as familiar to the nineteenth century English reader as the Bible.¹⁵

The 'thinness of the membrane' – an historical example

At this point in my paper I will leave Henty's fiction to give an example of the 'thinness of the membrane' between fiction and reality in terms of the Victorian settler, by citing the 'historical' example of Samuel White Baker. (1821 – 1893).

Baker's biographer Michael Brander asserts that 'the well-known late – Victorian author G. A. Henty, ... used Baker as an inspiration for many of his heroes', a sweeping statement evidenced only by some similar traits of character . Brander cites an unreferenced description of Baker, commenting that 'it is ... probably near enough to form a reasonably close picture of him as he was then'. ('Then' refers to the time just before he went to preparatory school, aged about ten years old).

He was of the Saxon type; a noble looking boy,
with very fair complexion ... and fearless blue
eyes. He was enterprising, mischievous, for ever
getting into scrapes and leading others into them;
but he was never known to tell a lie or do a mean thing. (14)

Compare this description of Tom and Peter Scudamore from The Young Buglers:

... they were constantly getting into mischief of one
sort or another; yet ... there was never anything low,
disgraceful or ungentlemanly in their escapades, and
they could be trusted never to attempt to screen
themselves from the consequences by prevarication,
much less by lying. (Henty, Young Buglers 1)

That there is a similarity between the two does not necessarily mean the correlation is as direct as Brander suggests, but, I have included these two descriptions to demonstrate the tendency of the Victorian age, described by Benjamin Disraeli as 'an age of infinite romance ... like a fairytale' (Wilson 263)

¹⁵ See William Raeper, George MacDonald (Tring: Lion Publishing, 1987) 78. for note on the reading habits of ordinary Victorian people.

to fictionalise its reality. In the life of Samuel White Baker, who later became an explorer, hunter, settler and writer, the recreation of England became a reality. His first taste of settler life was in Mauritius, where he administered the family sugar plantation with to his brother, but after two years their dissatisfaction with life on that island led Samuel to investigate settling in Ceylon (present day Sri Lanka), which they eventually did. After the decision had been made, Brander quotes Baker,

“... I determined to make a regular settlement at Newera Eliya, sanguinely looking forward to establishing a little English village around my own residence ... I trusted to be enabled to effect such a change in the rough face of nature in that Locality as to render a residence in Newera Eliya something approaching to a country life in England ...” (31)

This is precisely what the Baker brothers, with Samuel as the driving force, proceeded to do. As the biography continues, Brander himself begins to fictionalize his subjects lives by the interpolation of passages which, whilst they fit in with the circumstantial evidence, are nevertheless surmises prefaced by phrases such as ‘must surely’ and ‘almost certainly’. (69) Jean Webb has noted, ‘Both the physical and imagined landscapes are those which satisfy the cultural imagination’, (365). The translation of Baker’s physical reality into his imagined landscape as a real, historical geographical location is the point at which the ‘membrane’ between history and fiction becomes so thin as to break. The settler stories written by Henty gave expression to a concept deeply embedded in the Victorian ‘cultural imagination,’ that of taming unexplored land and bringing it into the realm of ‘civilisation’. This concept would in itself need another discussion beyond the remit of this article. Evidence for the continued life of this concept can be found in Susanne Howe’s discussion of ‘Earthly paradises’ (123-29) and ‘Other Englands (130-62) in her examination of novels of empire, whilst Kathryn Tidrick discusses the historical English settler as colonial administrator, noting particularly the recreation of English life in Kenya before independence in the twentieth century. (130-39) These two volumes demonstrate the indistinct boundary between history and fiction and evidence Terry Pratchett’s observation that

‘People think stories are shaped by people. In fact, it’s the other way round’.
(8)

In Henty’s story OP, the transition between real and imaginary worlds is pronounced. In part this is because as Henty’s first story written for a young audience, his didactic intent resulted in ‘chunks’ of factual information inexpertly linked with storyline. Two particularly marked examples demonstrate this observation. The first is near the beginning of the story when the homestead is under construction. After the two boys, Charley and Hubert had manufactured enough bricks to build the house, Mr Hardy ‘assigned to everyone their share of the future work’. A further paragraph describes the tasks ‘assigned’ and concludes ‘The way in which adobe or mud houses are constructed is as follows: Henty then launches into an encyclopaedic description:

‘The mud is prepared for brick-making; but instead of being made into bricks, it is made at once into the wall. The foundation having been dug out and levelled, two boards are placed on edge eighteen inches or two feet apart ...

Half a page later, the paragraph concludes:

The boards are then put on again higher up, and the process repeated until the walls have gained the desired height.

(Out on the Pampas or the Young Settlers 57)

Henty then resumes the story. Had this been written in the twenty first century, it would not be unreasonable to assume that the author had ‘lifted’ information from the internet and pasted it into his narrative. I could model the mixing of history and imagination here and say that it is likely that Henty, in his travels, had seen a mud house under construction and even participated in the building, in which case the authority of the eyewitness authenticates the passage. Seamon writes ‘History and (fiction) often share the *convention* that they are eyewitness account. We put great faith in what we actually see and hear, and so such accounts replicate what readers believe is most reliable, the evidence of the senses’. (207) The second example comes towards the end of the story and is even more intrusive in terms of the story narrative. Ethel, the youngest girl, had been carried off in an Indian raid. A rescue party is organised and the need for hasty preparations emphasised. Despite the

urgent need to find and rescue Ethel, Henty breaks off in the middle of a dialogue in order to inform his readers. This is the effect:

”And now Lopez, what amount of charqui have we in store?”

“A good stock, Signor; enough for fifty men for a fortnight.”

Charqui is meat dried in the sun. In hot climates meat can be kept for many hours in its natural state. When a bullock is killed, therefore, all the meat which is not required for immediate use ...” (Out on the Pampas or the Young Settlers 232)

and so on for another six lines before the dialogue resumes in the same urgent tone. The life and death predicament of poor Ethel is thus reduced to a humorous passage in which the anachronistic mixture of fact and fiction elicits an inappropriate response from the reader. Rather than authenticating the imaginative account by inserting fact, it detracts from the sequence of events and destroys the suspense built up in the aftermath of Ethel’s capture.

Henty often used such descriptive passages in order to inform his readers. As a journalist this became reportage when his story is constructed around an historical event such as a particular battle. In OP, it is textbook-like information. I have given these two examples at some length to demonstrate the ambivalence between historical and fictional narrative. A small amount of research on either the preparation of charqui or instances of young settlers being carried off by autochthons would establish the authenticity of either of these possibilities, which equally could both be fictional.

The Homecoming

The final section of my paper examines the meeting of the imagined and the real in the homecoming of the settler.

Brander writes,

‘As Samuel (Baker) was quick to note, when the French arrived in a colony they behaved as if they intended to spend the rest of their life there and never return to their native land, ... in every way putting down roots. The British, on the other hand, ... , always behaved as if they intended to return in due course to their old

homes in Britain. (20-21).

Samuel White Baker, the example of an historical person, did return to England, as did the most of Henty's settlers. Exceptions to this pattern of return can be found, for example in The Young Colonists: a Story of the Zulu and Boer Wars (1885), the family's intention on arrival was to make a living by growing trees for wood and for fruit, indicating a long-term commitment to settler life. After fulfilling this intention the story ends with the family contemplating a possible future return to England which may or may not happen. A different situation is found in The Young Carthaginian: a Story of the Times of Hannibal (1887). The hero is unable to return to Carthage for political reasons and chooses to settle in Germany with no intention ever to return to his home.

The Hardy's, (OP) having accumulated a sufficient fortune to purchase a country estate in England, all eventually return to England. Wilfrid Renshaw (MS) is also another exception. He remains in New Zealand at the end of the story whilst the rest of his family return to a country estate. Reuben Whitney, the hero of A Final Reckoning (1887) also 'returned to England and bought an estate ... ' (A Final Reckoning: A Tale of Bush Life in Australia 352) after twenty years of success in Australia.

Conclusion

The traveller who dreamt of paradise as 'an English field and hedgerow' (Byatt 117) becomes the settler who chooses a location 'like a bit of England' where he can "get up a nice house, with a garden round it' so that 'it will be like home again', (Henty, Maori and Settler: A Story of the New Zealand War 195) and so realise his idealisation of 'home', that is, England. His reward for the hard work of re-creating England in a remote place is the fulfilment of his imagined ideal in his homecoming to a country estate. And so he actualises the statement of Novalis, 'Our life is no dream; but it ought to become one, and perhaps will'. (MacDonald, Phantastes 315)

References

- Althusser, Louis. "On Ideology." Critical Theory: A Reader. Ed. Douglas Tallack. London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1995. 304-13.
- Arnold, Guy. Held Fast for England: G. A. Henty Imperialist Boy's Writer. London: Hamish Hamilton, 1980.
- Ashley, L. R. N. G. A. Henty and the Victorian Mind. San Francisco, London and Bethesda: International Scholars Publications, 1999.
- Gilbert White: The Nature Man. 2006. Television Programme BBC4, 28/08/2006.
- Berlyne, Gordon. Hugh Pruett's Henty Companion. Royston: The Henty Society, 1997.
- Blake, William. "From 'Milton'." The Oxford Book of English Mystical Verse. Eds. D. H. S. Nicholson and A. H. E. Lee. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1924.
- Brander, Michael. The Perfect Victorian Hero: Samuel White Baker. Edinburgh: Mainstream, 1982.
- Byatt, A.S. On Histories and Stories: Selected Essays. Chatto & Windus, 2000. London: Vintage, 2001.
- Carpenter, Humphrey, and Christopher Tolkien, eds. Letters of J. R. R. Tolkien: A Selection. London: George Allen & Unwin, 1981.
- Eliot, George. Middlemarch. 1871-2. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1965.
- Garfield, Leon. "Historical Fiction for Our Global Times." The Horn Book Magazine Nov/Dec (1988): 736-42.
- Henty, G.A. A Final Reckoning: A Tale of Bush Life in Australia. Blackie and Son, 1887. London: Blackie and Son, n.d.
- . Maori and Settler: A Story of the New Zealand War. New Edition ed. London: Blackie and Son, 1911.
- . Out on the Pampas or the Young Settlers. New Edition ed. London: Humphrey Milford/Oxford University Press, n.d.
- . Sturdy and Strong: Or How George Andrews Made His Way. London: Blackie and Son Limited, n.d.
- . Young Buglers. London: Humphrey Milford Oxford University Press, n.d. 1919.
- . The Young Colonists: A Story of the Zulu and Boer Wars. New edition ed. London: Blackie and Son, 1897.
- Howe, Suzanne. Novels of Empire. New York: Columbia University Press, 1949.
- MacDonald, George. "Cross Purposes." The Light Princess and Other Fairy Tales. Alexander Strahan, 1867. Whitethorn: Johannesen, 1993. 141-71.
- . Phantastes. Smith Elder and Co. 1858. Whitethorn: Johannesen, 1994.
- Pratchett, Terry. Witches Abroad. Gollancz, 1991. London: Corgi Books, 1992.
- Raeper, William. George MacDonald. Tring: Lion Publishing, 1987.
- Seamon, Roger G. "Narrative Practice and the Theoretical Distinction between History and Fiction." Genre 16 (1983): 197-218.
- Shakespeare, William. "The Tragedy of King Richard the Second." The Complete Works of William Shakespeare. "Falstaff" Edition ed. London: Sands & Company, 1899. 378 - 404.
- Tidrick, Kathryn. Empire and the British Character. London: I B Tauris, 1992.
- Wagner, Gillian. Children of the Empire. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1982.
- Walpole, Hugh. Reading: Being One of a Series of Essays Edited by J. B. Priestley and Entitled: These Diversions. Ed. J. B. Priestley. Vol. 1926. London: Jarrolds, 1926.

- Webb, Jean. "Conceptualising Childhood: Robert Louis Stevenson's a 'Child's Garden of Verses'." Cambridge Journal of Education 32.3 (2002): 359-65.
- White, Hayden. The Content of the Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1987.
- Wilson, A. N. The Victorians. Hutchinson 2002. London: Arrow Books, 2003.

Rachel E. Johnson. November 2006.