

Negotiating the Boundaries of Gender and Empire: Lady Curzon, Vicerine of India 1898-1905

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Abstract

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This thesis presents a life geography of Mary Curzon during the time she occupied the position of Vicereine of India, 1898-1905. Informed by gender and post-colonial theory I contextualise Mary Curzon within the culture of empire in India and at home. This thesis adopts the framework of the incorporated wife to address the imperial and domestic subjectivity of Mary Curzon and stresses the importance of reading her life situated within a fluid understanding of her negotiation of 'home' and 'empire'. This thesis has been shaped around the thematic reading of Mary's life divided into three parts that reflect Mary's negotiation of viceregal life; her corporeal concerns and her direct negotiation of 'India'.

I address Mary's position as an incorporated wife drawing attention to her roles as hostess, philanthropist and political companion. I address the extent to which Mary was able to exert agency within these roles and thus negotiate the boundaries of the incorporated framework. I develop the framework of the incorporated wife by analysing the nature of 'home' to Mary. I argue that the material homes of Mary in India were 'incorporated residences' which acted as 'contact zones'. I argue that despite the intense mobility of imperial life in India Mary found mechanisms through which she found stability. I address Mary's negotiation of the 'conceptual' space of home within the colonial metropolis.

The framework of the incorporated wife has prioritised women's 'public' roles at the expense of their corporeal concerns. To address this problem I present the illness narratives of Mary Curzon contextualised within the discourses of imperial health in India. This thesis charts the way in which Mary conceptualised disease and how she responded to the disease environment of India in terms of her physical response and her representations of illness to those at 'home'. I develop an intimate history of the body by drawing on Mary's reproductive concerns and seek to integrate Imperial motherhood within the framework of incorporation. I argue that Mary's imperial subjectivity cannot be separated from her domestic subjectivity. Mary's negotiation of motherhood occurs across the spaces of empire, this reiterates the need to see 'home' and empire' as contiguous spaces.

Mary negotiated the space of India most directly during the viceregal tours of India. I address the production of her tour journals and the audience for whom she was writing. The organization of the Viceroy's tours of India encouraged Mary to view India in a specific way. I address this 'frame' in terms of Mary's audience and her own periods of transgression. The space of the hunt within the tour is addressed. I follow the argument that the British sought to adopt the mantle of the Mughuls through sporting activities. However I question the extent to which the Viceroy exhibited 'mastery over nature' as Mary's diaries reveal the way in which representations of the Viceroy's hunting prowess through photographs and trophies were often illusions, which mask the reliance placed on the Indian host by the Viceroy. Finally I address the bodily space of the hunt, and highlight the gendered positioning of Mary's body within this space.

I conclude by drawing together the themes of Mary's life through the lens of the 1903 Coronation Durbar held in Delhi.

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Plate 1 – Their Excellencies just after shooting. Tiger shot through head at 70 yards
Deen Dayal 2-12 April 1902
OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/33 (19)

Chapter 1

Geography, Gender and Empire

I Introduction

In April 1902, the Nizam of Hyderabad's court photographer, Lala Deen Dayal memorialised the visit of the Viceroy of India to the state of Hyderabad, Central India. The images he took offered the Viceroy a photographic survey of the Nizam's state including notable industrial, architectural, ethnographic and topographical features. Dayal also photographed the meetings of the Nizam with the Viceroy, and documented the activities the Viceroy undertook during his visit. It is these images that resonate in particular with the symbolism of British imperialism at the height of the British Raj. One such image (Plate 1) from the photograph album presented to the Viceroy by the Nizam after his visit depicts a hunting scene. The Viceroy of India, George, Lord Curzon stands to the fore, the slaughtered tiger lies at his feet, 'shot at 70 yards' as the caption under the photograph proclaims. Mary Curzon, 'Vicereine of India', leans against a tree, slightly behind her husband. Partially concealed in the undergrowth behind, a ring of Indian beaters stare at the camera.

This image conveys the symbolism of the race and gender hierarchies of imperial power in India. The imperial white male stands to the fore, supreme over nature which lies dead at his feet; over the white female behind and finally over the Indian 'other' in the background. The imperial white female stands in a position in which her own identity is more ambiguous. She is superior by virtue of her race over the Indian 'other' standing behind, but subordinate to the white male in front on grounds of gender. Standing defenceless against the tree, the imperial female seemingly requires the protection of the imperial male.¹ The passive Indian men in the background, and the flayed tiger present a latent threat to the safety of the imperial female.

This image is a potent one for such interpretations, yet such readings can prove fragile on closer attention. If interrogated further it is clear that the Indian men in the background are the very beaters who would have driven the tiger to the Viceroy's gun in a highly organised fashion, ensuring the Viceroy's satisfaction and thus the edification of the Nizam's state. The Viceroy's very 'mastery over nature' is therefore questionable. Mary Curzon's diary of this hunt reveals that while Mary had no gun in hand, she celebrated in this triumph over the natural world. Her diary tells us that she saw the tiger first, and that she silently pointed it out to her husband. Moreover the celebratory caption under the image 'Tiger shot dead at 70 yards' is in Mary's hand. Mary also identifies herself underneath the photograph, as 'MVC' [Mary Victoria Curzon] and George in his official position as the Viceroys as 'V'.

This image prompts a consideration of the debates concerning the culture of empire that have engaged geographers (as well as historians and others) in recent years. George Curzon is symbolic of a particular type of imperial figure within the historiography of Geography. As an explorer, imperial administrator, and later President of the Royal Geography Society, George Curzon has long held a 'legitimate' position in the whigish history of Geography. Ironically, George Curzon was one of the figures that made other people's place within the history of geography less legitimate.² Speaking against the admittance of women as Fellows of the RGS in May 1893 he stated:

Their sex and training render them equally unfitted for exploration, and the genus of professional female globe-trotters with which America has lately familiarised us is one of the horrors of the latter end of the nineteenth century'.³

¹ The reading of this image holds powerful resonance with Gillian Rose's reading of Thomas Gainsborough's 'Mr and Mrs Andrews'. See Gillian Rose, *Feminism and Geography: The limits of Geographical Knowledge* (Cambridge: PolityPress, 1993) p.91

² It is fruitful to remember that George Curzon was an ardent advocate against women becoming members of The Royal Geographical Society, only to see the full admittance of women as fellows of the RGS during his times as President in 1913.

³ Mona Domosh, Toward a feminist historiography of geography, *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 16 (1991) p.97. See also Bell, M. & McEwan, C., 'The admission of Women

Such comments ensured that figures such as Mary Kingsley, the nineteenth century travel writer, have held a contested position within the history of geography. Such positions are now being addressed to be more inclusive to the different histories of geography.

Yet where does this place Mary Curzon who was arguably one of the American female ‘globe-trotters’ of whom George Curzon was so disdainful? What role does she have in illuminating different histories of geography, or of geographical concerns? Mary Curzon never fashioned herself as a geographer, explorer or traveller and I would not argue that she should be ‘recovered’ as such. Yet, Mary Curzon does illuminate what Driver might call an ‘unfamiliar history’ of geography (see below p.8).⁴ She certainly helped to create ‘popular’ and ‘imagined’ geographies of empire, her letters and tour diaries written on travels around India, and her public image within the newspaper press are testament to that. Yet there is a more significant ‘unfamiliar history’ that can be told. Mary Curzon’s life became a web that was spun over the spaces of empire from the metropolitan centre to the isolated boundaries of British India. Her identity was negotiated within these spaces and can be read through her letters and diaries, photographs and dress, and in newspaper articles. Plate I prompted me to unravel this web, which I present through a life geography of Mary Curzon.

This thesis offers a reading of Mary Curzon’s life that is informed by gender and post-colonial theory, and emphasises the importance of a contextual approach. In this introduction I flag the key debates upon which this thesis explicitly draws,

Fellows to The Royal Geographical Society 1892-1914: the controversy and the outcome’, *The Geographical Journal* 163 (1996) pp.295-312

beginning with different geographical engagements with cultures of empire. I then introduce the debates concerning gender and imperialism, histories of elite women in studies of imperialism and in British women's history. Finally I situate my approach within a discussion on the method and practice of biography, citing my sources and the interpretative method adopted in this thesis. This introduction concludes by outlining the key questions addressed in the thesis.

II Cultures of empire, geography and gender

This thesis emerges from a debate sparked in 1990 between academic geographers, surrounding the telling of the institutional history of geography. The critical turn of the 1980s influenced the attempt of another generation of geographers to re-write the history of the discipline.⁵ The more critical of these reflected an engagement with the history of ideas and the need for 'situated' approach that placed geographical ideas in a social and intellectual context.⁶ Feminist geographers responded, indicating that these histories reflected yet another generation of men writing institutionalised histories that failed to negotiate the gendered construction of knowledge, and prioritised the role of privileged, white, male heroes. Re-writing the history of geography led to debates surrounding the inclusion of women in the history of geography and their role in creating geographical knowledge.⁷

⁴ Driver, F., Submerged identities: familiar and unfamiliar histories, *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 20 (1995) pp.410-413

⁵ Livingstone, D., *The Geographical Tradition; Episodes in the History of a Contested Enterprise* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992); Stoddart, D.R., *On Geography and its history* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986). For a more personal analysis of the impacts of the disciplines history on a particular geographer see: Hagget, P., *The Geographers Art* (Oxford: Blackwell, (1990)

⁶ Livingstone (1992) pp.1-31

⁷ Domosh, (1991) pp.95-104; Domosh, M., 'Beyond the frontiers of geographical knowledge', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 16 (1991) pp 488-490; Stoddart, D.R., 'Do

Such debates have centered on the period of time in which the discipline of geography became institutionalised, namely from the mid 19th century onwards, a period of time in British and European history, that is intimately connected with rapid imperial and colonial expansion. The momentum with which this debate took place and the burgeoning of work that engages with the ‘cultures of empire’ that emerged from forays into critical histories of the discipline, must be placed against a wider inter-disciplinary backdrop of engagement with critical theory, colonial discourse analysis and post-colonial theory.

Unwinding the genealogy of recent critical approaches to empire is complex; more so as cross-disciplinary engagements have resulted in a rich tapestry of ideas. However the work of Edward Said is often taken as the main springboard from which critical engagement with cultures of empire have taken place. Said’s arguments presented in his study *Orientalism* (1978) and developed in *Culture and Imperialism* (1994) pointed to the centrality of colonial discourse meaning ‘the variety of textual forms in which the West produced and codified knowledge about non-metropolitan areas and cultures, especially those under colonial control’.⁸ Without analysing Orientalism as a discourse, Said argued ‘one cannot possibly understand the enormous systematic discipline by which European culture was able to manage – and even produce – the Orient politically, sociologically, militarily, ideologically, scientifically, and imaginatively during

we need a Feminist historiography of geography – and if we do what shall it be?’ *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 16 (1991) pp. 484-487

⁸ Williams, P. & Chrisman (eds), *Colonial Discourse and Postcolonial Theory: A Reader* (Hemel Hempstead: Harvester, 1994) p.5

the post enlightenment period'.⁹ As Catherine Hall has argued, Said was to link culture irrevocably to Imperialism, balancing the weight that had previously been placed on economic and political power, and provided a foundation for the development of a new field of post-colonial studies that analysed colonial discourse and colonial cultures.¹⁰

Said effectively placed the subject of empire in a wider inter-disciplinary arena, removing it from the clutches of imperial historians who faced problems of legitimacy in a decolonised world where their previous role of 'forwarding the imperial enterprise' through the fostering of 'imperial knowledge' was no longer required.¹¹ Liberal nationalist histories and attacks from the 'subaltern studies' group had left traditional imperial historians with limited role to play. While imperial historians have been critical of Said and colonial discourse analysis, the insights of post-colonial theory have provided 'Imperial and Commonwealth' historians a reinvigorated site of study. John MacKenzie has challenged imperial historians to think beyond the economic and political machinery of empire. His focus shows how features of colonial life such as hunting fed directly into the power relations at the heart of the imperial project, and also how empire was consumed at home through architecture, propaganda and exhibitions.¹²

The influences of post-colonial theory, and the work of imperial historians such as John MacKenzie in geography have been diverse and have expanded well

⁹ Said, E., *Orientalism: Western Conceptions of the Orient* (London: Penguin, 1995) p.3

¹⁰ Hall, C. (ed), *Cultures of empire: A reader: Colonizers in Britain and the empire in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000) pp.14-15

¹¹ Midgley, C.(ed), *Gender and Imperialism* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998) p.3

¹² See the series '*Studies in Imperialism*' edited by John M. MacKenzie (Manchester: Manchester University Press)

beyond the debates surrounding institutional histories. This has both impacted on traditional areas of geographical scholarship, such as the interpretation of landscape and has opened up new vistas. Indeed Felix Driver has suggested that there are many histories of geography to be told. Driver's articulation of the way in which contextual perspectives present different visions of geography, enable a clear appreciation of the diverse ways in which the discipline has developed in the last ten years. Driver argues that 'contextual perspectives':

Suggests a rather different vision of the history of geography; less a prop for the present, than as a means of understanding the distanced relationship between past and present. In place of the continuous lines of progressivist history, it substitutes a landscape of discontinuity; history as a series of spaces, rather than a single seamless narrative. The contextual approach to the history of geography is thus more concerned with mapping the lateral associations and social relations of geographical knowledge than with constructing a vision of the overall evolution of the modern discipline. It demands a more historically (and geographically) sensitive approach to the production and consumption of knowledge than that provided by more conventional narrative histories.¹³

The stress on mapping the 'lateral associations and social relations of geographical knowledge' reflected a call to engage with the wider cultures of empire, rather than remain bound to discussions of institutional histories.

This is not to say that the institutionalisation of the discipline has not remained an important area of study, but that it has been addressed in less totalising ways. The ways in which institutions such as the Royal Geographical Society were implicated in empire building, through the sponsorship of expeditions and the role of geographers and geographical methods such as mapping, in collecting

¹³ Driver, F., 'Geography's empire: histories of geographical knowledge', *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space: Society and Space* 10 (1992) p.35

knowledge about people and places, has thus been re-considered.¹⁴ Teresa Ploszajska's work on the development of geographical education, opens up a new space of engagement through which the consumption of geographical knowledge in schools may be addressed.¹⁵ Driver has also disrupted the narratives of the history of the Royal Geographical Society by telling the 'unfamiliar histories' of the institution, revealing the discordant voices of three members in one year.¹⁶ This has highlighted the heterogeneity of geographical knowledge, and indicated that more detailed histories of the discipline demonstrate the fractures of thought, rather than a seamless tradition.

An important approach to these more lateral, contextual histories of geography, emerges from a call for geographers to think more about the 'cultural and political dimensions of geographic knowledge during this period', with Driver arguing that geographers need to think about the way 'geographical knowledge is constituted, and the various forms it takes'.¹⁷ The response to this call has revealed the extent to which 'popular geographies' of empire were composed, and geographical information disseminated to a wider audience through exhibition spaces, the print media, urban architecture or in domestic gardens.¹⁸ The dissemination of popular geographic knowledge, was a very important constitutive part of the creation of an imperial national consciousness from the

¹⁴ See Driver, F., *Geography Militant: Cultures of Exploration and Empire* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001); and essays in Bell, M. *et al* (eds), *Geography and Imperialism 1820-1940* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995) and Godlewska, A. & Smith, N., *Geography and Empire* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994)

¹⁵ Ploszajska, T., 'Down to Earth? Geography fieldwork in English Schools, 1870-1944', *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 16 (1998), pp.757-74

¹⁶ Driver (1995) pp.410-413

¹⁷ Driver (1992) p.30

¹⁸ See Driver, F. & Gilbert, D. (eds) *Imperial Cities: Landscape, Display and Identity* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999)

late nineteenth century. Geographers have recognized travel writing as an important medium through which geographies of empire were disseminated.

From the earliest records, travel has always, as Derek Gregory has argued, taken ‘place within a complex web of textualisations’ in which the spaces of encounter were inscribed, capturing the ways in which landscapes and cultures were read, and the complex power relationships that defined these encounters.¹⁹ Said called for a critical analysis of the texts of these encounters, arguing that they constituted ‘imaginative geographies’, which Gregory describes as ‘figurations of place, space and landscape that dramatise distance and difference in such a way that our ‘space’ is divided and demarcated from ‘their space’.²⁰ Geographers’ interest in travel writing is set within a wider interdisciplinary framework that has seen a burgeoning of engagement with travellers’ texts. As Duncan and Gregory argue, histories of geographic knowledge have traditionally drawn on travel writing that came under the banner of ‘Science’, but much other travel writing, including that of women travellers, has been ignored in the discipline until recent years.²¹ More thematic geographical engagements with travellers’ texts have revealed the impact of geographical ideas such as climatic determinism.²² Others have been more influenced by postcolonial and post structural theory, reading travel writing as a ‘space of power’, articulated through the literary devices such as metaphor, imagery and idiom. Colonial discourses reflected in these texts are interpreted to reveal the power relation of colonial rule, reflecting the

¹⁹ Gregory, D., ‘Between the book and the lamp: imaginative geographies of Egypt, 1849-50’ *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 20 (1995) p.29

²⁰ Gregory (1995) p.29

²¹ Duncan, J., and Gregory D., *Writes of Passage: Reading Travel Writing* (London: Routledge, 1999) p.2

negotiations of race, gender, class and sexuality in the colonial conquest.²³ Feminist geographers have made a large contribution in this area, a lateral shift in direction as a result of controversies surrounding the acceptable inclusion of women within geography.

The controversy surrounding the inclusion of women within the history of geography remains unresolved. The recovery of women as the producers of geographic knowledge, and their positioning in the institutional history, have been difficult to reconcile with the fact that whilst such women were producing geographical knowledge, they did not consider themselves geographers, or have contact with the geographical establishment.²⁴ As Rose has noted, the act of recovering women as geographers and simply replacing them in the established canon of the history of geography, failed to challenge the masculinist nature of this tradition and tended to erase questions of gender.²⁵ Yet to celebrate women's difference is also less than satisfactory with the dangers of essentialism. Rose has challenged geographers to reconfigure a space 'through which the difference that gender makes to the production of geographic knowledge can be recognised' and calls for a space where situated knowledges can reside which 'articulate radical difference: a space of contradiction, reversals, paradoxes, a pleated and folded space'.²⁶

²² For example see Livingstone, D., 'The moral discourses of climate: historical considerations on race, place and virtue', *Journal of Historical Geography*, 17 (1991) pp.413-434

²³ See for example the essays in Blunt, A. and Rose, G. (eds), *Writing Women and Space: Colonial and Postcolonial Geographies* (New York: The Guildford Press, 1994)

²⁴ See McEwan, C., *Geography, Gender and Empire: Victorian Women Travellers in West Africa*, (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000) p.3

²⁵ Rose (1995) p.415

²⁶ Rose, (1995)p. 416

Feminist geographers' attempts to find new spaces for the gendered production of geographic knowledge have resulted in a growing area of study that has addressed critical geographies of empire through travellers' texts and other mediums. While there are a multitude of different sites of interrogation, the underlying focus has been with the construction and negotiation of the categories such as gender, class, race, and sexuality, within the context of imperial power relations and the spatial geographies that emerge from these negotiations.²⁷ While early studies addressed women whose links with geography were more established, such as Mary Kingsley, studies are now not constrained to either travellers' texts, or linking into the institutionalisation of geography, developing instead the area of study which address more broadly the spatial geographies of gender and empire.²⁸

III Histories of women and empire: the 'incorporated wife'

Work on gender, geography and empire must be set within the wider interdisciplinary context of gender and empire. Until the 1970s standard histories of imperialism ignored both white women's involvement in the empire and the gendered nature of imperial rule. Initial engagements attempted to rectify the exclusion of white women from histories of imperialism. These were often for a popular audience and focused on 'recovering' women's position in the empire, emphasising the diversity of women's experience whether as travellers, wives of colonial administrators or missionaries. Early work has been criticised for

²⁷ The papers in Blunt & Rose (1994) offer an important contribution by feminist geographers.

²⁸ Alison Blunt's work on British women India is of particular note in this respect. See: Blunt, A. 'Imperial geographies of home: British domesticity in India, 1886-1925', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 24 (1999) pp.421-440; 'Spatial Stories under Siege: British women writing from Lucknow in 1857', *Gender, Place and Culture*, 7 (2000) pp. 229-246;

isolating and celebrating specific women, making feminist heroines out of intrepid travellers or philanthropists, and has been criticised for oversimplifying their place in empire and steeping them in nostalgia. An example pertinent to this research is offered in Margaret Fowler's study 'Below the Peacock Fan'.²⁹ Fowler argued that 'most accounts of the British in India, both history books and memoirs, are masculine in their bias...I have tried to right the balance, to tell a small part of the women's story of India in the private view of heart and mind'. Her narrative offers a romanticised, nostalgic view of four 'remarkable women embarked on the greatest adventures of their lives... painfully uprooted, flung half-way round the world to a country where to venture out of doors when the sun struck straight down was to risk sudden death...All of them went willingly, motivated by love'.³⁰ One of these women is Mary Curzon. Fowler's analysis was drawn from Nigel Nicolson's 1977 biography of Mary Curzon, which has been criticised by Susan Bailey for its concentration on 'her social life and her husband's opinions almost to the exclusion of her influence on, or feelings about, important family or political decisions'.³¹ Not for nothing did Salmon Rushdie characterise the rash of imperial nostalgia emerging in the late 1970s and early 80s as 'Raj Revival'.

Chaudhuri and Stobel date more critical approaches to the study of woman as participants in empire, which 'attempted to refute the stereotypically negative

Embodying war: British women and domestic defilement in the Indian 'Mutiny', 1857-8', *Journal of Historical Geography*, 26 (2000) pp. 403-428

²⁹ Fowler, M., *Below the peacock fan: First Ladies of the Raj* (Canada: Viking, 1987)

³⁰ Fowler (1987) p.3, 5

³¹ Bailey, S.F. *Women and the British Empire: An annotated Guide to Sources* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1983) p.16

image of Western Women' to the late 1970s.³² These 'recuperative' histories aimed at 'debunking myths of destructive females whose racial prejudices led to the disruption of good relationships between male colonial figures and indigenous people and sought to reassess women's roles in a more positive light'.³³ Since the mid 1980s a new focus for studies of western women and imperialism has been found, one which moves away from making heroic feminist icons to one which focused instead on the 'complexities of women's lives in the colonies', focusing on gender and demanding in its analysis an 'understanding of the interactions of gender, race, and class'. These studies often revolved around women's complicity in, or resistance to, empire and tracked, with greater sophistication, women's agency within the empire. A focus has been placed on understanding the ambiguous position of women in an imperial environment, which simultaneously oppressed and privileged women.

Dominant criticisms of work on women and imperialism to date, have revolved around the problems with placing white women at the centre of the imperial stage and failure to address a broader social context in which relations between British men and women are understood, and also to render visible the connections between indigenous women and men and the colonial counterparts. Over time, gender analysis has taken a more critical edge and has asked questions about the gendered construction of relations between colonised and colonisers, and has sought to rectify an imbalance in our understanding of masculinity within an

³² Chaudhuri, N. and Strobel M. (eds) *Western Women and Imperialism: Complicity and Resistance* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992)

³³ Chaudhuri and Strobel (1992) p.3

imperial context.³⁴ An important area, which has recently gained increasing attention, charts the connections between the colonial and metropolitan society, for example through an analysis of anti-slavery politics, or through a focus on the lives of colonised people living in Britain.³⁵ These studies have indicated the limitations of treating the colonial and metropolitan society as separate fields. This re-linking of home and empire reconfirms that ideas of nationhood were constituted in relation to the empire.

A growing awareness of the diversity of western women's experiences of empire, has provoked debate on whether it is possible to address 'western women and imperialism' as a single category of analysis. For example growing appreciations of the differences in class positions of women who travelled in the empire has challenged the notion that overseas travel was the preserve of the middle classes.³⁶ Despite early 'celebratory' texts such as *Below the Peacock Fan*, which charted the position of four vicereines of India, and the widely critiqued travel texts of Emily Eden and Lady Mary Montague, studies of upper class and aristocratic women in the empire have received scant critical attention. Helen Callaway and Dorothy Helly's work on Flora Shaw is in this case an exemplary anomaly.³⁷ It is hardly surprising that given the dominance of work on middle class women's experiences of empire, that recent commentators such as Cheryl

³⁴ For critiques of work on women and imperialism see: Haggis, J., 'Gendering Colonialism or Colonising Gender? Recent women's Studies Approaches to White Women and the History of British Colonialism' *Women's Studies International Forum* 13 (1990) pp.105-115; Formes, M., 'Beyond Complicity versus Resistance: Recent work on gender and European imperialism', *Journal of Social History*, 28 (1995) pp.629-641;

³⁵ see: Cooper, F. and Stoler, A. *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997)

³⁶ Melman, B., *Women's Orient: English women and the Middle East 1718-1918: Sexuality, religion, work* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1992) p.32 cited in McEwan (2000) p.9

³⁷ Callaway, H. and Helly, D., 'Crusader for Empire: Flora Shaw/Lady Lugard' in Chaudhuri and Strobel (1992) pp. 79-97

McEwan should need to boldly state, 'aristocratic women travelled in the empire' and that 'Missionaries, missionaries' wives, and the wives of colonial administrators were not exclusively middle class'.³⁸ The lack of critical attention paid to upper class experience of empire reflects a priority placed on 'uncovering' lower and middle class women's social history in recent years. In seeking a more nuanced understanding of women's roles in empire it is necessary that upper class women are also given critical attention.³⁹

This thesis places at its centre a woman who occupied an elite position within society. Mary Curzon was wealthy, held the ears of some of the foremost politicians of the day and moved in the elite circles of international society. It could be argued that by placing Mary Curzon at the centre of this study I am re-privileging a class that has traditionally dominated all others. Equally, by placing attention on Mary Curzon's role as vicereines, I could be charged with placing attention on the figures at the pinnacle of British rule in India, re-calling a whiggish imperial history that focused on the heroes and heroines of empire.

Indeed it is in reaction to such debates concerning the dominance of upper class male histories that histories of lower and middle class women in the empire, and lower and middle class women more generally have, in turn, come to dominate. As a result of this, I would argue that upper class women have been disproportionately ignored from critical study. While they shared their husbands'

³⁸ McEwan (2000) p.9

³⁹ It also reflects the fact that the readings of texts by aristocratic writers such as Emily Eden have been pursued with colonial discourse analysis as the principal objective.

class position such women have not traditionally received the same level of historical analysis.

Critical histories of Victorian and Edwardian upper class women in Britain have focused on the intersections of private family concerns in women's life and their roles in the public spheres of politics and philanthropy.⁴⁰ Pat Jalland's ground breaking work on Victorian women's experience of marriage and politics has been followed by more detailed studies such as K. D. Reynold's analysis of early and mid Victorian women's role in politics at a local and national level. Until recently the impact of empire on upper class women has largely been ignored. The recent focus placed on links between the colonies and the colonial metropolis has led to a new direction in women's history in Britain, that pays greater attention to the imperial views, experiences and political participation of women living and working at the heart of empire. Aristocratic women's participation in the domestic campaigns for imperial issues has come into the foreground recently, primarily through the work of Julia Bush.⁴¹ While this is an underdeveloped theme in women's history, Callaway and Helly's work on Flora Shaw reflects an important pioneering study on the impact that an upper class woman had within the spaces of empire and the metropolis.⁴²

The need to engage with individuals' lives to understand the diversity of experience of empire is clearly shown when attempting to engage with upper

⁴⁰ Jalland, P., *Women, Marriage and Politics 1860-1914*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986); Reynolds, K., *Aristocratic Women and Political Society in Victorian Britain*, Oxford Historical Monographs, OUP, 1998; Peterson, M.J., *Family, Love and Work in the Lives of Victorian Gentlewomen* (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1989)

⁴¹ Bush, J., *Edwardian Ladies and Imperial Power* (London: Leicester University Press, 2000)

⁴² Callaway and Helly (1992) p. 79-97

class women's experience of empire. Owing to their elite positions, these women often had very individual experiences of empire, that should not be essentialised into a single category. Despite the small amount of work on the impact of the empire on women's lives in the metropolis, and on those living in the empire more generally, it is clear that upper class women engaged in empire in myriad ways and adopted a variety of stances towards imperialism.

An important gap in the study of women's engagement in the culture of empire, remains those women in the empire who were at the forefront of high imperial politics, as wives of the Governor Generals and Viceroy. Although briefly touched on by Callaway for such women in Nigeria, women in these positions have not been subject to in-depth critical analysis.⁴³ This thesis begins to address this lacuna.

This thesis develops a framework of the 'incorporated wife', a concept adopted in some studies of women and imperialism and British women's history, to redefine the way in which histories of upper class women are being told.⁴⁴ This reflects the call to re-evaluate the categories of 'public' and 'private' and 'separate spheres' in the wake of in-depth analysis of women's actual experiences, that have revealed the shortcomings of such frameworks.

As historian Amanda Vickery notes, 'public and private', 'separate spheres', and 'domesticity' are 'key words and phrases of academic feminism.' She goes on to

⁴³ Callaway, H., *Gender, Culture and Empire: European Woman in Colonial Nigeria* (London: Macmillan Press, 1987) p.75-79

⁴⁴ See Callan, H. & Ardener, S. (eds.), *The Incorporated Wife* (Kent: Croom Helm, 1984). See above p. 20 and p.49

argue that the concept of separate spheres has come to be seen as ‘one of the fundamental organising categories, if not the organising category of modern women’s history’.⁴⁵ Within women’s history, the analogy of separate spheres has become particularly associated as a fundamental part of middle class identity⁴⁶ that has been explored fully by historians Davidoff and Hall.⁴⁷ In an overview of debates connected with separate spheres work, Vickery questions the validity of the ideology of separate spheres. She asks what evidence there is for the acceptance of separate spheres by women at the time, other than that found in prescriptive texts, which were supposed to detail correct behaviour. How do women who broke the stereotype of the passive victim, such as travellers, impact on the model? In particular, Vickery raises questions connected to the position of the social elite. Vickery points to the fact that upper class women were in a better position to flout convention, and that studies of aristocratic women and conservative politics indicated the possibility that women paid lip service to formal subservience to their husbands and exercised a degree of agency.⁴⁸ This is particularly pertinent to the study of upper class women. I would also argue that it is crucial to see such a re-evaluation relating more broadly across the spaces of empire and not restricted to those at ‘home’. This is particularly applicable as the nature of viceregal appointments in India meant that women might only expect to live in India for five years before returning to their established life at home in England.

⁴⁵Vickery, A., ‘Golden Age to Separate Spheres? A review of the categories and chronology of English women’s history’, *The Historical Journal*, 36 (1993), pp 383 - 414, p 383, 389

⁴⁶ *ibid.* p.384

⁴⁷ Davidoff, L., and Hall, C., *Family Fortunes, Men and Women of the English Middle Class 1780 - 1850*, (London: Routledge, 1987)

⁴⁸ Vickery (1993) p.391

Vickery calls for research that challenges current conceptions of public and private spheres. She argues that too much weight has been placed in the past on prescriptive texts and that research should instead focus on looking at actual women's manuscripts, to discover whether such texts did shape the roles of women. To achieve this Vickery suggests that case studies are needed to 'establish with any degree of precision the extent to which women accepted, negotiated, contested or simply ignored the much quoted precepts of proper female behaviour in past time.'⁴⁹

This debate has been addressed in different ways. For example Sara Mills has shown through her analysis of women's travel writing, that while women situated themselves within feminine discourses, they also flouted convention, manipulated their positions and transgressed the boundaries of correct behaviour.⁵⁰ Vron Ware and Claire Midgley have shown in studies of women's involvement in the Anti-Slavery Campaigns, that while women entered the 'public' domain of anti-slavery politics, their focus on women slaves and the impact of slavery on the family, offered them a feminine sphere in which to campaign, that was acceptable within the public domain.⁵¹

K.D. Reynolds has recognised the shortcoming of 'separate spheres' in relation to studies of upper class women.⁵² Adopting the framework of 'incorporated wife' to explain the different roles of British aristocratic women in marriage, Reynolds

⁴⁹ Vickery (1993) p. 415

⁵⁰ Mills, S., *Discourses of Difference, Women's Travel Writing and Colonialism*, Routledge, 1991

argues that the idea of incorporation offers a clearer understanding of mid-Victorian aristocratic marriages than models of marriage based simply on partnership or companionship. Indeed, Reynolds finds the framework of the incorporated wife particularly applicable to aristocratic women, whose activities at local and national level politics and in philanthropic causes, renders attempts to categorize them within a framework of separate spheres impossible.⁵³

The term ‘incorporated wife’ has been coined to explore the relationship dynamics of women’s whose lives are integrated into their husbands’ work. Callan et al developed this model to explore the status of the ‘incorporated wife’ in a number of different contexts, including colonial situations.⁵⁴ Historian K.D. Reynolds has adopted the model of the ‘incorporated wife’ and her work on aristocratic women and political society in Victorian Britain offers an important context to understanding Mary’s own negotiation and experience of being the Vicereine. She suggests that ‘Aristocratic women in this period did not seek careers in their own right or on their own behalf, but saw a natural role for themselves as promoters of the interests of their husbands and families’.⁵⁵ The social structure that this understanding implied, allowed both husband and wife to accommodate themselves to it, maintaining ‘dynastic ambition and pride’ whilst not precluding companionship.⁵⁶

⁵¹ Ware, V., *Beyond the Pale: White Women, Racism and History*, (London: Verso, 1992); Midgley, C *Women against Slavery, The British Campaign 1780 – 1870*, (London: Routledge, 1992)

⁵² Reynolds (1998) p.6

⁵³ Reynolds (1998) p.7

⁵⁴ Callan et.al., (1984)

⁵⁵ Reynolds, (1998) p.7

In this research I will be seeking to continue this re-theorisation of separate spheres, adopting the framework of the incorporated wife, but will address the subtle nuances in which gender identities were negotiated in the different spaces of empire. An understanding of the fluid links between India and the colonial metropolis is required in this analysis. This thesis also addresses an important shortcoming in the development of the framework of incorporation, which effectively fails to take account of women's roles as mothers and child bearers.

This is a critique that has also been raised in association with work on western women and imperialism by Nupur Chaudhuri, who argues that much of the "revisionist" history, which seeks to challenge traditional stereotypes of Memsahibs, has emphasised the public sphere at the expense of understanding the significance of the domestic role in the colonial environment. Chaudhuri's work was perhaps the first to emphasise the connections between the memsahib as both a domestic and imperial subject, and shows 'by describing pregnancy, childbirth, nursing and infant care as perceived by the memsahibs...how the private sphere reflected, preserved and promoted imperialist attitudes'.⁵⁷ This is also reflected in the work of Frances Gouda who has noted that 'Colonial discourse throughout the nineteenth century adopted maternal symbols - the mission to foster the intellectual and social development of the indigenous people.'⁵⁸ The maternal theme is also explored in Anna Davin's now classic paper that reveals the extent

⁵⁶ Reynolds, (1998) p.7

⁵⁷ Nupur Chaudhuri, 'Memsahibs and motherhood in nineteenth-century colonial India', *Victorian Studies*, (1988), p 3

⁵⁸ Frances Gouda, 'Nyonyas on the Colonial Divide: White Women in the Dutch East Indies, 1900-1942', *Gender and History*, 5 (1993) pp. 318 - 342

to which mothers at 'home' were seen as rearers of the future 'empire citizens'.⁵⁹ This thesis seeks to integrate intimate histories of the body including sickness, pregnancy and child raising into the framework of the incorporated wife.

An approach that seeks to address a woman's life in the widest possible terms, has to address the principal method through which lives have been read and analysed in the past. This leads to an engagement with life writing, and the practice of biography.

IV Geography and Biography

This thesis demonstrates how life geographies can be unfolded in more subtle ways, in the broader context of writing a biography. In so doing, it highlights the contribution that geographers can make to new approaches to the method and practice of biography. This thesis suggests that while geographers have been unwilling to embrace biography as a method of analysis, theoretical engagement with the method and practice of biography in other disciplines, has begun to draw on geographical themes to broaden the compass of biography. This thesis offers one avenue through which geographers might contribute to a re-configuration of biographical practice.

Until recently, geographers' own engagement with biography has taken the form of memorializing 'great' male geographers such as Sir Halford Mackinder and Ellsworth Huntington and their contribution to the discipline, over their life

⁵⁹ See Anna Davin, 'Imperialism and Motherhood', *History Workshop Journal*, 5 (1978); Frances Gouda, (1993) p. 319

course.⁶⁰ Individual lives and life writing have now been widely adopted to illuminate different historical and cultural geographies of empire, and in rewriting the history of geography. This can be illustrated by the now well-rehearsed debates surrounding the inclusion of women in the history of geography. These debates emerged from the interest in the texts of women travel writers and have informed the subsequent research concerning geography, gender and empire.⁶¹

Whilst geographers have been happy to draw on the remnants of people's lives to illustrate their arguments, many would be uncomfortable with using the term 'biographical' in their work. Alison Blunt distances herself from the term biography, opting instead to see her work on Mary Kingsley as a means to 'address the construction of subjectivity', thus rejecting 'any realist claims to biographical authenticity and / or authority'.⁶² By considering Mary Kingsley within a biographical framework that adopts post-structuralist ideas, Blunt mediates Kingsley's 'subject positionality in terms of constructions of, primarily, gender, race and class and how she was represented over space and time by her own and other's writings at "home" and abroad in the context of British imperialism'.⁶³ I would argue that this is a strategy that contemporary theoretical practice with biography would also support.

⁶⁰ Martin, G. J., *Ellsworth Huntington: His Life and Thought*. (Connecticut: Archon Books 1973); Parker, W.H., *Mackinder: Geography as an Aid to Statecraft*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982; Gilbert, E.W., *Sir Halford Mackinder 1861 – 1947: An appreciation of his life and work*. Mackinder Centenary Lecture, The London School of Economical and Political Science, (London: Bell & Sons, 1961); Rowley, V.M., *J.Russell Smith: Geographer, Educator, and Conservationist* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1964). Yet as Stoddart's defence of 'On Geography' reveals, there are a number of biographical accounts of female geographers such as Ellen Churchill Semple and Marianne North, although these remain in the minority.

⁶¹ See Demosh (1991)

⁶² Blunt, A., *Travel, Gender and Imperialism. Mary Kingsley and West Africa* (The Guilford Press 1994) p. 4

⁶³ Blunt (1994) p.5

Similarly, Morag Bell has called for a change of focus away from a study of travel writers 'as a category', towards a study of 'specific regions in their imperial settings and to the participation of particular women in these regions'.⁶⁴ By shifting the focus from the individual to the region, the tension of recovering heroines related to the history of geography is removed, thus enabling broader contextual perspectives to be explored. Cheryl McEwan has also placed a priority on the region in her study of the woman traveller and missionary Mary Slessor, locating the 'geographical setting of West Africa during the nineteenth century' as 'fundamental to an understanding of Slessor's career and her acquisition of influence in both Africa and Scotland'.⁶⁵

Similarly Felix Driver has used lives of nineteenth century explorers to link connections between geography, exploration and empire, but he rejects the ability of biography to 'meet the requirements of a more contextual perspective, concerned with the wider significance of the ideas and practices of exploration', since biographies 'of necessity focus on the life and personality of individual explorers'.⁶⁶ Elsewhere, Driver has warned against attempts to 'recover forgotten and marginalized figures from the condescension of posterity, re-placing them at the centre of geography's past', arguing that 'while such efforts can certainly disturb received wisdoms, there is a danger that they may leave the notion of a

⁶⁴ Bell, M., 'Citizenship not charity': Violet Markham on nature, society & state in Britain and South Africa in (Eds) Bell, M. et al., *Geography and imperialism 1820 – 1940* (Manchester University Press UK (1995) p.189

⁶⁵ McEwan, C., 'The Mother of all the Peoples': geographical knowledge and the empowering of Mary Slessor in Bell (1995) p.125

⁶⁶ F. Driver, Henry Morton Stanley and his critics: Geography, Exploration and Empire, *Past and Present* 133 (1991) pp.134-135

“tradition” unexamined’.⁶⁷ However Driver uses individuals to explore ‘unfamiliar histories’ of the Royal Geographical Society, again stressing that he is ‘less interested in reconstructing their experiences as individuals, than in tracing the very different ways in which they negotiated (and were negotiated by) the geographical establishment’.⁶⁸

Whilst geographers may have been keen to distance themselves from biography, historians and biographers outside the discipline, have identified the very concerns that geographers are interested in, such as the construction of gendered identities through space, as issues needing to be addressed in contemporary approaches to biography and life history more generally.⁶⁹ For example, taking note of recent academic publishing within women’s history on biography, historian and biographer, Nell Irvin Painter has reminded biographers not to forget ‘the more complex identities of generation, race, class, and regional identities’ alongside that of gender.⁷⁰ Linda Colley has critiqued Amanda Foreman’s reading of Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire for failing to ask ‘potentially subversive questions’ such as how Georgiana viewed the Begum of Oudh.⁷¹ The observations that Colley and Painter make fall well within areas of key geographical concern, particularly within the historical and cultural geographies of imperialism, with the associated interest in colonial and post-colonial theory. If it is ‘potentially subversive’ to question how an eighteenth century woman viewed the Begum of Oudh with all the ‘orientalist’ implications,

⁶⁷ Driver, F., (1995) p. 411

⁶⁸ Driver, (1995) p.412

⁶⁹ Colley, L., ‘Why Darcy would not have married Elizabeth Bennet’, *London Review of Books* 3 (September 1998) p.11

⁷⁰ Painter, N.I., *Writing Biographies of Women*, *Journal of Women’s History*, 9 (1997) p.158

⁷¹ Colley, L., ‘An icon of fashion.’ *Times Literary Supplement* (May 29, 1998) 16

then geographers who have addressed such concerns in other contexts, have been particularly subversive of late.

A renewed biographical emphasis in geography would derive much from recent work on the method and practice of biography. This work has problematised every quality that David Cannadine writing in 1981 stated that a biographer should display: 'empathy sensitivity, sensibility, intuition and, above all be prepared to mortgage a large part of his [sic] intellectual and emotional life to understand one particular, defunct figure'.⁷² It is striking that where Cannadine speaks of the biographer as male, and the subject as 'the hero', much of the recent scholarly work on the method of biography has emerged from scholars working within the humanities from a feminist perspective. The qualities that Cannadine deems essential have come under intense scrutiny. Questions concerning subjectivity and representation, the authority of the biographer over their chosen subject's life, and what is presented as 'biography' are now being closely interrogated.

Critical theory has ultimately resulted, as Catherine Hall has noted, in the knowledge that 'we only have access to "the real" through representation, and that it is language that constructs meaning, rather than reflecting it'.⁷³ As historian Carolyn Steedman has observed, critical theory and the 'refusal of the real' has given historians of women difficulties in the search for silenced voices in history that has been such an important part of the feminist enterprise.

⁷² Cannadine, D., (1989) pp.286 - 287

⁷³ Hall, C., *White, Male and Middle Class* (Cambridge: Polity, 1992) cited in Carolyn Steedman, 'Difficult Stories: Feminist Auto/Biography', *Gender and History*, 7 (1995) p.322

Although this is not an uncontested position in women's history⁷⁴ critical theory has had an enormous impact in the academic study of life writing. Steedman sees the project of life writing as a fulcrum where the intersection of 'rescue and retrieval of real experience is undertaken with the theories of language and identity that eschew the real'.⁷⁵

Kali Israel, followed by Liz Stanley, have adopted the metaphor of the kaleidoscope to explore this new position. As Israel notes:

For the historian, however, no such return to the 'real' is possible; there is no chance to step into the past and see it whole, nor to perceive the 'real' shape and structure of a life outside of representation. Rather we are faced with writing inside the kaleidoscope, of attempting both to discern and describe the images beyond the glass and multiple images caught in the mirrors.⁷⁶

The multiple images that Kali describes are the different representations of a life that emerge from the collected material narratives connected with a subject. These narratives are the beads at the bottom of the kaleidoscope that '[form] patterns that shift with the movement of the viewer'. The biographer's focus must be on:

The delineations of these multiple representations in their relations – to each other, to other texts, to the meagre few hard facts of a life, to the subjects self representation and her reading of others readings of her life, and to our own attempts, individually and collectively, to create images of lives (including our own).⁷⁷

⁷⁴ Kathleen Barry rejects the place of critical theory in the telling of women's lives, although her voice is an important one in advocating the place of biography as a mechanism of re-conceptualising the categories of history. See Barry, K., 'The New Historical Synthesis: Women's Biography', *Journal of Woman's History* 1 (1988) 75-105

⁷⁵ Steedman (1995) p.322

⁷⁶ Israel, K., 'Writing Inside the Kaleidoscope: Re-Representing Victorian Women Public Figures', *Gender and History* 2 (1990) p.40

⁷⁷ Israel (1990) pp. 40-41

Similarly, sociologist Liz Stanley has challenged the conventional ‘spotlight’ model of biography, that is, one which adopts a ‘linear - jigsaw approach’ using a microscope to home in on the detail of a life and then bring each segment together in a whole, resulting in the ‘real person’. Instead, Stanley uses the metaphor of the kaleidoscope to indicate that ‘each time you look you see something rather different, composed certainly of the same elements, but in a new configuration.’ Stanley explicitly lays out an ‘intellectual biographical approach’ in her work, which reveals the detailed processes through which a biographer makes choices about the way in which to present a subject’s life. Stanley has also adopted different methods of representing the biographical subject. For example, she has stressed the practice of writing biographies of subjects lodged within the context of their community and friendship network. This approach is adopted within this thesis.

Negotiating the boundaries of representation and biographical form has been a major preoccupation for many recent scholarly biographers. Biographers from different academic disciplines have played with form in different ways, not all of which would be acceptable in each other’s eyes. For example a historian, however open to different representational styles, might question elements of literary biography, where authorial invention plugs the gaps the historical record has left behind. Andrew Motion’s recent biography *Wainwright the Poisoner* is a magnificent, if historically problematic, example of this.⁷⁸

⁷⁸ Motion, A., *Wainwright the Poisoner* (London: Faber and Faber, 2000)

Motion follows a path that Virginia Woolf opened in her biographical writings. As Hermione Lee notes, Woolf's work exemplifies the 'creative interplay between the biographer or historian and the dead subject' and argues that it was her close acquaintance with literary and historical source materials that proved that 'imagination can have historical authority'.⁷⁹ While historians may feel uneasy with this position, Nell Irvin Painter has warned that 'facts alone do not forge a credible character' and a successful biographer must be able to create a narrative that tells a 'compelling story and create[s] an intriguing character'.⁸⁰ Patrick French's biography of Francis Younghusband offers a model for such an approach. His adoption of the 'romantic' biographical model in following Francis Younghusband's footsteps across Asia results in an account which, while being historically grounded, is none the less full of lucid accounts of French's own experiences.⁸¹

It is worth noting the basic elements that Hermione Lee has garnered from Virginia Woolf's writing on biography, as they have great currency in this period of reappraisal of biographical boundaries. Lee has noted:

If you put Virginia Woolf's scattered writing on biography together, you can see her making up some rules. There must be these sharp moments, caught from the context, the subject's social world. But there must also be movement and change: generalisations, fixed attitudes, summings-up, are fatal. A good biography 'is a record of the things that change rather than of the things that happen'. Gradually, imperceptibly, we alter. 'A self that goes on changing is a self that goes on living': so too with

⁷⁹ Lee (1997) p.10-11

⁸⁰ Painter, N., Writing Biographies of Women, *Journal of Women's History*, 9 (1997) p.162

⁸¹ French, P., *Younghusband: The Last Great Imperial Adventurer* (London: Harper Collins, 1994). See also Matlass, M. 'Aliens, empire and naked climbing: an eminent geographer remembered', *Journal of Historical Geography*, 22 (1996) pp. 86-90; Matlass D., 'The Effects of History', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 20 (1995) pp.405-409

the biography itself. And just as lives don't stay still, so life-writing can't be fixed and finalised. Our ideas are shifting about what can be said, our knowledge of human character is changing. The biographer has to be a pioneer, going 'ahead of the rest of us, like the miner's canary, testing the atmosphere, detecting falsity, unreality, and the presence of obsolete conventions'. So 'There are some stories which have to be retold by each generation.'⁸²

This emphasis on context, fluidity and shifting identities together with an acceptance of a generational re-telling of life stories in the light of changing conventions, illustrates well the contemporary concerns of biographical form. Virginia Woolf's biographical writings are of specific interest to feminist biographers because it was through her biographical writing that Woolf's own feminist project was revealed. Through her 'passion for "lives of the obscure", and for marginal, unvalued literary forms like memoirs, letters, and journals' Virginia Woolf revealed that she wanted to find new forms for 'women's as yet unnarrated lives'.⁸³ Her project to revolutionise biographical form, was intimately bound with presenting women's lives that were not in the public eye. That the biography has been used as a vehicle for exploring other 'obscure lives' of women in the late twentieth and early twenty-first century indicates the importance of Woolf's early recognition of the power of biography as a form that could reconceptualise our understanding of history.

Geographers' unease with the term biography perhaps stems from a lack of interaction with the new theoretical positions within scholarly biography. While distancing themselves from biography, geographers are undeniably playing, if on the sidelines, with elements of biographical form. Alison Blunt's work on

⁸² Lee (1997) p.10-11

women's experiences of the mutiny, or the British constructions of home in India, indicates the strong contribution that a more sustained biographical engagement could make to histories of women and empire.⁸⁴ There are also growing signs that geographers are getting more interested in biography indicated by Stephen Daniels work on Humphrey Repton.⁸⁵ Contributions to the New Dictionary of National Biography have also engaged Geographers in recent years, and the forthcoming special issue of the *Journal of Historical Geography* on Life Histories/Life Geographies marks a shift towards a more critical engagement with biography.⁸⁶ However, biographical accounts need to pay greater attention to the spatial interactions negotiated by the biographical subject as well as the ways in which the representations of the biographical subject were absorbed and created over space. There is a need to cast biography in geographical terms and not to shy away from reconstructing the experience of individual lives, within both a historical and geographical context.

V The biographical subject: Mary Curzon

Born in 1870, Mary Curzon grew up in Chicago and later gained a prominent position in the elite social and political circles of Washington. Initially educated with her brother's tutor and later at a select seminary, Mary was an accomplished lady who had all the advantages of her father's fortune at her disposal. Having gained her position in American high society, Mary travelled with her family to Europe, joining the throngs of the 'new international plutocracy that was

⁸³ Lee (1997) p.13

⁸⁴ See Blunt (1999)

⁸⁵ Daniels, S., *Humphrey Repton: landscape gardening and the geography of Georgian England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999)

⁸⁶ For geographers contribution to the Dictionary of National Biography see Baigent, E., 'Recreating our Past: geography and the rewriting of the Dictionary of National Biography', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geography* (1994) pp.225-227; Matlass (1995) pp.405-409

clamouring for admission to high society in the world metropolis...the non-landed super-rich [who] used their wealth to buy their way into society'.⁸⁷ Her father's fortune (made from his partnership wholesale and retail firm Field and Leiter, later known as Marshall Fields) together with the necessary letters of introduction eventually ensured Mary's successful launch into 'high society' in London.⁸⁸

Having met George Curzon, Mary finally married him in 1895, becoming one of many American heiresses to swell the coffers of an economically declining British aristocracy.⁸⁹ On her marriage Mary bought with her a settlement entitling her to an annual income from \$700,000 (£140,000) worth of bonds that totalled \$33,500 (£6,700) per annum and the expectation of a minimum of one million dollars on the death of her father.⁹⁰ While Cannadine may be correct in his statement that 'Despite sensational press rumours to the contrary, the majority of these American brides were not especially rich,'⁹¹ Mary's settlement was significant, as were the subsequent sums of money which Mary's father produced on request. This financial agreement augmented George's personal income of £1000 a year at the time of his marriage, and enabled him to consider the appointment of Viceroy of India - an appointment where prestige outweighed the salary attached. On marriage Mary became incorporated into her husband's political career and soon became a mother to the first of their three female

⁸⁷ Cannadine, D., *The Decline and Fall of the British Aristocracy* (London: Papermac, 1990) pp.345-365

⁸⁸ It should be noted that high society was not easy to crack without the necessary letters of introduction. Mary's first European tour turned into a tourist holiday rather than a society launch owing to an underestimation of the requirements for admission. Mary's first dance of her society launch in London was with the Prince of Wales.

⁸⁹ Montgomery, M.E., *'Gilded prostitution': status, money and transatlantic marriages, 1870-1914* (London: Routledge, 1989); Jalland (1986)

⁹⁰ Gilmour, D., *Curzon* (London, Papermac 1994) p. 118.

⁹¹ Cannadine (1990) p.347

children. In August 1898 Curzon was appointed as the Viceroy of India, and Mary accompanied him bearing the courtesy title of vicereine. Mary returned home to Europe in 1901 for 8 months and again in the spring of 1904 to give birth to her third daughter, returning to India early in 1905 having partially recovered from a near fatal infection, following a miscarriage in the autumn of 1904. The Curzons' returned to Britain in December 1905, following George's resignation as Viceroy. Mary died in July 1906, following eighteenth months of sporadic but weakening illnesses that had plagued her since her miscarriage in the autumn of 1904.

While such a dry chronology allows one to map out the bare details of a life, its very inclusion in this thesis is problematic. It immediately sets up a subject position and places assumptions on what is deemed important in a biographical subject's life, here for example in the intertwining of public and private concerns mapped out in terms of George's career and Mary's childbearing responsibilities. However the way in which a subject's life is read is dependant on the surviving traces of their life and the interpretative strategy adopted. As I go on to show in the following section, we need to be sensitive to the construction of the records of the biographical subject when reading their life.

VI Interpretative method: Negotiating the archives of Mary Curzon

The shape of the archive

The principle written record for a study of Mary Curzon's life, is lodged as part of the Curzon Collection at the Oriental and India Office Collection.⁹² The 43 volumes of 'Lady Curzon Papers' include letters, diaries, some photographs, newspaper clippings and telegrams. A letter which accompanies the collection, written by George in January 1925, two months before his own death, tells us something of the collection conception and the wishes he had for the archive. This letter reveals that the creation of a material archive reflects the discursive practices of the time: what documents were included in and excluded reflects the values George held.⁹³

In 1925 the papers of Mary that George chose to keep were placed in a trunk, bundled together with a selection of her clothes.⁹⁴ The papers were divided into three parts. The first consisted of a selection of letters that Mary had received from her friendship circle. Tellingly George sub-divided these into letters received from 'public men' and 'women friends'. Those who George described as public men fell into a wide category from politicians, journalists, actors, artists and members of the clergy and viceregal household in India. The women friends ranged from aristocratic friends, the Begum of Bhopal, the novelist Pearl Craigie and Mary's dressmaker. The second major part of the Lady Curzon

⁹² The Lady Curzon Papers (LCP), European Manuscripts, Oriental and Indian Office Collection, British Library.

⁹³ The creation of the material archive is closely linked to a Foucauldian notion of the archive, not in this case as a material set of documents but the archive as 'the locus of the rules and prior practices forming the conditions of inclusion and exclusion that enable certain practices and prevent others from being accepted as "scientific" or "moral" or whatever other social rubric may be used at a particular epochs.' See Thomas Flynn, 'Foucault's mapping of history' in Gary Cutting (ed) *The Cambridge Companion to Foucault*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994) p. 30

Papers contained letters exchanged between Mary and George, from their first meeting to Mary's death. The third part contained the correspondence about Mary's illness in 1904 and her death including hundreds of telegrams and letters of condolence, copies of Mary's supposed last words in 1904, a copy of her will and miscellaneous items such as a lock of her hair. Over the course of time a fourth strand has been added, that of letters that Mary wrote to her own parents, and the journals written during the viceregal tours of India.⁹⁵ That George did not detail these elements in his note, suggests they were added to the archive at a later date. In the 1960's the letters were bound into 43 volumes at the Oriental and India Office Library, following George's system. The papers were then returned to family members until 1996, when the papers were deposited in the Oriental and India Office Collection following the death of Mary and George's youngest daughter, Lady Alexandra Metcalf.

George's 1925 letter detailed the selection procedure he had followed concerning the letters that they had exchanged:

I had kept all her letters. But by far the greater part of these I have destroyed, feeling that they were not meant for others eyes. Those that I have kept and arranged chronologically relate in the main to public events and to my travels, before we married and to our joint public life after we married.⁹⁶

There is a feeling within this archive that it was always designed to illuminate George's career, rather than Mary's life. George's emphasis on it relating to

⁹⁴ Mary Curzon's clothes were given to the Museum of Costume, Bath by Mary's daughters in the 1960's.

⁹⁵ Taking place in the spring and autumn months the Viceroy's Tours of India acted as a link between the winter season spent in Calcutta and the summer season spent in Simla. The main areas of visitation within the Viceroy's tours were the princely states of India, which constituted about one third of India's landmass.

public life indicates the way in which he wished it to be read; certainly his insistence that he destroyed more intimate letters suggests this. There are echoes of the excluded discourses throughout the papers: although letters were destroyed which contained references to grief, anger, love and, sexual practices the replies have often survived, giving intimations of their contents. While George has protected Mary in certain ways, it is certainly true that there are many moments that slipped past the censor's eye. For a set of papers that were meant to exclude familiar practices, there are an extraordinary large number of letters that reveal the deep intimacy of their relationship. It is certainly possible to re-create something of the every-day intimacy they shared something which biographer Richard Holmes considers to be the hardest thing in biography.⁹⁷

The second thrust of George's letter is related to their future publication. He wrote:

If any of the letters be thought to be of real interest and importance I would not object to their judicious and carefully censored publication at some date, possibly remote, in the future. There can be no harm in acquainting the world with the mind and character of so rare a woman... I ask that the contents may be treated as sacred and that they may not be irreverently handled or dispersed.⁹⁸

George hints of the control that families so frequently wish to maintain over the presentation of a life. That he desires her letters to be treated as sacred, suggests that the only form of life writing that he would have been happy with would be a hagiography.

⁹⁶ LCP 16 January 1925 Introductory letter to Mary Curzon's papers written by George Curzon

⁹⁷ Holmes, R., *Footsteps: Adventures of a romantic biographer* (London: Flamingo, 1995) pp. 143-4, 173-4

Although George gave his permission for these letters to be published, this lies uneasily with the wishes of Mary herself. An early letter that Mary wrote to her mother from India, indicates that she wished her letters to be private and that she had discounted a suggestion that she might publish them in the future. Telling her to return the letter, Mary wrote:

You mention my writing a journal which can be turned into a book this I shall never do. I abhor publicity so that I shall write nothing but private letters to you all & regard yours as the same⁹⁹

It is indicative of George's character that he ignored her desire for privacy, asserting his own authority over her wishes. On occasion, Mary herself requested certain of her letters to be destroyed after reading, even these survive, complete with her instruction. That Mary died prematurely, perhaps before she herself had a chance to sort her own papers, is of great benefit to the biographer, but leaves open important questions of the responsibility to the biographical subject in presenting her life.¹⁰⁰

Historians who use women's letters and diaries as evidence, often note that they are hard to find, and have all too often been viciously pruned, not labelled, or subsumed amongst the records of the estates or a husband's papers, lost until

⁹⁸ LCP 16/1 January 1925 Introductory letter to Mary Curzon's papers written by George Curzon

⁹⁹ LCP 8/72-73 Dec 29 1898 Mary to Mother

¹⁰⁰ These debates are periodically raised in relationship to the ethical dilemmas that biographers face in dealing with sensitive subject matters or in reaction to sensationalist biographical writing. See Malcom, J., 'The Silent Woman', *New Yorker* 69 (23, 30 August, 1993), p. 86 also Middlebrook, D., 'Telling Secrets' in Rhiel, M. and Suchoff, D. (Eds), *The Seductions of Biography* (New York: Routledge, 1996) pp.123-131; Malamud Smith, J., 'Private Matters: In Defence of the Personal Life' (Reading, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, Inc, 1997) pp.145-172

stumbled across.¹⁰¹ The Lady Curzon Papers are for many reasons unique in that they offer a comprehensive selection of correspondence, and although it has been put together with a strong hand, it nonetheless offers an extraordinary rich source. There are however clear gaps, most obviously those letters that George destroyed. While George kept a selection of the letters that Mary received from friends many others were disposed of. These letters are a tantalising glimpse of a wide range of correspondence. Letters that Mary wrote to her friends are not in this archive, with the exception of letters sent to the novelist Pearl Craigie that were returned to George on Mary's death. Letters that Mary received from her family are also absent.

The quest for biographical material is legendary, and if one is to believe Henry James's evocation of the biographer in *The Aspern Papers*, biographers' are a breed of fanatics who will go to almost any length to hunt down a hidden relic.¹⁰² Certainly the hand that George played in creating this collection demands a search for documents that would supplement the Lady Curzon Papers. Once located, additional documents such as the letters that Mary wrote to Cecil Spring Rice, Jennie Churchill and Queen Victoria alongside journalists such as Lovat Fraser, editor of the Times of India, can be fused with the Lady Curzon Papers creating the possibility to challenge the representation of Mary that George preserved in the Lady Curzon Papers.

¹⁰¹ While Mary Curzon's archive may have been 'pruned', it none the less exists, placing Mary as an educated elite. For biographical approaches to subjects for whom there is little source material see Painter, N.I., 'Sojourner Truth in Life and Memory: Writing the Biography of an American Exotic' in *Gender and History* 2 (1990) pp 3-16; Nell Irvin Painter, N.I. *Sojourner Truth: A Life, A Symbol* (New York; Norton, 1997)

¹⁰² James, H., *The Aspen Papers; and, The turn of the screw* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1984)

With the documents relating to a life in place, the way in which the life is read through the documents, changes according to the reading practices adopted. This is particularly pertinent when documents are fused together, subverting archive structures that give prominence to specific life stories.

I have been most anxious to fuse the different historical records of Mary Curzon's life together within this research. The biographical archive often reveals a number of different texts relating to a life, however while the written text often absorbs the most attention, it is the collision of different texts that offers a profound challenge to the writing of biography. Mary's daughters presented part of Mary's wardrobe, originally stored in the same trunk in which her letters were placed, to the Museum of Costume, Bath. This source led to a deeper understanding of Mary's preoccupation with dress. The photographic collection at Oriental and India Office has also provided an important source. The Curzon Collection presents a vast array of official photographic images drawn, in the main from George's time as Viceroy. Mary's own family photograph albums were not added to it until a later period. Images that supplement the representation of Mary within the Curzon Collection have been identified and placed within my own reformulated archive structure. Finally, a film of Mary on an elephant at the Delhi Durbar in 1903 offers a three-second glimpse of her life in celluloid. Although clearly recognisable as Mary, this silent film is tantalising to a biographer of a historical figure. Mary was on the cusp of so many technological revolutions that shift the boundaries of biographical source material. The photograph collection indicates this through its inclusion of the

informal snap shot photographs that Mary took with her new acquired hand held Kodak Camera. Mary is barely recognisable in the films of the Delhi Durbar, which show the ritual processions of elephants and the main ceremonial events. The three-second image in which she can be identified is not part of the documentary filming of the formal activities of the durbar, but a more impromptu filming of Mary on an elephant perhaps before or after a procession. In many ways it can be seen on a comparative level to the informal photographic images.

Interpreting the biographical subject

The variety of texts relating of Mary Curzon's life presented several important methodological challenges within this research. Initially the sheer volume of material within the Lady Curzon Papers demanded a rigorous analytical approach to ensure that the volume of material did not swamp the ability to maintain the desired depth of analysis. As the interpretative framework developed four different stages can be identified.

Stage One: Transcription

It soon became apparent when working in the archives, that the only acceptable option to ensure the material could be approached in a rigorous interpretative manner, was the complete transcription of the Lady Curzon Papers and other written archives. This was further necessitated by the closure of the Oriental and India Office Library for an extended period of time, for the relocation of the library to the new British Library building. The papers were transcribed in whole, and maintained within the original structure of the archive. Each transcribed letter in the Lady Curzon Papers was identified by the volume number, the page

numbers it spanned within the volume, the date where stated, and the names of the respondent and recipient. A full transcription of the archive was vital owing to the extensive nature of the archive and the way in which the papers were catalogued, making cross-referencing between different written texts complex. The value of having complete transcripts cannot be over stated. Once transcribed the interpretative method developed through a number of important stages.

Stage Two: Restructuring the archive

This stage entailed the complete reading of all transcribed letters to enable re-familiarisation with the text. This revealed that the archive structure presented in the Lady Curzon Papers was not going to assist the interpretative method. As each letter had been given a location code, the original archive structure could be altered, without losing the original location of the text. The re-structuring of the archive entailed merging the letters within the different volumes of the Lady Curzon Papers together into a complete chronology. Thus letters written to and received by different people on the same day were placed next to each other in a daily sequence, rather than across several volumes. Once the written texts were merged, other texts whether dress, photographs, film or newspapers were also placed within the new archival framework.

I have found that by subverting the archive structure, by melding a reconstructed version of the Lady Curzon Papers with other records that George Curzon did not censor, the interpretative method could be opened up. By subversion of the archival structure I mean that Lady Curzon Papers are presented in a certain way, neatly bound suggesting a correct reading order prescribed by George. It is really

when the suggested reading order is completely ignored, that the nuances of the record can be revealed. Once other texts, whether letters, dress or photographic images are merged with the Lady Curzon Papers, new interpretative avenues are opened. The third stage of the interpretative method addressed these different avenues. This subversion of the archive structure opened up the 'kaleidoscope' of biography, that recognises that there is no one interpretation of a subject, but many refracted frames which cannot be condensed into a single interpretation of a person.

Stage Three: Thematic indexing

The third interpretative stage entailed many re-readings of transcripts in the merged archive structure. Over the many re-readings different depths of interpretations emerged through the gradual submersion within the texts. The re-readings took place in two distinct stages. The first stage involved re-reading within each individual letter. The second stage involved re-reading across the whole archive.

Re-reading within individual letters

First re-readings took place within each individual letter. The first re-reading prompted the indexing of themes that recurred in the text. These were given very general index codes such as 'politics' or 'motherhood'. These codes were marked in the margins of the transcripts, and specific text highlighted which was thought particularly significant. Transcripts were then re-read and subcategories within each general index code developed.

The index codes that developed reflected both archive driven themes that had not been anticipated, such as 'dress' and 'reading matter' and others which were anticipated such as 'response to landscape'. It was however hoped that by adopting an index code method that reflected the detailed content of the letters, that a premature analysis resulting from the satisfaction of pre-conceived ideas of what might be expected could be avoided.

Once sub-categories of themes had been coded within the transcripts, these were recorded on a manual card index system. This brought together the relevant individual letter references to specific themes and sub themes across the whole archive. Thus for example, all references to the sub-theme of 'wet-nursing' were placed in a single index. This stage enabled the next interpretative stage to take place.

Re-reading across the archive

The second interpretative stage involved re-reading the themes across the archive, rather than within individual letters. Major themes were addressed in turn across the transcripts. In the early stages of analysis the extracts of the text relating to the individual sub-themes were collated, this however proved to be too time consuming a method for some of the larger sub-themes. It was also found by this point that the submersion within the archive had resulted in a detailed knowledge of the text rendering collation of text extracts of less value than expected. The index system allowed rapid access to specific texts as required.

Through the indexing process, the main focus of the analysis emerged. Main themes such as 'Health' that emerged within the index process have become chapters within the thesis. However, it was not until the different sub-themes, or independent themes that had no apparent connection to other themes, such as 'reading material', were analysed across the transcripts, that different interconnections were made. Thus the importance of re-placing the theme of 'reading material' as a sub-theme within the 'politics' became apparent when read across the transcripts. The index system is therefore not fixed but continuously re-worked.

Stage Four: Tension/Deviation/Contradiction, Context and Audience

The final stage of the interpretative strategy developed from the reading of the themes across the transcripts. Once read across the archive, moments of tension often emerged within each theme. These were moments where the content of the text, indicated a deviation from the general direction of the theme. Or where something contradicted the general expectation of the theme. Moments of tension, deviation and contradiction within themes were re-read within their original context in the archive. Specific attention was placed on understanding these moments, and these were placed within the broadest possible context. Although a thematic strategy had been adopted certain themes developed moments of tension at specific points in time, following a build up of tension within a theme. These moments indicated that some themes would have to be addressed in a chronological fashion to assist analysis, such as 'maternity'. Triggers for deviation from the general trends of themes also required a contextual grounding. Moments of contradiction within themes were often related

to issues connected with the production and reception of the text. Considerations of the audience of the texts were paramount in all areas of analysis, but this was reflected most greatly at moments of contradiction within the theme.

It was noticeable that the majority of moments of tension, deviation and contradiction occurred as the different archives collected in the course of the research collided. Thus the importance of collecting supplementary material to the Lady Curzon Papers cannot be over stated, and those texts that were not censored by George Curzon were often the most significant elements of the final stage of analysis. Reading across the archive and fusing the varying texts of a life together have enabled the constraints imposed by the Lady Curzon Papers to be overcome.

VII Thesis outline

The need for generations to re-tell life stories has great pertinence in this thesis. Nigel Nicolson first published Mary Curzon's biography in 1977.¹⁰³ This presents Mary life in a chronological form, and in an uncritical manner. Nicolson's biography sweeps the reader along, with a story teller's art, revealing a glamorous, romantic and nostalgic portrayal of Mary's life. Attention is given to George's political concerns and career at the expense of any engagement with Mary's own role in the political sphere. Similarly areas that might be seen as pertinent such as motherhood are given scant attention. This thesis presents a

¹⁰³ Nicolson, N., (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson 1977). An edited edition of Mary's tour journals published for a popular audience followed Nicolson's biography. Analysis drew on Nicolson's interpretations. Bradley, J (ed), Lady Curzon's India: Letters of a Vicereine (London: Wiedenfeld and Nicolson, 1986)

different re-telling of Mary's life shaped by my engagements with different debates in geography, biography and history presented thus far.

This thesis has been shaped around the thematic reading of Mary's life, adopted through the interpretative approach. It is divided into three parts, these reflect Mary's negotiation of viceregal life; her corporeal concerns and her direct negotiation of 'India'. Chapter Two addresses Mary's role as an incorporated wife. As Vicereine Mary's predominant role was that of a hostess. I argue that she was able to exert agency within her position, enabled through self-education and her adoption of dress as a symbolic code. Mary inherited philanthropic concerns as vicereine. As she expanded the remit of the Dufferin Nursing Fund Mary found an alternative way to stretch the boundaries of her viceregal position. Throughout the five years that Mary was in India, she participated in imperial politics. I chart her development as a political companion, noting the ways in which this was linked to her negotiation of the political culture within Britain and in India.

I develop the framework of the incorporated wife in Chapter Three by analysing the nature of 'home' to Mary. I argue that the material homes of Mary in India were 'incorporated residences' which acted as 'contact zones'. This chapter presents the intense mobility of viceregal life and addresses the importance of letters from family and friends, and the presence of members of the viceregal household, in maintaining Mary's sense of stability in India. I address Mary's negotiation of the 'conceptual' space of home within the colonial metropolis.

Mary found reassurance in knowing that she would eventually return to London and made this a material reality through the purchase of 1 Carlton House Terrace.

Chapters 4 and 5 argue that the framework of the incorporated wife has prioritized women's 'public' roles at the expense of their corporeal concerns. In Chapter 4 I present the illness narratives of Mary Curzon, contextualised within the discourses of imperial health in India. I then explore how Mary rationalized her own ill health, drawing on discourses of environmental determinism and germ theory. I chart how Mary protected her body through clothing and through physical retreating, which created a spatial response to her ill health. Representations of health and illness also carried spatiality, as Mary sought to manipulate her audiences' understanding of her health. Chapter 4 concludes by addressing Mary's representations of ill health at 'home' and in 'India'.

In Chapter 5 I dwell on a more intimate history of the body, and seek to integrate Imperial motherhood within the framework of incorporation. This chapter adopts a chorological perspective and charts Mary's maternal concerns during her time in India. I argue that Mary's imperial subjectivity cannot be separated from her domestic subjectivity. Mary's negotiation of motherhood occurs across the spaces of empire, this reiterates the need to see 'home' and 'empire' as contiguous spaces.

The final part of the thesis addresses Mary's direct negotiation of India through the space of the Viceroy's tour. Mary wrote extensive tour journals while she was

on tour. In Chapter 6 I address the production of her journals and the audience for whom she was writing. I argue that the organization of the Viceroy's tours of India presented a specific frame through which Mary was encouraged to view. Taking three sites, the 1900 tour of Assam, the 1901 tour of Burma and the 1902 tour of Rajputana and the Central Provinces I address the way in which Mary presented India to her audience at home; the moments where Mary transgressed the viceregal frame; and present typological framework Mary adopted in judging the Indian princes she encountered.

Finally in Chapter 7 I address the argument that the British sought to adopt the mantle of the Mughuls through sporting activities. I question the extent to which the Viceroy exhibited 'mastery over nature' as Mary's diaries reveal the way in which representations of the Viceroy's hunting prowess, through photographs and trophies, were often illusions, which mask the reliance placed on the Indian host by the Viceroy. Finally I address the bodily space of the hunt, and highlight the gendered positioning of Mary's body within this space.

Chapter 2

Duty, Work, and the Incorporated Wife

I Introduction

Although the title of ‘Vicereine’ had acquired a quasi-official status by the time Mary adopted the honorary title, the wife of the Viceroy had no formal position within the Governance of the British Raj. Mary went to India accompanying her husband, who had been appointed by the Crown; her own position defined through his. As Callen notes, the position of ‘vicereine’, like other ‘incorporated wives’, emerged out of a ‘structural dilemma that arises when, because of marriage, women have to be given a location in, on or outside the boundary of an organisation or institution’.¹ Many women went to the Empire as dependent wives, drawing their social status from their husbands’ position, and the wife of the Viceroy or Governor General was no exception. Yet due to their status at the apex of the social hierarchy, these positions became particularly demarcated. A similar position, the wife of the Governor General, had no official title. Callaway presents the Governor General of Nigeria’s spouse, in contemporary idiom as ‘lesser queen’ or, following Callen, as ‘senior lady’.² Others have followed the American Presidential pattern of naming the wives as ‘First Lady’.³ However as the wife of the Viceroy, the title ‘vicereine’ (or ‘Vice-Queen’ as Mary sometimes described herself) was a natural derivative. Although a courtesy title, the

¹ Callen, H., ‘Introduction’ in Callan, H. & Ardener, S. (eds.), *The Incorporated Wife* (Kent: Croom Helm, 1984) p.1

² Callaway, H., *Gender, Culture and Empire: European Women in Colonial Nigeria* (London: Macmillan Press, 1987) p.75

³ Fowler, M., *Below the Peacock Fan* (Harmondsworth: Viking, 1987)



Plate 2 – Portrait of Mary Curzon wearing Indian Order take on occasion of Delhi Durbar
Bourne and Shepard c.1903
OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/78 (4)

expectations of the 'vicereine' were significant. This chapter will examine the position of the vicereine within the framework of the 'incorporated wife'.

Mary Curzon may have gone to India to become the colonial incorporated wife, but her model for this was based on her experiences in England, within an elite political society that had not changed beyond all measure from the mid-Victorian period about which K.D.Reynolds writes. Indeed, while Mary and her circle were aware of debates concerning the 'new woman', it is clear from the documentary evidence that patterns of marital relations still stemmed more from the mid-Victorian model.

The quasi-official status of Mary's title was symbolically revealed before George and Mary left for India, on visiting Queen Victoria at Windsor Castle in November 1898. During this visit, Queen Victoria presented Mary with her official emblem of her status as Vicereine. She described this event to her parents:

George had his audience and she gave him my Indian Order which I can only wear after he is Vice Roy. The order is very pretty indeed of diamonds turquoises & pearls... George only gets his when we get out there nothing could exceed the Queens wonderful kindness to me I was quite overcome.⁴

That Mary was given her Order through George, and before she had arrived in India, emphasizes the unofficial nature of the Vicereines position. However Mary did not question the ambiguity of her status. Mary's order can be seen in Plate 2.

⁴ LCP 8/55-58 November [Undated] 1898 Mary to Parents

Taken on the occasion of the Delhi Durbar, this image shows Mary in full ceremonial dress.

The letter that Mary wrote to her parents on discovering that George was to be made Viceroy reveals the manner in which she approached her role:

This is a profound Secret

George is going to be made Vice Roy of India ... it is the greatest position in the *English* world next to the Queen & the Prime Minister, & it will be a great satisfaction I know to you and Mamma that your daughter Maria will fill the greatest place ever held by an American abroad - Heaven only knows how I shall do it. But I shall do my best to be a help to George & an honour to you and Mamma and I shall put my trust in Providence & hope to learn how to be a ready made Queen...[I] shall be [illeg.] [illeg.] 5 years. It seems an awful time, but it is all part of George's career & a thing he has always wanted - you will come out and see us in all our glory.⁵

This letter contains three strong elements that haunt Mary's negotiation of her role as Vicereine over the following five years. The first is Mary's reference to national identity. Whilst Mary presents her new found status as 'American abroad' as an honour for her parents, she associated anxiety with it herself. The letter reveals her consideration of her husband's vocation. She refers to the Viceroy as a prize, and while acknowledging that five years in India is a long time, consoles herself with the fact that 'it is all part of George's career'. Finally Mary expressed her desire to 'be a help to George' and 'learn how to be a ready made Queen'. The second and third element of this letter reflect the social structure of the 'incorporated wife' – the primacy of George's career and Mary's desire to support it. Yet it also hints at a key feature of Mary's negotiation of the

⁵ LCP 8/23-25 [Undated c. July 11 1889-August 10 1898] Mary to Father



No. 290.—Vol. XXIII.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 17, 1898.

SIXPENCE.
By Post, 6d.



THE NEW VICE-REINE OF INDIA.

Mrs. George Nathaniel Curzon (née May Victoria Leiter) becomes, by the appointment of her husband, Mr. George Curzon (M.P. for the Southport Division of Lancashire), as Viceroy of India, the most important woman, socially, in a country of two hundred and ninety millions of people. As the daughter of Mr. L. S. Leiter, of Washington, U.S.A., she gives fresh point to the Anglo-American Alliance. This picture of her is by Miss Alice Hughes, of Gower Street, W.C.

Plate 3 – The New Vice-Reine of India
Alice Hughes
The Sketch, Wednesday August 17 1898

Vicereine. The phrase ‘*learn* how to be a ready made Queen’ acknowledges both the novelty of the situation and the need to quickly acquire knowledge to cope.

This chapter examines Mary’s negotiation of her role as Vicereine within the model of the incorporated wife. By considering the three distinct ‘roles’ that Mary adopted: hostess, philanthropist, and political companion/mediator, the manner in which Mary negotiated her viceregal role will be illustrated. This chapter draws on Mary’s dress and reading activities, to demonstrate ways she exerted her autonomy and authority within the viceregal framework. It will be argued that while an ‘incorporated’ wife may have been defined through her husband’s position, the way in which ‘a wife’ negotiated the flexible boundaries of incorporation, reveals the individual autonomy that a wife could enjoy in such a position.

II Mary as Hostess

Following the announcement of the appointment of the new Viceroy of India (August 1898), the Curzons were given widespread newspaper coverage. Mary’s image appeared on the cover of illustrated papers and magazines including ‘*The Sketch*’ (Plate 3) which said of the ‘New Vice-reign of India’:

Mrs. George Nathaniel Curzon (nee Mary Victoria Leiter) becomes, by appointment of her husband, Mr. George Curzon (M.P. for the Southport district of Lancashire) as Viceroy, the most important woman socially, in a country of two hundred and ninety millions of people. As the daughter of Mr.L.Z.Leiter, of Washington USA she gives fresh point to the Anglo-American Alliance.⁶

⁶ *The Sketch*, Wednesday, August 17 1898 No 290, Vol XXIII

The emphasis on Mary's position within Indian society, alongside her American nationality, proved to become enduring elements of Mary's newspaper coverage.

'The Sketch' highlighted that through George's appointment, Mary was to bear the burden of being an imperial hostess. Placed at the pinnacle of a social and racial hierarchy, Mary was indeed 'the most important woman socially' in India. She assumed the mantle that was already prepared for her, following in the footsteps of previous vicereines. Within the first two months the 'social' duties that she would carry out for the next five years were laid out. Mary discovered the plethora of social entertainments she would have to host. By day Mary would be occupied receiving visitors, presenting prizes at school or sporting functions, hosting garden parties for adults and children alike, and looking after a never-ending stream of house guests. Mary would also be invited to attend similar functions hosted by eminent individuals or societies.⁷ The evening parties hosted by the Viceroy were the principal arenas for the demonstration of the Raj's social hierarchy. These evening events ranged in magnitude from the largest 'State Ball' and banquet given in both Calcutta and Simla each year to the more frivolous fancy dress ball which followed the same pattern. Dinners followed by a reception known as 'Drawing Rooms' took place regularly. These were highly formal occasions where the Viceroy and Vicereine would receive guests, speaking to each for a few minutes.

Social events followed a relentless and unchanging pattern throughout the year, whether the viceregal household was based at the winter capital at Calcutta, or

⁷ LCP 43/15 January 27 1899 e.g. Mary attended a fancy dress ball hosted by the Calcutta Women's Friendly Society

the summer capital in the hill station of Simla. The basic style of entertainment remained when on the viceregal autumn and spring tours to different regions of India, but owing to the brevity of each stay, it became more intense. Evening entertainments whilst on tour would also include fireworks and cultural displays, such as local dancing. The social calendar was only suspended when hunting or camping at Naldera during June each year, and only when Mary was physically ill could she present her apologies.

When Mary retired from the heat of Calcutta to Simla, in March 1899, after the first three months in India, she wrote a letter to George reflecting on her experiences:

You made me so happy by telling me you thought I had “made a good start” the 2 first months in India - sweet Papa! [George] anything I do seems minute beside all I want to do to help him, and India has been easy to please and I feel that I have done nothing but that Papa and only Papa has laid the foundation stone of success here.⁸

George’s acknowledgement of Mary’s role in the first few months indicates the importance of understanding the idea of the ‘incorporated wife’ within the accommodating structure of an incorporated marriage. Mary presents an element of insecurity over her desire to do more; her insistence on placing greater importance on George’s role reflects the subordination of her ‘social’ to his ‘political’ role. Yet in an environment that revolved around social functions, the need for a capable hostess who eased tensions and entertained guests was crucial. However, the unrelenting social calendar meant that Mary’s indispensable principal role eventually became a burden that had to be borne with fortitude.

⁸ LCP 15/4-11 March 6 1899 Mary to George

By January 1900 she had told her parents: 'I am pretty well and very very busy - never a day without various duties and the constant entertaining is slavery but we go through it gladly as it is a duty'.⁹ Mary's letters are scattered with what she described as her duties. As her use of the word 'slavery' indicates Mary's 'social role' was both demanding and inescapable. Mary outlined the typical duties:

We had a garden party of 1800 people yesterday which meant a great deal of hand shaking... I have a great deal to do this last fortnight in Calcutta & have 2 & 3 appointments every day. Today there is [Mohammedans] conversation tomorrow [illeg.] & a dance & dinner, Friday body guard review Saturday prize giving, Monday bazaar & Dufferin Fund meeting so you see I am very busy & like to keep well¹⁰

Although Mary certainly kept her misgivings from George, by October 1900 Mary's discontent at the 'slavery' of constant entertaining was evident in her letters. She told her parents:

I have refused to do anything more and although there are dances every night I have said there was an end to human endurance and I am going to bed at 10 o'clock though tonight we have a dinner of 70 people!¹¹

This was however a short-lived rebellion, and her correspondence continues to note the daily round of viceregal life.

The pressure on Mary increased as she removed the burden of formal social duties from George's shoulders, both representing him at functions to which they had been invited, and hosting official events on her own when pressure of work or ill-health prevented the Viceroy from attending. It would certainly appear from Mary's letters that this happened with increasing frequency during the viceregal term. On June 6 1902 Mary told her parents that 'George never does any social

⁹ LCP 10/4-5 January 11 1900 Mary to Mother

¹⁰ LCP 10/27-28 February 21 1900 Mary to Mother and Father

¹¹ LCP 10/31-32 October 11 1900 Mary to Mother

functions of any sort and they all [illeg.] upon me and I do them all'. Mary undertook the engagements understanding that 'it is a great help to George to make the effort for him' although 'it is all work and very little pleasure'.¹² She told her parents that 'Duty is a wonderful incentive and I have inherited my devotion to it from you' however her descriptions of 'the endlessly long list' of duties, of making 'George's excuses' and 'making the effort for him' reveals a certain dissatisfaction.

In 1903 when the viceregal term was drawing to an end, the prospect of a second was presented to Mary. She was quite clear in her desire for George to reject this opportunity. On learning that a second term would have to be endured she wrote letters to Cecil Spring Rice and her parents rationalizing the situation:

[T]here isn't any gilding on the cake here - it is really work, work, work...I rather hoped to go home for good next spring but I don't mind coming back, as after all, interest in life is what matters and we are very happy and no two people have ever been greater companions so it doesn't much matter where we are as long as we are together.¹³

She told her mother:

George knows that I am miserable to come back to India but when a man has a career I fear it is all important...I am determined to save my health but I must think of George too as he has given me so much.¹⁴

While both letters reflect the true desire of Mary to return to England, they have slightly different nuances. Mary's stress on the companionate model of marriage, with her only desire to be with George, doesn't rest easily with her insistence that 'there isn't any gilding on the cake here – it is really work, work, work'. Mary's

¹² LCP 11/112 June 6 1902 Mary to Father

¹³ CASR 1/30/8-11 June 15 1903 Mary to Cecil Spring Rice

¹⁴ LCP 12/132-135 June 30 1903 Mary to Mother

letter to her mother on the other hand reflects the prioritization of George's job within the marriage, and Mary's accommodation of it at the expense of her physical health. This was clearly demonstrated when Mary returned to India after a near fatal illness in the 1905. She was initially removed from her duties, telling her parents that 'I take great care of myself and do not come down to any of the big dinners'.¹⁵ Yet, when George became ill, Mary was forced to fill the breach for the viceregal household and told her mother:

I sometimes feel overwhelmed at having to do all the social part weak as I am and unless George is better I shall decline to go on with our parties. I am a willing horse but I cannot be driven too hard.¹⁶

During Mary's short absence from India in 1901 and 1904, George had to shoulder the social duties from which Mary had previously released him. Comments in letters between them reflect the accommodation that they reached concerning the social duties that were only recognized in the absence of Mary. When George informed Mary that he had 'just returned...from the Snowdon Garden Party which you usually take for me', Mary replied: 'I am so glad to hear of all Pappy's gaieties...How they must have loved Pappy coming to parties & [illeg.] & what a joy for then after having had to stand nothing but K [Kinkie] at former Simla frivolities.'¹⁷

Mary may have passed off the social events as 'frivolities' but they demanded adroit social skills. A journalist reporting on Mary's ease in social situations in her early days as Vicereine bears witness to her tact:

¹⁵ LCP 13a/83-86 March 15 1905 Mary to Mother

¹⁶ LCP 13a/123-124 May 24 1905 Mary to Mother

¹⁷ LCP 21/67-74 May 22 1901 George to Mary; LCP 15/239-254 June 28 1901 Mary to George. Pappy and Kinkie were George and Mary's familiar names for each other.

When it fell on her lot to take the arm of a general at dinner the other night, she began at once to question him upon the trade in fire-arms in the Persian Gulf. The general was mad with delight. It happened that this was his hobby and breaking up this nefarious calling was the work he had in hand. The Vicereine found this out, but how she did it no one could imagine.¹⁸

It is clear that Mary enjoyed exercising her social skills. Take her letter to Cecil

Spring Rice following the 1900 spring tour to Assam:

I devote all my attentions to the women and talk to them with my whole heart on subjects ranging from Jaeger's underclothes - baby food - to translations of the Vedas! I think the most satisfactory side of life is seeing shy people visibly thaw and from shaking with fright yield to intimate confidences.¹⁹

It is, however, no surprise that Mary could put both the General and women she met in India at ease, for she had taken great pains to make herself ready for such encounters.

When Mary hinted to her father that she would learn how to be a 'lesser-queen' it is clear that she began educating herself to enable her to converse and understand both the cultural and political worlds she was entering. She turned to Sir Alfred Lyall for advice. In October 1898, at Mary's request, Lyall sent her a list of books about India. He found it difficult to recommend a conclusive general study of 'religion and native society' as India was so 'vast and varied'.²⁰ He did however recommend a number of 'standard books' which were 'at any rate amusing'. Although they described India as it was fifty years previously this was not to worry Mary as Lyall explained 'the country changes very little in so short a time'.²¹ By turning to Sir Alfred Lyall for advice, Mary indicated her serious

¹⁸ Ralph, J., 'An American Sovereign Part IV', *Harpers Weekly*, June 10 1899

¹⁹ CASR 1/30/4 March 19 1900 Mary to Cecil Spring Rice

²⁰ LCP 32/174-175 October 1 1898 Sir Alfred Lyall to Mary

²¹ LCP 32/176-177 October 13 1898 Sir Alfred Lyall to Mary

intention in preparing herself appropriately. She also took the opportunity to consult a former Vicereine, Lady Lytton, concerning her forthcoming duties, particularly concerning the content of letter that Queen Victoria would like to receive.²²

When writing to Lyall, Mary can have had very little idea how much she would rely on his reading list and other books. Despite a busy social calendar Mary had much time to herself during which reading was often the sole distraction. This was particularly true when she retreated from Calcutta in early March 1899, going to Simla a few weeks before the rest of the viceregal household. Here Mary faced a completely different daily routine to that of Calcutta. She told George that:

Days pass here absolutely uneventfully. I have breakfast in my dressing room. Hug the babies, go out for an hour and then back and read till lunch at ¼ to 2 lunch in a small room with the brilliant members of my suite! [ADCs] At 2.30 I go back to my room and read till 3.30 when I go out accompanied by 7 Jampana pushing and pulling a rickshaw 2 in front 4 behind and a Jampana captain over them & the Fenn, Adams & Meades [ADCs] on ponies. I come in at 5.30 and read till dinner and after dinner sit alone till 10.30 that is my day.²³

This ‘vegetative existence’, as George called it, forced Mary to occupy herself. The absence of George and the structure of Viceregal entertaining, gave Mary little other option than reading, although she did have ‘the brilliant members of my suite’, a bevy of ADCs, to escort her around Simla. The books that Mary read during her first visit to Simla in March 1899, reflect her desire to learn more

²² LCP 33/66 December 6 1898 Lady Lytton to Mary. Lady Lytton was Vicereign between 1876-80

²³ LCP 15/28-29 March 10 1899 Mary to George

about the people, places and customs of India.²⁴ As Lyall's airy colonial discourse might indicate, her texts had a certain bias, and it appears that Mary absorbed orientalist views of India and its peoples. A letter to George implied that her reading matter was less than sympathetic to the Indian culture: 'I finished my book on the horrors of Hinduism at 5'.²⁵ As will be discussed in Chapter Six, despite Mary's early reading on the subject of India, her understanding of its cultures and customs lacked much depth. However Mary was clearly making a considerable effort to become familiar with the country, and during her first spring in Simla she started lessons in Hindustani.²⁶ It is unclear whether her Hindustani lessons were a great success as Mary found it difficult to communicate with Indian women with whom she visited on her tours, indicating limited linguistic skill.

Later in this chapter it will be argued that Mary's self-education enabled her to re-define her place within the political spectrum. However for the purposes of this discussion on social duty, it seems that Mary used her reading as a way of easing the social pressure on herself in India. Yet she was to find that her own level of interest exceeded that of many European people in India. Following a discussion with George over the nature of women's reading, Mary revealed her frustration at finding so few interesting companions in India:

As you say desultory reading only polishes the facets of the mind but doesn't make one "interesting to many people" in India as no one cares about culture or reading and no one thinks! And it is quite enough to read the "Simla News" to be sufficiently

²⁴ LCP 15/24-27 March 18 1899 Mary to George: Books Mary read included Guinness, L.E., *Across India at the dawn of the 20th century* (London: Religious Tract Society, 1898); Spier, *Life in Ancient India* and an illustrated book of the Himalayas

²⁵ LCP 15/30-33 March 29 1899 Mary to George

²⁶ LCP 15/24-27 March 18 1899 Mary to George

cultivated for Simla. Though I at last have a rugged sort of social companion in K [Kitchener] but his talks are always about his work but then most people only talk about themselves and it is only people like Alfred Lyall and Lord Cowper and Haldane and John Morley and Arthur and George Wyndham (if he is in the mood) who care to talk of other things.²⁷

Her criticism of the lack of intellectual rigour to be found within Simla society is biting. She enjoyed the mental stimulus amongst her circle in Britain, citing the companionship of established intellectual figures of her circle. Yet, George was correct when he argued that reading enabled Mary to be interesting to different people. As a social hostess, her literary knowledge did enable her to engage in conversations that would not have been otherwise possible.

It was perhaps more while Mary was on tour that she really drew on the knowledge that she gained from her self-education. Situations in which Mary revealed her capabilities included being the only member of the Viceregal party able to speak French to officials in Goa, and surviving dinner with the Nizam of Hyderabad during a politically tense time with a prepared list of discussion topics listed from A to Z. However, a letter to her father indicates that the intensity of tours was not wholly desirable:

I am so glad our tour is coming to an end. The strain of it is very great and our days are filled with politics, philanthropy and charity and our evenings with society, of the four I infinitely prefer the former 3 and oh! the fatigue of night after night of dinner parties, with frightful music, & worse food & company with whom you have nothing in common but these are only [whispers] for you and nannie as I am all smiles for George suspects you may be sure.²⁸

²⁷ LCP 17/56-62 April 9 1903 Mary to George

²⁸ LCP 10/72-74 December 10 1900 Mary to Father

Mary hid her frustration with the viceregal life, offering an outward façade of ease within the viceregal household and to George but released frustration in letters to her parents. This reflects the double faceted nature of Mary relationship with texts. By reading Mary coped with the social pressure, and through her correspondence Mary released the pressures she experienced.

Within the viceregal sphere, Mary followed the pattern of activity set by previous vicereines. However, when she moved slightly outside the viceregal sphere of influence in India, Mary exerted independence in her social duties. A case in point occurred during Mary's visit to the Kashmir hill station of Gulmarg in August 1902. Mary was taking a private visit to Gulmarg, accompanied by a friend from London, Eve Pelly, and members of the household staff. Although she was not on a viceregal tour, her letters to her father and George reveal that her reception at Gulmarg and the various activities organized, were very similar to those she would have experienced, had she been on an official tour.

She was met by the local Resident and given a list of garden parties and prize givings and banquets, which the local resident hoped she would attend. Mary was initially overwhelmed, and complained to George that she was expected 'to perform acrobatic feats of strength and endurance.'²⁹ However diary and photographic records reveal that Mary undertook many of the engagements that had been arranged, including presiding over a ceremonial Durbar, giving audience to the local Maharajas. She described the events to her father, indicating her adherence to the rituals of the ceremony, and used the audience as

²⁹ LCP 16/217-220 August 9 1902 Mary to George

an opportunity to thank her hosts, adopting the formal patterns of reception owed to each Maharaja's status.³⁰ From the written record it seems that this Durbar was the only occasion that Mary presided over a formal event that was traditionally a male dominated ceremony. Remarkably Mary was immersed in a ritual that she had looked at (often from a hidden gallery) many times, with George taking the principal receiving role. Her integration within this masculine ceremony indicates that her position as Vicereine enabled her to over-turn, on occasion, the gendered ceremonial boundaries of the British in India. Only a Vicereine would have been able to hold such a ceremony in her own right – yet the fact that Mary boasted of the occasion to her father but appears to have failed to tell her husband suggests that Mary had probably stretched the boundaries of acceptable behaviour. Indeed Mary did not return the Maharaja's audience, sending her household staff in her place to represent her; an event that she did communicate to George.

The social role of the Vicereine falls most clearly within the framework of the 'incorporated wife' model. Mary's role and duties are defined through George's position, yet Mary's focus on reading and writing to prepare herself for this role, indicates her agency within the structure in which she found herself. This curiosity enabled her to develop her social role to a more rewarding level. However it is clear that her lack of enthusiasm, extending from the intensity of the position, was one she had to hide from George indicating the unequal power relationship within this element of the 'incorporated' model. Though possibly ironic, Mary's use of the term 'slavery' is indicative of the dilemma faced within

³⁰ LCP 43/160-166 August 9 1902 Mary to Father

the viceregal framework, where her presence as a hostess was most visible and the importance of undertaking this role paramount to the success of George's Viceroyalty.

The Spectacle of Empire: Dressing the Vicereine

A second material mechanism, through which she exerted her position within this social role, was through her dress. As vicereine, a strong element of Mary's social duty was the creation of a striking visual presence, as the principal impression that the audience would take away of Mary was her physical appearance. She was powerfully aware of the importance of dress as a symbolic code in India. Moreover in her choice and style of dressing, Mary found an important means of exerting her own agency as an imperial hostess.

It is now widely recognised that colonial and imperial power was exerted in a number of ways, from direct military force to more subtle methods of visual display, which reinforced the authority of the imperial power. Cohn's work on the invented tradition of the Durbar by the British, is an example of one of the many ways in which the British exerted their power in more symbolic terms, bringing the Indian Princes under the wing of the British Raj through the traditional acts of incorporation and exchange.³¹ George Curzon was acutely aware of the importance of creating a spectacle as a way of displaying power.³²

A legendary example was his preparations for his visit to the Amir of Afghanistan in 1894. With his understanding of the so-called 'Oriental love of

³¹ Cohn, B.S., 'Representing Authority in Victorian India' in Hobsbawm, E. & Ranger, T. (eds.), *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983) pp.165-210

³² See Cannadine, D., 'Lord Curzon as Ceremonial Impresario' in *Aspects of Aristocracy: Grandeur and Decline in Modern Britain* (London: Penguin Books, 1994) pp.77-108

pageantry', George equipped himself with an appropriate military dress uniform complete with medals from a theatrical dress agency.³³ As Viceroy George developed this visible display of power through pageantry culminating in the Coronation Durbar in Delhi 1903. Mary shared his passion for creating a dominant visual impression, and the energy Mary invested in creating her wardrobe for every occasion suggests that George by no means coerced her.

Callaway has explored the symbolism of colonial modes of dress as a means of displaying colonial authority. She notes that the practice of dressing for dinner in the colonial context was an expression of imperial domination exercised by individuals whether dining together or alone, in the mess or whilst hunting. At the other end of the spectrum 'the elaborate attire worn for the grand ceremonies of empire which represented power and authority in a bravura of colour and style' was the most potent symbol of the use of dress in exercising authority.³⁴ This is particularly pertinent when analysing Mary's approach to her role as Vicereine. Yet dress was also a mechanism whereby Mary asserted her autonomy and authority.

As Barnes and Eicher note dress is a powerful indicator of identity, both as a sign that links a group together, but also as a way for individuals within a group to differentiate themselves.³⁵ As such dress becomes a way of establishing the 'social position of a person in society', and thus can be used as a mechanism

³³ Cannadine, (1994) p.84; Gilmour, (1994) p.97; Callaway, H., 'Dressing for Dinner in the Bush' in Barnes, R. & Eicher, J.B. (eds.), *Dress and Gender* (Oxford: Berg, 1992) p.240

³⁴ Callaway, (1992) p.233

³⁵ Barnes & Eicher, (1992) p.1

whereby inclusion and exclusion can be exhibited.³⁶ Dress was important for Mary in two distinct ways. Principally it became a very powerful mechanism through which Mary expressed her supremacy as Vicereine. Secondly clothing had a protective function, shielding the body from the dangers of the tropical climate. (This aspect will be addressed in Chapter Four.)

Biographers often employ evidence other than the written word to reflect on their subject, but dress is not frequently used as a means of exploring the biographical subject. Meanwhile fashion historians have often overlooked the relationship between dress and wearer, focusing instead on the history of design, or the dress designer. In the case of Mary Curzon the need to fuse the relationship between the subject as a free agent and the choice of dress is increasingly important. Drawing on photographs, letters, and the dresses themselves, I will examine Mary's use of dress, and explore her employment of dress as a means of asserting her imperial position. The impact that such appearance had on the audience is also crucial to the dynamic, as dress's symbolic power relies on its communication between subject and the audience, if the full power of the symbolism is to be understood.

From the time that Mary began to plan her wardrobe for India, she was aware that her dress should fit her position as Vicereine. In a letter to her father shortly after the appointment of George as Viceroy Mary detailed her plans for her wardrobe noting that she would employ a seamstress to make some of her clothes. However, for her evening wardrobe, no expense would be spared, telling her

³⁶ Barnes and Eicher (1992) p.1

father that: 'I shall go over to Paris in the Autumn and get my evening dresses of Worth (a queen's!)'.³⁷ Styling her dress as regal indicates the symbolic importance that she had already placed on her choice of evening wear.

Mary was right to suggest that the evening dresses of 'Worth' were fit for Royalty. Jean-Phillippe Worth was clothing most of the women in the European Royal families. As the son of Charles Frederick Worth, Jean-Phillippe Worth continued his father's design tradition. Charles Frederick Worth had been the first to offer women an *haute-couture* design service, in place of pattern books and personal seamstresses. Mary was already a patron of Jean-Phillippe Worth before she became Vicereine. Her patronage would have been normal for her social status, yet Worth also carried a particular distinction in America, and wearing Worth conveyed an important signal in high society. Worth attracted many of the American heiresses who had married into the British aristocracy, including Lady Randolph Churchill and the Duchess of Marlborough. In contrast, much of London society would have had their clothes made and bought in London. Fashion historians have noted the transnational patronage of Worth by Americans as a particular feature of his clientele. No doubt the cachet for social exclusiveness, meant that obtaining one's wardrobe while visiting Europe ensured a note-worthy wardrobe on return to America.³⁸ Coleman suggests that 'the consensus among Worth clients was that their toilettes were worth the expense because of the consternation they caused among rivals'.³⁹ Worth's

³⁷ LCP 8/27-29 August 10 1898 Mary to Father

³⁸ For example, Edith Wharton plays on this adoption of Worth amongst American High Society

³⁹ Coleman, E.A., *The Opulent Era: Fashions of Worth, Doucet and Pingat* (London: The Brooklyn Museum, 1989) p.101

gowns were tailored for each client, at considerable expense, and, despite the cost, they were from Mary's point of view, an absolute necessity.

Mary's letters to her parents reveal the way in which she allocated her considerable personal income. In 1902 Mary reserved £1500 from her personal income for her 'personal expenses', out of which £700 was used to pay for 'nursery expenses', including clothing and nurses for the children, Mary's own maids, presents and charity contributions. The remaining £800 was reserved for Mary's own wardrobe.⁴⁰ Mary's wedding trousseaux had cost £1000 in 1895, which in today's terms is well over £54,000.⁴¹ Many of Mary's letters reveal the considerable thought and difficult decisions that were made concerning her wardrobe, and convey the impression she was intent on delivering to her audience. Yet discussions of the finance of this display are always present, which emphasizes the studied nature of her decisions.

Mary's regarded her evening dress as a key element in maintaining her rank and authority. By choosing Worth, she ensured that her evening wardrobe would be unequalled in India. Mary's evening dress caused significant press comment both in India and also America. From her first arrival in India, Mary was only too aware that she was on a very public, and to a certain extent, global stage. A letter written to her parents in January 1899, shortly after she arrived in India, illustrates her consciousness of the newspaper coverage of her appearance, which

⁴⁰ LCP 11/167 October 16 1902 Mary to Mother. It is interesting that Mary's personal income was used to pay her nursery expenses.

⁴¹ de Courcy, A., *The Viceroy's daughters: The Lives of the Curzon Sisters* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 2000) p.6

also led her to take certain precautions, ensuring that she would not be embarrassed by a 'leak' of gossip from her parents:

I wore a white gown with white flowers embossed in velvet on it - it was simple but lovely but as the absurd American papers have been printing foolish accounts of imaginary bejeweled dresses covered with real stones the Calcutta paper next day commented on the extreme simplicity of my dress. The American papers do their best to make me ridiculous and I send some of the absurd cuttings.⁴²

Mary also ensured that her gowns were unique by commissioning special embroidery to decorate them. It is thought that Mary gave her embroiders in India a pattern she wished to be worked on. These lengths were then sent to Paris to be made up by Worth into evening dresses. Two skirt lengths, which belonged to Mary Curzon, now kept at the Museum of Costume, Bath, were embroidered in India and detail an eighteenth century European design.⁴³

Mary's support of the Indian embroidery industry has certain ramifications. As Nupur Chaudhuri has indicated, colonial historians have often concluded that during the nineteenth century Anglo-Indians 'chose racial exclusiveness and altogether rejected Indian goods and dishes' to 'project their status as rulers and defend British culture in India'.⁴⁴ Chaudhuri argues that although this was the case in India, British women became a 'major channel through which a range of Indian artifacts' flowed back into Britain from the mid- nineteenth century.⁴⁵ Mary acted as such a conduit for Indian goods back to England and America. She choose and supplied the Royal Household and her own family with Indian

⁴² LCP 9/ 6-14 January 17 1899 Mary to Father

⁴³ Museum of Costume, Bath: BATMC I.19.103; BATMC I.19.102.

⁴⁴ Chaudhuri, (1992) p.231

⁴⁵ Chaudhuri (1992) p.232

fabrics, shawls and embroidery.⁴⁶ She also supported artisans while she was in India. By wearing Indian embroidery on her evening gowns at the most public occasions Mary was seen to be actively encouraging Indian craftsmen. This suggests that whilst the embroidery would have made Mary's gowns unique in India, that this was not Mary's sole aim. Nor was Mary simply promoting the handicrafts of India. Mary drew on the skills of Indian craftsmen to produce dazzling, ornate gowns, which added to the pageantry surrounding formal occasions in British India. However, by using embroidered fabrics as her mechanism, Mary was following a well-established tradition, which held particular resonance in Courtly India.⁴⁷ Although the richness of her robes would undoubtedly have also signaled her status to her British audience by customizing her garments with embroidery Mary was offering a distinct signal to her Indian audience drawing on a history of embroidery as a sign of wealth, status and power.

This appreciation of Indian handicrafts, including textiles, begs the question of whether she wore Indian dress articles herself. Her patronage of Indian embroiders' indicates that she was, to an extent, not conforming to the convention of maintaining racial exclusiveness whilst in India. While Mary's embroidery followed established Europeans patterns, it also had elements that were characteristically Indian. She was, on occasion presented with Indian dress and textiles whilst on tour. Letters to her family indicate that she sent a length of sari fabric to her sister Nancy. Moreover, within the collection of Mary's clothes

⁴⁶ Mary was asked by Queen Alexandra to design and have embroidered in India her coronation robes. Mary thought this an especially great honour. LCP 11/53-54 August 1 1901 Mary to Father

⁴⁷ See Irwin, J. & Hall, M., *Indian Embroideries: Volume II Historical Textiles of India at the Calico Museum* (Ahmedabad: S.R.Bastikar,1973)

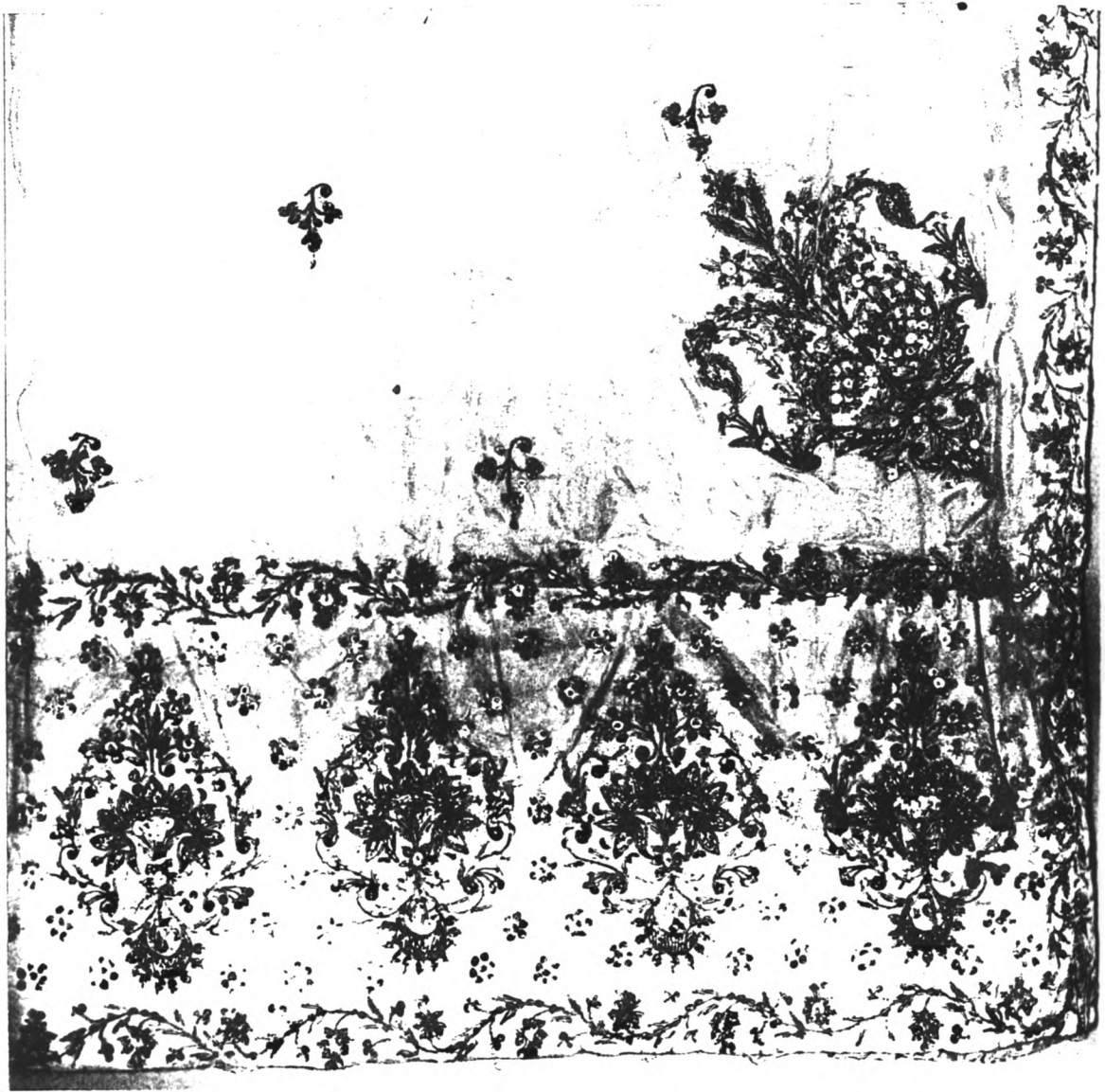


Plate 4 – Pale blue silk Sari with a border of gold embroidery derived from a patka motif
Museum of Costume, Bath
BATMC I.09.4302

kept at the Bath Museum of Costume, there is a sari length of pale blue silk with a border of gold embroidery.⁴⁸ (Plate 4) The embroidery has been identified as being a mughul design, derived from a patka motif, using an Indian embroidery technique on one side of the unlined length of fabric. Of course possession of a length of sari material gives no indication that Mary would have actually worn it. However, one length of the sari material was made into a western style skirt, indicating that the sari was to be worn in a partially western manner.

The stress that was placed in the press on Mary being an American vicereines, heightened her sense of many different national ‘audiences’ to whom she was playing. She was certainly very fearful of bad press reports and frequently referred to the ‘journalists spotlight’ that fell on her.⁴⁹ Without the correct attire, the power that this role had was diminished. Two particular occasions illustrate her keeping up of appearances. The first occurred while traveling to a hunting expedition in the Terai region in 1900. Mary describes the appearance of the viceregal party, who were unexpectedly met at Bareilly station, ‘grotesque[ly]’ dressed in their ‘jungle attire of greenish hued stuff’:

We had flattered ourselves that we should change trains unobserved at Barreily, as no public arrival was on the programme – so a decorated platform, a general in uniform breakfast under a Shaminana and the veritable child with a bouquet was somewhat disconcerting and it required some courage for Maj. Baring, Capt. Campbell and Col. Fenn and I to emerge as though [we] were immaculate in our best.⁵⁰

While the official reception at Barreily station was not scheduled, the significance of the sartorial faux pas is clear.

⁴⁸ BATMC I.09.4302

⁴⁹ CHAR 28-66/22 March 14 1899, Mary to Jennie Churchill

⁵⁰ LCP 42/51, March 28 1900 Tour Journal to family



Plate 5 – Mary in the residency garden at Gulmarg.
 Photographer Unknown
 OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/70 (95)



Plate 6 – Gown of Worth c.1902
 Museum of Costume, Bath
 BATMC

This was nothing to Mary's disbelief at the way in which the Princess of Wales dressed in order to enter India in 1905. Mary described the occasion to her mother:

George has been quite ill & has only just been able to come and meet the Prince and Princess of Wales which he did in full state. We both went on board the Renown and were received and came ashore with the Prince and Princess in a launch. I had on my most beautiful grey embroidered gown had parasol gloves all to match & my pearls , and to my horror I found the princess in a little common white muslin like sundress ! with a narrow blue sash & a little blue ribbon round her neck. This for her great public entry to India. To finish off she had a most common sun umbrella and a funny little blue pin - Well we all marched through the great pavilion with guards of honour and the whole official show & the Prince (in white linen clothes) walked first with George who was in full uniform, I behind with the Princess. I think people were taken aback by their appearance for there was no cheering at all when they walked up on the platform & received the address.⁵¹

Having paid such close attention to details of dress and spectacle for six years, Mary's dismay at the lack of respect given to India by the Prince and Princess of Wales is understandable. The cultural conventions of the imperial dress code had become second nature to Mary.

Another occasion that reveals the intense consideration that Mary paid to her presentation in India, can be illustrated during a visit to the hill station of Gulmarg, Kashmir 1902. As has been noted, during this visit Mary held a Durbar (see above p.62). A photograph shows Mary standing under her parasol in the gardens of the Residency at Gulmarg (Plate 5). Her clothing is significant: a pale yellow silk skirt elaborately embroidered with chenille thread, combined, with a white cotton or linen day blouse. The skirt is now held at the Museum of

⁵¹ LCP 13a/170-171 November 10 1905 Mary to Mother

Costume, Bath (Plate 6) and is part of a formal evening dress designed by Worth. As Mary took her evening dress to Gulmarg, it can be suggested that she would have worn this at the evening banquet given by the Maharaja. However the teaming her evening skirt with parasol and blouse indicates that Mary wore this ensemble during the day. Photographs indicate that Mary wore more standard day clothes whilst golfing and attending a prize giving, so one of the few possible reasons for her wearing this creative combination is that this was the outfit that she wore to the Durbar. The Durbar was an occasion that required as much pomp and ceremony as Mary could muster, the embroidered skirt would provide this key element. As it would have been inappropriate to wear the revealing matching bodice, the more modest blouse was substituted. That Mary might have devised this outfit for the Durbar reveals one of the most important aspects of Mary's role as Vicereine: her part in innovating and maintaining the spectacle of empire through her dress.

Mary's use of dress within her social role enabled her to mark out her identity within society in India. Her choice of dress empowered her to maintain her visual presence that was always more striking than those around her. While holding events such as the Durbar indicates that Mary was stretching the boundaries of acceptability within the incorporated framework, her social role in India was very prescribed and allowed her little deviation from expected norms. Mary's calculated use of dress is therefore of key importance in understanding her agency within his context.

Mary's engagement with philanthropic concerns offered more direct challenges to the model of the 'incorporated wife', shown through Mary's engagement with philanthropic concerns.

III Mary as Philanthropist

Mary's active engagement with philanthropy was limited prior to her arrival in India. She fell amongst the number of aristocratic women who supported charities through subscriptions and donations that would have been solicited by others. On arrival in India, her role shifted to fund-raising: a far more intensive and energy consuming activity.

As Vicereine, Mary's principal philanthropic role was through her position as chair of the 'Countess Dufferin's Fund for Supplying Medical Aid to the Women of India', known as the 'Dufferin Fund'. Her cause was one that could be 'construed as an extension of women's maternal functions'. The Dufferin Fund had considerable middle class support within Britain, and British people who worked within the charity in India would have been middle class. The vicereine was the most visible figure within the fund, raising money and raising the profile of the charity, both within India and at home. The fund also had a number of eminent patrons amongst the Maharanis of India, and within the British aristocracy. This reflects the practice of drawing on the support of eminent women, to add credence to a charity, through their association.

Philanthropy was thus an area where the Vicereine acted independently of the Viceroy, in that she donated money from her own income, and was not

representing the Viceroy when she undertook her philanthropic work. However by the very nature of her involvement, any philanthropic work would carry the informal acceptance of the Viceroy, and therefore act as a symbolic marker of his approval. Though Mary had the support of her husband, it will be shown that she also was able to exert agency in her philanthropic work. This can be demonstrated through an examination of her role within the Dufferin Fund, particularly in her establishment of the Victoria Memorial Scholarships for the training of Indian nurses. This concern took Mary directly into consultation with the Secretary of State for India, on her own terms.

The Dufferin Fund had been established in 1885 by the then vicereine of India, Lady Dufferin, at the behest of Queen Victoria. The Queen had been alerted by two women doctors working in India, Dr. Elizabeth Bielby and Dr. Mary Scharlieb, of the need for female doctors and nurses to assist Indian women as Purdah restrictions prevented Indian women from being attended by men.

As Antoinette Burton and Kumari Jayawardena have argued, women in Britain generated the pressure for social reform in matters relating to Indian women such as the control of child-marriage, sati and female exclusion in purdah.⁵² Burton notes that ‘the work of missionary women, or concerned middle class secular reformers, and of aristocratic women like Lady Dufferin was instrumental to the creation of an imperial reform culture in Britain.’⁵³ The campaign for social

⁵² Burton, A., *Burdens of History: British feminists, Indian women, and imperial culture 1865-1915* (North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 1994) p.10; Jayawardena, K., *The White Womens other Burden: Western Women and South Asia during British Colonial Rule* (London: Routledge, 1995) p. 66-67

⁵³ Burton, (1994) p. 127

reform of women in India initially was alerted by the missionary movement but, as Jayawardena notes, an important 'development of the nineteenth century was the de-linking in the West of Christianity and Social reform.'⁵⁴ The links between feminist campaigns and moves for the advancement of social reform for Indian women were significant.

Owing to the social custom of purdah, and the inability of Indian women to consult with male doctors, female missionaries and later secular British women in India, began the medical training of women to assist Indian women. The practical necessity of female doctors in India, led to the campaigning for access for British and Indian women to medical training hospitals.

The Dufferin Fund was established as a nationwide scheme to train Indian women to become doctors, nurses and midwives. Hospitals were set up in major towns and cities throughout India, often run by British doctors, and training was given to Indian and British women to train as nurses and doctors, both in Britain and India. Mary initially learnt of the perceived needs of Indian women's access to medical aid through her regular visits to hospitals in Calcutta, and throughout India whilst on tour. Mary also gained her knowledge about the problems of supplying medical care from stories she was told of life in the zenana while she was on tour, and in conversation with missionaries. She recorded in her tour diary's a 'characteristic story of a zenana tragedy', which emphasized for Mary how Indian superstition and ritual religious practices led to hostilities to the western application of medicine, with fatal consequences for women in

⁵⁴ Jayawardena, (1995) p. 65

childbirth.⁵⁵ Mary's tales of zenana tragedies would have been familiar to an audience at home reading magazines such as the *Englishwoman's Review*. Indeed such stories were often used to promote the advancement of medical aid to India, with the aim of training women doctors for the task.⁵⁶

As Vicereine Mary was the Chairperson of the Dufferin Fund Central Committee through which all decisions, fundraising and planning was channeled. This committee was made up of members of the Viceroy's council. While the Dufferin program aimed to provide medical services for Indian women by British and Indian women nurses and doctors, the central committee in India was, with the exception of Mary, solely British and male. Mary recorded her first meeting in February 1899:

This afternoon I had my first Dufferin Fund Meeting of the Central Committee. Mr Rivaz, Mr Chalmers and Sir A Trevor - all members of the Viceroy's council - Sir Patrick Playfair, Sir William Cuninghame, Mr Risley and Colonel Miley all came and sat round a table covered with papers and with me at the head of it and Colonel Fenn on my right conducting the business, I began the proceedings by making a modest speech of 20 words, saying I was not wise about the management of the Fund and looked to my Committee for counsel and advice.
⁵⁷

At this first meeting, Mary appears to have been very tentative. Her speech suggests that she wanted to allow her committee to lead her, establishing herself as figurehead, rather than one who would be centrally involved. However in a short space of time Mary developed a sense of leadership over the Dufferin Fund.

⁵⁵ LCP 43/ 186 [Undated] Autumn Tour to Rajputana 1902, Tour Journal

⁵⁶ Burton, (1994) p.112

⁵⁷ LCP 43/37 February 15 1899 Tour Journal

Having chaired the Dufferin committee for three months, visited hospitals, and talked to those with first-hand knowledge, Mary realized that while the Fund had achieved success in training what she would later term ‘midwives of a superior class’, its outreach was relatively small. Mary’s first letter to Queen Victoria outlined a future plan:

The Dufferin Fund meeting was very successful and the largest ever held. Year by year the fund gains a stronger hold and is less misunderstood, although the number of high caste ladies reached by it is I fear very small... I hope that your Majesty will agree with me in thinking that vast good can be done by training sufficient lady doctors to treat the ladies in their homes, and also attempting to teach the native mid-wives who attend the ladies in knowledge of medicine or nursing. By this post I am sending a report of the fund to your majesty.⁵⁸

The importance of training Indian nurses and midwives was recognized as an important step in giving aid to Indian women, however it would appear that building hospitals had been the Fund’s first priority. Mary returned to her desire to start widespread training of Indian midwives and nurses under the auspices of the Dufferin Fund in a letter to Queen Victoria in the autumn of 1899. Arguing that while ‘work which is being done in the women’s hospitals is very excellent indeed’, ladies in purdah were ‘still obdurate’ in their willingness to attend hospitals. Mary had by this time developed a sense of a personal mission, noting that she was ‘very anxious to encourage training native women to treat them and go to them when they will not come to us’. With Dufferin Hospitals underused, Mary wanted to shift the focus of the Dufferin Fund towards the training of nurses who would be based in the community.⁵⁹ Mary received the desired support from Queen Victoria in the spring of 1900 and wrote in reply:

⁵⁸ RA 06/68 March 14 1899 Mary to Queen Victoria

⁵⁹ RA 07/19 December 14 1899 Mary to Queen Victoria

The more I see of the Purdah ladies the more futile it seems to hope to impress them with western ideas - and the most hopeless of all is expecting them to come to our hospitals. I am so very glad that your Majesty approved of my proposal to increase the number of native midwives in our hospitals in the hope of teaching them to practice in the Zenanas.⁶⁰

Queen Victoria's interest and support was further stimulus to Mary in her efforts to train Indian midwives. Following the Queen's death Mary established a memorial in her name to keep 'in perpetual remembrance the sympathetic interest taken by the late Queen-Empress in the domestic troubles of women. This enabled Mary to promote the teaching of more basic skills to a larger numbers of midwives. Titled 'The Victoria Memorial Scholarship Fund', an appeal for money was made throughout India. Mary led this fund-raising initiative herself, and a letter she wrote to her parents about the launch indicates the high level of personal commitment she was giving:

I am very busy indeed as I have started a special memorial to the Queen and enclose a copy of my appeal which I have sent about. I hope I shall get a large sum. [I have] plenty to do and I have written hundreds of letters . I enjoy the work enormously and I can never have too much to do.⁶¹

The aims of Mary's memorial scholarships are laid out in a short summary to George:

To train two classes of midwives one a superior class the other the uneducated class who would be given elementary training which would in no way interfere with the Caste customs.⁶²

The Dufferin Fund had previously largely targeted the first of Mary's two categories, which aimed to give literate Indian women practical and theoretical tuition to become 'highly trained midwives'. The Victoria Memorial Scholarship

⁶⁰ RA 07/46 March 18 1900 Mary to Queen Victoria

⁶¹ LCP 11/27-28 February 21 1901 Mary to Parents

⁶² LCP 16/25-28 July 14 1901 Mary to George

was specifically aimed at a second category: 'the uneducated class'. In the 1913 review of the Victoria Fund Scholarship it was suggested that Mary considered this a new approach in the promotion of care for Indian Women. The 'uneducated class' that Mary targeted were the Indian midwives or *dias* who practices in the local communities. The first object of the Memorial Fund was:

To train midwives in the female wards of hospital and female training schools in such a manner as will enable them to carry on their hereditary calling in harmony with the religious feelings of the people, and gradually improve their traditional methods in the light of modern sanitation and medical knowledge.⁶³

Money raised in the locality was to be spent within the locality, and scholarships paid to those who attended. In addition, 'when desirable', qualified female teachers were to be sent into the remote districts to deliver elementary instruction. Teaching was to be carried out in the 'colloquial language familiar to the pupils' but it was hoped that they would begin to learn English during their attendance. Mary also asked Lt-Col C.P. Lukis of the Indian Medical Service to write an elementary *Manual of Midwifery* to be made available to the scholarship holders, translated into the appropriate language. This was widely used into the second decade of the twentieth century.⁶⁴ Mary raised the incredible sum of £50,000 for the Fund, drawing largely on the generosity of the Indian Princes. Money was 'as far as possible' to be spent in the area in which it was raised, and local midwives were to be trained as close to their own localities as possible. However, Mary considered that until the fund was run as a government scheme, its success would be limited.

⁶³ The original aims of the Victoria Memorial Scholarship Fund are re-stated in: The Victoria Memorial Scholarships Fund, *Annual Report 1913* (Calcutta: publisher unknown, 1913) p. 72

⁶⁴ See The Victoria Memorial Scholarships Fund, (1913)

It has been noted that official, Government-sponsored medical assistance in India was often restricted to reactive, ameliorative schemes, for example, to prevent the spread of plague, or to assist famine victims. Official welfare reform linked to Government schemes was not forthcoming. As Jayawardena notes, 'Indian opinion and British officials agreed in principle about the need for women doctors in India, government funds were often not available for "special interests" such as women's medical training and facilities.'⁶⁵ Viewed against this background Mary's success and personal investment should not be underestimated.

Having established and raised money for the Victoria Memorial Scholarships, Mary attempted from 1904 until her final departure from India to introduce a new nursing scheme, run along the lines of the Dufferin Fund and Victoria Memorial Scholarships under the government's auspices. George wrote to Mary, who was in England recovering from an illness, that:

Your admirable scheme is going home this week with a covering dispatch from is to the S of S [Secretary of State] and if you see St John [Brodrick] I hope you will speed his sympathy in the India Office. It would be a great pity if all your labours were to be thrown away.⁶⁶

The Secretary of State's response was to whittle down the scheme, and George asked Mary what should be done:

The Home Dept brought up to me your nursing scheme with the India Office reply on it and asked what you wished to be done - whether you were prepared to accept St Johns whittling down of it or whether you thought it fatal to the efficiency of the scheme. I could not say. But I suggested that the papers should be sent to me along with the Departmental notes to be forwarded to you. We will then avail your directions before

⁶⁵ Jayawardena, (1995) p.88

⁶⁶ LCP 27/113-114 March 30 1904 George to Mary

anything is done meanwhile finding out all about the existing provincial associations. I now enclose the papers. Perhaps you will look through them at your leisure and say what you think we had better do.⁶⁷

It is crucial that George is acting as an intermediary for Mary here. Mary gained and needed George's support for the scheme, yet he clearly respected her autonomy in political philanthropic matters. Mary's response indicates the importance she placed on it becoming an official scheme, 'controlled by the government':

I got the report you sent me by last mail on the nursing scheme - I despair of success as it is only a grant in aid scheme and the only hope of success is if it is actually controlled by Govt. I am going to write to St John again but it is no use I fear.⁶⁸

Although there is little written record of the content of this new scheme, it would appear in the last six months that Mary was in India, she gained, through private consultation, the approval of the local governments in India and associations such as the Dufferin Fund to support a revised nursing scheme. However, the official replies were not received before George resigned as Viceroy in 1905. Just as Mary had inherited the philanthropic efforts of the previous Vicereine, Lady Minto inherited Mary's efforts. In 1912 Lady Minto launched the scheme Mary had been working on under her own name, 'The Lady Minto Indian Nursing Association', much to the chagrin of George, who alerted the public in 1912, to the significant part that Mary's played in planning and establishing the scheme prior to her death.⁶⁹

⁶⁷ LCP 29/26-37 January 7 1905 George to Mary

⁶⁸ LCP 18/85-86 January 19 1905 Mary to George

⁶⁹ Curzon, G., letter to the Editor of *The Times*, London, January 22 1912

Mary's response to her philanthropic duties indicates that while she was handed these concerns owing to her official position, she did not accept the status quo, but sought to instigate improvements. Mary adopted the time consuming and demanding role of directing a new fund-raising initiative, and attempted to ensure it gained the official government sanction that she realized was required to cement her reforms. Mary and George's negotiation of her philanthropic position indicates a clear negotiation of the boundaries of incorporation. Although Mary was negotiating with the Secretary of State for India over her reforms, the correspondence being channeled through the Viceroy's office. However, George treated this as her own political project, and referred the correspondence he received straight to her, indicating her autonomy within this affair. Again this points to a flexing of the boundaries of the 'incorporated wife'.

Mary's negotiations within the political sphere of her philanthropic concerns indicate the most rewarding element of Mary's life in India: her position with imperial political society.

IV Mary as 'companion to statesmen'

The framework of the incorporated wife has often been applied to women who accompanied their husbands who ruled, administered and defended the empire. As we have seen, Mary exerted her role as Vicereine, a position gained through her husband in different ways, both carrying out her duties and exercising her own agency within the defined social and philanthropic roles that her position entailed. However, the third aspect of Mary's role in India was not one that was defined through her role as Vicereine, but through her own individual inclination,

an inclination that was integral to her relationship to George concerning her participation within the political sphere.

As suggested in Chapter One, the framework of 'separate spheres', the ideology that divided the male 'public' world outside the home from the female 'private' world based within the home, has come under intense scrutiny from historians. (See above pp.17-21) This is particularly true of recent analysis of aristocratic political culture in Victorian Britain. K.D. Reynolds has gone so far as to say that 'to few circumstances can the concept of separate spheres have been more inappropriately applied than that of Victorian political society'.⁷⁰ Reynolds adopts the framework of the incorporated wife, welcoming the opportunity to 'talk about women as wives without dismissively removing their autonomy and reducing them to passive compliance in a male-ordered society'. Although the political culture was changing by the end of the nineteenth century, it still revolved around the traditional nexus of aristocratic society, which Reynolds describes for the early and mid Victorian period. Politics continued to flow freely between the Houses of Parliament and the drawing room, the latter providing the informal space in which alliances could be established, support courted and grievances aired. Politics was an integral part of aristocratic society, and the role of women within this political culture was central.

Like the majority of aristocratic women, Mary participated in political activities long before she went to India. Indeed, before her marriage Mary had been integrated in the upper circles of American political culture, reflected in her

⁷⁰ Reynolds, (1998) p.155

personal correspondence with Theodore Roosevelt.⁷¹ On her marriage to George, Mary had been absorbed into the elite circle of political society in Britain, and had become accustomed to the structure of life that this entailed. As a result of her husband's occupation and place within political society, Mary visited the House of Commons to attend key debates, gave dinners and attended weekend house parties. Mary's circle revolved around the influential set of friends known as 'The Souls', who were one of the most famous cliques that formed within an increasingly fragmented, elite London society in the late Victorian and Edwardian period, drawn together around political and intellectual concerns.⁷² On her marriage, Mary was adopted into the Souls, thereby rubbing shoulders with key political figures of the day, including Arthur Balfour, St. John Brodrick and Henry Asquith. The Souls was far from being a male bastion. While the male members of the Souls might be actively engaged with politics, the female members were watching them in the galleries of the Houses of Parliament and campaigning in their constituencies of their behalf. Like the political wives that Reynold's describes of the early and mid-Victorian period, these women entertained, provided spaces for entertainment, received 'political confidences from husbands and friends' and actively 'engaged in political discussion and manoeuvring'.⁷³ None perhaps had the stature of what eighteenth and nineteenth century society called a 'political hostess', one whose participation in the political sphere elevated them from the general ranks of political wife, but all were integrated into the political culture.⁷⁴ This culture owed more to traditional

⁷¹ LCP 32/219-220 December 28 1901 T. Roosevelt to Mary

⁷² Ellenberger, N.W., 'The Souls and London "Society" at the end of the nineteenth century', *Victorian Studies*, Winter (1982) p.143

⁷³ Reynolds, (1998) p.157

⁷⁴ Lady Castlereigh was perhaps the only 'political hostess' to emerge from this generation of political wives, but did not take her place until the 1920's. de Courcy, A. *Circe: The Life of*

women's political roles than the burgeoning women's movement that was emerging during the later decades of the nineteenth century. Women within Mary's circle did become involved with both the suffrage and anti-suffrage movement, yet their political activities should not be read as a bid for empowerment. Rather, as an activity they inherited or adopted on marriage following the established traditions of the day.

Neither should their role be generally overstated. Although many of these women were highly intelligent (indeed this was a requirement from the Souls which was as much an intellectual set as a political one), they did not receive the rigorous education from Eton and Oxford that their husbands and male friends had gained. Reynolds has noted that they should not be expected to display attention to the formation or development of executive policy, yet by close examination of letters and diaries it is clear that aristocratic women have enjoyed a long history of manoeuvring political affairs within their range.⁷⁵

It is important to place Mary's own political participation within this context, as she became integrated into London political society long before she went to India. While Mary became an 'imperial' incorporated wife as Vicereine, she had been accustomed to supporting her husband as a 'political' incorporated wife at 'home', and continued this role in India. Mary's participation in the political sphere became of greater significance to her, and also to George, during their time in India. Indeed, Mary gained the stature of a political hostess in many ways.

Edith, Marchioness of Londonderry (London: Sinclair-Stevenson, 1992); Williams, A.S., *Ladies of Influence: Women of the Elite in Interwar Britain* (London: Penguin, 2000)

⁷⁵ Reynolds, (1998) p.154, pp.153-187

However the manner in which she participated in politics, changed in important ways depending on whether she was in India, or at 'home' in Britain, and also changed as she gained greater knowledge and became more aware of the importance others invested in her position.

It has been noted that historians who are anxious to uncover the nature of women's involvement in this sphere, have been hampered by the fact that little documentary evidence exists that records the 'personal and conversational' mode of intervention by women in politics.⁷⁶ Letters exchanged between Mary and George offer an opportunity to eavesdrop on the conversations they had together and with others, and record their thoughts on current events. Mary's letters to George during her time in England are exceptional in this respect, in that they record the important conversations she had with political figures verbatim, and from these letters it is possible to offer a broader understanding of the type of female political participation at the turn of the twentieth century.

Mary's participation in the political sphere changed significantly over time while she was in India. Having arrived in India familiar with home politics, the imperial political sphere was largely uncharted territory. The first phase of Mary's real development as a 'political wife', occurred during her first two years in India. During this period Mary was inevitably exposed on a daily level to Indian politics. Letters she received from George while they were separated were full of the current political affairs. Mary absorbed both Indian and British newspapers voraciously, and asked to see official Government papers to

⁷⁶ Reynolds, (1998) p.154

understand issues more clearly. As has been suggested above, Mary's reading enabled her to become a proficient social hostess; it also laid the foundation for her development as a political wife.

During the first two years in India, Mary absorbed Indian politics more as a way of fruitfully passing the time, than with the notion of active engagement. A letter to Cecil Spring Rice certainly suggests that her early interest in politics was fired by boredom:

I am well and interested in everything from Frontier Govts to Assam irrigation it is the only thing that keeps one going, as sometimes this life feels a very isolated one.⁷⁷

The second phase of Mary's deeper understanding of her role as a political wife came when she visited Britain in 1901. During this time Mary was able to use the knowledge she had acquired in India, and began to question her place as a political agent. Indeed, it can be argued that while Mary was not performing the normal functions of the Vicereine in India, by coming 'home' she was able to exert greater independence through her knowledge of Indian politics, applying her role as an imperial subject in a more personally meaningful way than she had in India.

In April 1901 Mary left India to go 'home' to Britain for six months with her children Irene and Cynthia. Although Mary was accustomed to metropolitan political society, she immediately found that she negotiated it differently through her viceregal role. In many ways Mary's imperial subjectivity became more strongly displayed at 'home' than it had previously been in India, giving her

⁷⁷ CASR 1/30/4 March 19 1900 Mary to Cecil Spring Rice

opportunities to display her knowledge on Indian politics. Mary's position within the culture of political society in the summer of 1901 was that of a pivot between 'India', which to Mary's circle was synonymous with 'George', and those at home in government, or closely connected with it. In addition to her political role, whilst in England Mary attempted to exercise power over newspaper reportage of the Viceroy's work within India.

As Vicereine of India, visiting Europe for a short period of time, Mary was caught up in an intense social whirl. The Souls welcomed her back to London, and her established place in society ensured her presence at all the dinner-parties, balls and events that London had to offer. Mary was also invited to join King Edward VII for a weekend at Windsor. She was eagerly drawn into the social and political circuit of weekend house parties, dinners and visiting which enabled her to listen to opinions of those around her, informing and advising, whilst reporting everything back to George. Mary's letters during this time are 'voluminous'. The content, termed 'tittle tattle' by Mary and 'gossip' by George, reveals the wide-ranging discussions that Mary had.⁷⁸ Mary told George that 'My thoughts never leave you and I find that my whole interest in people is what they may tell me which is of interest to you!'⁷⁹ The flows of information regarding the reception of Indian policy and George's position at home were directed back to India through Mary. George may have dismissed her letters as gossip when cataloguing them, but he asked repeatedly for increasingly lengthy letters describing everything she

⁷⁸ George's note on an envelope containing letter dated May 18 1901 (LCP 15/138-165) reads 'Gossip about London, Roberts, Kitchener, Milner, AJB [Balfour] G Hamilton, G Wyndham'. In this letter Mary refers to her 'voluminous letter' as 'tittle tattle'

⁷⁹ LCP 15/138-165 May 18 1901 Mary to George

heard and did. Indeed this task filled up Mary's time so completely, that she told her own parents she could not write much to them because of this demand.⁸⁰

On arrival in London Mary was inundated with callers, much to the consternation of her sister in law with whom she was staying.⁸¹ Mary described these visits for George:

Next darling came Lord Selborne and sat for a solid hour and ½ discovering [illeg.] [illeg.] "all you are doing!" I at once dropped on to the theory that he longs to succeed you but George his ignorance of India is quite amazing ... In the midst of all this in came St John and before I knew where I was he had kissed me - on the cheek! ... He proceeded to sit down and talk "haute politique"!⁸²

During the next few weeks, Mary had what she called 'dentist appointments' with what Mary calls the 'aged swells.'⁸³ It is characteristic of Mary's ironic, self deprecating approach to her involvement with political affairs during the summer of 1901, that she should refer to her meetings with cabinet ministers, ambassadors, senior military figures and eminent politicians as mere 'dentist appointments'. Certainly these figures were not simply paying their respects to Mary, they all sought her company on many occasions, and spent extended periods of time with her.⁸⁴

⁸⁰ LCP 11/50-51 May 24 1901 Mary to Father

⁸¹ LCP 15/98-101 May 6-9 1901 Mary to George

⁸² LCP 15/98-101 6-9 May 1901 Mary to George. Lord Selborne had become First Lord of the Admiralty in 1900

⁸³ LCP 15/117-133 written between May 12 and 18 1901, Mary to George

⁸⁴ Sir Alfred Lyall stayed with Mary at Braemar Castle, near Balmoral, Scottish Highlands which she had rented during August 1901

A typical example of Mary's attention to recording her conversations, is revealed in her description of a short exchange between the Prime Minister, Lord Salisbury and herself:

Lord Salisbury led through the crowd to me after lunch and asked me when I would come to Hatfield. He then proceeded to say "How is George, he is having in my mind a very great career in India. His frontier policy will keep us India 50 years longer than we should have kept it otherwise. It is a very difficult problem - we are always trying to balance a Pyramid on its point" this I suppose he meant the difficulty of holding India. He then said he strongly approved your princeling scheme...Then he said "G is very anxious about Persia so am I - but I don't see what I can do". I don't feel that I have repeated this very coherently but I really couldn't hear ½ he said as we were standing in the middle of a huge room seething with people & every moment people would come and shake hands.

This extract reveals much about the style of Mary's participation in the political culture. The social setting enabling an informal exchange, Lord Salisbury inviting Mary to his home at Hatfield for a weekend party, and then conveying his opinions, through Mary to George, of his approval of the newly formed Imperial Cadet Force, the difficulties of the Frontier, and anxiety about Persia. Throughout the summer Mary was a frequent companion of Lord Salisbury's nephew, Arthur Balfour who would become Prime Minister in 1902. Recording many conversations, she offered George some advice:

Arthur took me in and we talked straight through din [dinner]... His chief interest in India is Afghanistan and what your plan of operations in the case of Amirs death, he is really keen on this as he has read an alarmist Russian book on what Russia would do. So I think if you have planned what you wd. [would] do after proclaiming Habibullah it would [be] well to write him for future use in the cabinet.⁸⁵

⁸⁵ LCP 15/117-133 [Undated c.May 1901] Mary to George. The Emir of Afghanistan Abdur Rahman died later in 1901 and was succeeded by Habibullah. Tense differences emerged between the Indian Government and the British Cabinet on the way to deal with the new Emir and the protection of the Indian Frontier.

Here Mary is not only relaying conversations, but also sending advice to George, raising an issue that she felt needed his consideration. In other exchanges, officials sought Mary's advice on an issue before approaching George. For example, St. John Brodrick, Secretary of State for War, approached Mary and 'in great confidence he unfolded his plan of calling upon you for your best troops in turn for the spent and jaded men in S. Africa.' Mary analysed his proposition to George noting that 'India is made a commodity of but it shows her magnificent strength that she should be squeezed in this way to fight out England's battles.' She told George that St. John was uncertain if he would accept the plan, and informed him that she had told St. John that: 'I said you would I thought go as far as you could to help Empire, but never endanger the safety of India by too great depletion her strength'.⁸⁶ Mary demonstrated her diplomacy on this occasion, responding in a positive yet guarded way to the Secretary of State, and preparing George for Brodrick's suggestion. Indeed Mary was often made a conduit for ideas that the politicians of the day wanted to plant in George's mind. One of these she was particularly keen to promote herself: that which would encourage George to work less hard and return to British politics. Indeed one memo written following a conversation with Lord Salisbury and Arthur Balfour stressed George's role in future British politics and the need to maintain health for such an event.⁸⁷ The self-interest here is undeniable: she sent the clearest message to George on many occasions that he should come home as soon as possible.

⁸⁶ LCP 15/193-222 June 9 1901 Mary to George. George agreed on this occasion, and sent troops to help in South Africa, China and Somaliland

⁸⁷ LCP 16/149-150 September 19 1901 memo of a conversation with Lord Salisbury and Arthur Balfour

Having been immersed in the politics of India for two years, Mary was astounded by the lack of knowledge about India in Britain. While everyone agreed George was doing wonders, Mary's own in-depth appreciation of Indian politics was not generally shared. Mary suggested that general ignorance could be attributed in part to the lack of information in the newspapers. She commented to George:

The cessation of the long 'India Hunter' letters in the Times is really a calamity as they did jog ignorance of the Times readers at least, now George, India is the great unknown. The moon seems nearer to the majority, Indian isn't more than a huge troublesome [illeg.] that spells famine and plague.

In an attempt to rectify this situation, Mary suggested to George that he should instigate a series of informative articles on India to be published in the newspapers at home, citing topics such as railroads and famine as possible topics:

I am sure it would be enormously appreciated as I have heard many complain that people wanted to know more of your Indian work. Any paper with a big circulation would do... [the] Daily Telegraph or Standard would gladly do it if the article could be only arranged. Is it possible? ⁸⁸

Whilst in London it is clear that Mary was actively attempting to shape newspaper coverage both at home, and in India. George and Mary had felt the intensity of the 'journalists' searchlights'.⁸⁹ There is significant evidence that Mary adopted a diplomatic role, offering patronage to journalists and newspapers editors, most notably Lovat Fraser of the *Times of India*, in the hope of sympathetic coverage.⁹⁰ One of Mary's first attempts to quell hostile journalists in India, was in the befriending of Mrs Coates, the wife of a journalist living in Simla, who was also a novelist under the pen name of Jennette Duncan. Mary's patronage of Mrs. Coates soon ensured the cessation of hostilities from her

⁸⁸ LCP 16/80-89 August 9 1901 Mary to George

⁸⁹ CHAR 28-66 (22) March 14 1899 Mary to Jennie Churchill

⁹⁰ Letter from Mary to Lovat Fraser, Editor of the Times of India can be found within the Maxwell Fraser Bequest at The National Library of Wales

husband's pen, and the friendship blossomed to the extent that Mrs. Coates was given letters of introduction to several of Mary's friends in London.

Although George and Mary were first met with great adulation, criticism followed, and stories spread that were in Mary and George's eyes misrepresentative on a personal and political level. By 1901 stories were circulating in the press in India and Britain that poked fun at the pomp and ceremony of the viceregal establishment. Termed by Mary the 'Etiquette stories' these suggested amongst other things, that Mary curtsied to the Viceroy when she woke up in the morning.⁹¹ Whilst not damaging India's interests these stories infuriated Mary and George.

A letter from G.W. Smalley, an American journalist and writer who had known Mary since childhood, indicates that Mary had asked his advice as to what to do about the etiquette stories, both in Britain and in America. While Smalley suggested a 'contradiction in the Times' would 'more [than] likely cure that evil' he was uncertain as to the value of disabusing the American public, drawing attention to the pride that American had in her career.⁹²

In 1901 Mary took matter into her own hands, by shaping an article to be published in the *Lady's Realm*. Writing to George after its publication Mary declared:

I also found plenty of gush in the Lady's Realm you enclosed - A woman by the name of Willocks had written an article about us and asked me for photos to illustrate it with. I asked her to let me

⁹¹ Gilmour, (1994) p. 210

⁹² LCP 32/49-55 December 6 1899 G.W.Smalley to Mary

see her notes for article wh.[which] she did. She had the most absurd ideas I ever heard in her head and she willingly changed the whole. The story of Mil Sec behind your chair, our never shaking hands with guests she thought gospel!⁹³

The resulting article was gratifyingly informative about the normality of the viceregal household, and stressed the extent of social mingling with guests and the fact that the Curzons' occasions looked grand compared to the previous Viceroy who had a retiring disposition and an ill wife.

These initial forays, perhaps trivial, led Mary to tackle a larger concern. While in England in 1901, Mary used her friendship networks to tackle the hostility of the *Pioneer* newspaper, which was George's harshest critic in the English-Indian press. During a meeting with Clinton Dawkins, who had previously been the Finance Member of the Viceroy's Council in 1899, before returning to London, Mary questioned him about the *Pioneer*. He told her that he was 'powerless to alleviate' the *Pioneers* attitude. The 'chief proprietor' of the paper was a Sir W Ratigan, an 'ex Punjab judge' who had a 'grudge against the India Gov.' was 'a violent radical' who cared 'nothing about the Scandal of an English papers disloyalty so long as it discredits circulation.'⁹⁴ As Mary told George 'this looks badly'.⁹⁵

However disheartening this information was, Mary approached Sir Alfred Lyall to coordinate a meeting with the Ratigans', who were resident in Britain. Mary told George that although she would not be capable of conquering 'his policy as I

⁹³ LCP 16/164-171 November 10 1901 Mary to George refers to: By an Anglo-Indian, 'The Viceroy of India and Lady Curzon', *Lady's Realm*, November 1901 Vol XI, No 61, pp.3-13

⁹⁴ LCP 15/138-165 May 18 1901 Mary to George

⁹⁵ LCP 15/138-165 May 18 1901 Mary to George

did Mrs. Coates dislike of us both', she thought he might be 'more human' after a meeting with her.⁹⁶ Here Mary draws on the precedent set by her befriending of Mrs. Coates, hoping that by meeting the Rataigans' she could also quell some of the hostility. To Mary's disappointment she was not able to meet the Ratigans' and informed George: 'I am so sorry but I could have done nothing I fear and only seen what kind of man he was'.⁹⁷ George however had no doubt of Mary's ability to quell the opposition, and before he received knowledge of her failed plan he wrote: 'Darling, how good of you to take all that trouble about the Ratigans ... whatever hostile inclinations he might have I know that you would soften them down.'⁹⁸

It is clear that Mary was displaying independence in both participating in the political arena, and in her efforts to divert newspaper hostilities. It is also clear that Mary was sought for her views and that she gave them freely during the summer of 1901 when she was resident at 'home'. This marks the second stage of Mary's development as an active political participant.

An exploration of her own reaction to her experience at home, within the heart of the empire, should conclude this account of Mary's growth in the political sphere. Despite the fact that Mary had been immersed in imperial politics, and had been able to contribute to debates and discussions that would have been closed to her before she went to India, her view of her position as a woman within society is telling:

⁹⁶ LCP 15/30-31 July 21 1901 Mary to George

⁹⁷ LCP 16/80-89 August 11 1901 Mary to George

⁹⁸ LCP 22/73-84 August 14 1901 George to Mary

A man can know a woman fairly well because her life consequently the interests which mould her mind and conceive her thoughts are more or less simple. A man's life is so complex and much of it lies outside the woman's sphere - & his mind is spiked with hundreds of magnets pointing to different possibilities that she may never know him in his entirety – but what is within her grasp has the power of making her [illeg.] happy⁹⁹

In this self-reflective and reflexive letter Mary positions herself outside the male public sphere of political society, without acknowledging the role she had just played out in the political sphere in England. Yet Mary's actual understanding of the 'hundreds of magnets pointing to different directions', that she sees as representative of men's lives, is greater than she reveals. Mary actively influenced the direction in which these magnets were pointing. Yet at this point Mary does not question the correctness of the boundary of the 'Woman's sphere'.

In the third stage of her development as a political participant, Mary began to comprehend that her political understanding and that her elite position was exceptional, even when compared to that of her contemporaries who were also active political participants. Mary's role in the political process whilst in India differed from her time in England. On returning to India Mary continued to be absorbed by politics and in her role as a confidant. However, the arrival in India of Lord Kitchener as Commander in Chief in 1902, prompted a new self-understanding of her role in the political sphere. While she had clearly been actively engaging with political arguments, writing about and discussing political problems, from her letters it is clear that Mary did not fully place herself within this sphere until 1903.

⁹⁹ LCP 15/23024 July 14 1901 Mary to George

Mary was able to iron out the problems between George and Kitchener, countering their differences with invitations to tea and dinner.¹⁰⁰ Kitchener spent much time with Mary during 1903, offering a welcome relief from the isolation of her position. In Kitchener's company, she began to reflect on her involvement in political affairs, and by June 1903, had become more outspoken about her position. Mary found Kitchener to be 'a rugged sort of social companion', and throughout the summer boasted to her mother that she had 'become a sort of necessary companion to Statesmen!' to both George and Kitchener.¹⁰¹

In the same letter, Mary is reflective about why she is able to be such a companion:

I talk to George literally by the hour about every one of his political plans & the other Sunday K sat in the garden & talked business for 3 ¼ hours with me. It is only after vast study & reading that women can ever become good companions but it is a far greater satisfaction than frivolity – we had our first dance the other night and I wore my light blue satin & Velvet.¹⁰²

Clearly Mary's polishing of the 'facets' of her mind through reading had enabled her to understand and argue subjects, that during July 1901, she had placed beyond her sphere. By dwelling in the political atmosphere of the Viceregal household, avidly reading all newspapers, books, biographies and the government papers of the British Government in India, Mary dissolved a boundary she had set between the female and male worlds in her letter of 1901. She clearly enjoyed the novelty of this position and boasted about it to her family. In a letter written

¹⁰⁰ Gilmore, (1994) p.250-251, 296-317

¹⁰¹ LCP 12/96-103 June 1 1903 Mary to Mother

¹⁰² LCP 12/96-103 June 1 1903 Mary to Mother

in July, Mary informed her family again that she was talking business with the Army Commander:

I have just been talking for two hours and ½ to Lord Kitchener under a tree so my mind is rather military & I may burst into army reorganisation!¹⁰³

A letter to Cecil Spring Rice in this period, indicates that Mary considers her level of understanding to be superior to women at home, who occupy a similar position to that which Mary enjoyed before she became Vicereine:

I think one has a more honest and intelligent interest in politics when one is removed from the temptation of reading the summary in the Times every morning so as to be able to meet Prime Ministers at luncheon and dinner with a lame acquaintance with facts. Don't you know the London lady who gulps down politics with her morning tea and infers comprehension over political buttered toast at tea at five. Here it is a different interest that takes you through the columns of the Times without a break. George, Lord K and I all read the speeches through in this beautiful place and then we laid down the papers and talked very hard with the sort of strenuous intense interest that Indian life gives.¹⁰⁴

Mary considered her level of understanding superior to her counterparts in England. Her cutting image of the political wife, absorbing the main political summaries in the morning, enabling her to meet the Prime Minister at luncheon and eat 'political buttered toast at five', is perhaps an accurate reflection of Mary's own experiences prior to going to India. Yet Mary now mocks this situation, and she is therefore making a critique of many of her friends who played out this 'charade'.

Mary's debates with Kitchener in particular, placed her participation in politics in India outside the model of the companionate marriage, which characterised the

¹⁰³ LCP 12/145-146 July 8 1903 Mary to Family

¹⁰⁴ CASR 1/30/8-11 June 15 1903 Mary to Cecil Spring Rice

discussions she had had with George since their arrival in India. In 1904 when Mary reflected to George on her feelings in India she told him that she was often unhappy, however she noted:

I was happier after K came as his utter dependence upon me appealed so strongly to me – more because liking me as a woman he talked to me as a man!¹⁰⁵

Mary felt that Kitchener treated her more as an equal and this prompted Mary to reassess the importance of her participation in the political sphere. Perhaps because she was able to discuss matters with Kitchener, therefore outside the sphere of her role as a wife, Mary was able to comprehend that she was an intelligent companion, and that may have given her a greater sense of self worth. Although Mary had privately enjoyed this relationship with George for many years, by extending this companionship to Kitchener she realized that her role went beyond that of married companionship, and at this point she elevated her relationship with George to that of a companion to statesman.¹⁰⁶ Indeed, Mary began to talk actively of her close engagement with George's political affairs with her friends such as Pearl Craigie, again drawing on the importance of reading and knowledge in her position:

I read until I can't see & discuss problems with George until I feel like a volume of "Wisdom while you wait" Times Encyclopedia!¹⁰⁷

Between 1899 and 1903 Mary developed her own identity as a political wife, rather than as a wife of a politician. The distinction is important, as it reflects Mary's personal engagement with the political affairs.

¹⁰⁵ LCP 18/94-99 February 7 1905 Mary to George

¹⁰⁶ Mary's companionship with Kitchener did not however enable her to anticipate Kitchener's manipulation of the Army re-organization scheme, which ultimately led to George's resignation as Viceroy in August 1905. See Gilmour, (1994) p.296-317

¹⁰⁷ LCP 34/103-108 May 14 1903 Mary to Pearl Cragie

V Conclusion

The duties that accompanied the role of Vicereine offered Mary many different opportunities. It is clear that a framework of separate spheres cannot be applied to her position, and the adoption of an 'incorporated' framework offers a more positive method of addressing her role theoretically. While Mary was clearly always framed within her role as an 'incorporated wife', she flexed the boundaries of incorporation in different ways in her different roles. While the incorporated framework of Viceregal life had a fixed boundary, which Mary could only be released from when in Europe or unwell, there are indications within her texts, which demonstrate that Mary exerted a degree of autonomy within the defined structure of viceregal life. Mary negotiated her autonomy through a resistance to the intense social duty, in her own texts and through her adoption of dress and reading.

Mary Curzon's letters reveal that she put immense energy into creating a wardrobe, which she felt reflected the prestigious position she held in India. Her financial resources enabled a display which was probably unmatched by any other Vicereine. Mary's conscious adoption of dress as a symbolic code, which asserted her authority, is a reminder that imperial power was asserted in many different ways. The fusion of Indian embroidery with the designs of Jean-Phillippe Worth is a tantalizing example of the range of different exchanges of commodities between India and Europe, which are beginning to be uncovered. These exchanges further challenge the idea that western women in India maintained a racial divide by rejecting the adoption of Indian artifacts and wearing elements of Indian dress while in India. Mary's thoughtful adoption of

Indian embroidery, which culminated in the Peacock Dress worn at the Delhi Durbar, was indicative of the conscious decision to create a wardrobe which was not only unique, but which signaled that her dress was a metaphor for the authority of the British Raj in India.

As vicereines, Mary inherited the role of philanthropist. Although she showed initial apprehension concerning this role, she soon became thoroughly engaged, particularly when the time came to launch the Victoria Memorial Scholarship appeal and redirect the energies of the Dufferin Fund. Mary exerted some independence and autonomy within this role. She liaised directly with the Secretary of State for India in her attempts to set up a scheme which came under the auspices of the government, recognizing that this would ensure the future security of her venture. That Mary failed to achieve this aim is unsurprising given the lack of will of the Government of India to invest in primary health care. It does however indicate that Mary was attempting to exert her own agency within the incorporated structure of her life.

Letters to her family and close friends revealed that while Mary's role as vicereine offered her a multitude of opportunities, she was ultimately isolated and unhappy within the framework that the position offered.

Mary revealed this in a letter to Cecil Spring Rice:

I am well and interested in everything from Frontier Govts to Assam irrigation it is the only thing that keeps one going, as sometimes this life feels a very isolated one and in spite of the immense amount of social work I hardly see anyone outside our own staff family....I am flourishing and very hard worked toiling over schools, hospitals and institutions of every sort, in spite of

all the public occupation I have hours and days to myself so I
read and [ring] up the angel babies.¹⁰⁸

It seems that Mary was most fulfilled during the times when she was in London, and also when feeling her most fully empowered as a political companion in India. During these moments, Mary stretches the boundaries of incorporation, revealing, perhaps most importantly to herself, that she was an intelligent and autonomous individual. While it is true that Mary was still visibly placed within an incorporated framework to those viewing from the outside, internally Mary clearly felt that she was holding her own in her personal relationships in a way that she had not previously achieved. However, while Mary found this greater sense of self worth through her position as vicereine, it was not her original experience in India that triggered her process of self-realisation. Only once Mary had traveled back to England, and experienced political life in London with her new knowledge of imperial politics, was she able to return and negotiate the boundaries of her imperial position. While other women travellers' have been seen as transgressing boundaries of society whilst traveling, Mary only began to transgress these boundaries once she had come 'home', and seen the new opportunities that were being offered to her through her position as vicereine in light of the old.

¹⁰⁸ CASR 1/30/4 March 19 1900 Mary to Cecil Spring Rice

Chapter 3

Home and Empire

I Introduction

This chapter interrogates the nature of ‘home’ to Mary. Within the colonial setting, ‘home’ is a multifaceted concept. It can refer to the material space of the home in India, as well as the symbolic idea of ‘home’, which is the space that will, perhaps, be returned to, for example, the imperial metropolis. This chapter charts the complex ways in which Mary negotiated home, both as a material space in India, Britain and America, and also ‘home’ as the symbolic space of return. I will argue that ‘home’ for Mary, was located in the flows between the imperial metropolis and India, and suggest that the materiality of the home and the ‘idea’ of home coalesce in important ways. Indeed, it can be argued that Mary became an element in the many flows tying the empire and the metropolitan center together.¹

The ‘home’ is a concept that has, until recent years, been left largely unexplored within the disciplines of history and geography. Much conventional historical and geographical writing has assumed that the space of the ‘home’ in the Victorian period was, and still is, the preserve of women and children, separated from the public, male sphere of work. Indeed in their collaborative study of *The Family*

¹ For work on the flows between empire and ‘home’ see: Samuel, R., *Island Stories: Unraveling Britain, Theatres of Memory Volume II* (London: Verso, 1998) pp.74-97; Driver, F. & Gilbert, D. (eds.), *Imperial Cities* (Manchester: University of Manchester Press, 1999); Burton, A., *At the Heart of the Empire: Indians and the Colonial Encounter in Late Victorian Britain* (California: University of California Press, 1998); Stoler, A.L., *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997); Hall, C., *White Male & Middle Class: Explorations in Feminism and History* (Cambridge: Polity, 1992)

Story Davidoff, Doolittle, Fink and Holden comment that ‘the place of home in everyday life means that most intellectuals and academics deliberately distance themselves from its serious consideration’.² Yet, as historians such as K.D.Reynolds have recently demonstrated such binary oppositions do not withstand close interrogation. As has been noted above, (see Chapter 1) the expectations of middle-class society did not extend to the upper, aristocratic classes where binary oppositions between home and work were less adhered to. These oppositions become even more fluid in the case of colonial aristocratic life, and it is noticeable that the types of studies that Davidoff *et al* have called for, such as an interrogation of the extended family and broader household members including servants, have been carried out within a colonial setting. Feminist historians and geographers have also placed great attention on the lived experience within the colonial home as a means of exploring imperial power relations.³

Alison Blunt has stressed the need to examine the British home in India embedded within, rather than removed from, imperial power relations. By examining household guides, Blunt has shown that a key element of feminine domesticity revolved around maintaining imperial power relations within the home, as for example, advice concerning the correct management of servants

² Davidoff, L. [et al.], *The family story: blood, contract and intimacy, 1830-1960* (London: Longman, 1999) p.83

³ See Blunt, A., ‘Imperial geographies of home: British domesticity in India, 1886-1925’, *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 24 (1999) pp.421-440; Chaudhuri, N., ‘Memsahibs and Motherhood in Nineteenth Century Colonial India’, *Victorian Studies* 31 (1988) pp.519-535; Chaudhuri, N., ‘Shawls, Jewelry, Curry and Rice in Victorian Britain’ in Chaudhuri, N. & Strobel, M. (eds.), *Western Women and Imperialism: Complicity and Resistance* (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1992) pp.231-246; Mills, S., ‘Gender and Colonial Space’, *Gender, Place and Culture*, 3 (1996) pp.125-147

‘reproduced imperial power relations on a domestic scale’.⁴ By destabilising the binary that the ideology of separate spheres sets up between the female sphere of the home and the male sphere of the work of empire, Blunt illustrates that the domestic and imperial ideal were both firmly rooted within the home. Indeed, it was commonly argued that the British Empire could only be maintained if lands were domesticated, to provide ‘natural’ homes for future settlers and colonialist. Blunt argues that the feminised discourse of domesticity was used to domesticate the empire. Women’s roles in establishing and maintaining homes in the empire were firmly established, resulting in a discourse of imperial domesticity, which was played out within the home between women and their servants.

Blunt’s analysis of the British home in India draws on prescriptive household guides. While this provides an important insight into the authors’ domestic ideal, as Amanda Vickery has stressed, it is important to go beyond such texts, and read women’s letters and diaries in an attempt to establish whether the domestic ideal in the texts matched the reality of women’s lives.⁵ Despite Vickery’s caution, within an imperial context it should be noted that prescriptive texts published for women in India were often written by those who had long experience surviving in the country, such as the highly influential manual *The Complete Indian Housekeeper and Cook* co-authored by Flora Steel and Grace Gardiner.⁶ Such prescriptive texts were addressed to army officers and civil servant’s wives, the middle class women who became the memsahibs in their own home. However, although Mary would have sought advice on many of the issues contained within

⁴ Blunt, (1999) p.423

⁵ Vickery, (1993) pp.383-414

such prescriptive texts, (such as the correct wardrobe for a tropical environment and the ways of managing sickness and disease), she had no practical requirement for such a manual, relying instead on the guidance of the extensive staff of the Viceregal household.⁷

While women were establishing homes in the empire, 'home' was also a complex space negotiated over distance. In the imperial imagination, 'home' reflected a nostalgic idea that provided an illusion of security within an alien world. As Blunt suggests: 'the clearest and fondest imaginings of home are often located at a distance of forced exile or voluntary roaming...and thus remains a site of continual desire of irretrievable loss'.⁸ Yet the etymological root of nostalgia also reveals that the physical return home can be a painful one, reflecting the changes in subjectivity that travel brings. Thus, the reality of return, may not match the longing of the imagination. The desire for the familiarity of 'home' in the imperial imagination took concrete form in the design of homes in India, complete with impractical English style cottage gardens, or the delight in places which were a 'mirror of home' such as the Kandyan Highlands, which were 'uncannily like highland Britain'.⁹ Even when staying in Scotland, Mary wrote to George in Simla that their current environments were remarkable alike.¹⁰ While familiar elements of home might be concretized within the empire, the

⁶ Steel, F. & Gardiner, G., *The Complete Indian Housekeeper and Cook* (London: Heinemann, 1907)

⁷ The irrelevance of practical guides to elite women was also illustrated when Mary was asked to advise the Princess of Wales as to the correct outfit for her visit to India in 1905. LCP 35/137-128 May 2 1905 Victoria, Princess of Wales to Mary

⁸ Blunt, (1999) p.421

⁹ Duncan, J., 'Dis-Orientation: On the shock of the familiar in a far-away place', in Duncan, J. & Gregory, D. (eds.), *Writes of passage: Reading travel writing* (London: Routledge, 1999) p.152

¹⁰ LCP 16/91-94 August [c.12-22] 1901, Mary to George

symbolic resonances of 'home' within the imperial imagination resulted in complex negotiations of the imperial self.

By exploring the domestic space of the viceregal household through Mary's letters and diaries, the complexities of imperial power relations within the home at the symbolic heart of the Indian empire will be revealed. As this chapter will demonstrate, the complex exchanges between empire and the home explode any notion of a binary, which separates home from the empire, both materially and conceptually (i.e. the 'idea' of home'). This chapter addresses the four principal elements of Mary's negotiation with the material and symbolic 'home'. It will consider the Viceregal home firstly as an 'incorporated residence', and secondly as a high imperial 'contact zone'. The third element I address is that the place of home as a symbolic space of return in Mary's imagination was embedded within her family and friendship circle, and reflects her negotiation of national identity. Finally I will consider the attempts that Mary made to have a material home in London, within the symbolic space of home, ready for her return from India.

II The 'incorporated home'

Mary's own discourse was carried out within a 'frame' of incorporation. The headed writing paper stamped with Government House, Calcutta, or Viceroy's Lodge, Simla reveals that her homes were incorporated residences, that is, incorporated into the official position of Mary's husband. Although many British homes in India came with particular occupations, such as accommodation in army barracks or civil service cantonments, the Viceroy's home combined a working environment with an official entertaining space and family accommodation.

Mary's letterhead reflects the fact that the buildings were principally places of work, and homes second.

Viceregal life was intensely mobile, based between the two capitals of the Government of India. The winter capital was to be found in Calcutta until 1911, when the capital moved to Delhi, with the viceregal household working and living within Government House (Plate 7). When the heat of the plains encroached, the Viceroy and his household departed to Simla, a hill station in the Himalayas established by Dalhousie in 1849 as the summer capital of the Government of India, living at Viceregal Lodge (Plate 8). While resident in Calcutta it was customary for the viceregal household to 'retreat' to a more private weekend residence 15 miles from Calcutta at Barrackpore. Set in parkland on the banks of the River Hoogley, Mary ironically referred to Barrackpore as her 'celestial cottage' (Plate 9).¹¹ Six miles from Simla, outside the village of Mashobra was the Viceroy's summer weekend residence, appropriately named 'The Retreat' (Plate 10). A further four miles, on the slopes above the village of Naldera, the viceregal household enjoyed a summer camping ground living under canvas during the month of June. When in Calcutta, Mary would often retreat as a guest of Lady MacDonell, the wife of the Lieutenant Governor of the North Western Provinces and Oudh, to the hill station of Darjeeling staying at the Governor's residence 'The Shrubbery'. However for much of Mary's time in India the four permanent viceregal residences provided Mary's material homes.

¹¹ LCP 32/35-42 June 22 1899, G.W. Smalley to Mary quoting Mary's letter

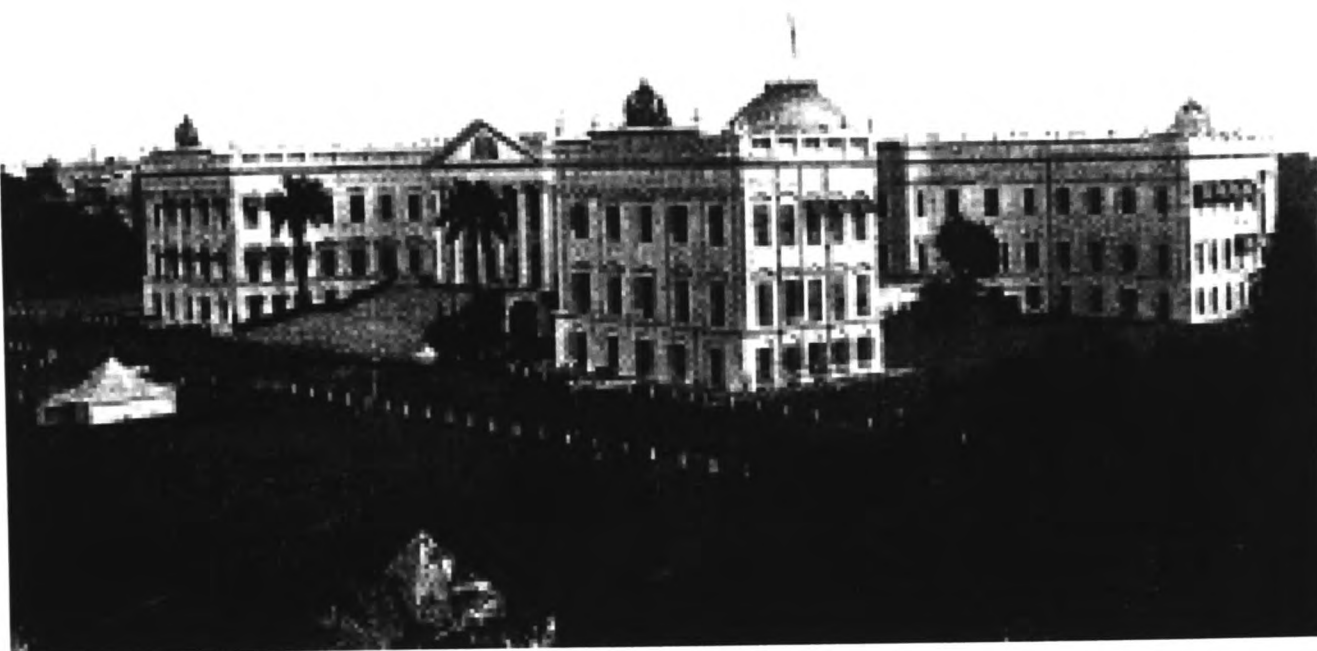


Plate 7 – Government House, Calcutta

Photographer unknown

From: Curzon, G., *British Government in India: the story of the Viceroy and Government Houses* (London: Cassell & Co., 1925)

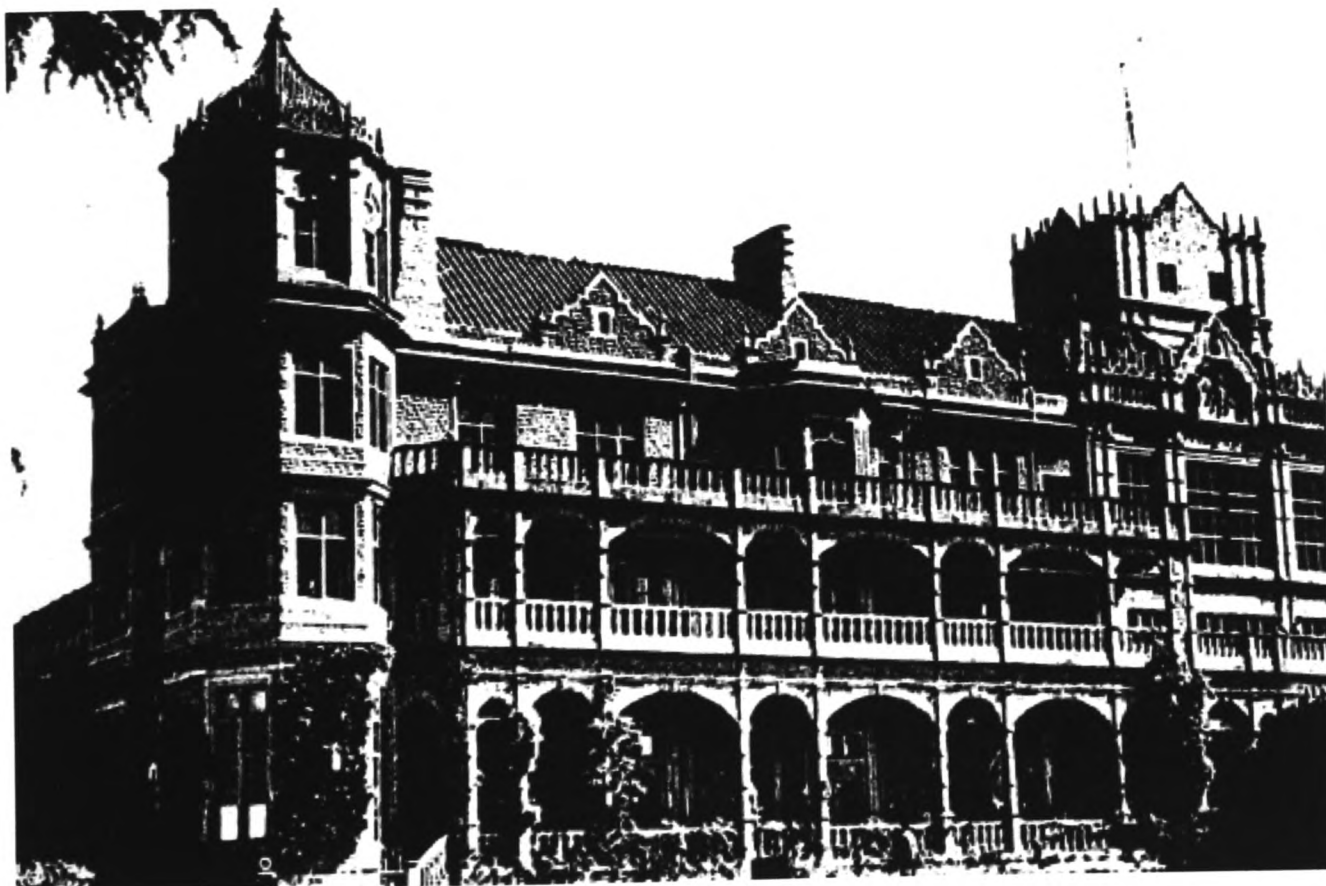


Plate 8 – Viceregal Lodge

Photographer Unknown

From: Nicolson, N., *Mary Curzon* (London: Wiedenfeld and Nicolson, 1977)

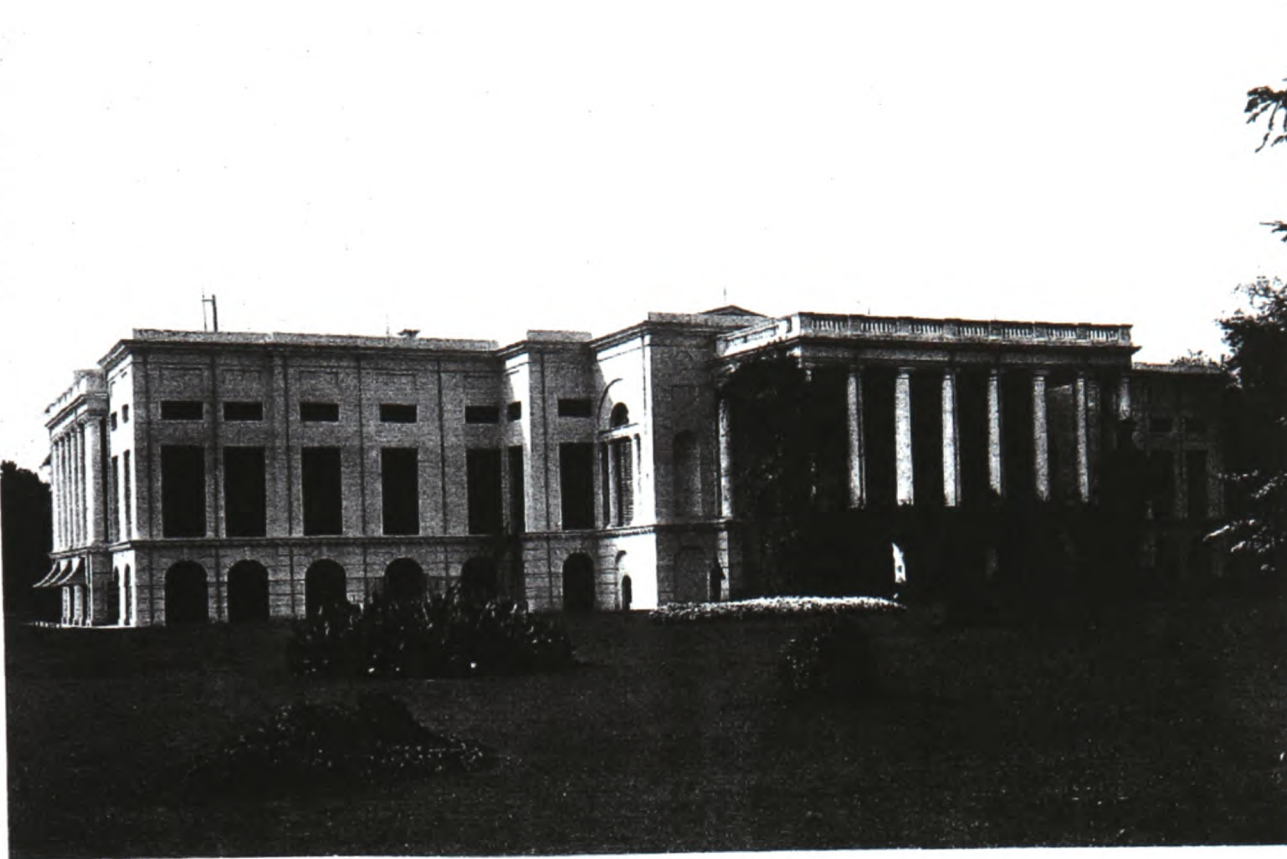


Plate 9 – Barrackpore
 Photographer Unknown
 From: Curzon, G., *British Government in India: the story of the Viceroys and Government Houses* (London: Cassell & Co., 1925)



Plate 10 – The Retreat, Mashobra
 Photographer Unknown
 OIOC Earl of Elgin Collection Photo 15/1 (55)

The lack of permanence surrounding viceregal life is suggested in the third form of headed writing paper, 'Viceroy's Camp, India', an address that is not grounded in a material location. This address ensured that post would reach its recipient wherever the Viceroy was staying throughout India and was used while the Viceroy was 'on tour'.

British women in India sought to make their residences 'home-like', with a mobile packing case containing items that could be strewn around impersonal lodgings. The Viceroy and Vicereine were no exception. Mary and George were expected to provide Government House with plate and glassware, and their own stable and carriages. Whilst much was purchased from the outgoing Viceroy, setting up in India was a vast expense for the newly appointed Viceroy; and despite an outfit allowance, they had to finance much of their arrangements themselves.

However, apart from this initial investment the task of creating a domestic space was not within the daily remit of the Vicereine. As Mary noted to her parents the household management was undertaken by the House Steward, Hillier, aided in administration by the Viceroy's staff - the ADCs:

all the machinery of life is wonderfully smooth and perfect and the immense number of servants see [to] the house all under the head English steward named Hillier who came out with Lord Lansdowne, he literally does everything. He is steward, butler and housekeeper and an invaluable man.¹²

¹² LCP 10/21-24 February 9 1899 Mary to Family

Although Mary's practical assistance was not required, her active interest in the running and organization of the house was recorded in an early diary entry. This is the only reference to the management of house recorded in her letters; either the routine of the exercise was not felt to be of interest to her family, or perhaps Mary did not continue to help in household affairs after the first few weeks. This reference also shows that Mary was aware of the illusion of a home that was created for guests who enjoyed the Viceroy's hospitality. Preparing for the first official state visit of a foreign dignitary, Mary helped with the arrangements:

I was busy the whole morning arranging entertainments for the week with Colonel Sandbach [Military Secretary], the various menus with Captain Marker [Viceroy's Aide-de-Camp hereafter ADC], the invitations with Captain Baker-Carr [ADC] and the house arrangements with Captain Adam [ADC]. After lunch I made a hour tour with Colonel Sandbach, and Captain Adam, Hillier [Housekeeper] and the house Baboo [Indian Clerk], and settled the rooms and comforts (which are scarce in many rooms for the Count of Turin and his suite and the Lonsdales) and one room was robbed of all its belongings to better furnish another. The system of carting things from one part of the house to another seems dreadful, but it is an Indian Custom, and as this gigantic house is only half furnished, the furniture, ornaments and photos from the one smart drawing room are removed and put about in empty halls and reception rooms whenever there is an entertainment¹³

The idea of an incorporated house is most clearly illustrated here: the management of the daily entertaining whether houseguest, a weekly dinner, or State Ball took a full time staff to co-ordinate. While present, Mary actively made important decisions herself, yet when she was away from the official residence the household staff continued to organise this aspect of household management, revealing that Mary's involvement was dispensable.

¹³ LCP 43/28 February 6 1899 Tour Journal addressed to parents

Mary was very vocal concerning her thoughts about the interior decoration and layout of the viceregal residences. Her first letter from India to her parents regarding Government House revealed that her ‘bed room is so big you can just see from one end to the other!’¹⁴, yet by the next week the practical considerations of accessibility to the nursery had taken precedence:

I never knew a more inconvenient house than this and the distances are perfectly awful, you know the plan so you can imagine the distance between my room in one wing and the children’s at the other end of the square – to get to them I have to go along my corridor through an immense drawing room – across a ball room of several acres through another huge drawing room – down another corridor eventually to their nursery.¹⁵

On another occasion Mary described the distance between the children’s ‘immense rooms’ as being ‘about half a mile from me’.¹⁶ Although in keeping with aristocratic child-rearing practice at the time for the nursery to be separated from the main house, Mary emphasizes the distance as being problematic. That Mary draws attention to the spatial distance she is faced with to see her children hints at the ‘unhomely’ environment separating the nursery from parents by way of the ‘official’ State rooms of Government House. Her trek from her own bedroom through the formal drawing rooms to the nursery indicates that the organisation of domestic life took place within and among the formal spaces of empire, signified through the State Rooms.

¹⁴ LCP 9/1-3 January 4 1899 Mary to Family

¹⁵ LCP 9/6-14 January 17 1899 Mary to Family

¹⁶ LCP 43/6 January 12 1899 Tour Journal addressed to parents

Mary found similar conditions in Simla. Such was her concern for an accessible nursery that she planned to make a small stairway to reach the children's nursery, rather than its only access 'miles away' via the 'big stairs'. As Mary explained to George 'I hate being out of reach.'¹⁷ Yet while Mary wanted to be able to supervise the nursery, she was also anxious to ensure that the children and the servants did not disturb George. A letter illustrates the practical considerations of combining a family home with the government residence; and reveals Mary's prioritization of her husband's work:

One thing I shall have down before you come & that is a thick thick carpet down in night nursery which is over your work room but I have avoided stairs by giving the children the room over my sitting room - this will spare you most of the noise and the rest will be deadened by a thick carpet wh.[which] the room now lacks. The floors are so thin that the people overhead seem to be coming through. Edith the maid had been put over your bedroom but this I quickly defeated & she has been put over my bathroom.¹⁸

Mary's sense of control over the allocation of rooms reveals her prioritization of George and her concerns for her children. While the domestic and the empire were negotiated within the home through the continuous traversing of imperial state rooms to bedrooms and the nursery, the decoration of these rooms, particularly those of Viceregal Lodge, were a key consideration for Mary.

Mary's first impressions of Viceregal Lodge were not favourable. After a three day journey the first view was 'most disappointing as you see an ugly side of course'. Mary drew of the familiar by compared it to the type of house a rich

¹⁷ LCP 15/4-11 March 6 1899 Mary to George

¹⁸ LCP 15/13-18 March 6 1899 Mary to George

American would build, but the element that she most disliked was the interior decoration, unchanged since the Dufferin's had decorated the Viceroy's Lodge during the late 1880s. On her first night in Simla Mary wrote to George:

The inside is nothing fine, but nice and oh! Lincrusta you will turn us grey! It looks at you with pomegranate and pineapple eyes from every wall!¹⁹

The embossed wallpaper that seemed to have been hung on every wall was further remarked upon in the following day's letter to George:

Angel: I have made the grand tour and seen everything. First all over the house. The vulgarity of the decoration of the drawing room is beyond belief - a suety brown yellow on the walls with lincrusta freeze, the ceiling, besides lincrusta panels and dark brown [illeg.] chair covers. I could have cried from despair over such needless hideousness all the fault of those tasteless Dufferins and yet we must not complain of it as Viceregal [Lodge] to Simla is a temple of beauty & the vile furnishings seem sacred. Brown is the prevailing colour think of choosing brown when the world contained such noble colours as crimson, green & blue...your work room and bed room and dining room are dusky failure in reddish brown!²⁰

Mary proposed redecoration but realised that she would be working within and official budgetary allowance. George's response was to 'charge it to another year' and asked Mary to 'Make up your mind as to colour and we will see about it when I come'.²¹

In fact two years elapsed before the viceregal residences were redecorated. During the summer of 1901, Mary returned to Europe for four months. Letters exchanged between Mary and George during the early summer of 1901 indicate

¹⁹ LCP 15/4-11 March 6 1899 Mary to George

²⁰ LCP 15/13-18 March 7 1899 Mary to George

the extensive redecoration that they had planned, both in Government House, Viceroy's Lodge and at Barrackpore. Owing to death of Queen Victoria, the period of mourning prevented large official entertaining during the summer at Simla, enabling the redecoration of the state ball and drawing room. The 'pineapple and pomegranate eye wallpaper' was striped off and replaced with coloured silk which George and Mary had decided upon together. The decoration for Barrackpore and more importantly the state rooms at Government House were however to be organized by Mary from London.

While Mary was at 'home' in England and visiting the continent she effectively made her material home in India, purchasing furniture, materials and china for the viceregal residences. The spatial displacement of making home in India could only be achieved by coming 'home' to the imperial metropolis. It is clear that Mary and George discussed the plans for the redecoration, and Major Baring gave Mary what she initially regarded as a strict financial budget for the redecoration work. Following extensive letters between George, Mary and Major Baring the budget was vastly extended reflecting the grandiose manner that characterized the Curzon's life in India.

George recorded the progress of the redecoration in letters to Mary throughout May 1901 and on the first public occasions recorded the impression it made

Tonight it is the Investiture which I am holding to give Jeypore [Maharaja of Jaipur] the GCIE and Charlie [Sir Charles Rivaz, Member of Viceroy's Council] the KCSI. It will also be the opening of the new yellow ball room. You can hardly imagine how beautiful it all is: everything absolutely right, the crimson lining to the chenille curtains and to the big velvet curtain leading

²¹ LCP 20/13-14 March 10 1899 George to Mary

to the drawing room, being a perfect contrast to the yellow silk.
The performance will be conducted in great state and style.²²

The most important redecoration occurred within the State Rooms, which George noted would enhance the ceremonial aspects of the occasion. Mary returned to England armed with a long list of requirements for the State Rooms at Government House. The incorporated home was one which was designed, particularly once Mary had chosen furniture in Europe, as an imposing space which symbolised the imperial power of the British Raj in a traditional European, as opposed to an 'Indian', style. Once decorated this space reflects one of the many flows between the imperial metropolis and the empire.

However a revealing letter written to George after he had departed from Simla in November 1901 leaving Mary behind, indicates that the space of home was only stable when the Viceroy was in residence:

From the moment your back is turned the order of everything at Viceregal Lodge is reversed - Rugs up, pictures turn their faces to the wall, lawns ploughed up - every mortal thing is packed, wild "mistrus" hammer everywhere, distraught Malis plant pansies in unnecessary places and an indescribable pandemonium reigns supreme! It is "dusturs" for the order of life to change when the Burra Lat Sahib turns his face away.²³

The 'home' in India was truly an incorporated one, a transient space that became homely only on the arrival of the Viceroy, and was packed up when he left, irrespective of the family members remaining behind.

²² LCP 21/85-92 June 5 1901 George to Mary

²³ LCP 16/181-186 November 15 1901 Mary to George

Whilst residences were designated centres of imperial government the weekend retreats were intended as private spaces for relaxation. Barrackpore was described in familiar terms to Mary's parents after her first visit:

Sunday evening we all went up the river on the launch to Barrackpore - it took us 1 ½ hours and we landed at a little pier and walked a long way under a bamboo arbour up to the house which is very like an English country house and the park, which alas! is open to the public who pour into it and destroy all privacy, is lovely - Lord Canning made a rolling country out of a flat plain and planted perfectly splendid trees so that with a stretch of the imagination we could imagine ourselves in an English Park afflicted by drought as the grass is all brown.²⁴

This 'English park' was visited each weekend when resident in Calcutta, and offered a space for the family to relax. Mary described this in a letter to her parents written at the end of her first month in India:

Everything looked lovely and fresh this morning after the rain and the air is delicious. We sat under trees and read and wrote – real dolce-far-riente existence which is [as] grateful to its over-tired people as water to a thirsty man. George gets quiet hours for work and I get plenty of time for the children, who are flourishing.²⁵

Yet Barrackpore was not a complete escape from duty, as informal entertainment of guests occurred during the weekends. While Barrackpore was a more informal incorporated home than either Government House or the Viceroy's Lodge, it remained within this category. It would appear that 'The Retreat' at Mashobra offered the only real escape from the incorporated home. Mary described the release that Mashobra provided in a letter to her family: 'We have come out here again to spend Sunday in the delicious peace and quiet of these mountains.'²⁶

²⁴ LCP 9/6-14 January 17 1899 Mary to Father

²⁵ LCP 43/16 January 29 1899 Tour Journal addressed to family

²⁶ LCP 9/43-45 May 20 1899 Mary to Family

Plate 11 from Mary's family photograph album was taken at Mashobra and shows Mary with ADCs relaxing in the garden of 'The Retreat'. The composition of this image suggests the private nature of Mashobra, protected by vegetation. The photographic record suggests that the various 'retreats' were the only places where the viceregal guard was lowered. The few informal, family images of Mary and the children are mainly taken at Mashobra or Naldera. (See Plate 12 and 13).

Mashobra was perhaps the most important retreat for Mary. Its small scale offered the release from the symbolic imperial spaces, which the classical architecture of Barrackpore did not. Yet George continued to administer the empire from this space: he discussed army reorganisation with Kitchener in the garden and debated home events read about in the newspaper. Indeed, it was perhaps the domestic setting away from the study or council room that enabled Mary to take her active part in discussing politics with these men. These were simultaneously domestic and imperial spaces, the boundary between then unfixed, enabling Mary to move with ease into the political sphere. Even when camping at Naldera, the fusion between empire and home remained powerful with George working in his study tent.

III The Viceregal Contact Zone

Government House and Viceroy's Lodge represented the heart of the empire in India. Within these homes the Indian Princes came to be invested with their Imperial Honours, to pay homage to the Viceroy, the representative of the Imperial Empress Queen Victoria and later the Imperial Emperor Edward VII. On



Plate 11 – 'The retreat at Mashobra'
Photographer Unknown
OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/75 (41)



Plate 12 – Mary and Cynthia
 Photographer Unknown
 OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/70 (84)



Plate 13 – Irene and Cynthia playing with puppies at Naldera Camp
 Photographer Unknown
 OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/70 (73)

the night of the State Ball 1899, an occasion where Maharajas mingled with Europeans, Mary noted:

The night of the State party I was amused to see Daisy's [Mary's sister] photo on a small table in the Marble Hall which was packed with Natives. This home-like photo sitting in that great hall looked very odd.²⁷

The photographs had been placed in the room for the occasion – to give a homely touch to the imperial display – a sharp reminder of the interweaving of the imperial and the domestic. This incident illustrates that Government House was at different scales a pivotal 'contact zone'. As Mary Louise Pratt notes, the contact zone is formed at the point of interaction between the colonized and the colonizers. It exposes the interrelationship between the subjects usually formed within a structure of power based on subordination of one over the other.²⁸

At one scale, when the Maharajas converged Government House became the high imperial contact zone. Mary's comment reveals that it seemed incongruous that a homely photograph should appear within this zone implicitly suggesting that the domestic was interfering in an imperial space or that her 'white' sister was out of place within the 'Marble Hall which was packed with Natives'.²⁹

Yet even within the high imperial contact zone, there is a complexity that underlines the importance of seeing the zone as an interactive space. While Mary found the Maharajas' within the home unsettling, she was not consistent in her

²⁷ LCP 43/28 February 6 1899 Tour Journal

²⁸ Pratt, M.L., *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London: Routledge 1992) pp.6-7

²⁹ LCP 43/28, February 6 1899, Tour Journal

approach to elite Indians. For example in 1902 Mary described her friendship with the Maharani Scindia:

The little Maharani Scindia is staying at the [illeg.] while her husband is at the Coronation in London and I am looking after her, she is a little creature and very sweet and pretty. She is his only wife.³⁰

Although they may have shared an equal class status her language indicates the pervasive influence of racial coding. The Maharani is described as a creature, in need of protection. That she is Scindia's only wife is highlighted, establishing her acceptability to a Christian audience. Yet Mary actively sought the Maharani's company and during 1903 Mary wrote to George asking if it would be appropriate for her to invite the Maharaja, but more importantly the Maharani, to Simla on a personal visit. George replied:

There is not the slightest objection to our asking Scindia to Simla and I will do so. It is known that she is a friend of yours and that a change is good for her health.³¹

In this letter, Mary's friendship with the Maharani places her as an equal. But the appeal to George for permission indicates the fragile nature of such equality, particularly when considered in relationship to the Indian Princes within the British Raj.

The elite contact zone of imperial domination and Indian subordination suggested by Mary's comments was replicated at a domestic level. Despite hundreds of Indian staff, her letters and diaries rarely betray an India presence. Mary reveals the domestic arrangements only in her first three letters to her parents. After this

³⁰ LCP 11/109 June 5 1902 Mary to Parents

³¹ LCP 25/3-14 April 13 1903 George to Mary

Mary erases the Indian staff from her record, until extreme events intrude into her life that are recorded for her family (see below). In her only account of her 'daily habits' does Mary give an indication of the extent of daily interaction she would have had with Indian servants:

We are getting more used to India customs and peculiarities...Everyone has a quantity of attendants and each of these has his special occupation and his caste only permits [illeg.] to do that one. One [illeg.] heats your bath water, and then brings it & a 3rd pours it into the tub & a 4th empties it and him being low caste does the objectionable things which [illeg.] necessitates. Quite a different [illeg.] wait on you at breakfast and there is a waiter for every person at table - the service [illeg.] is admirably done - and they all glide about in red livery and bare feet and a dinner of 100 - or one of 8 are equally well done ...George & I each have a high caste attendant who sits outside our doors & attends us wherever we go - my swells name is [Maudax] and wherever we drive out he sits up with [illeg.] behind the great barouche [and] behind them stands a satis. So there are always 4 people behind us in the carriages - 2 postillions in front, two outsiders, 8 body guards and 1 officer & a policeman so it takes 18 people besides the ADCs in the carriage to take a Vice Royal out.³²

Such an account reveals that Mary would have had close encounters with domestic servants throughout her day.

Indian servants dwelt intimately within the British home in India yet the contact zone brought with it the threat of sexual danger. The insurrection of Indian servants during the Indian 'Mutiny' or First War of Independence created a resilient image of white women vulnerable to attack by Indian men and therefore in need of protection.³³ Protection came from correct management of servants, maintaining the racial hierarchical divide, but could also come from more

³² LCP 10/21-24 February 9 1899 Mary to Family

traditional ideas of male protection. While household guides advised memsahibs how to manage their servants acting out imperial dominance within the home, servants within the viceregal sphere were under the controlling eye of the housekeeper. Mary was 'protected' from the Indian servants within her room, by her English maid, Miss Garland, and she sought the protection of the Viceroy's Aide-de Camp (ADC) in other situations. This is illustrated in a letter she wrote to George:

Today at 5.30 I shall have my first lesson in Hindustany the Munishe [teacher] is Amir Buck (the native doctors brother in law & in the public works department). Mr Meade had a lesson with me as I don't like being alone with the Muslim.³⁴

While day to day interactions, were erased from Mary's record, exceptional occurrences forced her to dwell on them:

Now we have had an awful tragedy in this house - The children's ayah's husband was murdered last night! He was asleep in his bed in the servants quarters when a man who is supposed to be a friend of his wife's blew off his head with a gun - he shot off the gun 6 inches from the mans head. The murderer will have to be hanged - This is a nice [illeg.] isn't it! Native Servants are worse than Europeans I really do think.³⁵

The surprise of such an event happening within the servants' quarters, not far from the home, shocked Mary and this occasion was used as an occasion to reinforce a stereotype of the unreliable Indian servant. Yet the second intrusion of an Indian servant into Mary's letters portrays a different image:

I woke with a bad head and an ulcerated throat and I have been in bed in this heat now for 5 days....Daisy gave my ayah a little present when she went away and the result of it was that she

³³ Blunt, (1999) p.430; see also Sharpe, J., *Allegories of Empire* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993); Stoler, A.L. *Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault's 'History of Sexuality' and the Colonial Order of Things* (Durham NC: Duke University Press, 1995)

³⁴ LCP 15/28-29 March 10 1899 Mary to George

³⁵ LCP 10/66-71 October 3 1900 Mary to Mother

never left me when I was ill took all the care of me, gave me my food, gargles, poultices & medicines, changed my clothes and Christie [maid] I only saw twice in 5 days. When she stumbled in [she] asked if “I wished anything”.³⁶

Here the female Indian servant is judged against the English maid, Christie. Her compassion, care and tenderness for Mary during her illness is shown in sharp contrast to Christie’s disregard. It seems here, though that Mary is pointing out the impropriety that she should be at the mercy of her native servant, having been abandoned by her English maid. While Mary address her maid as Christie, she does not give a personal name to the ayah, and also suggests that the Indian maid’s observance was only the result of Daisy’s attention to her.

The contact zone between Indian servants, European servants and Mary illustrate the boundaries of race, class and gender within the household. A second zone of contact, which involved the negotiation of gender relations within the viceregal household, was that of Mary’s relationship with the Viceroy’s Aide-de-Camps.

Throughout the six years spent in India Mary’s closet daily circle consisted of the household staff. At any one time this would consist of anything up to eight official ADCs, in addition to the household surgeon, Military Secretary and Private and Assistant Private Secretary. There were, in addition, unofficial ‘extra’ ADCs which George and Mary appointed. While there were also up to three ‘Native Aides de Camp’, these men did not become part of the intimate circle of the household, otherwise known during Mary’s time as the ‘family’, a circle which ate, relaxed, and worked together. While the viceregal staff consisted of

³⁶ LCP 12/39-43 March 11 1903 Mary to Mother and Daisy (sister)

both British and Indian members, only the British were admitted into the 'family'. By exploring the concept of the 'family' in the context of the viceregal household, it is possible to expand the examination of the idea of Mary's home. As has been seen, Mary had little stability within her multiple material homes in India, yet by exploring the concept of the 'family' we might begin to see if Mary felt 'at home' in India through the continuing presence of members of the viceregal household.

The make up of household staff was by no means stable. Indeed in 1903 George had calculated that forty-one different staff members had occupied positions within the household since Mary and George moved to India.³⁷ Despite considerable movement there were also ADCs who had long and faithful service to the household: Capt. Baker-Carr; Capt. Wigram; Capt. Marker; Major Adam and Capt. the Earl of Suffolk.³⁸ These men were the cornerstones of 'the family'.

The ADCs were responsible for ensuring that viceregal life ran smoothly coordinating official functions and acting as royal courtiers presenting guests to the Viceroy and Vicereine.³⁹ In addition, ADCs would accompany Mary and George on their official visits. For example during the morning of Friday 27th January 1899 Colonel Fenn the household surgeon, and Suffolk accompanied Mary to visit hospitals and in the evening she was accompanied by ADC's to a

³⁷ LCP 24/114-117 April 9 1903 George to Mary

³⁸ Capt. (later Major) Baker-Carr (Robert George Teesdale); Capt. Wigram (Clive) later became 1st Baron Wigram following his appointment as Assistant Private Secretary and Equerry to the King 1910-31; Capt. Marker (Raymond John); Capt. (later Major) Adam (Frederick Lock); Capt. The Earl of Suffolk (Henry Molyneux Paget Howard). Suffolk married Mary's sister Daisy in 1904.

³⁹ LCP 43/6 January 12 1899 Tour Journal to parents



Plate 14 – Irene and her admirers
Photographer Unknown
OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/75 (29)

fancy dress ball.⁴⁰ When Mary exercised her horses or travelled independently of George, she was always accompanied by at least one ADC. While some middle class women found that living in the colonial environment liberated them from the restrictions of domestic space within Britain, Mary was always protected within India by the ADCs.

While the ADCs played an important official role, the close-knit household structure gave rise to the term ‘the family’ was strengthened through the unofficial time spent together. The ADCs went beyond their official duties becoming valued companions to Mary and George. Naturally the ADC’s would have spent greater time in Mary’s company accompanying her on official visits when George was otherwise engaged. She also spent much leisure time with ‘the family’. Typical activities would include croquet, riding, looking for star constellations and playing with Irene and Cynthia.

Indeed the ADCs’ relationships with the children indicates most clearly the idea of an extended household ‘family’: Mary wrote to her mother that ‘Irene is adored by the staff: they all go and see her and make a great fuss of her.’⁴¹ Plate 14 taken from Mary’s private photograph is captioned ‘Irene with her admirers [ADCs]’. The ADCs played with the children as is shown in a description of a weekend at Mashobra:

We have come out here [Mashobra] again to spend Sunday in the delicious peace and quiet of these mountains – we sat under trees all morning – Irene digging and making a garden, Capt. Wigram dug it and outlined it with stones while Irene planted trees and flowers in it and Capt. Adam, Capt. Marker and Capt. Carr cut

⁴⁰ LCP 43/14 January 27 1899 Tour Journal to parents

⁴¹ LCP 43/6 January 12 1899 Mary to Parents

out paper animals which we stood up in long lines on the road to the Ark which was seated on [Mr Ararat?]. It was a great success and Irene perfectly delighted.⁴²

Such images are typical of Mary's letters indicating that the household enjoyed playing together, creating amusements for the children and actively creating an informal family atmosphere. Mary often recorded observations that her children made to various ADCs for her parents, which reflect the informality of exchange between the real and extended viceregal family.

Mary's first indication of the reliance she would have on the ADCs came on her first trip to Simla in 1899 when she was accompanied by Col. Fenn, Capt. Meade, and Capt. Adams. Writing to George she described joining the 'brilliant members of my suite' for lunch, who then accompanied her for a ride, walk or croquet in the afternoon.⁴³ Mary highlighted the importance of the company of the ADCs to George, writing: 'I still have 18 days to exist through without you but I keep busy and read till I get tired of sitting and then go out with my faithful slaves.'⁴⁴ Her use of the words 'suite' and 'slaves' point, ironically, to the relationship of power that Mary felt she has over the household. That Mary was happy to spend her leisure time with the ADCs indicates that she was comfortable in their company. It must be remembered that Mary was used to enjoying the social companionship of men other than those in her family circle. Having been part of the Souls she had become accustomed to platonic male companionship and accepted the ADCs as part of her new circle. Yet it must have been a large change for Mary, learning how to deal with household members

⁴² LCP 9/43-45 May 20 1899 Mary to Parents

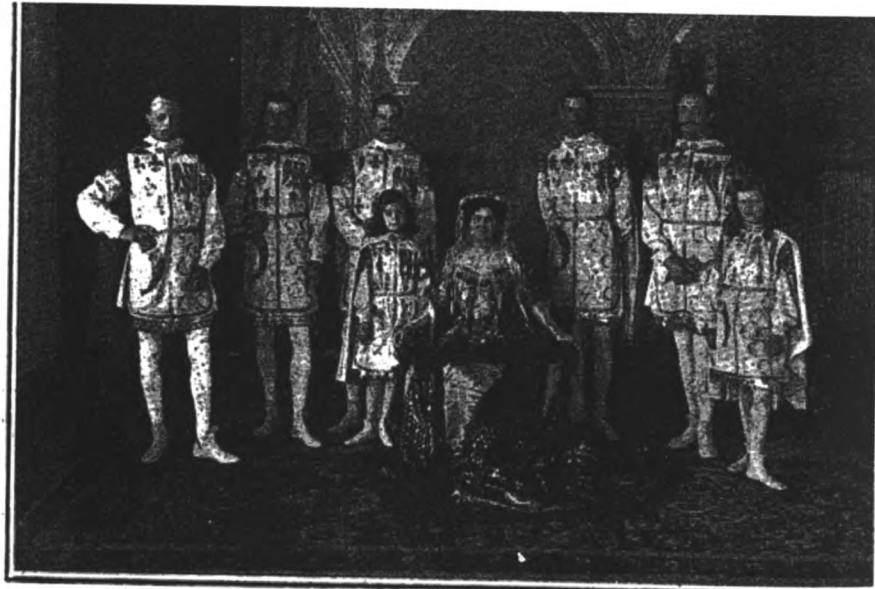
⁴³ LCP 15/24-27 March 18 1899 Mary to George

⁴⁴ LCP 15/24-27 March 18 1899 Mary to George



THE VICEREGAL HALL AT SIMLA: LADY CURZON AS BERENGARIA, WITH HER DAUGHTERS, THE HON. IRENE AND THE HON. CYNTHIA CURZON, AS PAGES.

Plate 15 – Belangrania with pages, Irene and Cynthia
 Feakins c. 1905
 Published in unknown newspaper



LADY CURZON AS BERENGARIA, WITH HER PAGES AND ATTENDANTS.

Plate 16 – Belangrania with her 'court'
 Feakins c. 1905
 Published in unknown newspaper

The symbolism of Mary holding 'court' within the household continued throughout her time in India. Her choice of costume for her appearance at the final fancy dress ball which she hosted alone at Viceregal Lodge on October 5th 1905, shortly before she left India reveals the enduring strength of her own image as a Queen with the ADCs as courtly attendants. (Plate 15) The image shows Mary dressed as Berengaria of Navarre, wife of Richard the Lionheart, with Irene and Cynthia as her pages, and the ADCs as her attendants. (Plate 16) George's absence from the image is symbolic of the extensive time that Mary spent apart from him. Whether this was a comparison that Mary had drawn in her own mind with Berengaria is not revealed in her letters. It is probable that had George not been absent through sickness he would have assumed the role of Richard the Lionheart. Mary's position within the household is highlighted most strikingly in light of his absence.

Mary relied on the ADCs to look after George when he was on tour without her. A letter sent to Mary by Capt. Wigram, known affectionately as 'Wiggah', indicates that he sent a daily telegram informing her that the Viceroy was safe during a tour of the areas afflicted by the plague around Bombay:

Thank you so much for your letter just received. I will send a daily telegram from tomorrow. H.E. [His Excellency the Viceroy] is very well and I really don't think I have ever seen him look better and he stands his days work simply wonderfully...I don't think any of us have got the plague yet, I don't think you need be anxious about H.E.. Mr Lawrence and I are taking the greatest care of him and he always wears a "topi" when he goes out.⁴⁵

⁴⁵ LCP 39/9-12 November 1 1899 Capt. Wigram to Mary



Plate 17 – Double exposure of Mary with members of the family’
Unknown Photographer c. August 1902 [?]
OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/70 (91)

A letter from Wigram to Mary written whilst she was recovering from a serious illness in England some five years later reveals the important role that the ADCs had in giving the Viceroy their companionship and moral support:

We are all trying to cheer The Viceroy up and get him to play billiards, croquet etc. and not leave him alone, as we quite realise how very lonely he must feel without you.⁴⁶

Wigram was perhaps the favourite ADC of both Mary and George. When Wigram had to rejoin his regiment in 1904 George wrote to Mary of his leaving:

Just now I bade an almost tearful adieu to dear old Wiggah who leaves for good tomorrow morning...It is a great breaking up. I told how dearly we both loved him and what a loyal and splendid and devoted fellow he had been. I think too that he has been fond of us and his eye lids flickered with emotion.⁴⁷

Wigram's parting letter to Mary revealed his sadness at leaving the family.⁴⁸

Photographs give an insight into the relaxed nature of household relations. As is so often the case, the informal photographs, probably taken by another member of the household, reveal a familiarity which official photographs of the Viceregal household hide. Plate 17 from Mary's family photograph album is unusual. The negative has been exposed with two slightly different images - something possible with a roll film used in the Kodak camera introduced in the 1880s which Mary used for her own photographs. Mary can be seen twice, leaning out of a window, with two slightly different sets of ADCs standing underneath the window. While positioned powerfully above her 'faithful slaves', her pose, and smile belies any suggestion of aloofness.

⁴⁶ LCP 32/249-250 December 18 1904 Major Wigram to Mary

⁴⁷ LCP 27/120-129 April 13 1904 George to Mary



Plate 18 – Playing golf on the [course](#) at Gulmarg, [Kashmir](#)
 Unknown Photographer
 OIOC Curzon Collection Photo [430/70](#) (90)



Plate 19 – Mary and Captain [Baker-Carr](#)
 Photographer Unknown
 OIOC Curzon Collection Photo [430/70](#) (97)

A second image shows Mary on the golf course at Gulmarg in Kashmir 1902. (Plate 18) Eve Pelly, a friend from England, and a group of ADCs, accompanied Mary. Again, the angle of her body, leaning towards the ADC who is looking directly at her, suggests the relaxed nature of the viceregal household.

A third image, again from an informal photograph album illustrates Mary and Captain Baker Carr Seated on a Verandah (Plate 19). This posed image shows Mary smiling, her arm supporting her chin, Baker-Carr mirroring her pose, also supporting his chin, their feet close together revealing a sense of companionship.

These photographs imply that the social distance between Mary and her 'suite' was minimised. It is significant that while she was in an elite position as vicereign, she shared a similar class position to the men in the household.⁴⁹ Yet Mary was very aware of the correct social behaviour within her 'court'. When Mary's sisters were to visit, she reassured her parents that she would be taking care of them. She wrote to her Father on February 13th 1899:

I think there is no one on our staff who will be a matrimonial danger and I won't allow any flirtations as here I am known as a Queen of Sermgapatam and can't have any flirtation in my court!⁵⁰

Even George was aware of the difficulties that introducing Mary's sisters into the household could cause:

⁴⁸ LCP 32/247-248 April 13 1904 Major Wigram to Mary

⁴⁹ It is noticeable that there are no photographs within the Curzon Collection of Mary and domestic household staff such as her maid/ A photograph of an ADC alongside the French wet nurse that Mary took to India to nurse Cynthia is the only image of the wider household.

Sorry to hear that Daisy is not looking her best: or perhaps it is as well, otherwise all the ADCs would fall in love with her. I expect the impecunious but ardent Suffolk will fall a prey. [pencil written note by Curzon afterwards: 'nearly 6 years later he did!']⁵¹

Nevertheless, despite consciousness that the social setting of the household could produce undesirable consequences, Nancy and Daisy's extended visit clearly added to the household's sociability. Something of the relaxed nature of the household banter can be gleaned from a letter Mary wrote to her mother on April 12th 1899:

Nannie is killing and keeps us all laughing – she calls all the Captains Majors and Captains Colonels and mixes up their names to our great delight. The doctors name is Col. Fenn & the Military Secretary Colonel Sandbach and she calls them both Major Fennbag. One of the ADCs had a pair of very short breeches for riding yesterday and she asked if he had grown out of his pants!⁵²

However the ribald spirits of this letter had to be dampened. A letter Mary wrote to her parents two weeks later indicates that Mary has had to chasten her sisters: 'They are now as anxious as I am to keep up the dignity of the position. I told them we were the first Americans they had ever seen out here and we would just show them how nice and quiet Americans could be'.⁵³ Although Mary's sister Daisy did eventually marry Lord Suffolk in 1904, Captain Marker became most friendly with her during her stay. Despite no intentions being made clear, he undoubtedly felt proprietorial, and when Daisy visited India in 1903 for the Delhi Durbar, his feelings strengthened. Mary enjoyed the sense of familiarity that she could enjoy with Marker as a result of his close interest in her sister, and sought

⁵⁰ LCP 9/17-19 February 13 1899 Mary to Father

⁵¹ LCP 20/57-62 March 31 1899 George to Mary

⁵² LCP 9/32-34 April 12 1899 Mary to Parents

⁵³ LCP 9/36-37 May 3 1899 Mary to Parents

his companionship in the Spring of 1903 when she was homesick for her own family:

Capt. Marker came to see me yesterday - I sent for him I was so lonely - he came about 6 just as the children appeared and Irene did nothing but hug him and clasp him in her arms. I was amazed and amused as I never saw Irene "taken so"...he likes me as a sort of sister and is quite happy when he can come and be near.⁵⁴

While Mary was clearly aware of the importance in maintaining correct social distance between genders, the differences in the acceptable relations between the Vicereine and the ADCs had a spatial dimension in Mary's mind. When writing in India Mary did not touch on the ADCs as a source of intimate personal anxiety. However when Mary went 'home' to England in 1901, she re-assessed her relationship with the household. Mary was preoccupied throughout the time she was in England concerned the arrangements that would be made for her return to India and also those which would enable her to join the viceregal tour in Burma which was to take place soon after her return. During the six months in England Mary voiced much anxiety to George concerning the ADCs who would attend her.

Mary's first source of anxiety was Ian Malcolm, a backbench MP who had worked with George at the Foreign Office who was to join the household as a temporary extra ADC. On May 26 Mary wrote to George: 'Ian tells me you have asked him to Burma. I think he will be a great trial myself and I don't wish him to come out with me as I don't like young male attendants.'⁵⁵ Two months later in July Mary followed this statement with a line in reply to George's reassurance

⁵⁴ LCP 12/39-43 March 11 1903 Mary to Mother and Daisy (sister): Marker's disappointment in Daisy's rejection of his suit is thought to be the reason for his involvement against Curzon in the Kitchener conspiracy. See Gilmour, D., *Curzon* (London: Papermac, 1994) p.279

⁵⁵ LCP 15/167-174 May 26 1901 Mary to George

that Ian would not be accompanying: 'So glad Ian is going to Mandalay. I feared he might be coming with me to Simla'.⁵⁶

Having been reassured that Malcom would not be her personal ADC, Mary's anxiety of male attendants shifted to one of the established ADCs, Baker-Carr. Mary had clearly communicated some qualms to George about returning to India in Baker-Carr's company. The letter she wrote does not exist, however one from George wrote to Mary exposes her anxieties:

I do not see the slightest objection to your returning with B-Carr or rather him with you. He will be useful to you in train and on steamer and is too tactful to bore you. There is one difference between going home with an ADC in attendance and coming out with one. In the former case you are out on a spree. In the latter you are returning to duty and the official attendant seems all right. I should certainly bring him out with you if he is desirous and willing to come.⁵⁷

It is important to note that George considered Mary coming to England as a 'spree' rather than duty. There is no doubt that while Mary was in England her imperial subjectivity as 'vicereine' became more strongly developed, particularly through her participation in the political sphere. Returning to India with Baker-Carr clearly worried Mary, but George's division between duty and pleasure indicates that he was reassured by the official nature of the relationship. However despite gaining George's approval for travelling out to India with Baker-Carr, Mary's anxieties were not abated. In September Mary's worries shifted to the likelihood of her being accompanied to Burma by Baker-Carr. Writing to George in September Mary revealed the real source of her concerns:

⁵⁶ LCP 16/1-2 July 3 1901 Mary to George

⁵⁷ LCP 22/14-21 July 8 1901 George to Mary

I do not like coming to Burma with B-Carr at all. I can't bear any talk starting and everyone I have heard speak of Bill Beresford, has mentioned his affair with Lady Lansdown and therefore I don't want B-Carr to conduct me on all my touring and hope when I go to Burma Streatfield or someone else may come too. The poor creature is quite innocent but the light that beats on our doings is very fierce and he comes out from home with me and his leave has kept him in England this summer and that is quite enough, so keep this in your mind.⁵⁸

In explicitly spelling out her concerns to George Mary shows acute awareness of the way in which a relationship between an ADC and a Vicereine may be read at 'home'. The coincidence of her coming to England at the same time as Baker-Carr was, in Mary's eyes, enough to cause a stir. Mary draws on the liaison between Lady Lansdown (a former Vicereine) and Bill Beresford (one of Lady Lansdown's ADCs) to show that she did not want to be the source of such gossip. George responded to her request with alacrity: 'Of course Portman will stay with you up here. I certainly would not leave you alone with B-Carr.'⁵⁹

The anxiety that Mary felt in England was perhaps related to her position in a society that was, at the time, sensitive to sexual misconduct. Edward VII's relationship with Mrs. Kepple was continuously in the public eye and a public divorce case during Mary's stay in England heightened her unease. Clearly the reference to Lady Lansdown triggered concern with Mary. However her letters also reveal sexual impropriety between members of the 'Souls' while she was at 'home'. George responded thus to Mary's revelations about their friends behavior:

⁵⁸ LCP 16/107-110 September 9 1901 Mary to George

⁵⁹ LCP 23/3-16 October [Undated] 1901 George to Mary

I was perfectly amazed at your report about H Asquith – bed-sides, a loose tongue & champagne....mid-night visits to virginal chambers were the last thing of which I dreamed of. As for HC [Harry Cust?] I do not believe his having resumed relations with V [Violet Cecil] because I do not myself believe that they had ever been interrupted. That man has gone far to ruin every woman with whom he has ever been brought into contact and it is he who has elevated the inherent duplicity in V to a fine art.⁶⁰

Coming home to England resulted in Mary's re-examination of her own situation to the extent that she sought to protect herself from potentially compromising situations.

It would appear that the space of 'home' was one in which the normality of the Viceregal household in India became alien and open to question. Yet when Mary returned to India she did not voice any more concerns surrounding her male attendants. Perhaps calling the household the 'family', with ADCs taking on nicknames such as 'Pussy Buller' or 'Father Adam' reduced any elements of sexual tension that might be present. By regarding the interpersonal relationships as ones that might be shared between siblings, the element of sexual anxiety was removed, allowing time to be spent alone without a hint of impropriety.⁶¹

IV Negotiating the idea of 'Home'

George and Mary's close emotional relationship meant that while she was near him she, in her own words, revived 'like a sunflower if Pappy [George] is near and droop like a crushed weed away from him'.⁶² The proximity of George created a space of mental security for Mary, and George's letters reveal that he too missed Mary enormously when she was absent. However, the rigorous work

⁶⁰ LCP 22/95-104 August 20 1901 George to Mary

⁶¹ Such names also perhaps reflect the public school atmosphere of the Viceregal household

⁶² LCP 17/90-91, December [Undated] 1903 Mary to George

schedule that George undertook in India and Mary's incompatibility with the heat caused her to retreat to the hills before the Government moved for the summer. Mary was thus often separated from George.

Although during these times they exchanged daily letters Mary relied more heavily on other forms of grounding. These included the maintenance of links with 'home' in Britain and also her family in America. Placing Mary within her friendship network, and looking at the letters she wrote to her family indicates that while in India she depended on this correspondence in many ways. Liz Stanley has been a key proponent of the importance of examining lives within their friendship networks. She argues that although biographers have always had knowledge about their subjects' friendship networks available, convention has denied this information to their readers, and this has contributed to the spotlight affect of conventional biography, by removing the subject from the interplay within their social mileaux.⁶³

On arrival in India Mary found herself in an alien environment and she reached to her correspondence for reassurance and security. Letters provided Mary with the comfort that those at home did not forget her and also provided her with much emotional support. The thirst for letters was intense, particularly when Mary's spirits drooped. Writing to her father having been in India for just over two months, Mary indicated her sense of isolation:

My precious darling papa: I received a beloved letter from you which has made me so happy, I feel such a long way off from everybody as we only have one post as week and then my letters are limited to yours and Mamma's as the world is a very busy

⁶³ Stanley (1992) p.214

place and only ones own think constantly of me and write faithfully, friends write once in 6 months! I am getting used to the new life.⁶⁴

It is unsurprising that Mary should initially feel ‘such a long way off from everybody’ in her new surroundings. But Mary’s dramatisation of her situation (‘friends write once in 6 months’) is suggestive of self-pity as she had only been in India for two weeks. There is no record of the letters that Mary may have written to her friends until March 1898. A letter that Mary received from Ettie Grenfell, written from her home at Taplow, Maidenhead the previous month indicates that Mary had not written to her friends since arriving in India:

It is impossible to tell you how much you have been in all our thoughts, and how we long for a little word of you yourselves, besides all the good tidings the newspapers are full of! It already seems a simple ages since you sailed away and my heart sinks to [illeg.] looking forward to such a kingdom of time before England holds you again.⁶⁵

Mary would have received this letter when she went to Simla at the beginning of March and it may have prompted her to write to her friends. With little else to occupy her time other than reading and exploring her new surroundings, Mary had time to catch up on her correspondence. Indeed we have evidence of two letters that she did write on March 14th, one to Queen Victoria, and the second to Jennie Churchill. Judging from the remnants of letters sent to Mary, it would appear that she received a number of responses that thanked her for her letter. Many are dated between 7th – 25th May, and make reference to having received a letter from Mary.⁶⁶ Allowing for delays in postage, it would be possible to

⁶⁴ LCP 9/6-14 January 17 1898 Mary to Mother

⁶⁵ LCP 33/19-21 February 21 1899 Ettie Grenfell to Mary

⁶⁶ See LCP 33/24-31 May 7 1899 Pamela Tennant to Mary; LCP 33/32-38 May 10 1899 Consuelo Marlborough to Mary; LCP 33/40-41 12 May 1899 Jennie Churchill to Mary; LCP

surmise with accuracy that Mary sent letters to many of her friends during her first arrival at Simla. Mary's letter to Jennie Churchill on March 14th exemplifies the type of letter that she wrote to her friends at this time:

What with Municipal bill and sugar bounties and Muscat, but, I shan't begin to bore you with shop but I have no NEWS to substitute in its place. So this won't count as a real letter, but will be just a bait for you which I am laying, so do oh! do write!...Jennie dearest how are you? and what are you doing? And are you well and happy and [busy] with the book? and are you full of interesting occupations? I long to know and don't feel as far away from 35a if I do. So bridge over the distance with all your precious news.⁶⁷

Jennie Churchill's response apologised for leaving her 'charming' letter unanswered and provided her with information about the journal 'The Anglo-Saxon' she was about to launch, towards which Mary had contributed a sponsorship and promoted in India amongst the Indian Princes. She finished her letter with a sympathetic request about Mary:

And you? You must have a [illeg.] of adulation and success. We all follow both your terrific progress and rejoice of course everything has its drawbacks, dance les Monde - otherwise it would Le Heaven - and [it] [must] be dreary to see none of your old friends - The Anglo Indian I am told is not an attractive creature.⁶⁸

A comparison may be drawn between this letter and one written to Mary by another close friend, Violet Cecil, who was living at Government House in Cape Town, South Africa in December 1899. Violet echoes Jennie Churchill's reflection about the inadequacies of the company that the 'Anglo-Indian women'

33/42-47 May 25 1899 Violet Cecil to Mary; LCP 33/49-53 June 16 1899 Lady Cranborne to Mary

⁶⁷ CHAR 28-66 22; March 14 1899 Mary to Jennie Churchill

⁶⁸ LCP 22/40-41 May 12 1899 Jennie Churchill to Mary

could provide, yet Violet Cecil is more open about her loneliness and isolation, and indicates that Mary has been openly critical about her life in India:

What do you really think of your life there? I can see what you think of Simla! Indeed from what I have heard, your enforced isolation there must be a blessing in disguise for I don't fancy there is anyone in India one wants to know intimately is there? There isn't here and the women who are not a bit vulgar or anything - I sometimes wish they were - are just deadly. Of course there are nice soldiers and those I suppose you have too, any amount of them... Oh my dearest Mary, when shall I see you or any of my friends again. It is no use being sad but I cannot help it. Fortunately there is a great deal to do here. What with refugees and wounded friends one's time is pretty full... Do write about your self and George I ache for news of you.⁶⁹

Work enabled Violet Cecil to stave off her loneliness, but it didn't stop her from writing such a plaintive letter to Mary. Indeed, this might have been one of the more reassuring letters that Mary received while she was away.

Letters that Mary received from friends offer a survey of the activities of elite women in Britain, playing their part in political life, supporting husbands and sons in their political careers, fighting elections, tending their homes and families, travelling and revealing the machinations of society. These letters often brought Mary's familiar world vividly to light and exacerbated Mary's feelings of isolation. Moreover she was temporally as well as spatially distanced from this world, all communication, unless it was of sufficient importance to be telegraphed was three weeks late. Letters brought reports of the Boer War, news of casualties and experiences of the war to Mary in India, her feelings of being cut off from the world were evident:

I could go on writing for hours but I hear the rush of London and you just going out and flying through this and looking for the end.

⁶⁹ LCP 33/61-64 December 20 1899 Violet Cecil to Mary

India feels the really imperturbable East to me which not even a Mafeking relief ruffles. I can't believe that thousands of miles away Piccadilly is [waking] and you are just tearing out to multitudinous engagements... Please write when you can and tell me all about my dear Jennie.⁷⁰

If Piccadilly seemed thousands of miles away to Mary in India, India seemed equally a long way off to Mary's friends in America, who, unlike those in England were unfamiliar with the idea of India. Mary's American friends, such as Henry Adams, were quick to express the idea of the spatial dislocation that they felt in relation to Mary.

In one of his first letters to Mary in India Adams explores his understanding of the importance of correspondence: 'Still, in the east, letters are something more than in London and Washington is a distant solar nebular from which one is curious to hear news'⁷¹. Later in the year, Mary received another letter from Adams that reflected speed with which it was possible to contact friends. The scenes described in her letter were so distinct from those that he found looking outside his own window that her world appeared unreal. Mary's descriptions presented something alien to anything Adams had encountered. However that the letter had only taken sixteen days to reach him forced a realisation that she was closer than thought:

Honestly you look to us here in this season of fog and smoke and darkness and in these cities of straight universality like a vision. You are unreal. Your letter mailed in the 9th falls on me here the 25th with a rapidity quite bewildering to make me realise that you are not in a neighboring solar system. Strange!⁷²

⁷⁰ CHAR 28/66/28-29 June 28 1900 Mary to Jennie Churchill

⁷¹ LCP 31/ 208-215 13 January 1899 Henry Adams to Mary

⁷² LCP 31/224-231 November 28 1899 Henry Adams to Mary

While Mary may have seemed remote to her American friends, she often felt acutely remote from her family in America.

Mary's feelings of homesickness are often expressed in letters to her parents. A typical example comes in a letter written to her Father while resting at Dalhousie mid-tour in September 1900, whom she imagines in Washington about to welcome her sisters' home:

I feel very far away from you all now...I think of you all together in Washington and how nice it is that you, Mama and the girls to unpack their things after all their wanderings.⁷³

The idea that her family was a stable entity in Mary's life was critical. Yet Mary's family were constantly travelling between Europe, America and beyond and the comforting image of her family together was, more often than not, a fiction. Mary was aware of the dispersed nature of her family, and warned against this in a letter to her father:

Such constant [illeg.] to Europe have so broken up home & it will be so good for you and Joe & the girls & Mamma to be united for a summer. We must not become a family of wandering and [footloose] Americans.⁷⁴

The fear that her family would be ill also worried Mary intensely. Many times when for some reason a letter from her parents missed the weekly post, Mary's letters would always contain a worried note asking if they were well. A letter to her father of June 22 1902 illustrates this particularly, noting the 'terrible distance between us' as being a source of great concern:

⁷³ LCP 10/62-65 September 28 1900 Mary to Father

⁷⁴ LCP 10/72-74 December 10 1900 Mary to Father

I have been sorely anxious about you as I have not had my weekly letter which I depend on so deeply for my peace of mind - I am always so nearly worrying about my darlings as I know you never tell me when any of you are ill - when Mamma was ill I worried myself half to death and when Joe was ill I saw it in the paper and I jumped to the fear that you were ill as soon as a post went by without a letter. I could not live without my weekly letter from you and mamma - for my love for you is the strongest current in my life out here and the terrible distance between us keeps anxiety very near my heart.⁷⁵

Mary's feelings of intense homesickness unsurprisingly arose in early June 1903.

George's five year term was to close at the end of that year, however owing to uncertainties as to the occurrence of a General Election and whether George would be asked to stay in India led Mary to consider staying for longer. This possibility resulted in an acute wave of homesickness and the desperate planning of a trip to see her Father as soon as she did return to England, which for a period of time was very uncertain:

Now there is a prospect of a General Election - so our staying on may not take place. Nothing will prevent my coming to see you and bringing the children and the only thing I cannot tell is the actual date ...We shall know by the middle of the summer. I am so homesick to see you. You are so much to me and I feel this is such a yearning to see you that it is like a pain as my heart... I am sure that no one in the world that more intense love for their own family than I. Your letters and Mammias are the greatest comfort in my life and it gives me peace of mind every week to read and re-read your dear letters and spend my few minutes with you.⁷⁶

Before Mary left for India she wrote to her Mother:

Just tell the dear girls once a month so they wont [illeg] [illeg.] never [illeg.] [illeg.] to marry away from home unless they find a George as it is always a [illeg.] to be an alien and 50 years in a

⁷⁵ LCP 11/130 June 22 1902 Mary to Father

⁷⁶ LCP 12/105-108 June 3 1903 Mary to Father

new country never alters your nationality and I shall never be an Englishwomen in feeling or character.⁷⁷

Mary had married away from 'home' as she phrased it, and in so doing experienced the transplantation of moving away permanently from her own country. Mary clearly felt the feelings of exile from America, which she felt she would never come to terms with. Moreover the transplantation to another continent intensified this. Mary found herself in India with a double sense of exile, from England and from America.

From the American flags flying when Mary arrived in India to the employment of an American masseuse in Simla, reminders of Mary's American identity were ever present in India. When visiting Assam she visited American missionaries, and American guests in Calcutta were sent home with items to post to her family. On July 4th 1903 Mary celebrated the 4th of July with Lord Kitchener. The irony of the situation was certainly not lost on her as she explained to her Mother:

Lord Kitchener has got a fourth of July dinner for me and had got American Flags made in my honour! So I shall celebrate our victory with a British Commander himself.⁷⁸

Yet certain situations arose that indicated that George questioned Mary's sense of national identity. Such an occasion emerged over the American Transvaal ship, a charity ship taking aid to South Africa during the Boer War. Organised by Jennie Churchill, another American who married into the British aristocracy, Mary was asked for a donation that she did give. However when Mary asked George if he knew anything about the ship his response was:

⁷⁷ LCP 8/45-47 [Undated c. November 1898] Mary to Mother

⁷⁸ LCP 12/137-138 July 1 1903 Mary to Father

I have not an idea what the American Transvaal ship is - possibly a ship containing books, luxuries, wine etc. for the wounded if so there is of course no objection to your giving though I think myself that the contributions should come rather from Americans in America than from those who have married Englishmen and still more high officials of the British Govt and have become Englishwomen in consequence. The tribute ceases in such a case to be from America.⁷⁹

George's pompous tone reflects a certain disturbance concerning Mary's national identity. His letter reflects the point of law that by marrying George, Mary had indeed rescinded her American nationality and had become an English subject. This however clearly not enough to change Mary's feelings towards her natural national identity which was demonstrated in Mary's response to the assassination of America's twenty-fifth President, William McKinley in September 1901. Having been shot twice on 6th September, McKinley died eight days later. Mary heard the news of the assassination in Scotland where she was staying with her mother and on the 15th September wrote to George: 'Mamma is deeply distressed about poor Mr McKinley and so am I'.⁸⁰ Days later she asked George:

I hope you sent an India telly [telegram] to America of grief on account of poor Mr McKinley – I have [heard] tellies from all corners of earth, Dublin, Ceylon, Wellington and Shanghai but no mention has been made of India I hope all the same one went.⁸¹

George replied to this:

Darling I deliberately did not send telegram about poor McKinley to America, I felt so certain that the Royal Family at home would say I was treating myself as a crowned head.⁸²

⁷⁹ LCP 20/74-79 November 12 1899 George to Mary

⁸⁰ LCP 16/135-140 September 15 1901 Mary to George

⁸¹ LCP 16/142-147 September 19 1901 Mary to George

⁸² LCP 23/3-16 October [Undated] 1901 George to Mary



Plate 20 – The American "Queen of India" and her husband
Photographer Unknown
Utica Globe, New York, December 3 1898

That Mary highlighted the countries and capitals of the empire that had sent telegrams indicates that she was pre-empting George's reply – something he ignored. George's sensitivity over Mary's American national identity clearly influenced his decision to avoid any public display of affiliation between India and America, who had after all hailed Mary as the 'American Queen of India'.⁸³ (Plate 20) Yet George could not influence Mary's deep-rooted sense of American identity, her correspondence reveals that the reading circle to which she belonged was one way in which her links to America were maintained. Her friend the journalist G.W. Smalley was prevailed upon to send her specifically American fiction.⁸⁴

V A home at 'home': 1 Carlton House Terrace

It has been shown that Mary sought security in communicating with her friends and family at 'home', planning to visit her family in America and reading newspapers and novels. These undoubtedly provided Mary with the mental security she needed while in India. Yet Mary also sought material security at 'home' in England whilst in India.

Before George and Mary left for India at the end of 1898 they took what has been regarded as an unusual step of buying a house in London.⁸⁵ As Mary and George had lived in rented houses until this time, and would not require a home in London for the duration of the position as Viceroy, it appears an unnecessary burden to have taken on. Several reasons that can be suggested for the purchase.

⁸³ Anon, 'The American "Queen of India" and her husband' [Utica] globe, New York, December 3 1899

⁸⁴ LCP 32/56-61 June 7 1900 G.W. Smalley to Mary

There can be no doubt that 1 Carlton House Terrace was a desirable residence, overlooking St. James Park and the Mall, and a short distance from Westminster. It presented a highly suitable entertaining space worthy of an eminent politician and of course a possible future Prime Minister, an ambition that George had in his sight. George and Mary perhaps felt they could not miss an opportunity to buy a house in such a prestigious location.

George and Mary had also expected her father to buy it for them. It would appear that Mary and George had decided to buy 1 Carlton House Terrace without consulting her father, to whom Mary then wrote asking for assistance. However a second letter on this issue indicated that Mary had written asking for money before she had heard the news of the family misfortune following her brother's speculation.⁸⁵ In this letter Mary asked her father to ignore her request and informed him that they had taken out a mortgage at the Derby Bank to pay for the house, and that it would be let while they were in India.

Why did Mary and George not at this point accept that it was possible that they would not be able to afford the financial burdens of being the Viceroy and maintaining a mortgage in London? Perhaps this relates back to the first point. Although the burden might be substantial, when would such a house become available again? More importantly, Mary's letters from India indicate that she found the emotional security of owning a material home in London a great comfort. That she had a home meant that she would, eventually return to live in

⁸⁵ See Gilmour, (1994) p.39

it, grounding her in London as opposed to India. Whether this was the reason that George and Mary went ahead and bought the house is never stated explicitly by Mary, but in her letters to her father and mother that address the financial details of 1 Carlton House Terrace, Mary continuously reflected on the importance of having a fixed, material home in London.

From the very beginning of her time in India the place of 1 Carlton House Terrace in Mary's imagining of 'home' is central. Before leaving for India, on December 16 1899 Mary wrote to her parents that: 'Having the house makes the whole difference in leaving England as when I come back I have a house for myself & the babies & George.'⁸⁷ The difficulties of leaving the metropolitan imperial centre for the unfamiliar were mitigated by the reassurance that when Mary returned she would have security and stability in the shape of a home.

Having let 1 Carlton House Terrace to the American Ambassador Mr Joseph Choate, Mary and George hoped to pay off the mortgage as soon as possible. However, despite Mary and George's joint income, the cost of maintaining the household in India exceeded their expectations. Although Mary told her father before she went to India that they would not require additional money, George and Mary were constantly forced to ask him for assistance.

The importance of the home for Mary reemerged in 1901. Following a letter from her father, Mary makes clear the overwhelming importance that having a 'home' in England means. From her letter it becomes apparent that her father is surprised

⁸⁶ LCP 8/27-29 August 10 1898 Mary to Father

that George and Mary have not paid some of the mortgage off. Mary replied by telling him that her ‘only sorrow is that we cannot save enough in our lives to pay for the house’.⁸⁸ Mary gives two reasons for needing the security of 1 Carlton House Terrace, firstly of her children, and secondly of her health:

I can’t give up the house – it will be the only home that my children will have. I can’t spend my life in hired houses I am not strong enough for this, I must hope some day to own a house – Joe has defeated this happiness but I shall not loose [illeg.] until we come back from India – then we shall have to tell you the amount to pay.⁸⁹

Mary categorically states the reasons for her utmost need for the house. Her overwhelming resentment against her brother preventing the family finances helping her out is clear. By mentioning her children’s future, her own health (which was, as will be seen in Chapter 4 a cause of widespread concern), and the powers of sibling rivalry, Mary was creating an emotional argument that she would eventually win. Mary was not unsympathetic to her father’s concerns over the debt. In the same letter she indicated that she planned to take her jewels to London to be valued, and, if necessary, sold to pay off some of the mortgage.

Mary had no doubt that she would eventually live in 1 Carlton House Terrace. When she came ‘home’ to England in 1901 she made an appointment with the tenants to inspect the property and wrote to George:

I have seen Mr Choate and Ma Choate [Ambassador] & I was so proud of our nice house when I went to see her. It looked rather

⁸⁷ LCP 8/65-66 December 16 1898 Mary to Father

⁸⁸ LCP 11/25-27 February 14 1901 Mary to Father

⁸⁹ LCP 11/25-26 February 14 1901 Mary to Father

bare and dusty but that doesn't matter – it is a house we can live in when we come back.⁹⁰

While Mary was busy buying furniture for the Viceregal homes in India she was also thinking about the furnishing of 1 Carlton House Terrace. Stumbling on a set of antique Gobeline tapestries in Munich that she thought suited to the hallway of 1 Carlton House Terrace she recklessly decided to buy them at the cost of £1900.⁹¹ This purchase, perhaps above all others, indicates that while Mary and George were often worried about their financial situation, their access to financial resources was of little serious concern. Mary also made plans for the decoration of the house in Italian rather than the current trend of Louis XV or XVIth style.

Yet coming to stay in London in 1901 also made Mary very aware of the importance of having her own house, rather than relying on the hospitality of family and friends. While living in London in 1901 Mary stayed initially with George's sister Evey. However Mary clearly found her independence slightly hampered by having to bow to both family and friends demands. A letter to George of May 12 1901 explains her position: 'I shall be glad to be in rooms after Whitsuntide as I shall be free, and now I am torn between all my friends and devoting my spare hours to Evey.'⁹²

The difficulties that Mary had in dealing with her family in law in 1901 meant that during 1903 when her health was suffering she did not escape 'home'. The house issue became intense as the uncertainty over George's possible extension

⁹⁰ LCP 11/50-51 May 24 1901 Mary to Father

⁹¹ LCP 15/13-14 June 28 1901 Mary to George

⁹² LCP 15/105-112 May 12 1901 Mary to George

as Viceroy of India continued Mary had been counting down the days till she returned to England. Writing to her father at this point reveals the intense depression she felt at staying for a further period of time in India and the importance she had invested in the idea of her own home:

I feel often as though I should end my days in India. I have not been well and George urged me to go to England at once - but I will never go again and be dependant on Hotels and ungracious Family in law - but I have promised him you go in the winter as our house was free and I had a dignified place to go with my children and I shall settle in the house and then come to see you.⁹³

The need for a dignified home to call her own was a dream that was fulfilled in June 1903. Mary had implied to George in 1901 that her father would settle the mortgage for them, but entail the house on Mary. George's response to this was characteristic of his conservative views on women, as demonstrated by his forceful anti-suffrage stance in later years:

Of course if your father decided to give us the house later he can attach to the [house] what conditions he pleases. We do not have the same ideas in England as prevail in America but if he wishes the house to be yours my darling it will not be I who will complain.⁹⁴

George's reference to 'the same ideas in England as prevail in America' relates to women's property rights. The 1882 Married Women's Property Act had given married women the right to act as independent legal and economic agents, thus releasing them from a subordinate position. As Mary Lyndon Shanley has argued, the 'language that gave married women control over their property and enabled them to make contracts and wills by proclaiming that a married women's property was to be "separate property" or "separate estates" circumscribed a

⁹³ LCP 12/72-75 May 6 1903 Mary to Father

⁹⁴ LCP 22/86-93 August 21 1901 George to Mary

married women's ability to use and be responsible for her property in particular and significant ways'⁹⁵ This legislation was fought against through the fear that by giving married women equal economic rights over property, 'male political hegemony as well as men's control in the family' would come into question. That women did not received equal legal status as men at this point is a testament to this fear.

George's tone in the letter above reveals the tension that Mary's financial authority over George generated. The Married Women's Property Act made it completely legal for Mary to own property independently of her husband. However, the implication of George's statement is that he did not regard this as entirely acceptable according to his established beliefs. It is not surprising that he should not be entirely at ease with Mary owning 1 Carlton House Terrace, however, his resignation over this point indicates his impotence in having any real bargaining power over a financial situation upon which he was dependant. In matters of finance, George became the incorporated partner.

Mary's father settled the mortgage and entailed the house in Mary's name in June 1903. The news came at the same time as that of George's extension, and was a much desired coating on a very bitter pill. For Mary, the home in London became a 'family' home in which all her parents and sisters could stay – so bringing the reassuring image of her family into her own domestic space.

⁹⁵ Lyndon, M., *Shanley, Feminism, Marriage and the Law in Victorian England 1850-1895* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989) p.103

I can't describe to you my peace of mind at the thought that I have a house of my very own...Where the [illeg.] [girls] and I shall have a place to lay our heads. It will be a home for you all too & your boxes and belongings can live there while you are abroad or gallivanting - and there shall even be your rooms.⁹⁶

Owning her own home gave Mary immeasurable peace at a time when the prospect of staying on for more time in India was becoming a certainty. The home of her own gave Mary an escape route from India, one that in a letter to her parents looked as though she would take.

George knows that I am miserable to come back to India but when a man has a career I fear it is all important anyhow I shall [have] the house darlings thanks to your [golden] generosity and I shall live there a great deal and only come back for the Wales visit and then return again. I am determined to save my health but I must think of George too as he has given me so much and now the house is mine there will be no more discussions about the future roof over our head, I can't tell you beloved the load that has gone from my mind.⁹⁷

When Mary discovered at the end of 1903 that she was pregnant, the comfort of having a 'home' in England was raised once again:

It is such a relief to feel I am going to my own house to have this baby so you & mama have given me such peace of mind & happiness⁹⁸

Mary's peace of mind at having her own home derived from her deep emotional need for a secure place to call her own outside of India and George's career. Out of all Mary's residencies, despite the fact she never physically lived there until 1906, 1 Carlton House Terrace was perhaps Mary's ultimate home.

VI Conclusion

⁹⁶ LCP 12/124-131 June 24 1903 Mary to Mother

‘Home’ became both a symbolic and a material space to Mary. Her different material homes, which were symbolic of the dislocation of imperial life in India, were fused into a symbolic family space called ‘home’ through the presence of members the household. The ‘family’ ensured continuity within the anonymity of the ‘incorporated residencies’. Mary’s chance to create her own imprint on the ‘incorporated residencies’ in India came while she was in England. Just as Mary developed a sense of her political subjectivity by coming home to the imperial metropolis, it can be further argued that by coming ‘home’ and undertaking elements such as the interior design, Mary displayed a greater sense of agency as Vicereine at ‘home’ than she had in India. Her sense of dislocation from her own family was exacerbated by living in India, yet, her insistence on maintaining a home in London reflected her acceptance of her permanent home in London. However, by bringing her own family into her London home she reveals that her American national identity was perhaps more linked to the presence of her family than the nation.

As I have noted in this chapter Mary’s viceregal residencies in India were ‘Incorporated’ home where domesticity and family life took second place to the political and social demands of high office. Though there was mobility within and between various residences Mary seems to have found little sense of security or personal belonging within them. As I have shown, these official residences in India were important ‘contact zones’ where the social relations based on hierarchies of race; gender and class were played out within a hybrid official/domestic space. Mary relied on ‘the family’ of elite English men as well

⁹⁷ LCP 12/132-135 June 30 1903 Mary to Mother

as her extensive correspondence with her parents in America and her friendship network beyond India, to give her a sense of homely security.

Mary's final ownership of her own home entirely independently of both George and the bank places her within a space that is not incorporated in any way. That Mary mentally places her own family with their own rooms in this space indicates that she regards it as a space in which she can dictate arrangements. Her purchase of the Gobeline tapestry's before she had gained George's permission and her suggestion that they decorate 9 Charlton House Terrace in an Italian style is indicative of the fact that she was mentally planning a space of her own, rather than one that George would dictate. Although it can be argued that interior design might naturally be within the Victorian women's preserve, George had dominated every aspect of domestic detail within the household prior to their going to India. Indeed it must have been especially hard for Mary to accept George's domination within this domain. That Mary exerted independence in making such decisions is therefore of particular note.

This chapter has emphasised the place of the material and symbolic home within a framework that reflects the flows of empire between the imperial metropolis and India. Whether these flows were reflected through the material transpiration of furnishings, or letters that linked friends and family together, or in the imagination that dwelt on the symbolic idea of home, they were fundamental to the identity of Mary Curzon.

⁹⁸ LCP 12/193 October 28 1903 Mary to Father

Chapter 4

‘Bodily ills’¹

I Introduction

While studies in gender and imperialism have focused on the role that western women had in controlling and ordering the colonised body, for example through health care provision (see pages 74-83), there has, in comparison, been less work that addresses the response of western women’s own bodies to the disease environment in which they were living. Work on personal experiences of health has drawn in the main, on the prescriptive texts of health care manuals to reveal experiences of ill health in the tropics.² The shortcomings of reading prescriptive texts as actual practice have already been noted. This chapter emerges from the body of work within the history of medicine that endeavours to ‘hear the voice of the female patient’, and seeks to understand disease, and the effects of its changes on the body, from the patient’s perspective, rather than that told from the doctors case notes, from medical journals, advice handbooks or from official medical sources.³ This approach seeks to critically incorporate areas of the bodily experience that have often been silenced within biographical work.

This chapter begins (in section II) with a discussion of tropical medicine in British India, which provides an important historical context in which to place

¹ LCP 13a/132-134 July 27 1905 Mary to Mother

² See for example, Bell, M., ‘The Pestilence that Walketh in Darkness: Imperial Health, Gender and Images of South Africa c.1880-1910’, *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 18 (1993)

³ Davies, M.J., ‘Whose Body? Recent Historiography relating to women, health and the medical profession’, *Gender and History*, 9 (1997) p.383. See also Rothman, S., *Living in the shadow of*

Mary's illness narratives. It is necessary to place Mary's illness narratives within this conceptual framework, while accepting that Mary's own illness narratives provide an example of how 'texts and contexts are inextricably intertwined'.⁴ Mary's understanding of her own ill health was informed by the knowledge that she, and those around her, had at the time. While it is important to place Mary's illness narratives within the historical context of European engagement with the tropical environment, it is also important to realise that the audiences' reception of Mary's ill body, contributed to the popular discourse of tropical disease. Livingstone's assertion that geographers studying the history of the discipline have failed to understand how 'reciprocity of text and context is to be understood', is equally valid for this argument.⁵

The ways in which Mary rationalised the ill health she experienced are addressed in section III. This analysis starts from the basis of the illness narrative that emerges from Mary's letters and diaries, and is placed in the context of the debates concerning illness at the turn of the twentieth century. Elements of Mary's illness narrative draw on the key tropes of traditional tropical medicine that linked disease to environmental conditions or the local population. Yet elements of the new understanding of tropical medicine also emerge, for example, in her reaction to the plague epidemic, and her references to germ theory.

death: Tuberculosis and the Social Experience of Illness in American History, (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1994)

⁴ Livingstone, D., 'Climate's Moral Economy: Science, Race and Place in Post-Darwinian British and American Geography' in Godlewska, A. & Smith, N. (eds.) *Geography and Empire* (Oxford: Blackwells, 1994) p.134

⁵ Livingstone, (1994) p.134

The importance that Mary placed on a healthy body, informed the ways in which she protected her body from illness. This is explored in section IV, through the two principal mechanisms Mary attempted to protect her body from disease: dress, and retreating. Although it is well established that dress was used as a method of preventing illness, the persistence of the concept of prophylactic costume at the turn of the twentieth century, is important to stress.⁶ The idea of retreating to a healthier clime, is also a well-established pattern in the protection of the imperial body. Drawing on Sander Gilman's observations concerning the cultural fantasies of 'beauty and health' and 'ugliness and illness', I argue that while Mary may have followed the tradition of retreating to Simla and other hill stations, to gain relief from the heat of the plains, Mary's own 'retreat' had greater significance, and was linked to her own rationalisation of illness.⁷ This places greater significance on Mary's personal practice of 'retreating' to shield her ill body from view, creating spaces of health and ill health in her life.

The illness narratives that emerge from Mary's letters were intended for different audiences. Her writings indicate that she was very conscious of the different ways in which her audiences in India, Britain and America would 'read' her illness. The final part of this chapter (section V) addresses the ways in which Mary attempted to direct and control the representations of her body to different audiences.

⁶ This has been demonstrated in Kennedy, D., 'The perils of the midday sun: climatic anxieties in the colonial tropics' in Mackenzie, J.M. (ed.), *Imperialism and the natural world* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990) p.119

⁷ Gilman, S.L., *Health and Illness: Images of Difference* (London: Reaktion Books, 1995) p.33

II Imperial Health in British India

It is argued, that from the earliest encounters with tropical environments, travellers, traders and explorers often rationalised 'the tropics' as a dangerous environment. David Arnold argues, that western travellers created the 'conceptual space' of the tropics, a dangerous place that was 'particularised through the discussion of disease'.⁸ India, alongside other tropical environments, became defined as something 'environmentally distinctive'.⁹ Cohn describes the factors of the Indian environment that Europeans found unsettling:

The heat, the direct rays of the sun, the heavy moisture in the air during the rainy season, the dust and hot winds of the dry season, the odours of the extensive marshes and sudden drops in temperature in the evening, and the dew in the early morning, the odour of urine, faeces, of rotting fruit and vegetables of the crowded cities and towns.¹⁰

Considering the impact of disease on the travellers who ventured into tropical environments, it is unsurprising that the tropics became seen as dangerous. Europeans visiting the tropics 'expired with a speed, frequency and randomness that seemed to defy explanation'.¹¹ In the absence of any medical understanding of germ theory of disease, (which was not to come until the second half of the nineteenth century), ideas of environmental determinism reigned supreme, with climate 'almost universally considered to be the prime cause of European ill health.'¹² Elements such as the 'insects, rapid processes of purification and decay, and the offensive smells and rotting vegetation', were understood to

⁸ Arnold, D., 'Introduction: Tropical Medicine before Manson' in Arnold, D. (ed.), *Warm Climates and Western Medicine: The Emergence of Tropical Medicine 1500-1900* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1996) p.6

⁹ Arnold, (1996) p.6

¹⁰ Cohn, B.S., *Colonialism and its forms of knowledge: The British in India* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1996) p.155

¹¹ Kennedy, (1990) p.119

contribute to this disease environment, but were thought to be secondary to the climate as a cause of disease.

Many of the attitudes displayed by European travellers towards the disease environment that the tropics represented, were remarkably consistent over space and time. However, there were regional variations, which resulted in different encounters with the disease environment through time. This emphasises the importance of establishing the place-specific examinations of ideas connected with health and the environment. Harrison explores in detail the changes in Europeans' response to India; this provides an important context in which to situate Mary's own responses to the disease environment in which she found herself.¹³ Harrison suggests that the only way to understand why, by the nineteenth century, 'Europeans came to see the Indian climate as one of the chief constraints upon their Imperial ambitions', is to place such thought in the context of the different phases of expansion in India.¹⁴ Attitudes towards the European constitution and environment were closely tied up with changing attitudes towards 'race', and this, in turn, reflected the type of colonial rule that the British enforced.¹⁵

Until the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Indian climate was not necessarily seen as injurious to European health. Evidence suggests that Portuguese traders (from 1498) had little doubt that they would be able to settle in India; the climate was not far removed from that of the Mediterranean, and,

¹² Arnold, (1996) p.7

¹³ Harrison, M., *Climates and Constitutions: Health, Race, Environment and British Imperialism in India 1600-1850* (India: Oxford University Press, 1990)

¹⁴ Harrison, (1999) p.3

setting aside small pox, the epidemics that were present in Europe at that time were absent from India. The conceptual space of India to these early Portuguese travellers was not as alien as it was to later travellers from Northern Europe. Even at the turn of the nineteenth century, northern Europeans were optimistic concerning their ability to acclimatise to the environment in India, and settle permanently.¹⁶

After 1765 the British East India Company transformed from a trading power, to a territorial power, resulting in a 'surge of interest in the Indian environment and its effects of the health and livelihood of Europeans'.¹⁷ This contributed to debates concerning the ability of Europeans to acclimatise to the Indian environment. During the trading and early territorial expansion phase of European encounter with India, expectations of Europeans' ability to acclimatise were positive. However by the 1820s, it was suggested that India would not be compatible with long-term settlement of Europeans.

Harrison argues that shifts in eighteenth and nineteenth century understanding of 'race', reveal the change in attitude towards acclimatisation to the Indian environment. He argues that early beliefs in acclimatisation 'rested on very different ideas of the human body, from that which came to dominate writing on health and the environment in the nineteenth century'.¹⁸ The theory of monogenism dominated discussion relating the origin of human kind, which influenced arguments relating to health and environment before the nineteenth

¹⁵ Harrison, (1999) pp.4-7

¹⁶ Harrison, (1999) p.9

¹⁷ Harrison, (1999) p.5

¹⁸ Harrison, (1999) p.11

century. Following the biblical creation story, this argued that there was one source of humankind, and that differences in physical appearance and character were determined by differences in climate, diet and lifestyles. Working from this monogenesis view, medical theory suggested that Europeans settling in the tropics would become suited to living in tropical environments. How quickly acclimatisation occurred, depended on 'lifestyle, temperament, and peculiarities of constitution.'¹⁹

However, at the turn of the nineteenth century, it was becoming clear to observers that Europeans were not adapting to the Indian environment, and suffered persistently from diseases compared to the 'native' population.²⁰ This practical observation accompanied a change in the understanding of the origins of human species, influenced by Cuvier's theory that three human sub-species (Caucasian, Mongolian and Ethiopia) had emerged following the Biblical great flood each in isolation from the other. Michael Banyon has argued that this conception of different species of humankind, led to a new understanding in the nineteenth century of 'race'.²¹ Previously 'race' was understood as representing the lineage of a race, and difference between races were regarded as the result of historical circumstances. The change in the nineteenth century, as a result of new thinking on the origins of mankind as suggested by Cuvier, resulted in a significantly different understanding of 'race', rooted in a biological essence 'which determined all other characteristics' and was 'unalterable and definitive of certain people'.²²

¹⁹ Harrison, (1999) p.11

²⁰ Harrison, (1999) p.16

²¹ Harrison, (1999) pp.11-18

²² Harrison,(1999) pp.14,15

Discourses of 'race' and of racial typing were a fundamental cornerstone of Victorian culture and identity, informed by the idea that 'social and political hierarchies were entrenched in biology, naturalizing the superiority of white men above all others'.²³ As human 'races' were subject to a variety of classification measures (usually based on physical characteristics such as skin colour or size), moral readings of the body were also imposed. As Ryan notes, 'human character [was read] through visible signs of the human body'.²⁴ Such discourses influenced political factors behind the consolidation of British rule in the nineteenth century, leading to a tightening of racial distinctions based on the racial superiority of the British over Indian people.

Once doubts were raised concerning the improbability of acclimatisation, it became argued that racial types were fitted to particular environments. Such arguments indicated that there were fundamental differences between the colonial power, and the indigenous population. Thus, there was great pessimism that Europeans bodies could withstand exposure to such climates for lengths of time, and also that long term residence in India would lead to the loss of attributes which had distinguished the 'imperial race'. Debates concerning acclimatisation raged throughout the nineteenth century, and, as Dane Kennedy has noted, well into the twentieth century.²⁵

²³ See Stocking, G.W., *Victorian Anthropology* (London: Macmillan, 1987)

²⁴ Ryan (1997) p.147

²⁵ Dane Kennedy, 'The perils of the midday sun: climatic anxieties in the colonial tropics' in John M Mackenzie (ed) *Imperialism and the natural world* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990)

This took a specifically gendered dimension as it became more common for women to live in India. In her study on imperial health and gender in South Africa, Morag Bell has noted that women and children were thought to be particularly at risk in the tropical environment. Drawing on travellers' guidebooks and medical reference books, Bell shows that women and children's health was believed to be weaker than that of men. Such conclusions were based on statistical surveys, such as Dr. Andrew Davidson's 1893 study of mortality figures in India, which showed that women and children suffered a higher rate of mortality than European men, and also on anecdotal evidence supplied by European women travellers themselves. Bell observes that 'biological differences were used to substantiate the belief that women were physiologically the weaker sex and could be more easily upset by the tropical heat'.²⁶ Such biological differences were emphasised through studies that showed that women were more prone to abdominal diseases in the tropics.²⁷ The impact of the tropical climate on children was thought to be so strong, that parents were advised not to allow their children to remain in the tropics for fear of physical and mental degeneration. Bell draws on advice by Sir William Moore in 1890 that suggested that children remaining beyond five years 'grow up weak and weedy,

²⁶ Bell, (1993) p.329

²⁷ Bell, (1993) p.329

deficient in energy and lacking in strength' and, more worryingly, 'with a 'marked disposition to relaxation and idleness', characteristics which were often subscribed to the native population.²⁸ These fears of degeneration had a real impact, and led families to develop elaborate schemes of extended families looking after children of relatives serving in the empire.

Disease was a fundamental problem in maintaining a healthy ruling population in India. Epidemic diseases such as cholera, enteric fever, malaria, dysentery, kala azar alongside diarrhoea, had critically endangered the health of civilian and military members alike in India. For example after 1857 British forces made up only one third of the Indian army, and with half of each year's new recruits not living beyond 8 years in service, disease threatened the security of British India.²⁹

While the aetiology of specific diseases was often not known, the imposition of regimes that tackled drainage, poor housing, ventilation, sewerage disposal and the maintenance of a clean water supply reduced disease rates. Reforms were also imposed in India that physically separated the Indian population, who were thought to carry disease, from the British population and placing in quarantine any carrier of a disease.³⁰ From the second half of the nineteenth century, the establishment of the germ theory of disease, alongside improvements in sanitation, considerably improved the disease environment of the 'tropics'. Scientists such as Patrick Manson, founder of the London School of Tropical Medicine, stated categorically that 'In the tropics, as in all temperate climates, in

²⁸ Bell, (1993) p.329

the European and in the native alike, nearly all disease is of a specific origin...[it is] caused by germs'.³¹ Germ theory exploded the arena for the investigation and prevention of disease, and different treatments and diagnoses were being made. In 1898, the year that Mary left for India, tropical medicine became institutionalised in Britain through the opening of the London School of Tropical Medicine founded by Patrick Mason.³² This event marked the official acceptance of the need to embrace new forms of scientific knowledge about tropical diseases. It was recognised that such knowledge had profound implications for the maintenance and growth of the British Empire.

Mary was in India during this transitional period, between the old forms of tropical medicine that looked back to the Hippocratic tradition of airs and water, and new forms that looked forward to germ theory. This chapter uses her illness narratives to examine how the debates between old and the new tropical medicine were infiltrating into Mary's own encounters with ill health, and her attitudes to the dangers of disease.

III Rationalizing Illness

Within three weeks of arriving in India, Mary described her first experience of ill health to her family. Having practised the opening dance for the first state ball at Government House, Mary retired to bed. Her narrative recorded that she 'Had a chill in the night, and a good fright for fear of an attack of fever'.³³ The word 'fear' underscores all Mary's entries connected with ill health in India. The

²⁹ Ramasubban, (1988) p.39

³⁰ Ramasubban, (1988) p.47

³¹ Kennedy, (1990) p.120

underlying fear was death, particularly the type of sudden death associated with tropical diseases. Yet in Mary's first illness narrative, she rationalised her chill in terms of her having practised her dancing in a 'bitterly cold' ballroom. 'India' had not been established in Mary's mind as a conceptual space of 'fear', in relation to the causes of illness.

By mid-February 1899 Mary had experienced a real attack of fever. Writing to her father she described her sufferings:

The journal has been quite silent this week as I was seized last Thursday with a bad attack of fever – my temperature flew up to 106 and I thought I was dead but I wasn't! The pain of the fever was awful as the temperature lasted 36 hours and my poor poor body was burning up – with this I had a violent headache and bad diarrhoea. ...It is the suddenness of things in India which sweep one into a heap - well one minute and ½ dead the next.³⁴

The language used here to describe her illness is that of a violent attack, as if her body had been violated. The speed of the illness, which in Mary's conception happens in a matter of minutes, gives an impression of continued imminent danger, which is linked specifically, to 'India'. By the end of March 1899, Mary had informed her parents that 'India' was a 'risky place to get your relations out to'.³⁵ Thus within four months of arriving, Mary had rationalised 'India' as a conceptual space, within which she was in danger. Although Mary's first attack of fever had given her a severe shock, it soon became apparent to her that illness was a very common occurrence in India. This was demonstrated during March 1899, when Mary's nursery staff all became ill. Cynthia, her youngest daughter, was ill as a result of a vaccination, and Mary was called on to be chief nurse. The

³² Arnold, (1991) p.1

³³ LCP 43/8 January 19 1899 Tour Journal

³⁴ LCP 9/20-21 February 23 1899 Mary to Father

arrival of her sisters, who were staying for an extended visit, added to her worries as Nancy (known also as 'Nannie') had become ill on the boat to India. She wrote to her parents:

It is a very worrying time for me what with Nannie ill and my wet nurse with gastric fever and Cynthia [daughter] vaccinated and my 2nd nurse ill and I have tooth ache till I cry - I am never out of sick rooms though the house is full of guests (Lady Lonsdale and her cousin) and I have to organise and arrange and place until I am dead with fatigue - It seems that I can never have 10 days in which to recover from my bad fever in Feb but go working on - I am happy because Nancy is so much better & the wet nurse & Cynthia turned the corner... India is a risky place to get your relations out to.³⁶

Mary's illness narrative reveals the specific factors that made 'India' a 'risky place' for her. The principal elements that Mary identified with regularity were not related to the new discoveries connected with germ theory, but the established environmental factors such as the climate and the sun. In addition Mary pointed to the 'native' and living creatures as contributing to the rich disease environment to which she was exposed. It is clear in some narratives that Mary accepted that germs cause disease, and that sanitation was important. However, the overwhelming cause of disease for Mary remained the environmental factors. This would support Kennedy's observation that tropical medicine was not a 'simple linear progression of reason over superstition', and that medical advances concerning germ theory and sanitation, did not remove the suspicion that factors such as the climate were dangerous to European bodies, and a principal cause of disease.³⁷ Indeed Mary's illness narratives are a remarkable indicator, that despite Mary's awareness of germ theory and the presence of elite doctors to care for her personally within the household, her

³⁵ LCP 9/30-31 March 30 1899 Mary to Parents

understanding of disease remained so strongly within the model of environmental determinism.

Climate, sun and 'native populations'

Mary's letters point to her understanding the climate as being a prime reason for her ill health, and of those around her. In her first year in India Mary's narrative indicated that 'The climate of India is enough to kill one'³⁸ and in her second year in India she recorded:

The Indian climate is the worst in the world – in one and a half years it has reduced our strong round faced butler to a shadow there are 1 or 2 ADCs strong young men who are very ill indeed...I am thankful we shall only spend 5 years here as the climate is a cursed one.³⁹

This letter provides the type of anecdotal evidence that convinced Mary's contemporaries that long-term habitation of the Indian environment was impossible. By implication, Mary was stating to her parents that it was impossible to acclimatise in the tropics. Mary clearly saw the climate as the reason for the wasting of her household staff, and that the strong should suffer so much, greatly raised the level of fear of the effects of the 'cursed' climate. Mary's narrative reveals that she believed that the deleterious effects of the climate overcame human strength. Writing in December 1900 Mary noted: 'It is all I can do to feel my heart as one would have to be a giantess to be always well in such a ghastly climate'. Mary was certainly no giantess; indeed the remarkable element of her narrative is that her body features in so many letters to her family.

³⁶ LCP 9/30-31 March 30 1899 Mary to Parents

³⁷ Kennedy, (1990) p.121, also see Bell, (1993) p.329

³⁸ LCP 9/39-40 May 17 1899 Mary to Parents

³⁹ LCP 10/50-51 July 19 1900 Mary to Parents

Mary's weekly monitoring of her health makes it easy to observe that she was, more often than not, suffering in some way. When she was well, her letters state this, triumphantly, but always in anticipation of the next bout of ill health.

While following a traditional route in blaming the climate for all ills, Mary was particularly unsettled by the heat of the sun, which she equated with her idea of 'India':

I am much better this week and pulling round after many weeks of general nursing – oh! India how hard you are on poor women who are forced to live under your burning sky.⁴⁰

The first 'winter' that Mary experienced in India left no doubt as to the difficulties of living under the 'burning sky'. Writing to her mother, Mary described her worries over her sister's ability to withstand the heat of Calcutta:

I do not know how Nannie will stand Indian heat I really think [you] could never get used to it....the least encroachment drenches me in perspiration. I am sitting under a punka and my head is as wet as a sponge but Nov & December and ½ of January are the winter months I went out early this morning and went over 2 hospitals and returned before 11 with a headache from the blazing sun.⁴¹

The 'blazing sun' may have caused the headaches, but even in good health the unpleasant levels of body perspiration were enough for Mary to write in relatively good humour: 'The heat – oh! Ye Gods is awful I am in a constant state of soaking wet clothes & sweat pours off my shiny nose!!'⁴² When ill, the drench of perspiration that the humid heat of Calcutta in January produced could not be endured in such good spirits:

The gals [Mary's sisters] went off this morning and I feel terribly without them but relieved I have got them quite safe &

⁴⁰ LCP 12/89-90 May 13 1903 Mary to Parents

⁴¹ LCP 9/38-85 November 1 1899 Mary to Mother

⁴² LCP 43/31 February 9 1899 Mary to Parents in personal post script of Tour Journal

well away from Calcutta as the climate is frightful here, very damp & wet, not rain but dense, damp fog which takes the life out of one. It is very hot too and both the children and I feel it very much - it is like a perpetual steam bath - I have a bad ulcerated throat but hope to be up in a day or two.⁴³

Mary often found Calcutta unbearable. In 1901 she apologised to her parents for writing a short letter, reminding them: 'the month of January is one I can hardly live through'.⁴⁴

Although the climate was the principal cause of Mary's distress, she also echoed popular understanding that Ramasubban has identified that saw the 'native population as a secondary source of infection'.⁴⁵ Writing to her Father in 1900 for example, Mary explained why she had taken refuge at Mashobra from the camp at Naldera:

I wrote you last from our camp at Naldera from which I was obliged to fly as I was literally devoured by every kind of beast...I caught bugs in my bed & fleas and a tarantula on my pillow & what they left of me the sand flies finished! It is very odd as the rest, George, the babies included were not touched & I was driven right away. Natives are the dirtiest people and it is not uncommon to see every sort of vermin marching about on them.⁴⁶

Mary continuously encountered insects and unfamiliar creatures that were all part of the environment of 'India', which she so feared. However if every sort of beast devoured Mary, she equated the 'native' as the carrier of such creatures. In line with Harrison's observations that the native body was seen as a threat to human health, Mary presents the 'native' on a level with the vermin that supposedly march on them, her sense of hygiene offended.

⁴³ LCP 10/1-2 January 2 1900 Mary to Father

⁴⁴ LCP 11/2-3 January 10 1901 Mary to Parents

⁴⁵ Ramasubban, (1988) p. 42

⁴⁶ LCP 10/47-48 June 19 1900 Mary to Father

Harrison has noted that the ways in which Europeans' compared their own bodies to the native body shifted.⁴⁷ After 1800 the rapid urbanisation prompted the beginnings of a policy of sanitary reform in cities. In tandem with this, a shift in attitudes towards the Indian body emerged which marked the Indian body as a 'threat' to European health. Harrison notes that before 1800, 'Europeans rarely made derogatory remarks about Indian hygiene', however, from the 1800's the European eye was increasingly critical of Indians' standards of sanitary habits.⁴⁸ Stemming from a shift that stressed the desirability of maintaining personal cleanliness as a sign of social status, Harrison notes that 'This new hygienic sensibility diffused gradually from the European nobility to lower orders, and, by the mid-nineteenth century, even the dregs of the British Army came to look upon Indian habits with feelings of disgust.'⁴⁹

Germ Theory and Sanitation

Although Mary most usually blamed climate, it is clear that she recognised other causes of her ill health, reflecting her position on the cusp of old and new understandings of the causes of tropical diseases. Take the following narrative, written in 1899 when Mary had just escaped from Calcutta to Simla:

The climate of India is enough to kill one and the suddenness of attacks is discouraging. I was quite well & in the twinkling of an eye got this awful diarrhoea. I had just got over a fearful cough there is no limit to Indian troubles – a young English girl just came up here from the plains and got typhoid at once, we are practically safe against this as we have 3 medical men who investigate food, natives and sanitation everyday, and this is

⁴⁷ Harrison, (1999) p.21

⁴⁸ Harrison, (1999) p.21

⁴⁹ Harrison, (1999) p.22

necessary to keep well at all. One has to be a rhinoceros to thrive in India.⁵⁰

Mary begins with a customary diatribe against the climate, yet by the end of the quotation it would appear that there were several causes of ill health she accepted. It seems that the ‘natives’ working in the viceregal household were considered a source of ill health and were inspected as such. The narrative also reveals that while Mary retreated to Simla to be safe from the heat of the plains, it is clear that she was not safe from the potential of ill health. Mary seems to link her attack of diarrhoea with the climate, and then goes on to discuss typhoid. Typhoid, also known as enteric fever, a highly infectious disease caused by the bacillus *Salmonella typhosa* ingested with food or water, was prevalent in Simla.⁵¹ Mary clearly understood that this disease was not caused by the climate, as she notes that the viceregal house was safe, due to the daily checks on ‘food, natives and sanitation’ by the three medical men.

Mary returned to Europe in 1901 and left George with some advice concerning the ‘perils’ of India:

Darling, do be careful of sun, elephants, snakes, cholera germs and ghazirs [Indian attendant on hunt?] – Each one of them in turn fills my soul with positive chills of terror and you will send me a weekly telly while you are surrounded by all these perils. My hair will turn silver if you don’t.⁵²

It is noticeable that cholera germs feature alongside the established perils of sun, animals, snakes and ‘natives’. Investigations into the increasing epidemics of cholera that were spreading through India started in 1861. Tackling the spread of

⁵⁰ LCP 9/39-40 May 17 1899 Mary to Parents

⁵¹ Kennedy, D., *The Magic Mountains: Hill Stations and the British Raj* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996)

cholera in India assumed an international importance, as Cholera spread throughout India, then to Egypt, through Europe and to England. The 1866 Constantinople Conference was formed to tackle the spread of this epidemic disease that threatened British and Indian trade interests. India was seen to be the 'natural home of infection,' which was then spread internationally through people, railways and ships. As little was known about the aetiology and transmission of cholera, measures including sanitation, quarantine, and isolation of afflicted areas were imposed with vigour.⁵³

Mary's correspondence with Lord Kitchener indicates discussion of disease and disease prevention, and reveals that Mary had given Kitchener a medical chest for his own personal use shortly after he arrived.⁵⁴ However their interests in health extended beyond their private concerns. Correspondence between Kitchener and Mary through the 1905 army reorganisation crisis indicate that they were discussing the health of the Indian Army:

Do you remember our conversation about enteric? I have been worrying about it for some time and although we have achieved some improvement I am sure we do not so half enough. Would you look at enclosed letter and let me know what you think of the scheme. I believe a great deal may be done by careful antiquated inoculation.⁵⁵

⁵² LCP 15/53-54 March 27 1901 Mary to George

⁵³ For Cholera and the Pilgrim Question see: Ramasubban, (1988); Chandavarkar, R., 'Plague panic and epidemic politics in India, 1896-1914' in Ranger, T. & Slack, P. (eds.), *Epidemics and ideas: Essays on the historical perception of pestilence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992) pp.203-240; Arnold, D., 'Touching the Body: Perspectives on the Indian Plague 1896-1900' in Guha, R. (ed.), *Subaltern Studies V: Writings on South Asian History* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1987) pp.55-90

⁵⁴ LCP 36b / 233-234 [Undated] Kitchener to Mary

⁵⁵ LCP 30/18-19 June 23 [1905] referred to in LCP 30/14-17 June [Undated] 1905 George to Mary : 'The 'K' letter about enteric is delicious.'

This letter indicates that Mary was considering the prevention and control of disease in a manner that did not rely on traditional ideas linked to environmental determinism, and was engaging with new concepts of tropical medicine.

Mary also displayed her knowledge of germ theory through her writings on the plague. Recent scholarship from the Subaltern Studies Group has shown that the British response to the Indian plague epidemic from 1896 illustrates a 'site of conflict between colonial power and indigenous politics' that has revealed the tensions between 'indigenous elites, subaltern classes and the colonial state'.⁵⁶ Within the context of this reading, Mary's writing on the plague epidemic in India, illustrates the extent to which Mary was conscious of the struggle over the imposition of measures to combat the plague. Mary's letters indicate her distance from popular Indian feeling concerning the imposition of western medicine, and the heavy handed way in which measures were imposed. Mary's worldview was restricted in many ways; her principal concern in this instance was for George's safety.

The first outbreak of plague started in August 1896 in Bombay, spread by rats on board ships from Hong Kong. This quickly spread to every major urban area via the railway network, creating an outbreak of epidemic proportions. Arnold records that during its height between 1898-1908 the plague took 6 millions lives. Again the aetiology and transmission of the plague had not been solved by

⁵⁶ Arnold, (1987) p.56

this time, and there was no remedy for the disease.⁵⁷ However extensive research at this time laid the foundations for the understanding of this disease.⁵⁸ As Chandavarka notes, although plague was not the most destructive epidemic to hit India, 'No other epidemic evoked the fear and panic generated by the plague'. Once the plague had been officially recognised by the Indian Government, measures were imposed to control the spread of the disease. The aggressive measures have been likened to those that occurred during the Black Death in Britain. The draconian measures included the isolation of sick in hospitals, the disinfection of the settlements including houses and gullies. Floors that were thought to harbour the disease were dug up, personal effects fumigated or burnt, relatives of sick people segregated in camps, forcible notification of new cases, and corpses were inspected before disposal.⁵⁹ Port surveillance checked people and cargo, and railway passengers were examined and sanitised, or prevented from travelling. These forceful measures pushed the state into the private domain of the local population. Insensitivity to caste observances and religious practices, together with local resistance to the measures, resulted in riots.

Fear of the plague is present in Mary's letters but they reveal nothing of the panic that state measures imposed on the local population. Mary's own 'incorporated' body was protected from the plague areas; when George went on an unofficial tour of the plague stricken region of Bombay in 1899 Mary was not allowed to accompany him to the plague districts. As Mary explained to Queen Victoria:

Although I shall go with George to some of the famine centres he does not wish me to go to the plague districts he is going to be inoculated against the plague and I am very anxious that he

⁵⁷ Chandavarkar, (1992) p.228

⁵⁸ Chandavarkar, (1992) p.204

⁵⁹ Chandavarka, (1992) p.203

should be, not only as a safeguard to himself, but as an example to the natives and his inoculations will lead to many thousands becoming so at Poona.⁶⁰

George was inoculated with the anti-plague vaccine that had been developed and completed by Waldemar Haffkine in January 1897. As a researcher at the Pasteur Institute in Paris, Haffkine was at the cutting edge of bacteriological science and had successfully completed trials into an anti-cholera vaccine in 1893, which had resulted in vaccination of army and government personnel in India.⁶¹ Yet plague inoculations, potentially ‘the first large-scale impact of the germ theory’s potential in India’, was to be quashed by 1899 owing to expense and under appreciation of the importance of the new discovery.⁶² Despite the fact that Haffekine’s vaccination had a 80-90% success rate, it was only adopted as a ‘personal prophylactic measure’.⁶³

Mary’s hopes that George would be an example to the ‘natives’ in Poona were not to be met. David Arnold has noted that the impact of the plague inoculation on Indian people was unsuccessful. While inoculations were introduced in 1897-1898, these were thought to be poisonous by the local Indian population, and when Europeans were inoculated publicly to inspire confidence, it was decreed that the Europeans were inoculated with rose water.⁶⁴

⁶⁰ RA 07/5 October 11 1899 Mary to Queen Victoria

⁶¹ Ramasubban, (1988) p.54

⁶² Ramasubban, (1988) p.54

⁶³ Ramasubban, (1988) p.55

⁶⁴ Arnold, (1987) p.73

Mary's letters at this time reflect Chandavarka's observations that 'The plague ... became the focus for the most terrible anxieties which India evoked in the British imagination'.⁶⁵ She wrote to George:

I have been absolutely miserable over the accounts of your doings in hospitals and Col Fenn [Viceroy's Surgeon] shares my sorrow and anxiety as you listen to no human voice of warning or beseeching.⁶⁶

Later, as Mary's concerns increased, George wrote to her in a somewhat exasperated tone:

I think you don't quite understand that in visiting the plague city there is absolutely nothing to be done except visit the hospitals. I believe that not the slightest risk is involved. Everybody goes in and out. Hundreds I suppose have been through them daily for months without incurring the slightest risk...It would be absolutely impossible to throw it all over on the grounds that I was afraid to do what every English man in the place has been doing for a year. What in that case would be left for me to see or to do at all?⁶⁷

While George was clearly undertaking his duty, it was not until he was safe that Mary could rationalise his visit in the same manner. Writing to Queen Victoria after his visit to the plague centres Mary expressed her relief that he had returned safely, and also that he had done his duty well, and expressed her own view of the good that the visit had done:

I joined George at Bhopal on his return from the famine and plague inspection and was intensely relieved to see him very well as I had been anxious about this contact with plague cases but I felt what a great thing his investigation was, and his three weeks spent actually with Indians suffering has done great good and stimulated the relief workers and pleased the unhappy victims.⁶⁸

⁶⁵ Chanavarkar, (1992) p.211

⁶⁶ LCP 15/34-35 November 13 1899 Mary to George

⁶⁷ LCP 20/81-84 November 14 1899 George to Mary

⁶⁸ RA 07/19 December 14 1899 Mary to Queen Victoria

This last line indicates that Mary was really unaware of the misery that the plague measures were having on the local population, and that the half-empty hospitals that George was visiting were indicative of the local dissension.

IV Protecting the Body: Clothing and Retreating

As noted above, Mary's body was protected from the plague areas by geographical separation. However, she adopted other methods to protect her body from the daily onslaught of living in the disease environment of India, which reflected the persistent belief in the role of climatic factors in the spread of disease. Mary adopted the use of prophylactic clothing measures and another form of physical separation, that of the retreat.

Clothing

Clothing was an established method by which the colonial body was protected from the climate of the tropics. In the understanding that diseases such as malaria and cholera, bowel disorders, chills and fevers were caused by the atmosphere, the colonial body was swathed in different materials which acted as a barrier, preventing the harmful contact. After her first attack of fever in February 1899, Mary was always cautious to wear a large hat and carried an umbrella. Although a sola topi is seen as the archetypal colonial sun hat, Mary tended only to wear these when hunting. Mary modified her sola topi to provide additional relief, using swathes of cloth and netting to protect her head, face and neck. She also picked up useful ways of keeping her sola topi cool, on one occasion suggesting to George that he lined his sola topi with plantain leaves. In a letter to Mary, George indicates that he has followed her advice yet was unable to state clearly



Plate 21 – 'M.C. Matiana Hill March 1899'
 Photographer Unknown
 OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/75 (47)



Plate 22 – George and Mary driving from Viceregal
 Lodge Simla
 Photographer Unknown
 National Portrait Gallery Photographic Collection



Plate 23 – Detail from: 'Their
 Excellencies just after shooting.
 Tiger shot through head at 70 yards'
 Deen Dayal 2-12 April 1902
 OIOC Curzon Collection Photo
 430/33 (19)

whether this was responsible for relieving the headache caused by the strain of the sun or dubious wine.⁶⁹ Plate 21 illustrates the typical dress that Mary would wear for outdoor pursuits, such as riding or hunting taken during a hill march in September 1899. More often than not, Mary is photographed wearing large dress hats, (Plate 22) although even when hunting, she would sometimes favour her own individual creation (Plate 23).

The wearing of flannel was used to protect the body from the excessive swings of body temperature as a result of perspiration, thought to induce chills. Mary reprimanded her mother for sending her sisters to India without flannel nightdresses, telling her that '[I'll] get the girls warm flannels & flannel night gowns which I find they are not provided with the danger of chills is great I am lending them my things now - their thin [illeg.] are useless here'.⁷⁰ The wearing of flannel next to the skin was taken one step further in the adoption of what became known as cholera belts. This flannel strip, that was wound round the waist, was believed to 'guard against chills incurred through evaporation or perspiration, as this was thought to induce cholera and intestinal disorders such as dysentery'.⁷¹ A reference that George makes in a letter to Mary certainly indicates that she wore a cholera belt: 'Goodnight precious child. I am going to bed and there is no slim Kinkie walking about [with] a white cummerband around her tummy.'⁷² Mary also checked that George was wearing his while he was away from her. Although Mary had clearly understood about the 'cholera germ', the continued use of flannel is indicative of Cohn's observation that

⁶⁹ LCP 25/3-14 April 13 1903 George to Mary

⁷⁰ LCP 9/30-31 March 30 1899 Mary to Mother

⁷¹ Kennedy, (1990) p.120

⁷² LCP 21/22-32 April 2 1901 George to Mary

flannel and cholera belts became part of a colonial uniform that endured long after their practical use was dispelled.⁷³

Mary described her hunting clothing in many different letters, however one sent during a hunting trip in Hyderabad 1902 exemplifies the level of protection that Mary depended on from her clothing:

Monday we moved camp...the only episode was a long walk in the scorching sun the thermometer being at 200o [?]. The sun is frequently hotter than this but this enchanted me, as I walked two miles in this furnace and my shoes scorched. Of course I had on my black glasses, a huge helmet and a back pad, and a thick wadded curtain over my head, and a thick umbrella, and ice in my mouth.⁷⁴

The back pad that Mary described gave additional protection to the spine from the sun, worn on the understanding that ordinary clothes did not provide suitable protection. As Cohn notes, a Dr. Moore had developed a pad of three to seven inches stuffed with cork shavings, which would not conduct heat. This was worn from the collar of a coat to the lower back, so providing an impenetrable protective layer. As Kennedy notes, this pad was later made in more advanced materials to protect the back from supposedly damaging ‘actinic rays’ of the sun.⁷⁵ It is a testament to the level of heat and sun glare that Mary writes about her blackened glasses. Mary’s only other reference to wearing such glasses, was during her first journey out to India when she wore them to hide an infected eye. No photographs exist of Mary wearing such glasses. Plate 24 was taken during the hunting trip to Hyderabad described above. Mary can be seen wearing thick hunting dress, including her sola topi, back pad, with a fan hanging at her waist.

⁷³ Cohn, (1996) p.154

⁷⁴ LCP 42/103 April 5 1902 Tour Journal

⁷⁵ See Kennedy, (1990)



Plate 24 – Drinking Soda Water in the Jungle, temperature 104
Photographer Unknown April 1902
OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/70

Clothing was thus a uniform that was adopted by Mary to ensure her body was protected.

Retreating

The second mechanism that Mary adopted to protect her body, was physically retreating from spaces of ill health. Mary retreated, following the established seasonal pattern of migration, from the plains to the hills. In 1899, the first year that Mary was in India, she retreated on March 6th to Simla from Calcutta leaving George behind to follow a few weeks later. Mary made this journey prematurely to rehabilitate from the fever she had suffered in mid-February. From the exchange of letters between George and Mary, it is clear that Mary experienced a reviving effect in her first retreat. One of her first letters reported that the air was ‘beautifully cool, not cold and the air has a snap’⁷⁶ and indicated that ‘I am quite well and brimming over with energy’.⁷⁷ Writing to Jenny Churchill at this time she stressed the exhilarating effects of the air in Simla:

It was fearfully hot in Calcutta but I stayed till 6th March and didn’t dare to keep the children any longer. George has to stay till the 25th for the Budget and he says the heat is terrific. Here the cold air makes you dance and I am fit as possible and riding and clambering around these endless mountains.⁷⁸

Writing to George at the end of her second day in Simla, Mary equated her new found health with her body, drawing on a tradition of linking good health with a robust figure:

Kinkie is perfectly well and quite fat...Fenn [Viceregal Surgeon] was amazed to see the change and can’t make head or tail of me

⁷⁶ LCP 15/13-18 March 7 1899 Mary to George

⁷⁷ LCP 15/20-21 March 7 1899 Mary to George

⁷⁸ CHAR 28-66/22 March 14 1899 Mary to Jenny Churchill

as I wasn't a bit tired after the journey and he was preparing to order a "casket" he was so sure I would be done in!⁷⁹

A letter Mary received from George, written on March 9th 1899, gives a second indication that Mary felt the reviving effects of Simla:

Darling, it is very miserable and lonely being here alone but console myself that you are recovering health, sleep, colour, flesh, everything: and that I shall barely be able to distinguish between those 2 desperate fellows in front and Brother and Sister behind when I arrive.⁸⁰

George often drew attention to Mary's weight gain in Simla, by signing off his letter of March 13th 1899 'Love to wide Kink from Pappy' and referring to her in a letter of Saturday 18th March as: 'the maid, or should I say Matron of Mountain Height'.⁸¹ However, his reference to 'those 2 desperate fellows in front and Brother and Sister behind' is revealing, equating her regaining weight that she had lost since the attack of fever in February, with the size of her breasts and buttocks. Furthermore, that George genders Mary's breasts as male and codes her buttocks as 'Brother and Sister' indicates that in their relationship they developed a language code that enabled them to discuss features of the female body, but within a male frame of reference in which George was clearly comfortable. It is also of note that Mary and George referred to menstruation as 'those fellows', again drawing on male gendered language. Sander Gilman has described the history of thought that equates the healthy female body with 'positive reproductive capabilities', noting that 'the healthy is the beautiful, is the erotic, is the good, for it leads to the preservation and continuation of the collective'.⁸² As

⁷⁹ LCP 15/22-23 March 8 1899 Mary to George

⁸⁰ LCP 20/9-12 March 9 1899 George to Mary

⁸¹ LCP 20/16-17, March 13 1899; LCP 20/28-33 March 19 1899 George to Mary

⁸² Sander, G., *Health and Illness: Images of Difference* (London: Reaktion Books, 1995) p.65

will be shown in the following chapter, concerns over Mary's health were intimately bound with reproduction.

After this first retreat in 1899, Mary knew that a retreat to Simla would provide relief from the heat of the plains. Yet in future years, Mary took to retreating in stages, first by withdrawing to Barrackpore when Calcutta got oppressive, then retreating to Darjeeling or Nani Tal, as an intermediate measure, staying with her friend Lady MacDonnell, finally retiring to Simla. Mary often sent her children to Darjeeling early in the year with their nurses and attendants, keeping them away from the sun in Calcutta.⁸³ She also adopted plans to retreat by stages if she did not think she would be able to attend one of George's Spring Tours owing to ill health. (Take the plans that Mary made during a period of illness in January 1900 to visit Lady MacDonnell in Nani Tal to coincide with the Spring Tour to Assam, before going onto Simla.) In the event Mary was well enough to go to Assam. However instead of returning to Calcutta before starting the second stage of the tour to the North-West Frontier Mary retired to Darjeeling.

The practice of making a structured retreat, from Calcutta to Barrackpore, to Darjeeling or Nani Tal and finally to Simla, was carried out on other occasions. In 1902 Mary undertook this staged retreat to Darjeeling prior to the 1902 Spring Tour of the Central Provinces. Her letter of February 18th described the change from the heat of Calcutta to the cool of the hill station of Darjeeling.

We left Calcutta last Saturday, I had been ill all day with a cracking headache & had had my feet in hot water and everything done to enable me to start - & I made one of my grand efforts & somehow dressed & went off in a dream and

⁸³ See for example LCP 13b/243-244 February 28 [1901], Mary to Father

travelled 23 hours and changed trains 3 times and got to Darjeeling much better! It was very hot when we left Calcutta and bitterly cold here and in 24 hours we have changed our temperature by 50 degrees, but we bought plenty of furs and wrapped up and after the first day have not one of us suffered.⁸⁴

The reviving temperature, clear air and cold offered Mary an instant elixir her first response in Darjeeling reveals the games she is able to play with her children:

The children have already got lovely red cheeks and we play all day in the garden of the house [we] are in and you would have laughed to see me coasting down the hills with Irene and Cynthia – while they rolled over and over with wild laughter.⁸⁵

The idea of a staged retreat occurred after Mary's first year in India. During 1899 Mary had gone straight to Simla, and while she initially enjoyed the feelings of exhilaration, described above (see page 180) and enjoyed the presence of the viceregal family, she felt isolated and lonely. An experience she tried to avoid in future years.

Mary's physical health, and her use of retreating were closely tied to her emotional well-being, especially her sense of isolation from friends and family. This may be seen, for example, in the events following the Delhi Durbar when Mary's mother and sister had made an extended visit until early March. Mary wrote to her father before they left, anticipating how she would feel after their departure: 'only one week more remains of Mamma and Daisy's visit and I am beginning to feel very depressed at the thought of their leaving'.⁸⁶ On the day of their departure, Mary wrote to her father that she felt 'so grieved I don't know

⁸⁴ LCP 11/91 February 18 1902 Mary to Father

⁸⁵ LCP 11/91 February 18 1902 Mary to Father

⁸⁶ LCP 12/31-32 February 26 1903 Mary to Father

what to do...I am soaking wet and I cannot wield a pen anymore'.⁸⁷ The following day Mary 'woke with a bad head and an ulcerated throat' and was in bed for the next week with a poultice on her neck and was fed 'through a tube'.⁸⁸ At this point Mary decided that she should retreat to Simla, acknowledging to her father that she could not 'live in Calcutta'; to her mother she wrote: 'I am nearly well & shall be quite so at Simla'.⁸⁹ While Mary's mother had been staying with her, Mary wrote to her father that she couldn't bear 'horrible, dreary old Simla'; however when languishing, ill and alone in the intense heat of Calcutta, Mary shifted her idea of Simla towards it being a place of health, in which she would be well.

Simla provided Mary with relief; writing to her Mother shortly after arriving Mary pronounced that 'the air is magnificent and has picked me up splendidly already and I feel another person to what I did in that horrible Calcutta'. Yet in the same letter she expressed the usual sense of isolation that she had anticipated in February: 'I am absolutely alone all day except at meals and read and write and go walking - that is all! It is sometimes as trial to be exiled in India but I must not complain because of the great work that George is doing here...I am well and lonely'.⁹⁰ The word 'exiled' obviously carried resonance. It should not be assumed that George was unaware of her feelings; indeed he shared many of them. A letter written to Mary shortly after she left Calcutta displays the emotion that George felt on their parting, and his understanding of the solitude that Mary would encounter. In this letters George displays his habit of substituting the first

⁸⁷ LCP 12/34-27 March 5 1903 Mary to Father

⁸⁸ LCP 12/39-43 March 11 1903 Mary to Mother and Daisy

⁸⁹ LCP 12/44-45 March 12 1903 Mary to Father; LCP 12/39-43 March 11 1903 Mary to Mother and Daisy

letter of a word with a 'k', k being the first letter of Mary's alternative familiar name 'Kinkie'. Thus George wrote:

Kinkie is speeding away to cool and hills and two itty girls. But also to kolitude: [sic. Solitude] while poor old Pap already feels a sense of melancholy isolation bordering on despair. Love from Loving Pappy⁹¹

Letters in March initially conveyed to George that she was regaining her health and spirits. For example on March 27th George wrote to Mary:

Daily I get Kinkies admirable letter and now that they tell [me] of exhilarating air and recovered spirits and health I feel almost glad that you are not here and that I am pursuing Kport [sic. Sport] in Kolitude [sic. Solitude]. Dinner waiting Much love from P⁹²

By the end of March, Mary seemed to have gained increased health and recovered spirits.⁹³ Yet on April 3rd, for the first time since their parting, George didn't receive his daily letter from Mary. The following day he reproached her for her absent letters writing: 'I have written every day whether fresh of tired'.⁹⁴ Mary had taken to her bed during these days, unable to write, suffering from bad headache. It would appear that Mary didn't experience the expected symptoms of menstruation at this time. Mary cautiously took herself to bed, in the hope that she had conceived. In the event Mary stayed in bed for a month, and this enforced bed rest released a wave of depression that can be charted in her narrative. Writing to George on the 5th April:

Writing a letter today will really be making something out of nothing as I have only the walls of the white room to inspire me and I have a headache which must dim my sparkling wit and I

⁹⁰ LCP 12/47-50 March 21 1903 Mary to Mother

⁹¹ LCP 24/27-28 March 10 1903 George to Mary

⁹² LCP 24/49-52 March 27 1903 George to Mary

⁹³ LCP 24/49-52 March 27 1903 George to Mary

⁹⁴ LCP 24/75-78 April 3 1903 George to Mary; LCP 24/80-83 April 4 1903 George to Mary

can drag none of the miscellaneous and unlabeled material out of the dusty pigeon holes of the untutored brain.⁹⁵

The next day Mary wrote to her mother in pencil (always an indicator that Mary was very weak, and used only as a last resort):

I was so happy to get three precious letters from you as loneliness is indescribable...I am quite well again but I hate Simla...& kiss Daisy from loving sister & tell her to write to me every week if she loves me.⁹⁶

Three days later Mary wrote to George telling him:

It is as though I wrote to you from a prison. It has been a horrid day and I have not moved from my room and I feel quite unutterably lonely and the walls of my fortitude threaten to crumble sometimes and I build them up with enormous peaceful reasoning.⁹⁷

This letter give a sense of the personal resilience that Mary drew on in these days, isolated in her room. Unusually, Mary did not describe the symptoms of her illness to her parents or to George. Indeed Mary's illness narrative charts her depression, but not the reason for her bed rest. A letter from George written on April 13th reveals the reason for Mary's bed rest:

I will send on Armstrong straight from Kalka to advise you about getting up. DO not experiment a day too soon. Let us give every chance to kitten Pap⁹⁸

As will be seen in Chapter 5, Mary and George were desperate to conceive another child. The reference to kitten, a word used by George to refer to their children, indicates that he was hoping that given bed rest Mary would not disturb

⁹⁵ LCP 17/54-55 April 5 1903 Mary to George

⁹⁶ LCP 12/60-63 April 6 1903 Mary to Mother

⁹⁷ LCP 17/56-62 April 9 1903 Mary to George

the chance of conception she may have believed had happened. These are the only three sentences found in the correspondence relating to this period, which reveal a possible reason for Mary's bed rest. That Mary usually thoroughly documented her illnesses indicates the strong possibility that she thought she might have conceived. Mary was clearly distressed by her low spirits, and a letter from George on April 21st consoled her:

Darling your depression is only the result of the long imprisonment and solitude and we will soon get you out of it. I am afraid I do not lavish half enough love or affection upon Kinkie.⁹⁹

Mary was however 'weary, weary of India', and weary of lying down on her bed.¹⁰⁰ Indeed on April 30th Mary wrote to her father that she was 'longing to leave India'.¹⁰¹ And began to make plans to visit her father in America writing to him that

I find I cling to this [illeg.] so deeply as these weary days of Simla monotony drag on. I do not see a living soul day in day out and I have been now flat on my back on a sofa or a bed for a whole month! I sometimes wonder if I am the same person who lived through the gaieties of Delhi ...I hope to go to Mashobra on Saturday and the change will pull me round and I shall be happier when I begin riding again.¹⁰²

Having been unwell in Calcutta Mary had retreated to Simla, seeing it as a place of good health but after being imprisoned in Viceregal Lodge for over a month, Mary planned her retreat to Masobra, again anticipating that the change in location would offer her a chance to increase her health. Yet while Mary did retreat to Mashobra, she did not feel instant relief. Writing to Jennie Churchill on

⁹⁸ LCP 25/3-14 April 13 1903 George to Mary

⁹⁹ LCP 12/47-52 April 21 1903 George to Mary

¹⁰⁰ LCP 12/64-65 April 23 1903 Mary to Father

¹⁰¹ LCP 12/67-70 April 30 1903, Mary to Father

¹⁰² LCP 12/72-75 May 6 1903 Mary to Father

May 18th Mary optimistically told her that ‘George and I are blooming’ but the rest of her letter betrayed the sense of isolation, exile and depression that continued to engulf her:

Do write to those in exile beyond the sea directly – you can put it down to acts of charity in your programme as it is really an act of mercy to write to us in the East End of Empire... I am sticking to the sides of the Himalayas like a barnacle with only a 3 week old copy of the Times to make me gay or witty!¹⁰³

The early depression that Mary felt after her mother and sister left India, provide the backdrop to the heightened sense of isolation that Mary felt in Simla, as if she were an insignificant barnacle on the side of a mountain, rather than the positive ‘matron’, which George mentions. The bed rest that her hoped-for condition required, pushed Mary into a state of depression that was unprecedented during her time in India. In this month above all others the place of letters providing the reassurance and the emotional support is clear. Mary begged her sisters and Jenny Churchill to write, the link with home being so important for Mary at this time. Her use of the word ‘exile’ poignantly emphasises her feelings of isolation.

Retreating was thus a mixed blessing for Mary. It enabled her to escape the heat of Calcutta, but ill health plagued her wherever she was, at one point prompting George to note ‘that it is not location but your constitution’.¹⁰⁴ However, the idea that the retreat was a space of health was an enduring one for Mary. Indeed, eventually when Mary had been nearly fatally ill in England, she came to see her return to India, the place where she had been so ill, as a retreat away from ill health, a space where she could get well again. Mary’s near fatal illness in

¹⁰³ CHAR 28/78/2-3 May 18 1903 Mary to Jenny Churchill

¹⁰⁴ LCP 30/23-32 June [Undated] 1905 George to Mary

England 1904, made her re-evaluate India as a conceptual place of fear. Thus spaces of illness and the practices of retreating must be placed in relation to the experiences of Mary as an individual.

Having been taken ill in October 1904 shortly before both she and George were to return to India for the second term of George's Viceroyalty, Mary stayed in England over the winter, recuperating at Highcliffe Castle, Dorset. The decision to return to India, a country that was associated with so much ill health, was a tremendously difficult one. Mary's view of 'India' as a place in which to fear for one's health, had shifted during her prolonged illness through the winter months of 1904-05. In the decision-making process of whether Mary should return to India or not it is clear that the therapeutic qualities of India's climate had been considered. As Mary wrote to her mother, now a widow:

I have had a letter from George saying he would give you his post and come home if I wished but he still has much work to do. So I am going out to him for the summer. I could not make him give up his work especially as the doctors have wanted me to go to India and have the Warm Climate for my lungs, Sir Thomas Barlow [Surgeon] is coming tomorrow to decide if I can sail February 10th and I must take the children & send them to Simla as I have nowhere to leave them here. Life is all duty and I must do my best. I am very lame but the phlebitis was bound to leave my leg weak...I think you would have advised me to go to George. I feel that the mere rest from housekeeping will be a boon. I cannot [be] alone here.¹⁰⁵

While Mary is clearly doing her best to alleviate her mother's anxiety, she certainly developed a selective memory of her experiences of ill health in India during these negotiations, such was her desire to return. The pressure of duty and marital responsibility looms large in this letter. Writing to her mother from Port

¹⁰⁵ LCP 13b/330-331 January 23 1904 Mary to Mother

Said on her return journey to India, Mary asked of the history of lung disease in her family, and then noted:

One of the reasons he [Sir Thomas Barlow] was so anxious to get me to India was the heat to cure my lingering [illeg.] in the lungs. It improves everyday on the voyage and oh! The comfort of peace and rest, the cough has gone & I only have occasional bits of phlegm to get up now.¹⁰⁶

Again, in the act of reassuring her mother, Mary is also reassuring herself. By placing the responsibility in the hands of her doctors, she can see her return as a part of her therapeutic regime. It should be noted that the correspondence between Mary, George and her doctors, reveal Mary's great resolve to return to George. George certainly applied some pressure to entice her back to India, even going so far as to suggest that 'the climate we really have here is really divine. I never realised it as much on returning from England'.¹⁰⁷ Whether Mary disputed this is not known, however her correspondence with her mother indicates that her illness in England put her experiences of ill health in India in perspective:

I think that summer without care here will be my salvation...in all my years in India I have never suffered such atrocious ills as I did at home. My heart is very tender towards India and I shall do my best to get well here. I am practically all right & only want a little more strength to make me fit and you know darling I have all your strength of will. Darling I am well & I have done right & God will take care of me.¹⁰⁸

That Mary should reassure her Mother that she has done the right thing to come back to India, a country that from 1899-1904 she continuously painted as a place that caused ill health, is astounding. Mary's return to India, and her use of her health to rationalise this, was motivated ultimately by her devotion and loyalty to George. George also tried to justify Mary's presence in India in terms of her

¹⁰⁶ LCP 13a/80-81 February 26 1905 Mary to Mother

health. During the Summer of 1905, when Mary was still an invalid, George assured both Mary and her mother that she would not have been better off had she stayed in England.¹⁰⁹ Writing to Mrs Leiter following his resignation as Viceroy George wrote:

I shall be glad to get Mary away because she never thinks that India suited her although I still believe that she is far better now than she could have been had she spent the last 6 months in England.¹¹⁰

Whether or not Mary would have been better in England is of course impossible to say. However a month before she left India Mary revealed to her mother: 'I am so thankful that we are leaving, I simply long to get away and be at rest.'¹¹¹ This is perhaps the clearest expression of Mary's true feelings: that of an exhausted woman.

V Representations of health and illness

Mary's illness narrative and correspondence reveals the ways in which she shaped the presentation of her body to other people, both in India and at 'home'. This section argues that the different ways in which Mary sought to present her body to her 'audience' displays anxieties about how her body was 'read' by different people. Mary's personal narratives expose different physical and mental states that can be read to reveal the different representations of her body. It is perhaps in this, more than in any other area of her self-representations, that Mary's sense of self is exposed. This section will show how Mary represented

¹⁰⁷ LCP 29/51-58 January 18 1905 George to Mary

¹⁰⁸ LCP 13a 97-100 March 31 1905 Mary to Mother

¹⁰⁹ LCP 30/14-17 June [Undated] 1905 George to Mary

the health of her body in different way's, and what role her letters had in this definition of the self.

Hiding the ill body in India and at 'home'

Mary's principal means of maintaining a healthy body image, was to carry out her public duties and show her body to the public in India, thus minimising cancellations that caused rumour of ill health. Mary's letters record several occasions when she performed duties even when ill. The first such occasion was recorded in a letter, in which she presents herself in a heroic light:

Part of my letter is typed and I finish it up in pencil.... Yesterday I had one of my headaches but in spite of this I went to a party on board the Admiral's ship. George also and I smiled when I could [illeg.] [illeg.] I had much pain, When I came back I had to be carried up stairs and our doctor thinks I was mad to go to the Lt Governor to dine but a dinner of 70 had been arranged for us and I could not bow out. I nearly fainted twice dressing and nothing but my will carried me through, I was carried to the carriage & had to drive 3 1/2 miles to the house I thought at times that I should die as when I arrived I had to shake hands with 70 people & talk all though dinner and after I had talks with each lady. The only thing I ate was a water biscuit and a teaspoon of brandy. I never in all my life made such an effort. I collapsed in a heap in the carriage on the way home our doctor met me at the door here & I was carried up to bed he said he never in his life had seen such an exhibition of pluck.¹¹²

This first, heroic description of the willpower she used to overcome her illness and perform her public duty, was gradually superseded by a sense of resignation to the trials of duty that were imposed on her body, even when unwell. Keeping in the public eye dispelled rumours of ill health in India and at 'home', however it was not always possible for Mary to maintain this presence.

¹¹⁰ LCP 13a/140-141 September 14 1905 George to Mrs Leiter

¹¹¹ LCP 13a/149-152 October 18 1905 Mary to Mother

¹¹² LCP 13b/284 [Undated, c.January 1899 - March 1899] Mary to Family

Mary shared her experiences of ill health freely with her immediate family. Indeed, receiving her letters must have been a continual source of worry. The occasional week when Mary missed a mail must have caused most anxiety followed by letters written from the sick bed in pencil rather than ink, particularly when the handwriting became large and childlike, rather than the usual regulated script. Yet Mary reassured her parents in letters that conveyed particularly worrying news about her health telling them, 'as you know I have a talent for quick attacks and quick recoveries and long before you have my account of this I shall be well'.¹¹³ The three-week period between sending and receiving letters, allowed time for the latest fever to be shrugged off before the next attack.

While Mary's letters to her parents give all the information about her illnesses, Mary's other writing, for example in tour journals indicates that she was very conscious of her audience. Mary's journals were written to be shared within an extended family, both her own family and also George's. Mary's journals survive in two different versions, edited in Mary's hand, and different editions reveal that the extended audience was presented with a guarded picture of Mary's health. A visit to Agra and Fetehtpur Sikri in December 1899 is representative of the small changes that Mary customarily made to her journal to remove references to her ill health:

~~I could not go to the hospital this morning as I was too unwell.~~
...At 2.40 we started in a long drive to Akbar's City, Fatehtpur
Sikri. It was a 24 mile drive, and ~~I though it would kill me, but I~~

¹¹³ LCP 9/20-21 February 23 1899 Mary to Father

~~was determined to go. The drive was through a fine avenues of trees the whole way, and we had changes of artillery teams, so we flew along, and I felt much better in spite of my remains of chill. We got to Fatehpur Sikri at half past five. and got to Fetehpur Sikri for tea. ...After dinner, which I had in my room we went to see the Mosque illuminated.~~¹¹⁴

That Mary was unable to attend her public engagements indicates the severity of her sickness, an admission of failure which she hated making. While her indomitable will forced her to undertake the drive to Fetehpur Sikri, she had no desire for her extended family to read her initial commentary, and changed the text to reveal a dry account of the journey. The removal of the information that she took dinner in the privacy of her room continued the theme of presenting a healthy self.

Mary's tour diaries are consistent in the removal of elements of sickness. While at times Mary removes all elements of her condition, at other times she alludes to a headache, or simply mentions she was ill, giving few details. Mary's underplayed presentation of ill health in letter journals, is revealed when letters to her own family or personal postscripts to her journal, are read alongside, indicating the current malady inflicted on her body. These emphasise the way in which Mary tailored her letter journal to the wider extended family audience over which she has no control, but still informed her own parents of her actual plight.

During the 1900 Autumn Tour of Southern India Mary arrived in Goa and was accommodated in a sixteenth century nunnery. Mary noted in her journal that the 'comforts have remained medieval', but chose to cross out the information that

¹¹⁴ LCP 42 December 7 1899 Mary's Tour Diary. The strike through indicates what Mary crossed out by hand. Mary added the italicised words in hand.

the bedrooms were ‘~~swarming with red ants~~’ and had ‘~~no sanitary arrangements of any sort.~~’¹¹⁵ At the end of the Goa visit Mary noted in her journal that: ‘The whole Goanese visit was too much for me and I was ill all night’, and for the next three days.¹¹⁶ Although her tour diary does not indicate what illness she had, a letter to her parents continues her illness narrative:

I have collapsed and have been ill for 24 hours at Goa which is a Portuguese settlement on the coast - The food was so vile that I got violent diarrhoea & am now in bed for days...if I get through without Cholera or dysentery it will be all right. The heat is perfectly terrible night and day nearly 100 and I suffer intensively Oh! I pray that I shan’t die in one of these Southern Indian Furnaces.¹¹⁷

Mary was clearly informed as to the severity of the illnesses that she might have been incubating; her journal however reveals nothing of these details. It details instead ironic features such as the white marble seat named in her honour that the Maharaja of Mysore had erected over Gersoppa Falls which future visitors would ‘presume I sat in rapt admiration, whereas I was in a cabin in the Clive’.¹¹⁸

The way in which Mary attempted to shape the wider public perceptions of her ill body, reveals the deep concern that she felt in maintaining a healthy body image. Mary’s first attack of fever in February 1899, combined with the first few letters she received from her friends at home, indicated to Mary that her health was of

¹¹⁵ LCP 43/77 November 12-17 1900 Tour letter Diary

¹¹⁶ LCP 43/78 November 12-17 1900 Tour Letter Diary

¹¹⁷ LCP 13b/322-323 November 13 1900 Mary to Parents

¹¹⁸ LCP 42/78 November 17 1900 Tour Letter Journal. The Viceregal Party sailed on the ‘Clive’ during this tour. The building of a marble seat overlooking a Gersoppa Falls, arguably a sublime landscape, indicates the continued power of the ‘monarch of all I survey’ trope at the turn of the century. Mary would have been able to claim the landscape from a seat designed for her. This is a materially gendered viewing position as Mary’s seat would have been made to help her rest after the exerting climb. Mary enjoyed the idea that because of the material reality of the chair people would assume she had enjoyed the view. This is a pertinent message for biographers who seek to trace the biographical subject through the re-tracing of their footsteps.

‘public’ interest in India, England and America.¹¹⁹ Mary described her first attack of fever whilst in India to her father explaining:

The journal has been quite silent this week as I was seized last Thursday with a bad attack of fever – my temperature flew up to 106 and I thought I was dead but I wasn’t! The pain of the fever was awful as the temperature lasted 36 hours and my poor poor body was burning up – with this I had a violent headache and bad diarrhoea. ...It is the suddenness of things in India which sweep one into a heap - well one minute and ½ dead the next.¹²⁰

This version of events differed markedly from the version she presented to her friends and enquirers. Writing to Queen Victoria on the 14th March 1899, Mary presented a contrasting version of the illness and its impacts on her body:

We deeply appreciate the telegramme which your Majesty so graciously sent to enquire about my slight attack of fever. I was only ill a few days, and I caught the fever by going out in the heat to visit a hospital without being sufficiently protected from the sun. I had been so perfectly well that the doctor thought only a touch of sun could have sent my temperature up to nearly 106 so suddenly and without warning. I was well enough too fulfil all my engagements before leaving Calcutta.¹²¹

In this letter Mary reduced the severity of her fever, passing it off as a ‘slight’ attack and that she had recovered sufficiently to carry out her public engagements. Writing to Jennie Churchill on the same day, Mary was less formal but still economical with the truth:

Our first two months have been splendid and we have done and immense deal in the time. I had the bad luck to get fever for a week from going out in the heat of the day without enough protection from the Sun and I never mean to get a fever again as I haven’t time, and illness even if it only lasts a week gives you such a feeling of hindrance...I am as fit as possible and riding and clambering about these endless mountains.¹²²

¹¹⁹ Mary's illness narratives offer an important indicator of the colonial discourses of disease and health at the turn of the century from a non-medical perspective. These indicate that whilst Mary was on the cusp of new understanding of the causes of tropical diseases, climatic and environmentally determined tropical disease discourses continued to dominate her own understanding of illness.

¹²⁰ LCP 9/ 20-21 February 23 1899 Mary to Father

¹²¹ Royal Archives, Windsor March 14 1899 Mary to Queen Victoria

¹²² CHAR 28-66-22 March 14 1899 Mary to Jennie Churchill. In fact Mary was suffering badly when she wrote this letter.

Two weeks prior to Mary sending this letter to Jennie Churchill, Winston Churchill, Jennie's son, also commented on the aftermath of Mary's attack, in a letter to his mother written at the beginning of a week's stay with the Curzon's at Government House, Calcutta:

You would be shocked to see how Lady C is changed. I was pained to see her. She has had a sharp attack of fever and will not I think stand the climate which will spoil the whole thing.¹²³

This letter implies that Mary's physical appearance had altered significantly within three months of being in India, which is confirmed by George's letters to Mary whilst she is in Simla indicating that Mary had lost a significant amount of weight.¹²⁴ Winston Churchill's letter also tells us that whilst Mary could use her own letters to represent her body in one way; she could not control other people's representations.

A letter from G.W.Smalley in June 17th 1899, indicates that Mary was an item of 'news' in America:

The telegrams have [illeg.] had you ill and well again. Have you really been ill? Do somehow find the strength and impulse to tell me something of yourself.¹²⁵

By the time this request had arrived to Mary, she had already written Smalley a letter to which he replied instantly:

I am so glad to have your delightful letter of May 23 that, though I wrote you not many days ago, here is another line. You answer the [illeg.] of my questions about yourself and your health and it is a comfort to know that you have not had influenza but only made it

¹²³ CHAR 28/26/11-12 March 2 1899 Winston Churchill to Jennie Churchill

¹²⁴ LCP 20/9-12 March 9 1899 George to Mary

¹²⁵ LCP 32/29-34 June 17 1899 G.W.Smalley to Mary

fashionable for other people to have it. I hope the other people will keep their monopoly.¹²⁶

While Mary was better again by late May 1899, from the beginning of May she had been, in her own words 'ill and well in turns'.¹²⁷ On the 3rd May Mary wrote to her parents that she had been 'in bed for four days with fever and cold.' However, she reassured them that 'I am much better but still cough & [illeg.] a good deal - no blood with mucus - I shall be alright again soon'.¹²⁸ However by 17th May, Mary was again reporting her ill health to them.¹²⁹

Despite these experiences of extreme ill health, Mary told Smalley that she was well, and his response indicates that she told him nothing of her recent physical discomforts. Mary's way of dealing with the first attack of fever she experienced in India, set a pattern for her way of hiding her ill health to friends and being suspicious of newspaper inquiry.

Representations of the Body in the newspaper press

An element that Mary had not anticipated when she went to India was the newspaper speculation about her own health. Mary's first attack of fever was widely reported in the newspapers in America, India and Britain, a letter Mary received from Consuelo, Duchess of Marlborough confirmed the 'journalists spotlight' on the Viceregal pair: 'I am so sorry to hear that you have been ill and

¹²⁶ LCP 32/ 53-42 June 22 1899 G.W.Smalley to Mary. Such crossing in the post indicates the difficulties of 'lag time' in the postal system.

¹²⁷ LCP 9/43-45 May 20 1899 Mary to Parents

¹²⁸ LCP 9/36-77 May 3 99 Mary to Parents

¹²⁹ LCP 9/ 39-40 May 17 1999 Mary to Parents

only trust you will keep well now and not do too much again. We read of you both constantly.’¹³⁰

As has been shown in chapter two, Mary actively attempted to control newspaper representations of the viceregal household, and this included representations of her own body. The first occasion came in 1901 when Mary was in Europe. When approached by a journalist, who was writing an article about Mary and George for the *Lady's Realm Magazine*, Mary asked to read the article before publication. Mary described her own input in the article to George after its publication:

I also found plenty of gush in the Ladys Realm [sic.] you enclosed - A woman by the name of Willocks had written an article about us and asked me for photos to illustrate it with. I asked her to let [me] see her notes for article wh. she did. She had the most absurd ideas I ever heard in her head and she willingly changed the whole.¹³¹

The changes that she made were clearly gratifying to Mary, particularly those that concerned her own health. As the article in the *Lady's Realm* told its readers:

Two rumours concerning the Viceroys and Vicereines of India are almost of a weekly nature, and have been during the last hundred years. One is that the Viceroy is about to resign; the other, that his wife's health has failed in the Indian climate. It is true that in the latter case this has sometimes happened; but as regards Lady Curzon, no report could be wider of the mark, she has enjoyed splendid health in spite of all her marches, travels, and arduous work, and not a little of her time at home last summer was taken up explaining how she came to look so well when the newspapers had been killing her for two years.¹³²

¹³⁰ LCP 33/32-38 May 10 1899 Consuelo, Duchess of Marlborough to Mary

¹³¹ LCP 16/187-201 [Undated circa November 22 1901 - November 28 1901] Mary to George

¹³² By an Anglo-Indian, (1901) p.13, see above p. 94

Mary's sense of humour is clear in the last sentence, but the content is blatantly misleading when read alongside Mary's letters to her family. The newspapers had been 'killing' Mary for a very good reason.

Mary's second device for attempting to maintain a healthy body image in the newspapers, concerned the American papers. An undated letter written to her father, indicates that Mary used her parents to refute stories about her ill health:

If the papers print any more about my health will you [say] just this: "The reports about Lady Curzon are entirely incorrect & she is very well indeed". I imagine they will soon begin their yearly report about some illness.¹³³

This letter indicates that these reports of ill health had a regularity that Mary was attempting to interrupt. In August 1902 Mary wrote to her parents again (from Kashmir) ordering them to deny any rumours:

The American papers are full of reports of my health breaking down and my coming to Bar Harbour – will you contradict these reports whenever they appear.¹³⁴

Considering that Mary's letters to her parents before her Kashmir trip were indicative of her usual fluctuating health, Mary's request smacks of desperation. Shortly before leaving Simla for Kashmir, Mary wrote in worryingly depressed tones to her father:

My strength holds out & while I live I shall fight to be strong & never complain. I think we live at such a pace in these days that no one is really as strong as they ought to be. We ought to lead simpler primitive lives & not artificially exhausting ones. The next letter will be from Kashmir.¹³⁵

¹³³ LCP 13b/318 October 29 [Undated] Mary to Father

¹³⁴ LCP 43/166 August 9 1902 Mary to Father, letter found in Tour Journal

¹³⁵ LCP 13b/304-305 July 31 1902 Mary to Father

Mary's strength clearly did not hold out as this occasion as the journey from Simla to Kashmir was fraught with health problems:

We left Simla yesterday at 11 – I went with an awful headache and from the awful pain I became unconscious and remained so for two hours in the train. I have had to drive in the heat all day and have arrived at [Murree] half dead and too ill dine with the Bloods. We drive again at 7 tomorrow.¹³⁶

As has been mentioned in Chapter Two, (see page 62) on arrival in Kashmir Mary was coerced into attending many functions that she complained of bitterly, arguing that she had come away to rest. It was at the bottom of this letter that Mary ordered her father to deny all rumours of ill health in the American newspaper press.¹³⁷

VI Conclusion

This chapter has drawn on the personal narratives that emerge from Mary's letters, to demonstrate her negotiation of ill health in India and at 'home'. As Arnold has noted, the tropics were created as a 'conceptual space' particularised through disease. Mary's illness narrative reflects this, and demonstrates the strength of discourses of climate and disease in the face of new knowledge concerning germ theory.

This chapter has revealed that Mary developed conceptual spaces of health and ill health in India. Retreating further away from the spaces of ill health enabled Mary to maintain an element of hope that she would be better. Although this was

¹³⁶ LCP 11/137 August 2 1902 Mary to Parents

not to be the case, Mary's belief in the power of a further retreat to 'pull her round' was maintained through her time in India. Indeed, Mary's association of place and ill-health was not fixed, but shifted depending on Mary's physical location and sense of emotional well being. This was demonstrated when she returned to India from England in 1904. Yet the retreat also enabled her to hide her body from sight. By retreating to Simla weeks before the government moved to its summer location, indicates that she sought a legitimate excuse not to be present in Calcutta. Her use of the children's health as an excuse for retreating, indicates that she drew on a powerful discourse of maternal care to hide her own weakness.

The importance of drawing on the voice of the patient is revealed in the final section of this chapter, which demonstrate the different lengths to which Mary went to hide her ill body from the public eye. This reveals the way in which categories such as the 'incorporated wife' also have strong 'corporal' significance that has not been acknowledged. Mary's body became a principal cause of concern because of her sense of duty to George, and obligation to fulfil the duties of the vicereign. Mary's dislike of newspaper intrusion concerning her body indicates her personal need to preserve her public image of health. The elaborate strategies that she devised to ensure she was presenting an image of good health to the public, reveal the stress that her failing health must constantly have placed her under. Mary's concerns regarding her health indicate that her body was firmly embedded within the 'incorporated' structure of viceregal life. Her valiant attempts to entertain whilst ill indicate the priorities of duty over

¹³⁷ See Chapter Two page 62; LCP 43/165-166 August 2 1902 personal letter from Mary to

corporeal concerns. Illness was not the only bodily concern that Mary had whilst she was in India. The following chapter demonstrates the maternal concerns that Mary negotiated in India.

Chapter 5

Charting the ‘fall of kids’: Imperial motherhood

I Introduction

Mary shared her duty as Vicereine, with the maternal duty of producing and raising a family. In aristocratic families where the hereditary line ran through the eldest direct male relative, a male heir was highly sought-after. Mary Curzon was certainly no exception; she had married into an aristocratic family, and George being the eldest son, would, in time, inherit his father’s title and hopefully pass it to his eldest son. The desire for a male heir placed a heavy physical and emotional burden on the shoulders of women like Mary. This chapter explores how Mary dealt with this issue that, despite her active role in public life, dominated her time in India.

It is ironic that while the model of the incorporated wife releases women’s roles from being placed into a restrictive binary of ‘public/private’, most work within this model has tended to focus on the more ‘public’ roles of women, and thus ignore the intimate histories of the body, such as sickness and maternity. A biographical approach demands that intimate histories are not disassociated from other areas in a life. This chapter attempts to address a ways in which intimate histories can be fused with the model of the ‘incorporated wife’, adopting a chronological approach to consider Mary’s attempts to secure her fertility, conception, pregnancy, confinement and birth.

In her study of women and politics, Jalland argues that the history of childbirth in Victorian and Edwardian Britain, particularly studies drawing directly on women's accounts of childbirth, has been neglected.¹ Studies of women and childbirth have generally drawn from texts associated with the medical profession and official data sources. From these more formal sources, scholars have explored the discourses relating to medical opinion and womanhood, the medical discourses associated with treating women, the shifts in practice of using doctors instead of midwives, the history of surgical techniques and women, particularly in the creation of the idea of women as a diseased and disordered body that can be controlled by the medical profession.² The lack of 'firsthand testimony' to challenge or compliment these formal sources is a problem faced by all who research elements of women's history however, as Jalland notes, close attention to correspondence and diaries reveals histories of childbirth that provide a rich insight into women's personal experience of childbirth and connected concerns.

Debates concerning motherhood and the empire reached the political sphere in late Victorian Britain. Indeed, it is surprising that historians have paid so little attention to the personal histories of motherhood in the empire, given the widespread contemporary discussions of imperialism and motherhood at 'home'. As Anna Davin has demonstrated, falling birth rates, high infant mortality and worries over the physical health of the nation's population informed serious political debate from the

¹ Jalland, (1986) p.134

² See for example Donnison, J., *Midwives and Medical Men: A History of Inter-Professional Rivalries and Womens' Rights* (London: Heinemann, 1977) Jacobs, M., Fox Keller, E. and Shuttleworth S. (eds) *Body/Politics: Women and the Discourses of Science*, (London: Routledge, 1990)

late 19th century. These three concerns led to political discourses informed by eugenicist debates, moral ideals, and imperialist ideologies that resulted in arguments that the 'maintenance of the empire' was resting on the shoulders of children and future generations.³ Motherhood therefore became a national concern. Class became a serious issue in the debates. Davin notes that working class mothers were blamed for the 'physical deterioration of the nation' - and this class divide formed a corner stone of the eugenicist debate.⁴ Those supporting eugenic theories 'strongly believed in the importance of the family and especially the mother, because improving the racial stock was a question partly of breeding and partly of rearing, and in both her health and her role were essential'.⁵ However Davin notes that while eugenicists shared ideas of child health, they also desired to improve the racial stock through select breeding. Many observers thought that undesirable traits such as 'alcoholism, pauperism and criminality', often seen as key features of the working classes, could be removed if 'marriage and procreation' were limited.⁶

As Nupur Chaudhuri notes, the experience of pregnancy, childbirth and childrearing within the colonial setting has been given relatively little attention. While many

³ Davin, A., 'Imperialism and Motherhood' in Raphael Samuel, R. (ed), *Patriotism: the Making and unmaking of British national identity* (London: Routledge 1989), p.204. See also Stoler, A, 'Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power', Scott J., *Feminism and History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996)

⁴ Davin, (1989) p.207

⁵ Davin, (1989) p.210

⁶ Davin (1989) p.211. Mary did not refer to these contemporary debates directly in her own writings. However, as has been demonstrated, she followed political debates keenly and associated with Henry Asquith who participated in these particular debates. That Mary did not refer to these debates in her letters suggests that she did not perceive her own role as an 'imperial' mother. Indeed this debate was perhaps one that did not touch on the personal experiences of the elite, who instead focused their energy on promoting this as a philanthropic concern within the lower classes. Indeed Mary's primary preoccupation with childbirth and motherhood lay with her ability to produced the desired male heir.

authors have looked at the domestic world of British women in India, studies have not addressed ‘the most important elements in the configuration of women’s private lives: conception, pregnancy, childbirth, nursing, and child rearing’.⁷ Chaudhuri challenges this gap, by drawing on the experiences of a small number of women in India who addressed such concerns in personal narratives.⁸ However Chaudhuri’s work, focusing on the ‘emotional response’ of women facing confinement in India, stands alone, the ‘paucity of records’ makes the subject difficult to research. While this work on the experiences of childbirth and motherhood has been limited, it provides an illuminating indication of the ways in which personal narratives considerably broaden the clinical history of childbirth, which focuses on the medical profession’s histories of motherhood and prescriptive texts.

Researching the intimate narratives relating to Mary’s maternal concerns reveals the extent to which George ‘pruned’ the Lady Curzon Papers. It is clear that letters which were destroyed, were the ones in which Mary would have detailed her reaction to such issues as failed conceptions. This is apparent as George kept the answers that he wrote in response to the letters he destroyed. Thus, from the content of his letters we can gauge Mary’s. That George kept other letters he had written to Mary concerning their family plans, suggests that he was not trying to hide these issues, but we can only surmise that the letters that Mary wrote to him were more personal than George wished to be left. While George may have thought that the

⁷ Chaudhuri, (1988) p.519. Stoler (1996) has offered an important overview of work on sexuality, motherhood and empire. However Stoler does not draw on women’s narratives to address these concerns rather offering an overview of work to date including analysis of prescriptive texts.

⁸ Chaudhuri, (1988) p.519

letters he had kept revealed elements of 'public life', the surviving letters reveal personal intimate narratives.

This chapter extends Chaudhuri's work through a consideration of Mary's recorded experiences of conception, pregnancy and motherhood. Whilst Mary's experiences are unique, they indicate the complex ways in which western women in India approached their private family concerns within an imperial setting. Mary's accounts of her struggles of conception and pregnancy reveal the very profound physical and emotional torment that she suffered, in the course of seeking to fulfill her duties as a mother, wife and Vicereine.

II Expressions of hope and desire for a child, 1898-1900

When they arrived in India, Mary and George had two young daughters, Irene born in 1896 and Cynthia born just before Mary left for India. Letters show that Mary and George discussed their desire for another child, and give a powerful insight into the difficulties that their imperial positions posed to their domestic decisions. Mary also discussed the subject with her parents and within her friendship circle.

George's letters to Mary indicate that there were occasions in 1899 and 1900 when Mary thought she might have conceived. Having accompanied George on the first part of the 1899 Viceregal Autumn Tour, Mary retired to Simla while George visited the plague stricken districts around Bombay. George wrote to Mary on two occasions referring briefly to news he must have received from Mary. The first time he asked

tenderly: 'So delighted to hear that Kinkie feels little pre-natal stirring. Fancy if it is really so. It seems almost too good to be true.'⁹ This expression of George's delight was followed three days later with a letter that presented a more strident tone: 'Keep me informed as to abdominal excavation'.¹⁰ What George meant by 'abdominal excavation' is not clear. Perhaps George was referring to the onset of menstruation, which would have dashed their hopes of a pregnancy, or he may have been referring to a pelvic examination used to diagnose pregnancy. The use of an internal examination to confirm a positive pregnancy had been pioneered in the 1830's and was a common procedure in the 1890's.¹¹ On this occasion Mary's 'pre-natal stirring' clearly led to nothing, and the matter was not raised again until the following year. However, George wrote to Mary's mother in January 1900 and told her that 'We would both like a little George. But hitherto he has not turned up!'¹²

Following the spring 1900 Viceregal Tour to Assam, Mary retreated to Darjeeling for two weeks. George wrote to Mary during this time, requesting that she: 'Keep me informed of all doings and precious Kinkie and [little] hypothetical little fellow.'¹³ From Darjeeling Mary wrote to her Mother indicating that her menstrual cycle had become irregular, noting 'I am keeping well and have not had any inside trouble for sometime.'¹⁴ However, two weeks later Mary joined George on a shooting trip and nothing more was said about the 'hypothetical little fellow'.

⁹ LCP 20/69-72 November 11 1899 George to Mary

¹⁰ LCP 20/69-72 November 14 1899 George to Mary

¹¹ Jalland, (1986) p.142

¹² LCP 10/13-14 Jan 25 1900 George to Mrs. Leiter

¹³ LCP 20/92-94 March 16 1900 George to Mary

¹⁴ LCP 10/37-38 March 19 1900, Mary to Mother

It is no coincidence that these hoped-for pregnancies came after or during a break between tours. Mary frequently found these tours exhausting and would retreat afterwards to recover. This retreat would also have enabled her to be quiet should conception have taken place, following contemporary advice was that rest at the time of the usual menstruation helped prevent miscarriage. Handbooks such as Florence Stacpoole's *Advice to women on the care of the health before, during & after confinement* (1901) quoted the eminent obstetric physician Dr. Cullingworth from St. Thomas's Hospital on the prevention of miscarriage:

We know from experience that miscarriages are most apt to take place at those times which, in the absence of pregnancy would have been the ordinary menstrual periods. It is on these occasions, therefore that preventative measures are most needed, and most likely to be useful. Every month then, during the time that the patient would, under other circumstances, have been unwell, she should maintain the recumbent posture, if not in bed, at any rate on a couch. If this simple rule were attended to, many a miscarriage would be averted.¹⁵

Mary came to see the time on tour as an opportunity for conceiving a child. The tour clearly offered a slight relaxation of George's heavy administrative regime and offered opportunities for the possibility of conception. The failure of the 'hypothetical little fellow' to materialise, certainly caused both George and Mary considerable anxiety. Yet after this failure there is no surviving correspondence in which Mary and George discuss this issue, until 1901.

¹⁵ Stacpoole, F., *Advice to Women on the Care of the health before, during & after confinement* (London: Cassell & Company Ltd, 1901) p.65

Mary's desire for a child and failure to conceive, would have caused anxiety in any situation, yet in India it was compounded by her position as Vicereine. One of the most difficult things that western women faced during pregnancy, childbirth and early motherhood, when placed in a colonial situation was the absence of a close kin network. As Chaudhuri has argued, the stratified nature of the 'Anglo-Indian' society in India meant that women could only gain support from those on an equal social footing with them, and when geographically remote from other women this might not be possible.¹⁶ For Mary the stratified nature of the social situation would have had considerable bearing on her ability to gain support from other women. Mary's friendship circle in India was limited and there is no indication of close confidantes. Equally there is no record of Mary sharing her feelings with her social circle in Simla. Letters from a friend Mrs Coates, for example, do not reveal that intimacies were exchanged surrounding Mary's desire for a child, although such exchanges cannot be ruled out. Eve Pelly, Mouche Dunscombe, Mary's sisters Nancy and Daisy and Mary's mother were the only close female companions from England and America who stayed for any length of time with Mary in India.¹⁷ Mary acknowledged her appreciation of Eve Pelly, particularly during her 'poorly time'¹⁸ and Daisy and Nancy also cared for Mary while she was ill. Mary was very close to her sisters. However although they visited, Mary complained that neither of her younger sister were good correspondents and they do not seem to have offered Mary a great deal of emotional support or advice.

¹⁶ Chaudhuri (1988) p.527

¹⁷ No records survive to document Mary's relationship with Eve Pelly or Mouche Dunscombe

Mary relied especially on communication with her parents, particularly her mother concerning her maternal concerns. As Chaudhuri has shown, for many women in British India, letters containing advice from their mothers at home were the only sources of support and comfort to be had during pregnancy.¹⁹ Mary did discuss her health and fitness with her family and responded to their letters in ways that suggest a substantial amount of parental support. While she was happy to share personal information about her health with her mother, we cannot know what advice Mary's mother may have given her.

Letters that Mary received from her female friends, indicate that she depended on her existing friendship network at home for support concerning maternity while she was in India. Letters exchanged between Mary and her female friends reveal a common concern surrounding the 'Baby mystery'.²⁰ That Mary relied on such reassurance over thousands of miles indicates the sense of isolation that she must have felt over such an emotional issue.

The 'Baby mystery' for Mary was not merely about her attempts to have another child, but more specifically focused on her desire for a son. This was a desire she expressed quite openly to friends. Thus, on March 7th 1899, Pamela Tennant wrote to Mary:

You say you wonder if you will ever have the bliss of having a son! Of course you will; and two daughters together in age as you

¹⁸ LCP 11/160 October 8 1902 Mary to Father

¹⁹ Chaudhuri, (1988) p.527

²⁰ LCP 33/119-123 October 15 1900 Lady Poynder to Mary

have is really a more perfect arrangement than mine for I shall be very lonely with Clare when both sons go to school.²¹

Pamela Tennant's letter indicates the culture of the time in which boys were sent to school whilst girls stayed at home, acting as companions to their mothers, before their own marriages.²² This letter also reveals the clear association in Mary's mind of producing a son being 'bliss', indicating once more the strength of her longing for a son as a male heir for George.

Another close friend, Alice Cranborne, writing in autumn 1900 offered Mary practical reassurance on her failure to conceive:

[A]s for your other trouble, dear Mary don't, don't worry: there is simply oceans of time. You are still so young and [when] one begins life as you did at once it shows the natural condition is to be productive and the change of climate and all the hard work would be sufficient to account of your not happening at once. I am as sure as I live that you will have as many more as you want and that for your health etc. the great thing is not to worry about it but keep yourself at your highest for when you begin.²³

As Mary had already proven her reproductive abilities by conceiving Irene and Cynthia, Alice blamed the climate and hard work for disrupting Mary's reproductive condition. This was a well-established reason for 'barrenness and sterility' in contemporary advice manuals for women living in the tropics.²⁴

²¹ LCP 33/24-31 March 7 1899 Pamela Tennant, Lady Glencommer to Mary

²² See Peterson, M.J., *Family, Home and Work in the Lives of Victorian Gentlewomen* (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1989)

²³ LCP 33/107-112 October 4 1900 Alice Cranborne to Mary

²⁴ See John, E., *Health in India for British Women, and on the Prevention of Disease in Tropical Climates* (London: Churchill, 1875)

Letters from other friends, such as Lady Poynder, writing to Mary on October 15th 1900, gave Mary less structured advice, but reflected the anguish that the problem caused amongst her friendship network: 'The great mystery to me in this world is the Baby mystery - Why not grant babies to the people who long for them. I am despairing.'²⁵ It is clear that Mary was by no means isolated in her reproductive difficulties. Whilst Mary used her friendship network for emotional support, her friends also used letters in a similar way to express their own sorrows. These letters reveal that amongst Mary's social circle, reproductive gossip was circulated that reported both miracles and miseries, allowing the sharing of joy as well as personal loss and grief.

A letter written to Mary by Margot Asquith, received in August 1900, explained her own forthcoming baby and then consoled Mary, reassuring her in disconnected English: 'I'm sorry you have not begun, but there is no hurry and son [sure] to...'²⁶ A month later Margot wrote another letter, which followed the death of her child 6 hours after its birth. Mary had sent a gift to Margot on expectation of the child, and Margot's reply reflects the anguish of loss, and the role of letters within the grieving process:

Your darling present made me sob, it came 4 days after and wd [would] have been such a joy it is lovely and I shall always wear it if you allow me to as a memory of this sacred time and almost nameless sorrow.²⁷

²⁵ LCP 33/119-123 October 15 1900 Lady Poynder to Mary

²⁶ LCP 31/30-33 August 9 1900 Margot Asquith to Mary

²⁷ LCP 31/34-35 September 6 1900 Margot Asquith to Mary

The female support network also operated at more formal levels of acquaintance, as in the correspondence between Mary and Consuelo, Duchess of Manchester, to whom Mary had written in sympathy following the Duchess' loss of a child. The latter's reply, addressed to 'Lady Curzon' thanked Mary for her letter and described the Duchess' heart-rending sorrow.²⁸

It is perhaps Rachel Dudley's letter to Mary, following the former's miscarriage, that indicates the importance of the friendship circle as a means of sharing emotions of grief. Having been in bed for five months, too ill to write, Rachel explained her feelings of loss to Mary:

I cannot forget the disappointment of losing my poor baby. It is such a strange mysterious sort of feeling this sensation of loss for a thing that has never had existence. I argue with myself that it should be impossible to grieve for the loss of something one has never possessed but my arms feel so empty all the same.²⁹

Mary had also heard of Rachel Dudley's miscarriage from another friend, Alice Cranborne: 'Poor Rachel she had the most perpetual flooding for weeks and weeks; she was never able to move from her bed or see anyone after the poor baby came away.'³⁰ Rachel Dudley was a close friend of Mary's; her letter can only have made Mary more acutely aware of the dangers of pregnancy and made her more cautious. It may have increased her anxiety of complications, particularly in India where she was not guaranteed of the best physicians that England could offer. While such letters may have helped the correspondents come to terms with their losses, women

²⁸ LCP 33/80-81 March 19 1900 Consuelo Duchess of Manchester to Mary

²⁹ LCP 33/92-97 July 1 1900 Lady Dudley to Mary

³⁰ LCP 33/99-103 July 23 1900 Alice Cranborne to Mary

such as Margot Asquith were anxious not to announce possible pregnancy for the fear that a disappointment or a miscarriage would be harder to endure in the light of public knowledge.³¹ The uncertainty of conception that Mary clearly experienced, was common amongst women at this time. It was difficult to diagnose pregnancy with any certainty until the fourth month of pregnancy, and women would have watched for signs such as fullness of breasts and morning sickness when their menstruation was overdue.

III Returning ‘home’: ‘Six months in Search of Health and Progeny’

By December 1900, it was decided that Mary, having survived two years in India, should return ‘home’. This event was shrouded in different representations that reflected Mary’s desire to project herself to those outside her family as a person in good health, who was simply coming home for the sake of her children.

The story, however, unfolds in a different way and telling the story of this year in Mary’s life reveals the decisions that biographers’ make in presenting a subject’s life. The time in which Mary was in England has already been narrated within a discussion of Mary’s participation in the political sphere (see above pp.88-93). Yet it is only Mary’s personal decision to go home, that allows her to enter into this political role. This next section attempts to untie these narratives to demonstrate the impact of India, on the domestic life of Mary and George. It is precisely in piecing

³¹ Jalland, (1986) p.142

together diverse stories, seeking meaning in actions and finding contexts to Mary's words, that a picture of the year of 1901 can be drawn.

One of the first intimations of Mary's return home comes in a letter written by Mary to Queen Victoria on December 1st 1900, following her attendance on the Autumn Tour of Southern India. The announcement of her return is placed in the context of Mary's own good health and the health of her children.

I am very well too though I have found 8 weeks hard travelling & never spending more than two nights in any one place very tiring. I do not know who could have started the report that both our healths had suffered and George was coming home in consequence as we are both well ...George is most anxious that I should take the children home in the spring & take them to the sea & then perhaps a breath of Braemar air but I cannot bear the thought of leaving him, and shall only go home for 4 months if he thinks it my duty.³²

Mary here placed the burden of responsibility for deciding whether she should return home, solely on George, and the reason for a return, on the children. By attributing the decision to go home to George, Mary removed possible criticism that she had ignored the responsibilities of her viceregal position, and also that of being a proper wife. Mary uses the word 'duty' when she refers to her reason for coming home, the duty of a mother in removing her children from the dangers of India. Yet Mary's reasons for coming home were far more complex than this letter suggested.

Writing to her Father on the 19th December 1900 Mary revealed an alternative reason for returning home:

I have not made up my mind about leaving George & shall only go for health if necessary as we are too happy to ever be separated unless it's duty, I fear as I am so thin and ailing after this tour a change & some foreign weather would do me some good.³³

While Mary dropped her subterfuge with her close family, her correspondence with Jenny Churchill revealed that she continued to use the children as a cover for her return:

I expect to come home in April as both the children need a change very much and I shall come back in September in time to go to Burmah with G & the children won't follow until the red sea is comfortably cool in Nov.³⁴

This is not to say that Mary was unconcerned about her children. Writing to her Father nearer the time of departure, the children's health assumed a stronger importance:

I have now changed my date of sailing to March 23rd as I feared that April would be too hot for the children and I may spend a fortnight at Cap Martier [South of France] after landing as I am in no hurry whatsoever to get back to England where we will be plunged in gloom [official mourning for Queen Victoria] for the next 6 months. No one can know how I hate to leave George and whenever I think of it my heart sinks but I must go and take [illeg.] children.³⁵

Yet the day before the departure date, a last letter posted to Mary's family reveals who is suffering more in the heat:

The children are just back from Darjeeling looking perfectly lovely and full of [talk] & excitement. I am prostrated by heat & was ill yesterday & lay on my bed in the dark under a punka at

³² RA 08/60 December 1 1900 Mary to Queen Victoria

³³ LCP 10/75-76 December 19 1900 Mary to Father and Nancy

³⁴ CHAR 28/66/32-34 January 21 1901 Jennie Churchill to Mary. Mary's spelling of 'Burmah' changes frequently adding or dropping the 'h'

³⁵ LCP 11/5-6 January 28 1901 Mary to Father

Barrakpore....I am too hot to write another line it is 95 & my head is beating with pain I shall be splendidly well on the [journey]³⁶

Once at home in Europe, Mary sent George letters each week. Through these runs a theme, which indicates that Mary only came 'home' in order to make her a fit mother on her return to India. From letters exchanged between Mary and George, and from her activities in Europe, it is clear that Mary was given, in her words, 'a blank six months in search of health and progeny'.³⁷

The six months started in the South of France where Mary stayed with Cynthia and Irene. Here she met many friends from England who were on holiday in the region. In her letters Mary shared her daily news, detailing the conversations she had with different people and included information she had received in letters from friends. This included news concerning the pregnancies of friends and acquaintances.

Alice writes that Esther Smith is to have a baby her 1st sign of such a joy in 7 years matrimony...Yesterday I went to see Anne Poynder she thinks she has had a small mishap & is lying up in a state of nervous frenzy in the hope of beginning again. Poor thing she retailed to me a list of [people] who all had babies after years of waiting and anxiety & Esther Smith the crowning hope of us all. So we must hope too....Poor Anne Poynder after lying up for a month praying for progeny returned to London barren and heart broken.³⁸

The first intimation that Mary's return home was to rest for her reproductive health, also emerged while Mary stayed in the South of France on her way to England. She

³⁶ LCP 11/31-32 March 22 1901 Mary to family

³⁷ LCP 16/23-24 July 14 1901 Mary to George

³⁸ LCP 15/59-62 April 10 1901 Mary to George; LCP 15/71-72 April 18 1901 Mary to George

wrote to George after a quiet day spent in her Hotel: 'Feel that every quiet day stores up strength for the boy & so I don't grudge an hour of the ennui of the hotel'.³⁹

Having left France, Mary returned to London, where she stayed with George's sister Evey, at her home in Grosvenor Gardens. Mary had an active social life over the next few weeks, but took time to consult with her doctors as she reported to George:

Dr says I am shockingly run down and could not have stopped longer in India in safety. So I hope Ems and Highlands will put me to rights and restore the "fall of kids" to Angel Pappy.⁴⁰

India is clearly blamed for Mary's ill health. Mary is perhaps reassuring herself and George that they have done the right thing by sending her home to Europe. Mary gives an intimation in this letter that she will be seeking places which are particularly health inducing, to put her 'to rights'. The German Spa town of Ems and the Scottish Highlands were to be visited, to ensure that she gave herself the best advantage of good health and that her body returned to India in a fit state to conceive.

Mary recorded her concern with her reproductive health during 1901 in her letters in different ways. Sometimes it was expressed indirectly through unplanned incidents. Indeed, these demonstrate the extent of her preoccupation during her time at home. One such incident occurred when Mary spent the weekend of her 33rd birthday attending a party at Panshanger, the home of her friend Katie Cowper. On Monday, her birthday, a telegram from George was delivered which gave a bible reference for Mary to read. This event is referred to in Mary's subsequent letter to George:

³⁹ LCP 15/74-75 April 22 1901 Mary to George

[M]idday your dear wire came & I hastily retreated to my bible to read 9th verse of 4th chapter. Everyone much interested but I would not tell them the verse... and said it should be the one “Thy teeth are like a flock of sheep each of which shall bring forth twins in due season”... I hope you made out my answer to wire. I put same song so no one could go and read the verse 3-1.⁴¹

It would appear that George and Mary are referring to The Song of Solomon. The verses that George sent to Mary (Chapter 4 Verse 9) and her reply (Chapter 3 Verse 1) are poignant:

You have ravished my heart, my sister, my bride; you have ravished my heart with a glance of your eyes and one jewel of your necklace. (Song of Solomon, ch.4 v.9)
Upon my bed at night I sought him whom my soul loves; I sought him, but found him not, I called him, but he gave no answer. (Song of Solomon, ch.3 v.1)

When Mary received the telegram, whilst in the company of the house party, she had picked up another verse in jest, which reveals her overwhelming and equally poignant search for ‘health and progeny’. For Mary, Song of Solomon, Chapter 6, verse 6 bore particular resonance:

Your teeth are like a flock of ewes, that have come up from the washing, all of them bear twins, and not one among them is bereaved. (Song of Solomon, ch.6 v.6)

In the context of George and Mary’s desire for children, these verses show private and serious concerns. However, Mary’s joking over such a personal desire in a social setting, reflects the openness amongst her friendship circle of her desire to bear a child.

⁴⁰ LCP 15/138-165 May 18 1901 Mary to George

Mary's decision to return to Europe simply for the sake of her children's health comes fully into question during July 1901. Following her trip to Munich to sit for a portrait by the artist Lenbach, Mary went to the spa town of Ems. Her decision to visit Ems was first alluded to in the letter above. There is no documentation prior to Mary's actual stay in Ems that details her decision to visit this spa town, or on whose advice, if any, she decided to visit, however, it is likely that she decided on this course of action once she had arrived in England. A letter that George wrote to Mary in July 1901 suggests that he had not discussed her plan to visit Ems before her departure from India: 'Darling, I know nothing of Ems except that it sounds very old fashioned and quiet'.⁴² As Mary mentioned both Ems and the Highlands in the same letter in which she informed George of her doctor's opinion, it might be inferred that she took medical advice. A short reference in a letter to her father that she was to visit the 'lake baths' at Ems following the painting of her portrait, is all that is left of Mary's decision to make this visit.⁴³ Another reference to Ems comes from George, in a letter to Mary in which he expressed his loneliness, but indicated that there was a specific purpose in Mary's visit to Ems: 'Never an hour but I think of Kinkie and wish her back. It is so lonely. However old Ems is to do the trick'.⁴⁴ Quite what the 'trick' is, remains unclear, until Mary's letter to George from Ems. Then she notes that bathing in Ems' spa water is to 'work the miracle of an almost immaculate conception'.⁴⁵

⁴¹ LCP 15/167-174 May 26 1901 Mary to George

⁴² LCP 21/94-101 June 11 1901 George to Mary

⁴³ LCP 11/53 June 21 1901 Mary to Father

⁴⁴ LCP 15/138-165 May 18 1901 Mary to George

While Mary's visit to a spa to aid her fertility in 1901 might appear an antiquated practice, as historian Roy Porter suggests

Even as late as the turn of the present century, doctors, patients and therapeutic systems alike were commonly ardent advocates of the healing power of water – whether pumped, imbibed, bathed in, swum in, sat in, splashed through or whatever.⁴⁶

A testament to the enduring influence of taking the waters can be found in the guidebooks to these spas or 'health resorts'. One popular guide titled '*The health resorts of Europe: A medical guide to the mineral springs, climatic mountain and seaside health resorts, milk, whey, grape, earth mud, sand and air cures of Europe*' by Thomas Linn M.D., first published in 1893 had run to eighteen editions by 1910. For those serving and living in India W.M.Moore's guide '*Health Resorts for Tropical Invalids in India, at home, and abroad*' (1881) catalogued those hill stations in India, and health resorts around the globe, that were conducive to the health of ailing empire builders, and also where they could retreat at home and elsewhere to regain their health.⁴⁷

Spas were chosen on account of the mineral content of the water and its ability to aid specific conditions. Thomas Linn classified Ems mineral waters as simply 'Alkaline': and described them thus:

Alkaline waters. – These have an extensive usefulness. The soda springs are of great importance in stomach troubles, by acting directly on the acid secretions of the body. They are most

⁴⁵ LCP 16/ 23-24 June 14 1901 Mary to George

⁴⁶ Porter, R. (ed.), *The medical history of waters and spas*, Medical History, Supplement No. 10, Wellcome Institute for the history of medicine (London: , 1990) p.vii

⁴⁷ Moore, W.M., *Health Resorts for Tropical Invalids in India, at home, and abroad* (London: J & A Churchill, 1881)

useful, therefore, in chronic maladies that have their seat in the viscera, liver, spleen, stomach, kidneys. &c.⁴⁸

However, in the specific break down of exact ‘therapeutics’ that the waters of Ems are suitable for, indicate that: ‘The great treatment here is for catarrh of all kinds, bronchial and laryngeal; women’s diseases, sterility, nervous dyspepsia, gout and many other troubles.’⁴⁹ Moore’s guide also refers to Ems noting:

The waters are useful for chronic bronchial affections, for skin diseases, and for some forms of dyspepsia attended with acidity. They are also of much reputed efficacy in female affections, as hysteria and nervous complaints, depending on womb malady; also for sterility. They are not promising for tropical ailments, neither is the climate of that locality.⁵⁰

Ems is one of the few resorts to which Moore refers explicitly for the water’s ability to aid in ‘women’s diseases’. Moreover, the specific reference to ‘sterility’ indicates the emphasis on aiding the fertility of patients who took a cure. Clearly Mary’s retreat to Ems was in order to assist her cure, to ensure she could conceive on her return to India.

On arrival in Ems, Mary was unimpressed by her surroundings and questioned her actions. Having left Munich in a buoyant mood, Mary’s next letter to George from Ems reflected a lowering of spirits:

I have been so lonely all day. This little German bath is so heartrendingly desolate. I wonder how I shall ever get through 4 weeks not a soul to speak to and I feel so restless, but I shall

⁴⁸ Linn, T., *The health resorts of Europe: A medical guide to the mineral springs, climatic mountain and seaside health resorts, milk, whey, grape, earth, mud, sand and air cures of Europe* (London: Henry Kimpton and Hirschfeld Bros: London, 1899) p.21

⁴⁹ Linn, (1899) p.227

⁵⁰ Moore, (1881) p.105

calm down in a day or two and make the best of it, now it seems perfectly awful.⁵¹

Spa treatments were taken under strict medical supervision and the length and type of treatment clearly prescribed. Mary made no reference to her medical advisor, but her four-week cure was of recognised length. Thomas Linn strongly advised that people should follow the doctor's guidelines to the letter, to ensure the full benefit was made from a spa cure. Mary detailed her own regime in a letter to George that showed she had clearly not 'calm[ed] down' and that her spirits were sinking lower.

Mary described her treatments thus:

I have never known so foul a place and I never leave this little brown coloured room save for a bath or a gargle of vile water...The only milestone in my day is a hot bath at 10 am and my indignation over Ems in general makes the water fairly boil and bubble with excitement. It is this bath which is to work the miracle of an almost immaculate conception! And I hope that the Saint of Ems will not retaliate and give me no twin sons because I hate the place so.⁵²

Mary's reference to the baths bubbling with her wrath is both figurative and literal, as the spas at Ems were boiling hot. Linn noted that their temperature varying between 85 – 115 degrees and Moore described the waters as 'alkaline and gaseous, with a temperature ranging from 86 – 133 degrees'⁵³. Yet the elision of science and religion is interesting. Whilst Mary was going to the spa for the therapeutic powers of the waters, she was also considering the place that religion had in the process. That Mary terms the idea of the waters 'working the miracle' of an 'almost

⁵¹ LCP 15/25-28 July 15 1901 Mary to George

⁵² LCP 16/23-24 July 14 1901 Mary to George

⁵³ Linn, (1899) p.227; Moore, (1881) p.104

immaculate conception' suggests both desperation and reluctance to believe wholeheartedly in the power of the water.⁵⁴

Mary's doubts were also expressed in medical texts at the time. For example the Dr. Edis, the senior physician to the Chelsea Hospital for Women, stated in his examination on the 'Sterility in Women' that:

A visit to some of the mineral water spas, either in this country...or on the continent...as at Ems...is by some regarded as very advantageous in chronic uterine disorders leading to sterility...it is difficult to imagine that, except in a very small percentage of cases, mineral waters are sufficient to break down the barrier to maternity.⁵⁵

Yet while Mary had doubts that Ems would do the 'trick' she did go and endure her treatment for a month; she was trying everything in her hope for a successful conception.

With time for reflection at Ems, Mary dwelt on the course and situation of her life. Surrounded by water, she draws on an analogy of a river course to illustrate her point:

I feel that I have got into the back water of life here. Someone once said that life could be divided into three parts the mainstream, the weir and the backwater. My backwater comes second & is self imposed and there hasn't been the exhilaration of going over a weir to deserve the horror of this isolation! Only dying health or a dead reputation could ever deserve a life at Ems and thank God my penance is half over.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ Georges absence would also necessitate an immaculate conception

⁵⁵ Edis, A.W., *Sterility in Women including its causation & treatment* (London: H.K. Lewis, 1890) pp.18-19

⁵⁶ LCP 16/23-24 July 14 1901 Mary to George

Mary's denotation of different stages of life within this fluid trope, can be conceptualised within Victorian and Edwardian thought on the female life cycle, which 'established the biological destiny of women as the paramount fact about female identity and social functions.'⁵⁷ The life cycle was based around three major stages, which related to three distinct phases in a woman's life: puberty with the onset of menstruation; childbirth and child-rearing usually within the institution of marriage, and finally menopause which marked the end of a women's reproductive life. That Mary should classify herself as in the backwater, or in the final stage of her lifecycle reflects the depression that engulfed her at Ems. This may have reflected her fear that she would never carry more children, or perhaps reflected the desperation that time away from George, combined with the emotional pressures attached to the desire for a pregnancy, had induced.

In response to Mary's letters reflecting her unhappiness at Ems, George replied with characteristic levity, writing a poem that would cheer her spirits:

Darling,
I am so distressed to hear of your isolation at Ems, a gloomy hole I take it
'There was a young lady at Ems,
Who declared she would part with her gems,
But Pappy said no,
On old Kink they shall glow,
In the splndidest house on the Thames'.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ Jalland, P. & Hooper, J. (eds.), 'Introduction' to *Women from Birth to Death. The female life cycle in Britain 1830-1914* (New Jersey: Humanities Press International, 1986) p.5

⁵⁸ LCP 22/32-43 July 24 1901 George to Mary. This also refers to Mary suggestion that she should sell her jewels in 1901 to pay off the mortgage of 1 Carlton House Terrace.

Although George did his best to lighten the situation, this was undoubtedly the lowest point in Mary's 'six months in search of health and progeny'. She endured her treatment at Ems only because of her desire to provide George with a son, and to return to India at the peak of reproductive health.

IV The return to India: despair and elation

As early as April 1901 Mary was planning her return home, but by mid-May George had written to her preventing her return in August:

Before you think of coming back in August do regard your health. You must recover it, build it up, lay the scaffolding for itty boy, sacrifice everything to that. You might fritter it all away in a bad monsoon passage. No, I can plug along a month more or less can be endured & you must get out of Europe all it can give, It does not matter to a cabbage whether it leads a vegetable existence for 5 or 6 months and that is my condition.⁵⁹

Increasingly, during the time that Mary was in Europe, an image of George arises which demonstrates his humility towards his wife, but also conveys his almost obsessive desire for an heir. While he is clearly anxious to ensure that Mary regains her health that would improve their chances of conception ('lay the scaffolding for the itty boy'), it is clear that George missed Mary and the support she gave him in India. The ill health that Mary suffered in India was clearly of great concern.

The return of Mary to India in autumn 1901 coincided with the planned Viceregal Tour of Burma. As the months progressed and Mary planned her return, the sense of

⁵⁹ LCP 21/59-65 May 14 1901 George to Mary

expectation of conception mounted. The Burma Tour took on a new importance for Mary, if she conceived straight away on her return to India, she could bypass the tour, but failure to conceive, would result in her carrying out her imperial duties. Thus for Mary the space of the tour became intimately bound up with her role as a domestic and imperial subject.

Significantly this letter writing exchange began as Mary was languishing in Ems. Mary's hopes of returning to George, and the ability of her treatment to enable immediate conception focused her thoughts around the practicalities of timing to ensure the maximum opportunities for a successful conception, perhaps before her body took another battering from the Indian climate and disease.

Her letters are full of the dates when she should be 'quiet' in order not to miscarry and suggestions as to the best form of travel that would ensure she would not miscarry - a houseboat.

As you say starting for Burma after Nov 15 will be too late to join you at Mandalay. I had better come 1st week of November to Mandalay - Could I have a tour diary of dates sent me. These are made out months in advance and I could see where you will be between 13 and 20 of November & if I could have any chance of quiet, of course if the tour is to be a wild rush like Southern India I must not go - but I think you will be willing to take a common place jaunt and not make a meteoric dash. Standing and Railroads would kill the chance of a baby. However everything can be settled when I get back and no need to say that I am not going as am going if I haven't begun a baby! I assume I am going and so must you.⁶⁰

⁶⁰ LCP 16/25-28 July 4 1901 Mary to George

Some eight weeks later Mary continued to ponder potential times and places for conception:

Could not I join you at Mandalay when you get back there. I see the revised tour you only reach Rangoon Dec 2nd and if I sailed 22nd I could meet you perhaps at Mandalay but wait till we meet. It is hopeless to settle [in ink] I will do anything you think best but all that time in Simla alone hangs very low if I am to be left with B Carr, as there is not every chance of achieving our hearts desire.⁶¹

It would appear that Mary was counting the dates of her menstrual cycle when she suggested particular times to George. However, Mary would not have known about the fertility cycle, which was only first surmised in 1908 and not fully understood until the 1930s.⁶² Indeed, Mary is likely to have known only the contemporary wisdom that the time of menstruation was in fact the most fertile time for a woman, and mid-cycle the least (the reverse is today known to be the case). I suggest that Mary was simply counting the quiet time when she would have expected to menstruate.

Despite the extensive plans that were laid by Mary and George to ensure a safe conception the last few letters exchanged before Mary joined the Burma tour indicate that Mary failed to conceive, resulting in her taking on the public persona of the Vicereine and going on the tour. Her failure as maternal subject thus enabled her to act out her imperial role – a fact that Mary does not refer to in her tour diary of her trip to Burma.

⁶¹ LCP 16/107-110 September 9 1901 Mary to George

Having met George in Simla on her return, Mary rested at the Viceregal Lodge in Simla whilst George went on the first leg of the tour. In anticipation George wrote: 'I hope that little Trotter is germinating.'⁶³ However, on the same day Mary broke the news in a letter that she had failed to conceive. Mary's letter of 21st November indicates how she coped with this first failed conception, which was clearly a disappointment to her:

I am so glad that Manipur was such a splendid success. I should have loved it. I shall do the rest of Pappy's tours now, I must give up a baby and try to be a happy though barren Kinkie. I thrill at the thought of Burma as I am vulgarly well and if Pappy will keep my heart up about the baby I can be happy as some day it must come when we go home and vegetate on Scotland little George will grow.⁶⁴

Mary's failure to conceive on her return to India was a deep disappointment. Her six months away 'in search of health and progeny' was not rewarded, and the crushing blow that Mary felt is seen in her letter to George. While trying to remain optimistic, indicates that she is going to be less mentally preoccupied with the hope of a baby. Once Mary is back in India, and had failed to conceive she decided that she would wait until they return home to try again. Yet significantly it was not London she envisaged as being a potential place of conception but Scotland; the image of the highlands as a place of health and therefore conception was an enduring one for Mary.

⁶² Lequeur, T., 'Orgasm, Generation, and the politics of Reproductive Biology' in Gallagher, C. & Laqueur, T. (eds.), *The making of the modern body: sexuality and society in the Nineteenth Century* (California: University of California Press, 1987) p.3

⁶³ LCP 23/28-21 November 9 1901 George to Mary

⁶⁴ LCP 16/159-162 November 21 1901 Mary to George

George's response to the failure of conception, following Mary's letter breaking the news, showed his disappointment but attempted to absolve Mary of any blame and offered her philosophical consolation:

Just this moment your letter of Nov 13 has come in. Please don't think it would ever occur to blame you or anybody for the misfortunes of nature. We may not be meant to have a son. If that is so it only remains for us to bow our head. After all we have a great deal and we have 2 precious children as it is. So please don't worry about it. It may be my fault for all we know.⁶⁵

It is of course ironic that in fact George would have been responsible for the gene that would give them a son, but that of course was not contemporary knowledge at this time. George's sense of balance in supporting Mary shows the sympathetic nature of their relationship, particularly in a culture in which the woman's body was often regarded as the reproductive vessel.

Having failed to conceive, Mary joined George at Manipur and enjoyed a viceregal tour of Burma, which she recorded in her tour diary, written as if she had always meant to attend the tour (see p.278). There are no references to the topic of pregnancy in Mary's correspondence with George in 1902. It is as though Mary had accepted that she would have to wait, in her own words she became 'a happy though barren kinkie'. In fact 1902 seems to have been one of the most fulfilling years that Mary spent in India. However the thought was never far from Mary's mind. For example, a letter which Mary wrote to her parents in August 1902 indicated the

anticipation that Mary experienced each month, hoping her menstrual cycle (which she referred to as her ‘poorly time’) would be interrupted: ‘I will write you a huge letter next week as I am safe from a headache until my next poorly time – no baby coming alas!’⁶⁶ The continual pressure of failing to provide a male heir weighed heavily on Mary’s mind.

In Chapter 4 I explored the spaces of health and sickness that Mary created in India. As I noted during the spring of 1903 Mary retreated to Simla, experiencing the invigorating effects of the change in climate. However at the beginning of April Mary retired to her bed with one of her headaches most associated with ‘those fellows’. Mary continued to lie in bed, steeped in misery (but revealing no specific details about her sickness as I note in Chapter 4), probably taking preventative action against a possible miscarriage.

On this occasion Mary did not conceive, causing great distress and depression. Yet while 1903 had started badly, it was to be the year in which Mary did finally conceive. In July 8th 1903 Mary wrote to her family from the summer retreat at Naldera, using a strikingly modern metaphor to illustrate her menstrual pains:

I am very well again after one of my most awful headaches which about finished me but I have picked up again and am cheerful until my next. Its like being overtaken by a motor car & run over every month but everyone must have something & this is the first bad one I had since the 6th of March the day after my darlings left me. ⁶⁷

⁶⁵ LCP 23/32-39 November 19 1901 George to Mary

⁶⁶ LCP 13b/308-309 August 2 1902 Mary to Parents

Just over a month later, Mary was not writing of the difficulties of menstruation, but of morning sickness. The first letter that indicated her pregnancy was written to her mother and sisters, on August 26th 1903:

I shall write from my bed but I am going to get up today and lie on the sofa. I still have the nurse who takes splendid care of me – I am pretty miserable as I suffer agonies from faintness and nausea & am hardly every free from either but I hope when I can be about again to get better. I don't think I can live through another nine months like Irene's as I never was well a day – It is so long since I have been like this that it probably accounts for all my troubles and of course the limitations in food are trying as I can get no fish or game but the weather is cool fortunately.⁶⁸

Mary's social position and resources at her disposal, left nothing to chance for the safety of her pregnancy. Mary suffered none of the difficulties in obtaining professional care that faced by many western women in India, as she had a trained nurse with her from an early stage in her pregnancy. However despite her resources, obtaining the desirable food was difficult even for the viceregal establishment. Mary was anticipating a trying pregnancy in this letter, and past experience indicated that she would find it difficult. However, Mary was less open about her morning sickness in a letter written to her father on the 27th August informing him of her pregnancy:

Mamma will have told you of my [illeg.] & my hopes. I have told no one but you in these early days, I am taking great care of myself and my only sadness is that my visit to you must be postponed.⁶⁹

By September 3rd 1903 Mary had got up from her bed. She complained to her mother and father that 'I have literally nothing to write as I have been in my room for 3

⁶⁷ LCP 12/145-146 July 8 1903 Mary to family

⁶⁸ LCP 12/159-161 August 26 1903 Mary to Mother and sisters

⁶⁹ LCP 12/163-164 August 27 1903 Mary to Father

weeks & have not seen a soul'.⁷⁰ George wrote to Mary's mother that 'we were anxious to start with since things did not seem to promise very well', however he recorded that two months in to the pregnancy 'all the symptoms seem to have been established'.⁷¹ Mary described these as 'the usual symptoms of nausea to contend with at the present'.⁷² However, George went into greater detail and offered a comment on the female condition and the resignation that he believed Mary held:

Poor Mary suffers a good deal cannot sleep and is frequently sick. It seems such a shame that women should have to bear the cross as well as the child. However I think there is no pain or heat which would not gratefully endure if only she be blessed with the result.⁷³

In the same letter George referred to an exchange that he had had with Mrs Leiter concerning Mary during her visit for the Delhi Durbar:

I cannot help writing & have a mild score at your expense! For I remember when you left India the expectation that you addressed to me about the fatal effect that was being exercised on poor Mary's condition (&) the Indian climate and your entreaties that she should go home without delay in order to secure that edition to our family which we have so long desired. Well poor old India seems to have done it or at least tried to do it after all and I hope you will entertain a better opinion of her in the future.⁷⁴

It was clearly a relief for George that Mary had conceived in India, and that the blame that had been attached to his ruining Mary's health through his appointment, which must have been levelled at him by Mary's mother, could be diminished.

⁷⁰ LCP 12/166-172 September 3 1903 Mary to Mother and Father

⁷¹ LCP 12/176-179 September 23 1903 George to Mrs Leiter

⁷² LCP 12/166-172 September 3 1903 Mary to Mother and Father

⁷³ LCP 12/176-179 September 23 1903 George to Mrs Leiter

⁷⁴ LCP 12/176-179 September 23 1903 George to Mrs Leiter

In the early stages of her pregnancy Mary seemed simply overjoyed to be pregnant, however following the news of a friend's new born son, Mary indicates to her parents that her underlying desire was to bear a son.

I got a cable from [Laura?] to say she has had a son what luck! I hope I shall be as lucky. But I am so glad to have a baby I don't mind what it is!⁷⁵

This line begins, what was a source of endless expectation between Mary and George, on the sex of the unborn child – the underlying hope of a boy, veiled by a tortured negotiation of this desire.

George referred to the unborn child as 'Naldera', a reference to the summer camping ground of the Viceroy in the hills above Simla, where Mary and George thought they had conceived. In the first letter that mentions 'Naldera' no particular sex was assigned to the name. However, on October 5th George wrote a letter to Mary, which expressed his hope that 'Lady Naldera is placid and growing'. The gendering of the unborn baby as female in an interesting first stage in Mary and George's negotiation of desire for a male child; perhaps they were not tempting fate at this early stage. Later however, George became more convinced that the child was a boy, calling it 'Dorian'.

When George went on tour in autumn 1903 Mary retreated to Mashobra. No surviving letters from Mary to George record this time, however from George's

letters to Mary it is possible to gain some idea of her time at Mashobra suffering with morning sickness. George wrote to her from tour 'I hope...that Naldera is quiescent and does not compel you to 'at [cat - meaning to be sick].'⁷⁶ Later he responded sympathetically to a letter from Mary:

Just now I got Kinkie letter also written in pencil and describing her miseries – these are sad and trying enough but fortunately they will have their compensation. What if there be a little Naldera and a little Naldera clasped in each other's arms!⁷⁷

Mary only wrote in pencil when particularly ill or weak. This letter emphasises George's compassionate response to Mary's troubles. Here the unexpected bounty of twins is discussed, forcing Mary to think positively. The unexpected birth of twins was a dream outcome, perhaps stemming from the verse in the Song of Solomon.

George returned to Simla by the second week in October and his last letter from tour asked: 'I wonder if I shall be able to detect much difference in the appearance of Kinkie and whether people will suspect me of impending paternity?'⁷⁸ Mary's absence from public society was explained in the early stages of her pregnancy, as she was supposedly indisposed, suffering from 'water on the knee'. Only Christie her maid, her nurse and the doctors, 'know the truth and won't breathe it'.⁷⁹ When George returned from tour Mary returned to Simla, and would have returned to public society had George not gone straight to bed with an 'inflammation of the

⁷⁵ LCP 12/166-172 September 3 1903 Mary to Parents

⁷⁶ LCP 25/79-82 October 1 1903 George to Mary 'at – shorted from cat – meaning to be sick.

⁷⁷ LCP 25/84-89 October 3 1903 George to Mary

⁷⁸ LCP 25/118-121 October 9 1903 George to Mary

⁷⁹ LCP 12 166-172 September 3 1903 Mary to Parents

varicose veins' having been kicked in the leg by a pony on tour.⁸⁰ On the 27th October, Mary had her first public engagement since the pregnancy hosting a farewell dinner to Walter Lawrence, George's private secretary.

Mary described the dress she wore to this party in a letter to her mother the following day:

I had a most lovely Empire dress which I had made here of Benares stuffs, cream coloured gauze with gold paillette work with a wide gold boarder made up over sky blue crepe de chine & the palest blue & gold gauze little train from the shoulders and a upstanding lace collar and long wing like floating sleeves. George had said that he hoped I had a 'decent frock with weaker arrangements in front' but didn't tell him a word about burst upon his/him gaze in my celestial raiment & he could only ejaculate gosh!⁸¹

An empire line dress was designed to fall from under the bust, loosely covering the stomach. This would have disguised any signs of pregnancy and the 'weaker arrangements in the front' would have prevented the pressure of a corset on the abdominal area. Mary's dress design was clearly very dramatic, which may have detracted attention from her condition.

Mary enjoyed being back in society, and noted to her mother that: 'I think the baby enjoyed a little gaiety as she has had such a dull time poor thing living like a turnip in the country.'⁸² After 'being stagnant for so many months' Mary wrote to her mother that she was 'yearning to get away from Simla which I do so hate and

⁸⁰ LCP 12/187-190 October 21 1903 Mary to Parents

⁸¹ LCP 12/197-208 October 28 1903 Mary to Mother

⁸² LCP 12/197-208 October 28 1903 Mary to Mother

loathe'.⁸³ Her presence on the Viceregal Tour of the Persian Gulf in November 1903 enabled her escape. Previous tours had been exercises of physical endurance for Mary, and had the Persian Gulf Tour been similar Mary would undoubtedly not have gone. However, transportation on the tour was aboard the luxury boat the *Hardinge* and Mary was required to do nothing beyond some official entertaining in the evenings. Although Mary recorded the Persian Gulf Tour in her tour diaries the text bears little reflection on what Mary did each day. The diaries describe the scenes others relayed to her when they came back from an official function or sightseeing, and Mary gives no reason for her staying on board each day. Nor does she offer personal detail, or mention her pregnancy. Mary's tour diaries were written as open letters to her family that she knew were passed around to read. As they were sent to both Mary and George's family they were not regarded by Mary as personal letters. However, in a letter to her mother Mary described her 'extravagantly lazy life' on board ship which revolved around eating regular meals and reading or walking on the deck of the *Hardinge*. Mary noted to her mother that:

It must be very good for me to take this sea journey & I am very well indeed I do not go off the ship because of the difficulty of climbing in and out of the launch – I don't run any risk I can tell you, I miss all the fun of the journey.⁸⁴

Mary thus took great pains to reassure her mother that her pregnancy was healthy and that she was taking care and being well looked after. Mary's mother knew how ill her daughter could become in India, was undoubtedly concerned for her pregnancy. Mary's reassurance is sincere as her health seems to have been good

⁸³ LCP 12/197-208 October 28 1903 Mary to Mother

⁸⁴ LCP 12/212 November 25 1903 Mary to Mother

during this stage of her pregnancy, she was well looked after and seemed to relish her 'extravagantly lazy life'.

However, by December 1903 Mary was clearly unsettled by her pregnant body.

Writing to her mother she discussed her weight and appearance for the first time:

You would be amused if you could see me as since I went to the Persian Gulf...I have got to weigh 155 pounds! & my normal weight as you know is 118-120! I am even bigger than you are and George is quite alarmed at my size and says I am a vast matron! I suppose it shows that I am well & I hope I shall keep so but I have never been such a size in my life and I waddle like a duck and think I shall produce 2 young elephants. When I sit down in an armchair I get jammed between the arms & no clothing of any sort will go on. The things I wore when Cimi [daughter Cynthia] was born I cant get near me so you can judge [illeg.] my dimensions.⁸⁵

Clothing was particularly important at official occasions during which Mary continued to perform throughout her pregnancy. When a cloak that she had ordered from Worth arrived, Mary was desolated to find that it was too short to cover herself with. This mishap meant that Mary was unable to attend the races and public functions with George which Mary considered a 'blow' telling her mother 'George says I look too awful'.⁸⁶ Mary was not happy with her body image – her swollen state became distasteful in George's eyes and she was prevented from venturing onto the public stage. Later when Mary returned to Europe, she again emphasised the importance of having clothes that covered her advanced pregnancy. In a letter to George Mary reflected on a meeting with Balfour:

⁸⁵ LCP 12/225-230 December 24 1903 Mary to Mother

⁸⁶ LCP 12/225-230 December 24 1903 Mary to Mother

He was amazed at how well I looked, kept putting on his glasses and saying “you look quite astonishingly well”! Oxen Dorian was all hidden in a big black velvet coat with an ermine collar and no one could guess where he was!⁸⁷

V ‘Home’ and confinement

On September 3rd Mary wrote to her parents detailing an outline of her confinement plans:

My going to England will depend entirely on how I get on and Sir Benj. Franklin [doctor in India] will decide on the best dates for me to travel, he is going to England about then and will very likely travel on the same ship to look after me...I must be near good doctors and shall feel happier in London. I have written to Sir [illeg.] about a doctor to look after me as he has retired.⁸⁸

This letter reflects that Mary’s pregnancy was being supervised by male doctors rather than traditional midwives, reflecting the shift towards professional medical supervision of childbirth. Pregnancy and childbirth even at the turn of the twentieth century carried a high risk factor to mother and child. Mary’s concern that she should be in London with access to doctors she trusted indicates her concerns for her safety at this time. Although mortality rates are approximate, it is thought that one mother died for every two hundred children born alive in Britain around 1900, however this figure is likely to be much higher as it does not take into account possible deaths as a result of miscarriages or stillbirths.⁸⁹ While medical knowledge and techniques were always improving, a complicated birth would gravely endanger both child and

⁸⁷ LCP 17/160-163 March 7 1904 Mary to George

⁸⁸ LCP 12/166-172 September 3 1903 Mary to Mother and Father

mother. The threat of miscarriage was always present, and greatly feared owing to the high risk of puerperal fever. In Britain, upper class women could depend on calling the most eminent physicians to assist and advise them. In India, only women in Mary's elite position would have had easy access to a similar level of expertise. While other western women gave birth in India, Mary had decided that she wanted to return home to Europe before the birth to ensure that she would have access to the best medical treatment. Yet Mary was worried by this decision as well, in India she could draw on the resources of the viceregal household to ensure that she and her family were taken care of. Writing to her mother in late 1903 Mary highlighted her concerns:

I am very well & the baby is very lovely and I have never eaten so well or been so huge...I fear my last two months there [England] and feeling as ill as I was with Irene but it cannot be helped and I must struggle through Feb & March somehow. Here I haven't a worry or a care and I am looked after like a Queen. George, the doctor, the staff, Mouche, my nurse all looking after me every moment, it will be very different in England where I must worry and shift for myself. Daisy will help me and as soon as you come all will be well.⁹⁰

The distance that Mary's family were from her, added a dimension to this problem. Traditionally, her mother and female relatives would have attended a woman during confinement. However, from Mary's letters it is clear that she did not take this for granted, but asked her mother and Daisy to come to England to look after her. While George had sisters in England, it is evident that Mary did not want their help during the birth, although both George's brothers and sisters helped her on her return to Europe. This problem was not one that Mary thought about on her own, as George

⁸⁹ Jalland, (1988) p.159

also wrote to Mrs Leiter to ensure her personal assistance for Mary during the later stages of her pregnancy.⁹¹

As their thoughts turned to Mary's confinement and the birth of their child, George and Mary also entertained renewed hopes for a son. Until Mary's return to England became immediate, the subterfuge of 'Lady Naldera' continued, however at the point of departure for England, the unspoken desire for a son was revealed. Mary's last letter to George from India, expressed their mutual hope for a male child:

Goodbye darling, try to get out everyday just for the sake of rest and take care of Pappy, because life is too full of hope to sacrifice heart and health in this land of regrets. I do hope with my whole soul that Pappy may have prayed for little boy so, All love from loving, desolated Kinkie.⁹²

From Aden Mary wrote that she was going to take care of 'kon' again (again using the replacement of 'k' for 's' in this instance). George's anxiety about Mary's safety during her journey and arrival in London led him to write:

How keen I am for news that the long and anxious journey is safely over and that you have been safely landed in your own house. Be very careful about cold and tell me every single thing about yourself and little Dorien.⁹³

The desire of George for Mary to give birth to a son was expressed in another letter in which he told Mary of the prayer he said each morning and evening:

Everyday and through the day I think of you and wonder how you are getting on. Morning and evening I pray the same words 'May she bear a child to the honour and glory and to the good of

⁹⁰ LCP 12/ 219 [Undated, probably between 13 December and 24 December 1903] Mary to family

⁹¹ LCP 12/176-179 September 23 1903 George to Mrs Leiter,

⁹² LCP 17/94-97 January 11 1904 Mary to George

⁹³ LCP 27/26-33 January 30 1904 George to Mary

thy kingdom and may it be a male child...Love to dear Mother,
Naldera and above all to beloved K from Loving P [Pappy].⁹⁴

George's uppermost desire for a son is never left without doubt. However by signing off his letter with a reference to 'Naldera' it can be suggested that he appreciated the uncertainty of the situation. A letter from Mary to her father shortly before she gave birth reveals the pressure that Mary faced to give birth to a son within an aristocratic family where so much depended on inheritance. This letter reveals that Mary absorbed this tradition, but was not entirely at ease with the subordinate position it would place her daughters. It also reveals that Mary had no desire to invest in the Curzon family estates unless her own children would directly benefit:

It would be so sad to leave no boy or child to be George's & my descendant a boy would be the head of the family a girl can only be lost in a maze of Women Curzons or at best begin a younger branch of the family - it is thus sad not to have had a son - but I may still be blessed. If I never have a son I should never care to do anything to Kedleston [Curzon family home] - why should I for Affy [Alfred, George's brother] - so our lives will be materially altered. Whatever happens I can live for the future of the little girls and I often hope that Irene can inherit one of George's homes in her own right. As our eldest child. George would then found a line even though Kedleston went to his brother's child - I think much of this & bring up Irene with this in view! ⁹⁵

On March 15th 1904 Mary gave birth to her third child, a daughter. Alexandra Naldera was born prematurely, due to the onset of influenza that Mary had contracted. Although George would have been informed of the birth by telegram the details of the birth were sent by letter, which George received some three weeks after the event:

⁹⁴ LCP 27/65-74 Mary 3 1904 George to Mary

Precious Kinkie, Only last night when the mail came bringing your tearful letters of March 15th etc, did I at all know how ill you had been and what a terrible time you passed through just before little Naldera appeared. I wonder if your suffering acerbated her arrival. The only news I had so far of your suffering was on the morning of the 20th when I got your telegrams saying that you had influenza which may mean so much or so little and then 6 hours later your mothers announcing the birth of 3rd kittie. Former news was rather swallowed up in the latter! I expect we are all liable to these reactions on coming back from the tropics: first rejoice in cold nip then cold, cough and possible pneumonia.⁹⁶

The premature arrival of Alexandra meant that George's carefully laid plans for letters to arrive to cover all eventualities were destroyed as he told Mary:

Poor darling Kinkie, I am afraid that all my inappropriate letters will reach you [while] you are week and feeble. And the ones specially designed for the kituation [sic.] will all be too late. If you will be so shockingly premature you must expect the consequences.⁹⁷

However, George's response to the birth of another daughter was sanguine, and he attempted to remove from Mary feelings of failure although his longing for a son was intense nonetheless:

Darling I felt how miserable you would be and though of course I too was somewhat disappointed I really felt it much more for you than for myself. However I think that we must attribute it entirely to me! You will remember some months ago we discussed and contemplated this and that the name Naldera was arranged in consequence. So we will be content with our little Naldera and postpone Dorien till some future date. After all what does the sex matter so long as you are all right and what does it matter after we are both gone.⁹⁸

⁹⁵ LCP 13a/25-28 May 8 1904 Mary to Father

⁹⁶ LCP 27/131-140 April 6 1904 George to Mary

⁹⁷ LCP 27/102-111 March 24 1904 George to Mary

⁹⁸ LCP 27/102-111 March 24 1904 George to Mary

George's disingenuous comment may have done something to relieve Mary of the guilt of giving birth to another girl. However, of course the only reason why it was so important to give birth to a boy was the need for an heir to George.

George and Mary's desire for a son was no secret. Indeed, the wish for a male heir would have been naturally assumed of such a couple, particularly as they had two daughters already. Thus it was that George and Mary had to cope with the dissemination of the news of the birth of another girl, both to a large circle of friends and acquaintances as well as to a wider public whose appetite for such stories was fed through the press.

Conveying the news to friends and colleagues was clearly a mixed emotion for George. As he told Mary in one letter: 'Everyone here comes up and asks news of you and others combine congratulations with condolences.'⁹⁹ George recorded one of the condolences he received from Harry White in a letter to Mary's mother:

It was of course a disappointment the child being a girl & for this I am ready to assume the full blame. But as Harry White (put) it in a letter the situation is fortunately by no means irretrievable! And now that I have vindicated myself from the assertions that you cast on me at Calcutta I feel that there is reason to hope.¹⁰⁰

This last line suggests that Mary's mother had blamed George for Mary's failure to conceive. Kitchener, responding to George's obvious desire for a son, offered Mary diplomatic reassurance both on her child and her husband:

I am so sorry it is a daughter as I think you would have preferred a son, but the main thing is that you are well again. I was driving with the Viceroy when he got the telegram he was so thankful you had got through all right. I had a long talk with him after dinner.¹⁰¹

For her part Mary was keen to acknowledge her gratitude to such well-wishers and to reassure them, of her happiness at the birth her third daughter. Thus, in response to Mary's reply to his letter Kitchener wrote: 'I am so glad to hear you are pleased with the young lady who has given so much trouble and hope you are now quite well and strong again.'¹⁰² Kitchener's support seems even more sensitive and tactful in comparison with the blunt response of Margot Asquith who told to Mary: 'I am sorry it's a girl and only hope you'll get well soon and have a boy.'¹⁰³

Margot Asquith was correct in judging the length of time that Mary would rest before she tried for another child. Despite Mary's love of her new child, having a son was still uppermost in her mind. Indeed, she did not let her recent disappointment or poor health slow her down and set about immediately planning for the next attempt. Mary had already informed George, prior to his return to England in May 1904 that she would have weaned Alexandra 'so as not to be tied down'.¹⁰⁴ Despite the short length of time after Alexandra's birth, Mary became pregnant again when George returned home. However, during the second half of August Mary had a miscarriage.

⁹⁹ LCP 27/115-118 March 31 1904 George to Mary

¹⁰⁰ LCP 13a/21-25 April 14 1904 George to Mrs Leiter

¹⁰¹ LCP 36a/160-161 March 24 1904 Kitchener to Mary

¹⁰² LCP 36a/43-168 April 5 1904 Kitchener to Mary,

¹⁰³ LCP 31/ 50-52 March 20 1904 Margot Asquith to Mary

¹⁰⁴ LCP 17/183-194 April 27 1904 Mary to George

The consequences of this miscarriage were almost fatal, and left Mary an invalid for many months.

Mary's illness became national news. As a society figure Mary had always attracted a certain degree of press attention both in America and England. As Vicereine Mary had discovered that the journalist 'spotlight' was never far from her. It is ironic that the one element of her life that Mary had attempted to keep hidden from newspaper reporters, her ill health, should become a subject of intense international interest.

A report in *The Globe* on September 23 1904 offers an example of the early reports:

The 'Daily Mail' states that nearly a month ago Lady Curzon was under medical treatment for some days, and had evidently not fully recovered when she went for a long motor car drive on Tuesday. It is understood that this set up a severe internal haemorrhage and early Wednesday morning Dr. Champneys was telegraphed for from London. Lady Curzon became worse during Wednesday night and yesterday her condition was almost comatose though at 10.30 last night a slight improvement was visible. Throughout the day Lord Curzon remained by the bedside. Acute peritonitis has, it is understood, supervened.¹⁰⁵

Twice daily bulletins were released to the press from Walmer Castle, and every stage of Mary's illness was analysed. The drama of the illness was recorded in gripping style; the public were presented with Mary, the beautiful American, society heiress fighting for her life with her husband at her side. Sir Thomas Barlow, physician to Queen Victoria, was cabled in Paris by George to attend Mary, and his rush to her bedside was well documented. The dramatic flight of Mary's mother and sister from

¹⁰⁵ The Globe, September 23 1904

America was also recorded in minute detail. Telegrams were flying in from all over the Empire, from members of the royal family and thousands of well wishers, enquiring after her health.

While speculations as to the causes of her illness were printed, none directly attributed the problem to a miscarriage. While the papers sometimes alluded to the fact that she had been 'ill' in August the main reason presented was a 'ride in a motor car'. The official cause of Mary's illness was attributed to a bad drain outside the bedroom window at Walmer Castle where Mary had been staying. However, in one surviving letter from Mary to Belle Herbert, Mary states that the 'troubles' began after her miscarriage.

Mary's ordeal was made all the worse by her knowledge that she had miscarried a male child. As she told Belle:

Belle did you ever know that all my troubles began my miscarrying a boy? – Is there anything left for me to bear? The three doctors who lived in the house a month say I should be dead by every law human divine surgical & medical, and that I am a law unto myself! I think the prayers and wonderful pity that thousands of people feel helped me. I am still ill with 4 viruses – but as soon as the doctor will let me see a visitor will dear Belle come and see poor Broken winged Mary?¹⁰⁶

Mary felt herself to be 'broken winged' and indeed she never recovered both emotionally and physically from the miscarriage. It is doubtful whether Mary would have survived without the aid of her medical team. A transcript of what George

thought would be her last words survives in which Mary relates her wishes for her funeral and directions for the care of her children. Mary also felt helped by ‘the prayers and wonderful pity that thousands of people feel’. Here she acknowledged one of the benefits of the profound popular press interest in her life and well-being and her decision to return to India in Feb 1905, was in part due to the sympathy she received there.

Despite being a semi-invalid, Mary returned to India. Mary stayed with George in Calcutta until she moved to Simla in April, accompanied by ADCs and Mouche Dunscombe who had, by that time, married Col. Baring the Military Secretary. However in April an earthquake rocked Simla and the surrounding countryside and tremors lasted for any days. Mary and the viceregal party escaped injury, but as Mary wrote to her mother at the time: ‘this has caused me a serious set back’.¹⁰⁷

Letters written by Mary to her Mother shortly after the earthquake, indicate that she was no longer chasing conception: ‘I hope I may have no more babies until I am safe in England. I have had all I can bear for a long time.’¹⁰⁸ Yet despite this decision Mary continued to take great joy in her children, which the following extract reveals, although again it ends on her heartfelt desire to avoid the ‘fall of kids’:

¹⁰⁶ Letter from Mary Curzon to Belle, Lady Michael Herbert, quoted in Montgomery, M., *Gilded Prostitution: Status, money, and transatlantic marriages, 1870-1914* (London: Routledge, 1989) p.231

¹⁰⁷ LCP 18/124-129 April 5 1905 Mary to George

¹⁰⁸ LCP 13a/105-108 April 15 1903 Mary to Mother

We are all well and settled into our new rooms in the undamaged wing of the house. Here I have the joy of the sweet children next to me and they can come in and slip into my bed & there I get a general smothering with little Sandra creeping all over me like a kitten. She jabbers & does all the sweet baby things that you love so well. I devoutly hope that I shall have no more babies until I am strong.¹⁰⁹

VI Conclusion

This chapter has charted the different elements of Mary's experience of maternity, ranging from concerns over fertility, to conception, pregnancy, confinement and birth. This chapter has drawn on Mary's own narrative to highlight actual experience, rather than the narrow accounts of motherhood that can be gleaned from medical histories. Drawing on actual experience reveals different elements of motherhood that histories, which focus on the medical professions approach to pregnancy and childbirth, ignore. This chapter has revealed emotional intensity and psychological burden that issues of motherhood carried at the turn of the century. Despite rewarding interactions in political and philanthropic fields, many women within Mary's circle carried similar burdens of motherhood, which Mary's narratives reveal.

This brings into question the role of motherhood within the 'incorporated wife' model that I have been using. As I concluded in the last chapter, the category of the 'incorporated wife' has a strong 'corporal' significance that has not been acknowledged. This has focused on women's engagement in areas previously regarded as 'public', at the expense of developing an understanding of areas previously seen as 'private' within the 'incorporated wife' model. The theory of

¹⁰⁹ LCP 13a/109-112 April 18 1905 Mary to Mother

‘separate spheres’ on the other hand, prioritises the ‘private’ life of women at the expense of engaging with her roles outside the home. The question remains therefore how to incorporate intimate histories of the body, whether sickness or maternity, into the model of the incorporated wife. A model, which has a number of strengths in addressing the public roles of women such as Mary Curzon

One method is to address maternity within the model of the ‘incorporated wife’ as a shared concern between the husband and wife, rather than being placed as the sole concern of a woman. In this chapter I have tried to present both Mary and George’s reactions to their family concerns. It can be seen that George and Mary readily discussed their family plans together, and this interaction gives a valuable insight into the way in which George and Mary negotiated her body. The incorporated wife model is a powerful one for a discussion of the social construction of womanhood and motherhood. Just as Mary was only in India through George’s appointment, we could also argue that Mary’s desire to bear a son was forced by George’s obsession for a son. Although Mary was accustomed to paternalistic models of inheritance (her own father settled a large sum of money on her) she was not naturally sympathetic to aristocratic models of inheritance. I would certainly read from Mary’s note to her father before her third child’s birth (see p.244) that she would have liked to overturn tradition and allow her eldest daughter to inherit the title and estate. Mary was constrained within her marriage to provide an heir. It is clear that George saw her viceregal role as secondary to her maternal role. The act of sending Mary to Europe

is indicative of this. Yet it is a testament to the agency of women within Mary's position that they negotiated the boundaries set by a paternalistic society.

This leads to a second area where the incorporated wife model might be broadened to include intimate histories, through developing a stronger sense of the spatial aspects of incorporation. For example, this chapter has demonstrated that Mary came home in 1901 to recuperate to aid fertility. By travelling 'home' George saw Mary travelling away from duty into a domestic setting where her health was the principal concern. Yet we see Mary travelling 'home' into a space where her political agency is exerted to its full. Her maternal concerns enabled her to act out her political agency, and as we have seen the summer of 1901 gave her the confidence to grow in the role when she returned to India. Thus the space of 'home', conceptualised as a space of health, gave Mary the opportunity to pursue her political activities. A more nuanced understanding of the ways in which intimate histories and activities in public life are intertwined broadens our idea of incorporation.

I have argued that Mary was not directly influenced by the political debates surrounding motherhood as an imperial concern, whose history has been described by Davin. However the scrutiny under which her body was placed in order to achieve healthy conceptions, reveals a certain filtering of ideas connected to the politicisation of the maternal body. The requirement for a healthy body for successful breeding relates directly to contemporary debates surrounding imperial motherhood.



Plate 25 – Mary Curzon with Irene and Cynthia
 Bourne and Shepard 28th January 1899
 OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/66 (2)



Plate 26 – Mary with Irene and Cynthia
 Alice Hughes c. Summer 1901
 Printed in Ladies Pictorial July 28 1906



Plate 27 - 'Mary and the two little
 princesses of Travencore'
 Photographer Unknown c. Autumn 1900
 Printed in The Lady's Realm, November
 1901

To conclude, I would argue that motherhood was an image that was embedded in Mary's role as a vicereine, at a symbolic level. Whilst Mary struggled to conceive and carry a child to term in her own life, photographic images of her as vicereine often marked her as a mother. Newspaper press often showed Mary photographed with her own children, Plates 25 and 26 were frequently reproduced. Occasionally, photographs in which Mary was pictured alongside Indian children were also published. Plate 27 shows Mary with the young princesses of Travencore. It should be remembered that Mary herself provided this plate for publication in the *Lady's Realm*, indicating her desire to be represented as an imperial maternal figure. Such images produced an intense visual association of the vicereine as a symbol of imperial motherhood. If Queen Victoria was the Empress of India, as Vicereine, Mary was perhaps the symbolic mother of India. Thus the model of the 'incorporated wife' can be embedded within intimate histories of motherhood.

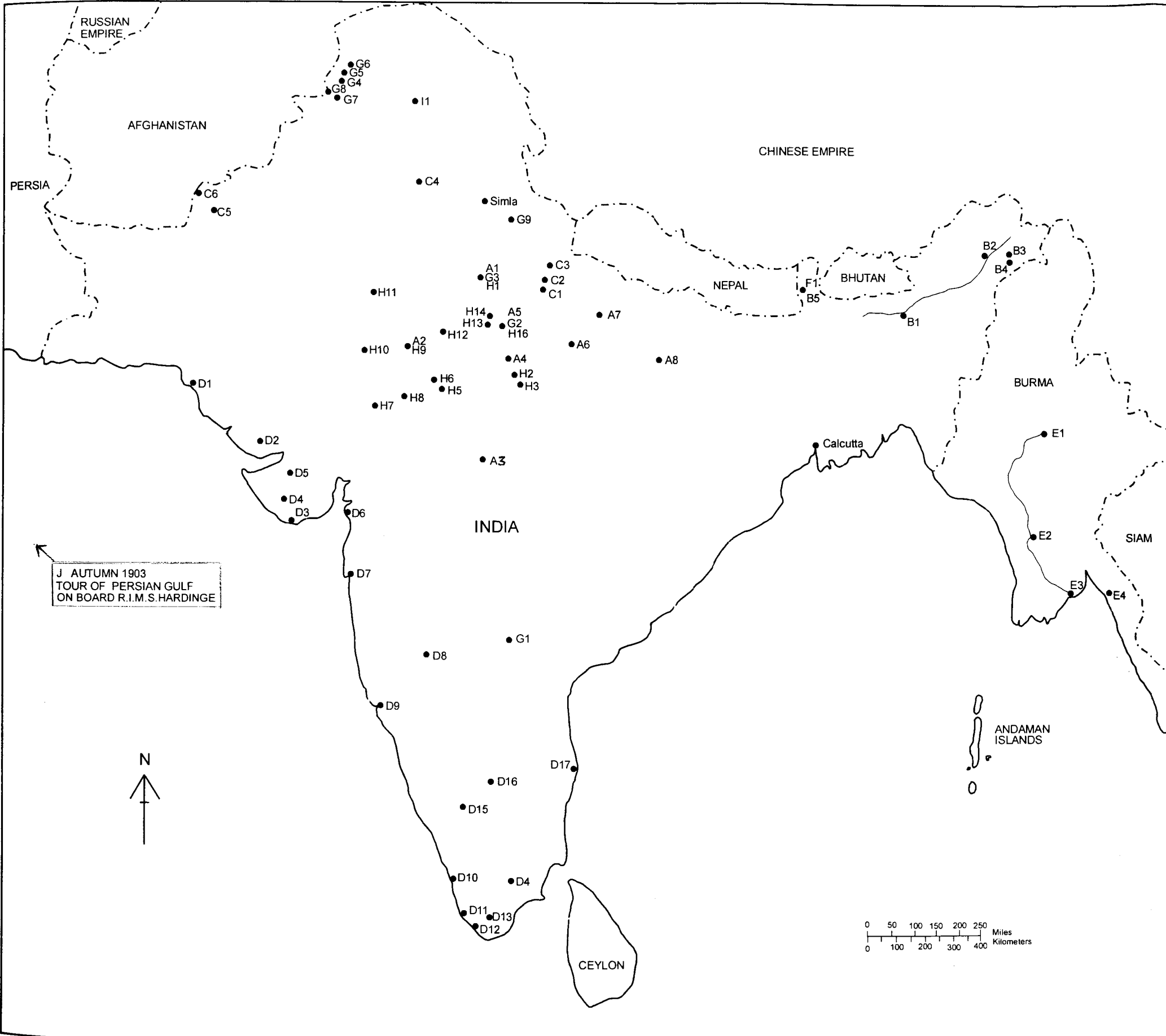
Chapter 6

India through the viceregal frame

I Introduction

Taking place in the spring and autumn months, extended tours of India lasted up to two months and acted as a link between the winter season spent in Calcutta and the summer season spent in Simla. Owing to the extensive railway network, the viceregal theatre of power could be brought to the furthest reaches of the country within weeks; a display that was orchestrated in the Indian provinces by the British residents, and played out by the Viceroy, the vicereine, and members of the household. The main areas of visitation within the Viceroy's tours were the princely states of India constituting about one third of India's landmass. Notionally autonomous, these states were ruled indirectly by the Raj, with 'residents' from the Indian Civil Service acting as advisors. The Viceroy's visit cemented the relationship of indirect rule. Designed to show the highlights of a region, the tours incorporated dramatic displays of all things 'oriental', specifically planned by their hosts and British residents in the princely states to satisfy the eye of the viceregal party, but also placed greater emphasis on displays of Imperial power.

This chapter will argue that the organisation of the 'tour', as a mode of travel, prompted a particular 'way of seeing' India. Map 1 plots the tours that Mary attended between 1899 – 1905, demonstrating her extensive travel throughout the country. After a tour that took her from Assam to the Northern Frontier Mary noted to her father that she had been to the two most Western and Eastern points



A	Autumn Tour 1899	I	August 1902
A1	Delhi	I1	Gulmarg, Kashmir
A2	Ajmere		
A3	Bhopal	H	Autumn Tour 1902
A4	Gwalior	H1	Delhi
A5	Agra	H2	Datia
A6	Cawnpore	H3	Jhansi
A7	Lucknow	H4	Orcha
A8	Benares	H5	Kota
		H6	Bundi
B	Spring Tour, Assam 1900	H7	Udipur
B1	Gauhati	H8	Chitor
B2	Dibrugarh	H9	Ajmere
B3	Digboi	H10	Jodhpur
B4	Margherita	H11	Bikaner
B5	Darjeeling	H12	Jaipur
		H13	Bharatpur
		H14	Dig
		H15	Muttra
		H16	Agra
C	Spring Tour, 1900	J	Tour of Persian Gulf, 1903
C1	Bareilly		
C2	Naini Tal		
C3	Lalkua		
C4	Amritsar		
C5	Quetta		
C6	Chaman		
D	Autumn Tour, 1900		
D1	Karachi		
D2	Bhuj		
D3	Diu		
D4	Junagarh		
D5	Rajkot		
D6	Surat		
D7	Bombay		
D8	Bijapur		
D9	Goa		
D10	Cochin		
D11	Quilon		
D12	Trivandrum		
D13	Tinnevely		
D14	Madura		
D15	Mysore		
D16	Bangalore		
D17	Madras		
E	Autumn Tour, Burma 1901		
E1	Mandalay		
E2	Prome		
E3	Rangoon		
E4	Moulmein		
F	Visit to Darjeeling February 1902		
F1	Darjeeling		
G	Spring Tour 1902		
G1	Hyderabad		
G2	Agra		
G3	Delhi		
G4	Dargai		
G5	Malakand		
G6	Khar		
G7	Peshawar		
G8	Landi Kotal		
G9	Dehra Dun		

MAP 1
Routes of Viceregal Tours attended by Mary Curzon, 1899 - 1903

in India inside a month' having endured 'about 4000 miles of travelling.'¹ This chapter explores the construction of the 'frame' through which Mary 'saw' India, which she described for different audiences in letters and tour journals. It begins by examining of the nature of the viceregal tour and analyses the production and reception of Mary's tour journals. From this basis, the viceregal 'frame' will be examined in three ways. First I consider the audience for whom Mary was writing during the tour of Assam in 1900. This also addresses Mary's role in creating the photographic record of the viceregal tour. The second strand addresses Mary's subjective understanding of the 'frame' in the context of the 1901 tour of Burma. I argue that moments of transgression beyond the confines of the viceregal way of seeing produced different encounters with India. Finally I examine the observations and judgements that Mary made during the 1902 Autumn Tour of the Central Provinces and Rajputana. This tour is distinctive as Mary made sustained comparative judgements about the places and people she encountered.

II The tour and imperial eyes

Cohn observes that in the pre-modern state, 'power was made visible through theatrical displays, in the form of processions, progresses, royal entries ... and other rituals that guaranteed the well being and continued power of the rulers over the ruled'.² While the process of modern state building added alternative forms of power such as taxation and the registration of people and property, ritual displays of power remained important. As an imperial power, the British process of state building in India took the form of the extension of executive procedures

¹ LCP 43/93 April 9 1900 Tour Journal

² Cohn, (1996)

and through ritual displays, exemplified during the Viceroy's tours, designed to ensure that the many constituents of the area of visitation had contact with the Viceroy. The Viceroy was presented to the local population on arrival in the form of a procession, as Mary understood noting in her journal that: 'George rode through the Native Town to show himself to the populace'.³ Audiences, durbars, investitures and dinners were organised to enable the Viceroy to meet the princes, discuss and resolve political issues. Garden parties, sporting events, balls and dinners were held to ensure the local British community met their Viceroy. Hospitals were opened and school prize givings attended to display the 'pastoral' arm of the Raj. The tour programme also ensured that the viceregal eye was cast over the economic and cultural features of an area, hence the visiting of tea plantations and temples formed a vital part of the tour programme.

The level of planning illustrates the extent to which the tour was an orchestrated theatre of power. Prior to the tour a detailed guidebook was printed and distributed to all parties involved with organisation and management.⁴ Firstly the guide listed a daily travel programme that detailed the exact mode of transport and the arrival and departure times at specific railway stations and junctions. The guide continued by listing all activities to be undertaken from presentations, durbars, excursions and meal times with a timetabled plan for each event. Members of the viceroy's party were given detailed information of their accommodation. Attention was placed on issues of precedence and protocol from

³ LCP 43/65 December 9 1899 Tour Journal

⁴ See Office of the Military Secretary to the Viceroy, *Viceregal Tours in India from March 1899 to April 1904* (Calcutta: Government of India, 1905) OIOC MSS Eur F112/473; also Office of the Military Secretary to the Viceroy, *Autumn Tour Guides 1899, 1902* (Calcutta: Government of India) MSS Eur F111/273

carriage processions on arrival in at specific destinations to the number of guns to be fired on the arrival of a Maharaja at a durbar. Tables displayed where mail from England should be sent, on what day, depending on the precise arrival of the steamer from England. After such logistics, the guidebook gave detailed regional information on topographical features, historical notes and information on specific cultural features to be visited; contemporary information on the military presence within a given area, an inventory of the population including religious composition, while transport and communications networks were also given prominence. Finally, a map slotted into the back cover of the guidebook indicated the travel route. In short the tour guide represented the working manual of the tour that would be followed by all who played a part in the theatre of power, both the rulers and the ruled.

While the logistics of the Viceroys tours represented the colonial order, the visual impact of the Viceroy's power was gained in most part from the extent to which the local Indian ruler embraced the Viceroy's visit and the tour guide gives little indication of the extent of the hosts' co-operation. Mary's journals indicate that the tours offered the chance for the Viceroy to re-enact elements of the Moghul traditions of power albeit in a bastardised form. Just as the British had adopted elements such as the durbar, the rituals of Moghul ceremonial processions were adapted during viceregal processions. The first Autumn Tour to the Central Provinces illustrates the manner in which the viceregal party enacted elements of Moghul processions. Mary described a sightseeing visit to the Sanchi Topi in the following manner:



Plate 28 – 'On the Road to Sanchi Tope'. 'View of the Curzons in the howdah of a state elephant'

Deen Dayal c. 1899

OIOC Photo 430/17 (22)

We went one hour by train to Sanchi where we slept, and this morning to see to the Tope – a Buddhist Temple. A dozen elephants in gorgeous howdahs and hangings were ranged on the platform of the station, and George and I got on the hugest. As the elephant had to climb up hills and steps we swayed in our howdah like a skiff out at sea and I laughed till I cried... I was carried back to the train in a golden dhoolie, as it had begun to be hot.⁵

Plate 28 illustrates this scene. The incorporation of the elephant procession complete with a ‘golden dhoolie’ recovery unit into what was essentially a sightseeing expedition indicates that no occasion within a tour was too insignificant to merit being dignified by a traditional symbol of authority. The beneficence of the local ruler in supplying this form of transport was essential.

Mary’s journals reflect what Cohn describes as an ‘observational/travel modality’ through which she recorded what was significant to her eye, within a context of what she felt would be of interest to her audience. While this awareness of audience is part of the conventional travel-writing genre I argue that as a mode of travel, the viceregal tour encouraged a distinct ‘way of seeing’ revealed in the type of observations that Mary made. The organisation of the viceregal tour encouraged a viewing position that adopted the masculine gaze within the ‘monarch-of-all-I-survey’ genre and this is the trope that is most frequently adopted by Mary in her journal. Mary Louise Pratt identifies three conventions that typify this viewing position.⁶ The first concerns the way in which the landscape is aestheticized. Seen as a painting the landscape is given compositional order, described in terms of its fore, middle and back ground and

⁵ LCP 42/24 November 28 1899 Tour Journal

⁶ Pratt, M.L., *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London: Routledge, 1992) p.204

aesthetic pleasure is inscribed into this description to constitute the value of the scene to the observer. The second convention of the genre represents the landscape as 'extremely rich in material and semantic substance' with 'depth of meaning' given through the addition of adjectives and the addition of colour expressions such as 'snowy foam' which tie the description to the familiar landscapes of the home.⁷ The final convention is informed by the metaphor of the painting. The observer both views, judges and appreciates the scene, finally representing it for an audience. This relationship between 'viewer-painter' is a relationship of 'mastery', as Pratt argues implies that the viewer 'has the power if not to possess, at least to evaluate' the scene.⁸

The conventions of the 'monarch-of-all-I-survey' genre within travel writing dates from the development of a 'way of seeing' in the Renaissance informed by Cartesian perspectives.⁹ As Pinney argues this 'way of seeing' informed traveller's observations as '[o]ne important function of this methodization [the adoption of Cartesian perspectivalism] occurring during the sixteenth century was to produce the object of travel as a pictorial surface and the outward and return journey as parts of the picture frame.'¹⁰ Manuals published to direct travellers on the correct form of travel encouraged a systematic encounter with other societies and evaluated the information received. The regulated 'way of seeing' encouraged the convention central to the creation of the 'monarch-of-all-I-survey' genre. As Timothy Mitchell suggests, travellers to the 'Orient' had the

⁷ Pratt, (1992) p.204

⁸ Pratt, (1992) p.205

⁹ See Cosgrove, D., *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape* (London: Croom Helm, 1984); Pinney, C., 'Future Travel, Anthropology and Cultural Distance in an Age of Virtual Reality Or A past seen from a possible future', in Taylor, L. (ed.), *Visualising Theory: Selected Essays from V.A.R.* (New York: Routledge, 1994) p.413

‘notion of an “imaginary” structure’ that existed before their journey.¹¹ In order to make sense of the visual chaos found on arrival the viewer tried to compose the world, stepping back, controlling chaos through different representations such as the taking of a photograph, painting or travel writing.¹² Pinney suggest that these methods, an extension of the extension the practice of going to the top of a hill and looking over, gaining distance and perspective from the vision ‘exemplifies that Cartesian need to see things as a “whole”, as a picture’ searching for an omnipresent ‘point of view’. He also notes that to ‘raise the possibility of the ‘picture’ is to presuppose a frame’. Drawing on the work of art historian John Berger, Pinney interrogates the rise of the frame in relationship to the framing of the world as a picture by travel writers. Berger notes:

The frame emphasises that within its four edges the picture has established an enclosed, coherent and absolutely rigorous system of its own, The frame marks the frontier of composition and pictures illusory but all pervasive three-dimensional space constitutes the rigid laws of this order.¹³

The conventions of the ‘monarch-of-all-I-survey genre’, enabled travellers to order their picture, to place a frame around the chaos. Yet other conventional modes of encounter also informed way images were composed, most notably in Mary Curzon’s case, the framing presence of the tour guide manual. The viceregal frame of encounter is a crucial one in addressing the way in which Mary responded to and represented India in her journals. The organisation and

¹⁰ Pinney, (1994) p.413

¹¹ Mitchell, T., *Colonising Egypt* (California: University of California Press, 1988) p.21

¹² Mitchell, (1988) pp 21-22, see also Gregory, D., ‘Between the book and the lamp: imaginative geographies of Egypt, 1849-50’, *Transactions of the Institute of British Geography*, NS 20 (1995) pp.29-57. Also quoted in Pinney, (1994)

¹³ Berger, J., *Ways of Seeing* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books and BBC publishing, 1972) p. 219 cited in Pinney, (1994) p.417

management of the tour acts as a frame, bounding the correct way that the Viceroy and his entourage would see India.

As an organised spectacle, the viceregal tour could be seen as directing Mary towards a masculine colonial gaze. Feminist geographers such as Gillian Rose have questioned such gendered nature of the 'way of seeing' landscapes suggesting that rather than adopt an omniscient dominating masculine gaze; women tend to see 'landscapes in relation to their domestic spaces and their networks of interaction'.¹⁴ Sara Mills argues that Rose's critique of the gendered gaze does not work well in a colonial context: 'the women's gaze in this context is mastering, not in a simple aping of a male gaze, but in a more complex negotiation of their position within a power hierarchy instituted through colonisation'.¹⁵ Mill's view certainly bears weight in an analysis of Mary's tour narratives, her adoption of the 'mastery of all I survey' genre is central to her diaries, and also reveals her negotiation of race and gender within an imperial context which she grappled to understand through her writing.

Mary's journal reveals that she privileged her visual impression over other sensory experiences of travelling. She does not comment on smell at any point, and only notes sounds when they overwhelm her for example the experience of driving through a crowd with firecrackers being thrown under her carriage.¹⁶ While Mary privileged sight, her journal indicates that her experience of touring

¹⁴ Rose

¹⁵ Mills, S., 'Gender and Colonial Space', *Gender Place and Culture*, 3 (1996) p.132. See Rose, (1993) pp.86-112

¹⁶ LCP 42/76 November 12 1900 Tour Journal

was also perceived through different bodily responses from illness to tiredness suggesting elements of her response could not be controlled within a viceregal frame. As Chapter 4 (see page 194) showed Mary often edited these bodily experiences of travelling from her journal in order to ensure the maintenance of a healthy body image to her audience at home. By editing such responses Mary indicates her privileging of the 'correct' way of seeing. Yet attention should be paid to her bodily response as it represents another way of reclaiming landscape away from its association with vision.¹⁷

III Production and reception of the viceregal way of seeing

While Mary was on tour she wrote a 'journal letter'.¹⁸ Written daily, or occasionally at the end of a short tour, the journal was posted at the end of the week to her family and family-in-law. The context, in which Mary was creating her journal, bears on the extent to which her audience shaped her reflections and the established conventions of journal keeping and travel writing, may have influenced her style.

That Mary's journal had an audience, her family and family-in-law, places it firmly beyond that of a private journal, and into a more public arena. From one of the first letters that Mary wrote to her mother from India it is clear that she did not intend to publish her journals:

We are still all well - you mention my writing a ~~book~~ journal which can be turned into a journal [book] this I shall never do. I

¹⁷ See Nash, C., 'Reclaiming Vision: looking at landscape and the body', *Gender, Place and Culture*, 3 (1996) pp.149-169

¹⁸ LCP 43/121 November 4 1900 Tour Journal

abhor publicity so that I shall write nothing but private letters to you all & regard yours as the same.¹⁹

Mary's journal followed a practice that had emerged in the eighteenth century - an ongoing, daily dated letter, addressed to a recipient which functioned simultaneously as a journal and as correspondence, the writer retaining a copy as a personal record'.²⁰ It is evident from Mary's correspondence that she did not keep a personal copy for herself.²¹ The journal that Mary sent to her family is found in Volume 43 of the Lady Curzon Papers.

Mary initially began her journal as soon as she went to India, recording her first impressions of her new life in India on the January 12 1899 from Government House, Calcutta. The first letter found in Volume 43 reflects her audience giving a hint of Mary's style of letter journal writing that develops over the course of the next 4 years:

My dear ~~Blanche~~ *precious Mother and Nancy and Daisy,*
George *and I* received all your letters to him yesterday, and he
has asked me to write to you for all *you* [and] the girls to read.²²

Mary's journal letter was typed, and then sent to her family. Originally written to Blanche, George's sister, Mary had a second copy of the journal made and re-addressed it to her Mother and sisters, making the appropriate alterations to the text in pen. George had obviously prompted this original letter, yet Mary continued for the next two months, January and February 1899, describing the official viceregal life in the early months of office in addition to weekly 'personal' letters to her family.

¹⁹ LCP 8/72-73 December 29 1898 Mary to Mother

²⁰ Blodgett, (1989) p.24

After these first two months, the daily journal from Calcutta stopped, and started again as a journal written while Mary was on tour. The journal constituted the principal weekly communication with her family with personal comments at the end of the letter journal removing the need for a second letter conveying 'personal' news.

Mary's journal was presented in type written form, with the addressee's name, any personal news and greetings added by hand. A comment by Mary at the end of the first letter journal indicates the process by which Mary composed her text:

'The mistakes in this are due to the assistant private sec [secretary] taking it down'.²³ Mary would perhaps have either written a rough copy of the daily letter journal or dictated her journal to a secretary, who then typed it, returned it to Mary who would presumably have personalised it before posting.

Comparing volumes 42 and 43, it is possible to see that Mary wanted to add much more to her typed letter journal than just personal detail before sending. The journal that was sent to Mary's family is found in Volume 43, typed onto letter paper. Volume 42 contains a rough copy of the typed journal, heavily annotated with Mary's handwriting. I would suggest that these were the changes that Mary wished to make to the first draft of her journal. Although the journal that Mary sent to family members did not contain all the changes she may have wished to make, she did annotate the content of her journal - adding additional

²¹ LCP 13a/57-58 September 3 1904 Mary to Mother. Mary asked her mother to have a copy made of her letter journal sent to her so it could be kept for the children, and complained that George's family had lost their copy

²² LCP 43/1 January 12 1899 Tour Journal

²³ LCP 43/7 January 12 1899 Tour Journal

description, extended paragraphs of anecdote and personal information at the end of the letter.

The revisions that Mary makes to the text falls into different categories. The first concerns Mary striking out words within a sentence, or whole sentences. The following examples indicate the common occasions where she deleted certain words. Each revision has a particular meaning. Mary was clearly aware when re-reading that she wished to alter certain initial impressions. For example Mary frequently removed indicators of weakness or illness from her record:

I did not go as they stayed at Bhuj only 24 hours and drove back again the next day, I thought two quiet days at sea better ~~for me~~ ~~after the fatigues of Karachi~~ than the blistering plain of Kutch.²⁴

A second area where Mary simply removed words concerns phrases that may appear as a harsh judgement or where she was looking on scenes with irony; perhaps upon reflection Mary considered her words unsuitable:

~~We got to Umballa at 8 and dined with the head policeman who has the safety of the Viceroy on his shoulders, and this seemed a small task compared to his efforts to keep a glass eye in his head which kept of the verge of bursting out; and the train officials dined with us~~ *We started and stopped at Umballa* and after dinner which General MacDonald and Colonel Townsend came to see us.²⁵

This last example went through two editions. By placing numbers above the words Mary indicated the change in sentence structure that she wanted. However, having made a first alteration Mary then entirely cut the comments on the unfortunate policeman's glass eye.

²⁴ LCP 42/67 October 28 1900 Tour Journal

²⁵ LCP 42/12 October 27 1899 Tour Journal

On many occasions Mary added additional descriptions to her journal, sometimes over the top of sentences, at other times writing extensively down the margin of the page:

The Rao (*or Maharaja*) of Cutch drove all the 36 miles back with George, as he was so disappointed at my not coming to his State that he begged to be allowed to come to the ship and make his salaam. *So he came on board with George & is charming & speaks perfect English and has been to England twice.*²⁶

However, occasionally Mary also simply crossed a line through swathes of text without replacing descriptions. In addition, Mary began or signed off her letters with a personal comment, such as:

*We have now got to Rajkot the thermometer is 115 so I must put off writing any more till I get cool which I despair of ever doing. Do write and tell me if you like my journal letters as I work so hard over them for my darlings.*²⁷

Although Mary sent her letter journal to her in-law's references within the text indicate that Mary's principal audience was her own family. For example, Mary compared forests or rivers through which she travelled to American equivalents, thus revealing how she made an unfamiliar landscape comprehensible to her own eyes and to those of her American audience:²⁸

The ride through the forest is perfectly beautiful. Trees are magnificent *beautiful* and seem as fine and as immense as the tall pines in California.²⁹

That Mary was writing principally for her own family brings the question of nationality and audience more closely together. As letters that were written to Mary by her own family have not survived, it is impossible to tell how they

²⁶ LCP 42/68 November 1 1900 Tour Journal

²⁷ LCP 43/121 November 4 1900 Tour Journal

received and responded to the descriptions of India that she wrote to them. However a letter from Mary's American journalist friend, G.W. Smalley indicates the extent to which India featured in the American imagination:

I try to imagine you in your new life but I have no frame to put you into. India is to me a perfectly unknown country...They all say you are magnificent in your new place which I believe but you are very remote and I cling to memories I have.³⁰

That India should be a 'perfectly unknown country' reveals the difference between the popular understanding of the Empire in Britain at the same time, and of a country like America, which had few direct links with India. Mary's letters to Smalley enabled him to develop a frame to put her in, yet he implied that this was not the completed frame of India that he had clearly imagined from some prior knowledge:

I wrote you I had no frame to fit you in, but your description of Simla is so vivid that I can imagine you in this strange scene much better than ever expected to till I had seen it with you: seeing it with your eyes is the next best thing ... When you come to see the real India, the India of the ages and not that which the English have made in their own image. I hope you will tell me about it, I mean about your impression.³¹

That Smalley should note the difference between the 'real India, the India of the ages' and Mary's descriptions of her life in India indicate that he has some notion of what 'India' was.

²⁸ See McEwan, C., Paradise or pandemonium? 'West African landscapes in the travel accounts of Victorian women', *Journal of Historical Geography*, 22 (1996) pp.76-77; Duncan, (1999) pp.151-163

²⁹ LCP 42/6 September 18 1899 Tour Journal

³⁰ LCP 32/29-34 June 17 1899 G.W. Smalley to Mary

³¹ LCP 32/35-42 June 22 1899 G.W. Smalley to Mary

Drawing on works from American poets, essayists and novelists, B.G.Gokhale has explored the image of India in the American mind.³² Gokhale argues that India and America 'built their own separate lives impinging on each others' consciousness only peripherally' yet when a point of contact was made the impressions were enduring.³³ American missionaries and Transcendental thinkers conveyed two diverse impressions of India, one based on an intolerance of superstitious religions the other developing an 'idealised structure' of India that was 'built with selected parts of ancient Indian literature and philosophy'.³⁴ By the mid-nineteenth century Gokhale notes India was 'more an idea than a living and actual place ... a far away land, teeming with millions who are generally very poor, of climate that is harsh, lofty mountains and sacred rivers, of sublime religiosity but bizarre rituals and offensive social taboos and convention'.³⁵

The transference of America into a colonial power following the Spanish American Civil War of 1889-1899 shifted the popular and official American attitude towards the British Empire, becoming more sympathetic to the imperial process couched in term of the civilising mission. Images of India came directly from British sources, whether through the newspapers and the Foreign Office; 'Americans now looked at India through British eyes'.³⁶ Where transcendentalist ideas had tempered the negative stereotypes of India in the past, by the end of the nineteenth century the 'usual stereotypes about India, heat and dust, wild animals

³² Gokhale, B.G., *India in the American Mind* (Bombay: Popular Prakashan, 1992) p.1

³³ Gokhale, (1992) p.1

³⁴ Gokhale, (1992) p.27

³⁵ Gokhale (1992), p.27

³⁶ Gokhale (1992), p.30

and deadly reptiles, strange religions and demeaning customs, fatalism, poverty, disease and destructive natural forces, still persisted'.³⁷

Smalley was probably more educated than Mary's own family and was aware of the 'India of ages' through the transcendentalists' understanding of the history and philosophy of India, yet still not comfortable enough with India to have a 'frame' in which to fit Mary. Mary's role at the turn of the twentieth century in bringing India to the foreground of the American imagination should not be underestimated. Although her personal letters and family letter journals only informed a small circle in America, a larger American audience were reading about their 'American Vicereine' in newspapers and magazine journals.³⁸ It will be seen that Mary fed her smaller audience with images of India which attempted to place the focus away from presenting British India, but concentrated on what Smalley would describe as the 'India of ages', an India which already had a position in the American imagination based on stereotypes, which Mary's own descriptions perpetuated.

IV The audience at 'home' of the 1900 Tour of Assam

In March 1900 the viceregal household sailed for two weeks on the *Buzzard* up the Bhamaputra River through Assam, stopping and travelling inland to different destinations. Mary wrote an extensive journal and also described the tour in letters to Queen Victoria and Cecil Spring Rice. This is only tour for which a

³⁷ Gokhale (1992), p.35 .

³⁸ Ralph, J., 'An American Sovereign Part IV', *Harpers Weekly*, June 10 1899

supplementary written archive sources in the form of letters to alternative audiences has been found.

Letters to Queen Victoria and Cecil Spring Rice start in the same manner. To Queen Victoria, Mary revealed: 'We have just returned from our tour to Assam which we enjoyed very much. Assam is the forgotten corner of India and no Viceroy had ever been to the Northern wilds where we went'.³⁹ In a similar vein to Cecil Spring Rice: 'Just this minute we have been to Assam – to the very “back of beyond” and we had a splendid time.'⁴⁰ Mary's focus on the remote nature of their tour implies a sense of adventure, an attempt to frame the tour within a travel narrative of exploration.

Mary explained to Queen Victoria how '[w]e made most of our Assam journey on the Bhamaputra river and only went inland to see mines or tea gardens. We had very hard work and went to every important town and completed the tour in a fortnight'.⁴¹ Mary also revealed that 'the enormous pleasure the visit seemed to give to the few English settlers pleased us immensely. I took the greatest pains to meet every English woman living in the districts we went to'.⁴² An image of a tour based around the visiting of the industrial features emerges with a focus on meeting the English settlers working in the area. Her letter to Cecil Spring Rice expands slightly on this brief description of the tour adding the varied topics of conversations from underclothing to Hindu texts and communicating her

³⁹ RA 07/46 March 18 1900 Mary to Queen Victoria

⁴⁰ CASR 1/30/4 March 19 1900 Mary to Cecil Spring Rice

⁴¹ R.A. 07/46 March 18 1900 Mary to Queen Victoria

⁴² R.A. 07/46 March 18 1900 Mary to Queen Victoria

enjoyment of putting people at ease.⁴³ Mary added that ‘We varied addresses of welcome & durbars and banquets at all times of the day and night by fishing (at least I did) and sightseeing’.⁴⁴

Placed alongside the tour journals, these letters reveal Mary’s different audiences. Two editions of the Assam tour journal survive, both edited by Mary one sent to her family (volume 43) and the other a rough draft (volume 42). They share the same typed text, but incorporate different editions both through the deletion and addition of text. Irrespective of the changes that Mary had made, it is clear that Mary’s meeting of the British settlers, particularly the women, were given more emphasis in letters to both Queen Victoria and Cecil Spring Rice than in those to her family. One of the most revealing revisions that Mary made regarding the meetings with British women is found in Volume 42. Having visited a tea plantation near Tezpur, the centre of the tea industry in Assam Mary attended a banquet held by the tea planters:

[A]t 8 we went ashore to the great banquet given to us by the tea planters. ~~This was a formidable function as 100 *people* were present, and we shook hands with them all~~ and after dinner an address was read by Colonel Buckingham and George replied ~~and then~~ while the men smoked I met all the ladies, Mrs Cotton did not know any names so I walked round by myself and talked to each, There were only 20 and they were all ~~exceptionally nice~~ *charming*. We only got back to the ship at about midnight.⁴⁵

Mary initially edited the version slightly (as shown above), and then struck out the entire paragraph, writing a note by its side to ‘*enlarge on tea planting*’. Clearly Mary decided that the description of the banquet was of little interest to

⁴³ CASR 1/30/4 March 19 1900 Mary to Cecil Spring Rice

⁴⁴ CASR 1/30/4 March 19 1900 Mary to Cecil Spring Rice

⁴⁵ LCP 42/45 March 9 1900 Tour Journal

her family and that a description of the tea planting would be more appropriate. This is an extreme example of Mary editing out her contact with the English community, but throughout the journal her comments on meeting English women are cursory, simply stating that for example in meeting a group of 50 people on a railway platform that 'one lady supported me', or commenting on a tea party given by Mr Fitzgerald whose wife had made all the cakes herself.⁴⁶ These comments give no indication that Mary discussed 'baby food', let alone her discussion with Queen Victoria that she thought it was a disappointment that the children of these families had been sent to England.

The sentences that Mary struck from her journal often indicate the main object of Mary's real interest. A striking out sometimes indicates a matter of inappropriate interest, offering a blander alternative in its place. Such an occasion occurred when the viceregal household went by train to Margherita:

There we were met by Mr and Mrs Holder a tea planter and his *typically delightful* wife and who we are to stay ~~and are the managers of the local coal mines.~~ *The train stopped at a decorated platform covered with people.* ~~More picturesque than all these were the crowds~~ *Outside were hundreds* of wild hill tribes in their gala attire grouped about the station. The largest of these tribes and one which still goes in for human sacrifice ... The men of the tribe were dressed in feathers and shells and carried leather shields and long spears ... Beside the groups of Nagas a fantastic Buddhist priest and his following sat under Chinese umbrellas counting it saying their amber bead rosaries. One of the ~~priests~~ *Lamas* beat a tomtom *another waved a fan behind the head of another a Yaks tail* and the whole made a very picturesque picture. While we gazed at the old Buddhist and ~~I photographed him~~ he showed ~~sighs of interest in~~ *extreme interest in* us.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ LCP 42/45 March 9 1900; LCP 42/44 March 7 1900 Tour Journal

⁴⁷ LCP 42/43 March 7 1900 Tour Journal

The thrust of Mary's revisions indicates that the local people were more 'picturesque' than the decorated platform and her lengthy descriptions give a strong indication of the sort of local colour that she wanted her family to receive about Assam. Mary offered her audience sensational details of human sacrifice and an ethnographic emphasis on elements of material culture of the Naga tribe and contrasted them with the images of the Buddhist priests. The tableaux organised outside the station of Naga's and Buddhist priests is characteristic of the staged displays that Mary witnessed on tour. On this occasion Mary went a stage further and materially framed the scene by taking a photograph of the Buddhist priests noting explicitly that it made a 'picturesque' image, although this information is struck from her journal. Mary's amendment that the Buddhist priest showed 'extreme' interest in the viceregal party indicates her surprise. The exhibits on display, the priests, were not meant to look back at the viceregal party thus betraying their silence and their subservience.

Instead of accompanying George on a visit to an oil factory and coal mine the following day, Mary rested at her host's bungalow. Mary does not normally expand on what she did when she was alone in her journal, however on this occasion she wrote a short typed journal entry and expanded her description in a written note alongside:

I stayed behind at the Holder's bungalow and photograph[ed] Nagas and [saw?] Orchids. I got some wonderful Naga chiefs braves and put all the most fascinating dress on one man and he made a magnificent show. ^x Captain Baker-Carr grouped them, and Mr. Holder explained that the camera wasn't the evil eye.

^x *& they showed great fear of the Camera and Ld Suffolk Mr Holder did have to assure them that it was not the evil eye . After worrying them a great deal with poses and light I asked*

*Mr Holder what I could do to reward them. They would hear of no gratuity it was a sufficient honour to be photographed by the great Lady Sahib. This high chivalry was unexpected in these tribal hill areas.*⁴⁸

In her journal a line has been put through this scene, and the information that Mary photographed the Buddhist priest at the station is also struck out. By crossing out this text, Mary denies her role as a photographer. Whether it was the subject matter that was thought inappropriate or the activity of the Vicereine photographing is unclear. This is the only recorded occasion in the tour journal of ethnographic photography, or indeed the only time in which Mary dwells on the subject of her photography and the response to it. Mary makes much of the 'savage hill tribe' later describing her visits to three missionaries who were attempting to convert the Naga's who 'go in for devil worship only.'⁴⁹

It is clear that Mary was taking pictures purely for their 'picturesque' quality and not for a scientific purpose - although the composition of her photographs would clearly draw from the ethnographic tradition. Mary's act in forming the 'braves' into poses and putting 'all the most fascinating articles of dress on one man' resulting in a 'fantastic show' is indicative of the attitude Mary had in regarding these people as items on display. Mary's talk of the 'evil eye' is the phenomenon that she would have encountered in other writings, and from the fact that she does not explain this statement in her journal it can be concluded that her audience would have been comfortable with the expression. Mary's use of the term the 'evil eye' also indicates that she was viewing herself as a

⁴⁸ LCP 42/43 March 8 1900 Tour Journal

⁴⁹ LCP 42/48 March 13 1900 Tour Journal



Plate 29 – Naga Warrior, Assam
Mary Curzon, March 1900
OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/75 (94)



A NAGA CHIEF.
From a Photograph taken by Her Excellency Lady Curzon.
(By kind permission.)

Plate 31 – A Naga Chief
Mary Curzon, March 1900
The Empress, April 1900



Plate 30 – Naga Warriors, Assam
Mary Curzon, March 1900
OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/75 (95)

photographer within an ethnographic tradition. Her comment on the Naga tribes refusal to accept gratuities for the 'honour of being photographed by the great Lady Sahib' as being akin to 'high chivalry...unexpected in these tribal hill areas' indicates a conflict between her representation of the hill tribes as savage and their manners which she recognises as 'civilised'.

While Mary edited her descriptions of the Nagas' in her journal, photographs of them survive in her family photograph album. Illustrated in Plate 29 and 30 these offer an example of the ethnographic style photography of the period. The edition of the picture newspaper *The Empress* that followed the Viceroy's tour of Assam printed images of the Naga tribe people that were attributed to 'The Vicereine'.⁵⁰ Plate 31 is identical to Plate 29. Other images attributed to the Vicereine printed in *The Empress* illustrate less stylised groups of people, who are none the less posing indicated by the direction of the eyes into the camera. That Mary offered her photographic efforts to be printed in the picture newspaper indicates an acceptance of her photographic ability, which contrasts to its erasure in her journal. That these images were printed also indicates that *The Empress* at least was being directed from the centre of the viceregal household. Not only was the tour organised from the viceregal household but also the official version of the tour published in the newspaper press also originated from the centre of the household.⁵¹

⁵⁰ *The Empress* April 1902

⁵¹ Mary arranged a subscription of *The Empress* for her parents ensuring they could follow her footsteps across India.

Mary's understanding of the 'wild hill tribes', one of whom being the 'Naga tribe', is cursory.⁵² Mary's reference to their savage practices relates to practice of the dismembering of an enemies head as a trophy within inter-Naga tribal warfare. It is understood that the practice of head taking during warfare was a ritual associated with a village's fertility. However the practice of head taking proved an intractable problem for Government officials until independence. It has been estimated that on average 90 heads were taken each year between 1902 and 1905 in 'a stretch of border country 30 miles long'.⁵³ It is certainly unsurprising that Mary should emphasise this point to her audience.

Mary's ethnographic photography feeds into a longer history of ethnographic analysis within the colonial project. In Assam and more widely in India ethnographic analysis had made great use of photographic techniques, most notably in recording and classifying racial types in 'The 'People of India' project. From her journals, it would appear that this was the only occasion on which Mary carried out this type of photography.⁵⁴

V Gazing through and transgressing from the viceregal frame

If Mary's tour journals are placed within the context of her life, rather than being read independently as travel writing it is clear that the failed conception of her

⁵² See Jacobs, J. [et al.], *Hill peoples of North-East India: The Nagas, Society, Culture and the Colonial Encounter* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1990)

⁵³ Jacobs, (1990) p.142

⁵⁴ For racial types see: Stocking, G.W., *Victorian Anthropology* (London: Free Press, Collier Macmillan, 1987). Also Ryan, (1997) p.140-182 and Edwards, E. (ed.), *Anthropology and Photography 1860-1920* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992)

return from Europe in 1901 enabled Mary to carry out her viceregal duties on tour to Burma in November 1901 (see above p.232). While Mary may have told George during the summer of 1901 to assume she would attend the tour it is clear from the official tour timetable that her presence was not anticipated. Her name is not on the list of participants in the tour, nor are her engagements noted.⁵⁵ The last minute engagements made for Mary were detailed in a letter from George, received on her arrival in Rangoon. The engagements listed gave prominence to those shared with the British community in Mandalay, namely a garden party and the opening of a bazaar and organised sight seeing tours. Although George offered these suggestions tentatively, it is clear that these were Mary's expected duties whilst she is in Mandalay. In reply to these suggestions Mary wrote:

I will of course go to Bazaar and Garden Party and do every mortal thing I can - I am little enough use in the world and only too glad to be other than idle.⁵⁶

The implications of Mary's words are clear. Her failure to conceive left Mary with feelings of worthlessness, which could only be salved through her imperial duties. Mary's journal gives no indication that her presence on tour was only as a result of a failed conception, the disappointment masked by the embrace of imperial duty. This example indicates the importance of reading travel writing within the context of a life rather than in a vacuum.

Although the arrangements that George made for Mary in Mandalay revolved around the English community, within her journal Mary placed a low priority on

⁵⁵ See Office of the Military Secretary to the Viceroy, (1905)

⁵⁶ LCP 16/187-201 [Undated] Mary to George



Plate 32 – Lady Curzon opening bazaar at Mandalay
Photographer Unknown
OIOC Reverend Charles William Hodder Collection Photo 741/3 (26)

describing these official duties to her audience at home. Indeed her only allusion to the British community was cursory:

I did many commonplace things in Mandalay, such as open bazaars, go to Garden Parties and attend nightly dinner parties, but they do not come into the picture as they offer no variety.⁵⁷

In contrast, where George noted in passing that ‘I think it would be a tactful thing if you were to see the ex-princesses of the Royal Family ... they would be very gratified if you paid them a little attention’⁵⁸ Mary expanded this in great length detailing the minutiae of this visit to her audience at home.

Mary’s words ‘they do not come into the picture’ carry a certain irony as one of only two photographic images found illustrating Mary undertaking official duties as vicereine is set in Mandalay. Plate 32, found in the collection of the European Church at Mandalay shows Mary opening the Bazaar. Despite several thousand images detailing many different aspects of George’s appointment, there are no images of Mary undertaking her own official engagements as vicereine within the Curzon Photographic Collection at the India Office Library. While every aspect of viceregal life was subjected to the photographic lens, Mary’s independent duties are not recorded in the photographic archive.⁵⁹ Mary does appear in a supportive role in many images.

⁵⁷ LCP 43/206 December 15 1901 Tour Journal

⁵⁸ LCP 23/46-55 November 28 1901 George to Mary

⁵⁹ The commemorative photographic albums of tours were compiled in the States of visitation and presented to the Viceroy. Mary’s independent official engagements are not recorded in these albums, which celebrate the Viceroy’s activities. However unofficial albums also silence her role. It is significant that there are no images of Mary acting as the viceregal hostess that would emphasise her position. The daily social round was not photographically recorded. It cannot be said whether Mary’s absence from the photographic record was a deliberate removal, or whether

Writing her journal entry on 15 December 1901 Mary noted ‘How to describe Burma! All our party exhausted their adjectives vocabularies quite three weeks ago, and now sit pencil in mouth trying in vein to knock new adjectives and poetic descriptions out of their front teeth!’.⁶⁰ Thus Mary describes the creative process of ordering the chaotic impressions around her while conveying her consciousness of the literary quality of her journal. In fact the letter journal of Burma is unusual in that Mary wrote her journal nearing the end of her tour rather than day by day. This adds a retrospective tone that illuminates Mary’s response to the tour as a way of seeing. Mary conveyed to her audience through her journal that she was allowing them a privileged image of Burma. She begins this by observing ‘To the untutored eye one place in Burma is a key to the whole’.⁶¹ Mary noted the components that an ‘untutored eye’ might see, creating an essentialised view of Burma:

Look well at a dazzling sky, a dense green glorious earth; pop golden cone-shaped pagodas wherever harmony calls out for one; people the earth with pink petticoat, beaming faced Burman men and women; tone down all this vividness with ubiquitous monks, solemnly shaved and wrapped in saffron togas; and you have the main outlines of every picture in Burma.⁶²

Mary’s use of ‘untutored eye’, followed with the trope of a painted landscape composition suggests that such a visual representation of Burma did not do Mary’s gaze justice. Mary had already explained to her audience that the language of poetic landscape description (‘jewelled palaces’ and ‘sun bathed golden temples’) was also not ‘sufficiently elastic do justice to each

such images were simply not deemed important enough to take. The Viceroy had no official photographer as part of the household staff.

⁶⁰ LCP 43/202 December 15 1900 Tour Journal

⁶¹ LCP 43/202 December 15 1901 Tour Journal

⁶² LCP 43/202 December 15 1901 Tour Journal

impression'.⁶³ She continues by suggesting that she is presenting to her own audience the results of her *tutored* gaze; that her descriptions are beyond the 'untutored' representations and the verbal clichés which she mocks. By placing herself in opposition to the 'untutored eye' Mary asserts her position of authority in educating her audience. She was not simply producing a description for them to visualise Burma, but pinned something more fundamental to it – a historical and moral understanding of the cultural landscape she viewed.

It is clear from the instructions that Mary had from George and from the way in which Mary wrote her journal, that the tour to Burma, like every viceregal tour, had been set up as an exhibition of the region. George sent an outline of the sights she should see and who would be best amongst the local officials to accompany her, to ensure that she gained the most historical detail from her visit. In addition George sent Mary the tour guide to Burma before she arrived. This background enabled Mary to survey Burma with a *tutored* eye, registered through her preoccupation with offering a historical context to her audience to each sight she saw. The majority of Mary's journal revolved around her description of the architecture and the histories attached to the buildings and included observations of the people. In this way Mary established herself as a knowledgeable observer, gaining a form of mastery over the landscape. Yet this stance ultimately reflected the viceregal frame, from which she was viewing.

⁶³ LCP 43/202 December 15 1901 Tour Journal

Despite the fact that Mary dismissed the drawing of a stereotypical vision of Burma, she presents different images for her audience, which she described as ‘frames’. In the first frame Mary asked her audience to actively engage with her text, drawing on an image that would be familiar to them, on which to pin her own ‘frame’:

You will want to hear first of the Palace at Mandalay, so in your minds eye build a high wall round Kensington Gardens and Hyde Park, and pierce the wall with a half dozen seven roofed pagoda-like gates.⁶⁴

Mary presented the familiar image of a walled expanse in which she found the royal city. Brief descriptions of the gilded teak palaces, gave way to illustrations of barbarism within the royal precinct as her audience learnt of live burials beneath the city wall foundations, ground ‘consecrated by the blood of martyrs’ in the massacres between the families of King Theebaw and his Queen Supaya Lat.⁶⁵ Amongst all of this Mary found an ‘English Church sheltered under the seven roofs of Buddhism’, a symbol which Mary reported to her audience ‘creeps into all unexpected corners of British dominion’.⁶⁶

Having asked her audience to build this image in their mind’s eye, Mary revealed to them the extent to which they were viewing something from a particular vision. It would appear that Mary was acutely aware of her position as an imperial visitor, and the unnatural gaze that this produced:

⁶⁴ LCP 34/203 December 15 1901 Tour Journal

⁶⁵ LCP 43/204 December 15 1901 Tour Journal

⁶⁶ LCP 43/203-204 December 15 1901 Tour Journal

A Viceregal visit frames the impression in an unnatural frame of gazing crowds, presentation of addresses, tents filled with local officials, and Burmese dances danced by little women.⁶⁷

Mary's perception of this 'unnatural frame' is not repeated. This sentence reveals Mary's self-awareness that she was observing India in a certain way, couched in certain terms.

Another way to emphasise the way in which Mary experienced the Indian landscape is to address her response to moments when she slips beyond the constraining viceregal frame. This represents a transgression beyond Mary's way of seeing which is framed by the controlled order of the tour. While Mary was always looking and framing her own vision, she was highly aware that she was being bound in a frame of her audience's making which acted as a constraint on her behaviour and freedom to respond. Mary was always looking, but also always being looked at. Mary had two principal audiences in India, aside from the audience of her tour diaries. The first audience can broadly be described as 'public' composing of all who saw her in India during the tour, both British and Indian. This includes hosts with whom she had greater interaction with and the crowds that looked from a distance. The second audience observing Mary in India was the viceregal household, in the space of the tour this is extended to the agents directing the tour at a local level. Essentially for Mary to respond differently to India she needed to transgress the viceregal frame through which she saw, and also the gaze of her audiences both the 'public' and the 'family'.

⁶⁷ LCP 43/202 December 15 1901 Tour Journal

The gaze of the second audience looking at Mary, that of the viceregal household is particularly important. As mentioned in chapter three, while other western women travelling in the empire found freedom through travel Mary was constantly protected within India by the 'family'. When on tour Mary was given greater protection. While Mary adopted elements of the masculine gaze in her own way of seeing, her audience placed Mary within the landscape. If nature, landscape and femininity were bound in the male gaze, then Mary's physical protection within the landscape by members of the viceregal household is indicative of that male gaze. Whilst traversing through the spaces of the tour Mary was always bound by her femininity, her movements controlled and ordered. Thus the way Mary saw was ordered and controlled, not just through the timetabled tour outline, but also through the vigilance of those protecting her.

Moments of transgression outside the frame are rare, her viceregal life was one that was continuously timetabled and controlled. As will be shown in Chapter Seven hunting offered her an opportunity to slip away from a public audience, in a way that the tour often did not. Yet small slips occurred which enabled Mary to make partial or complete transgressions outside her enframed existence. One evening in Burma Mary described a rare moment alone with George:

George and I went for a quiet homely drive one afternoon and saw the great Shwe Dragon Pagoda, which is the golden glory of the East. It is as high as Saint Paul's and entirely covered in gold leaf. We escaped a crowd, and only a vigilant policeman hovered near as we walked about the great platform and watched the monks at their evening prayers.⁶⁸

⁶⁸ LCP 43/208 December 15 1901 Tour Journal

This drive echoes George and Mary's routine drive each afternoon when in Calcutta or Simla, reflected in her use of the word 'homely'. The 'escape' of a crowd enabled a rare moment of solitude amongst the hectic tour schedule. Although the drive represented a partial transgression outside the tour, in that Mary almost escaped the her public audience (save for the policeman and the monks) Mary continues to adopt a gaze which makes the unfamiliar familiar through the use of comparison (the temple with St. Saint Paul's Cathedral) and offers mastery by looking on the monks in prayer.

A second moment of partial transgression occurred during the spring tour (1900) of the Northern Frontier of India with Afghanistan. Mary took a railway journey, which she described in her journal and also in a letter to Smalley. Her journal revealed:

After lunch Major Baring and I and the Manager of the line got on a seat which had been arranged for me on the front of the engine and we went through the Kijak tunnel. The tunnel is as long as the St Gotthard, at least it seemed so, and plunging through it up to the top of the ascent, and then tearing down the blackness towards the opening, which looked exactly like a rising moon as we flew towards it, was the most breath taking exciting thing I have ever done...As we rushed out into the daylight the wind hit us like bricks, and for six miles down a steep grade we seemed to be going 600 miles an hour and the wind 120, and I couldn't see, or hear, or breathe, or think, but just clung ~~on for my life to Major Baring~~ *to my supporters whose hats left their heads quite early in the race*. As the arrival at Chaman was public I couldn't very well arrive on a cow-catcher of the engine so the train stopped three miles outside and we got off the engine and arrived in the usual way.⁶⁹

⁶⁹ LCP 43/104 April 13 1900 Tour Journal

This railway journey represents a partial transgression from the viceregal frame, as Mary's public audience was no longer looking in. Away from this audience Mary found the undignified ride totally exhilarating. Yet this was only a partial transgression, Mary was still within the organised tour schedule and with members of the household. Mary removed the sentence that exposed that she had 'clung on to dear life to Major Baring', replacing it with the less compromising 'supporters'. Mary re-positioned herself on the train thus enabling herself to arrive in the 'usual' composed manner for her public audience.⁷⁰ Smalley's reaction to a letter in which Mary had described this event is revealing:

What a picture you draw, the wonderful scenery, the train rushing through it, and you, the most beautiful thing in India perched on the front of the engine surveying it all. It will be long before I forget that but you don't heed my request for a photograph of the Queen of India, in all her splendour...As I suppose you were never taken on the engine I think I should like you in evening dress in all your magnificence.⁷¹

Smalley draws on the trope of the 'Monarch-of-all-I-survey' in his reading of Mary's description noting her dominant viewing position on the front of the train. Yet the image of Mary perched on the front of a train, while amusing, is not the way in which he wishes to imagine her, and requests a photograph of Mary in viceregal magnificence in preference. This desire is cemented in the following paragraph as he writes 'I can send no society news to match tigers and entourages'.⁷² Smalley represented an audience that lusted not just for the 'real India', but also for the opulence of viceregal life, not the moments of transgression, the moments that Mary really revelled in.

⁷⁰ LCP 43/104 April 13 1900 Tour Journal

⁷¹ LCP 32/56-61 June 7 1900 G.W. Smalley to Mary

In fact it seems that Mary only completely escaped the ‘unnatural frame’ once in her time as vicereine. The Viceroy’s Autumn Tour of 1900 took Mary to Southern India, a journey made by boat and railway over a six-week period. This is one of Mary’s most vivid journals in which she described what became an overwhelming intensity of sights and experiences. Each page reflects the concentrated mediation of the people and places that the viceregal tour entailed.

Mary begins her description of the journey from Quillon to Trevandrum in characteristic manner telling her audience that: ‘I fear my language can never rise to a sufficient pitch of eloquence to describe our journey’.⁷³ And so the story follows, a tale of a night river journey with each passenger having ‘a boat like a Lord Mayors barge – a cabin, a roof to sit on, and 20 rowers’ to take them the course of the journey. It turned into a night of horror for Mary, but one that resembles a farce on paper. She initially joined George to watch ‘the crowds on the bank run along with torches’. As it began to rain Mary retired to her own barge ‘but the noises on the bank and the noise of the crew defeated any sleep’.⁷⁴ As the boats entered a lagoon the race was on for the boats to enter a tunnel that would take them to the next stage of the river journey. This was an experience that resonated deeply with Mary as she noted:

Such a banging and bumping and inextricable muddle, and we seemed hours going through the most horrid tube full of bats and smells and every boatman screaming to keep off evil spirits. Gustave Dore could perhaps have depicted the scene and likened it to the River Styx and a journey to Hell.⁷⁵

⁷² LCP 32/56-61 June 7 1900 G.W. Smalley to Mary

⁷³ LCP 43/42 November 21 1900 Tour Journal

⁷⁴ LCP 43/42 November 21 1900 Tour Journal

⁷⁵ LCP 43/43 November 21 1900 Tour Journal

The scenes on waking mitigated the horror of the night:

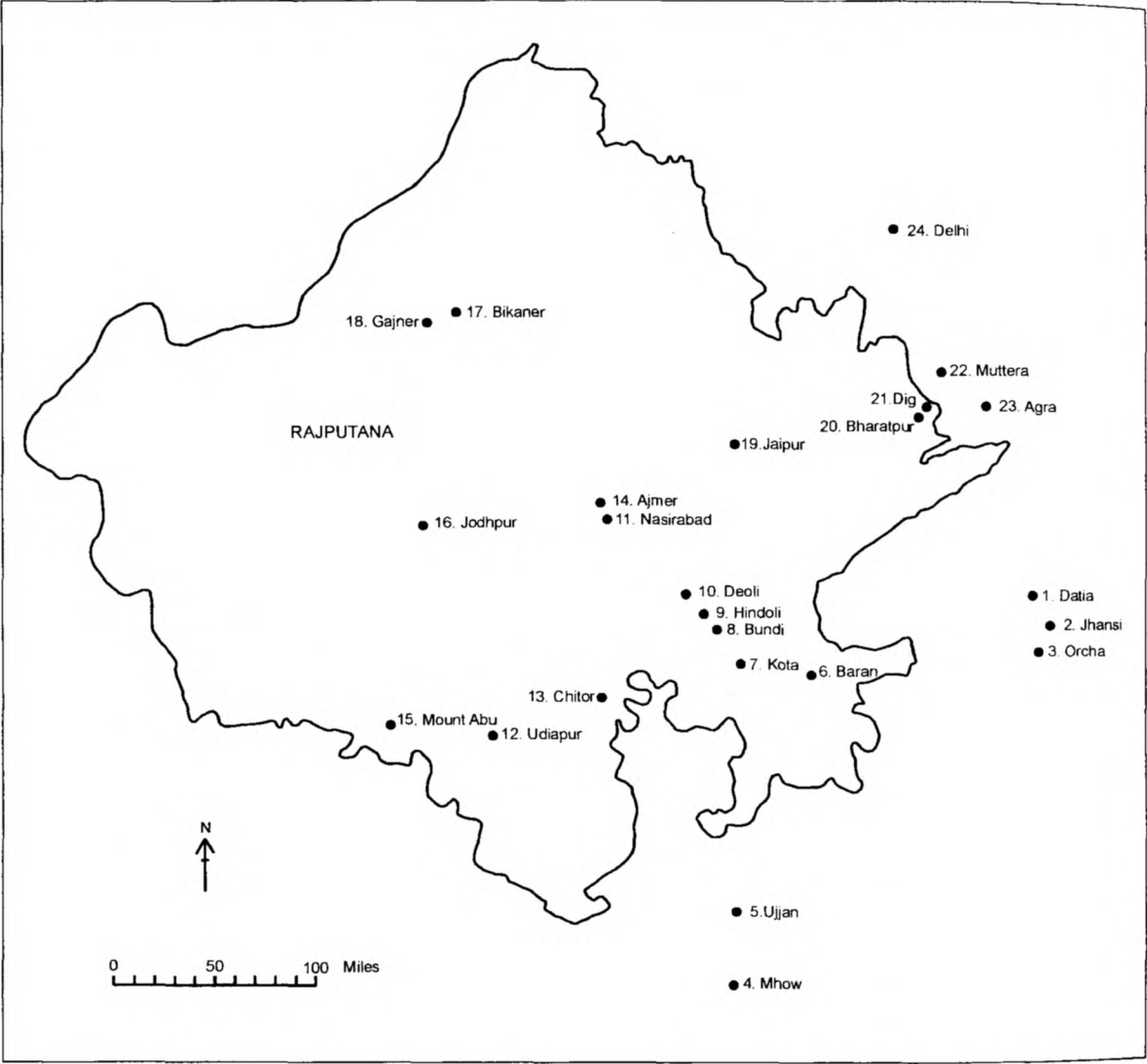
I was never more relieved than when the sun rose after that night of horror; but when it did the stillness was wonderful. The rowers had screamed away their lungs; there was only the splash of oars; and no boat of any kind was in sight; and for two hours I lay watching the unearthly vegetation of the river banks – enormous plants and creepers, and flowers as big as your head, mammoth lilies and orchids all hanging heavy after one night of rain. Here at last was the India of one's dreams; and it only needed oily pythons suspended from the branches, and bison and wild elephants to complete the picture. At 8 when I began to think I should sail through that dark jungle alone for ever I got to the bungalow.⁷⁶

It should be of no surprise that Mary should encounter the 'India of one's dreams' when she had escaped from the fray of the viceregal tour. She described a pristine landscape, one in which she described herself as 'alone'. The twenty men who had rowed her through the night had not only 'screamed away their lungs' but had also been removed from her description. Mary depopulates the landscape and isolates herself within India. With nothing to interrupt her Mary wrote as though she has entered a realm suspended beyond the space of the tour. Mary's 'dream' of India is a classic evocation of the aesthetic principle of the oriental picturesque image of nature. Her reference to the desire for an 'oily python' or the presence of bison or wild elephants to complete the picture indicates her reference to a clichéd form.⁷⁷ While Mary slipped out of sight in the backwaters of Trevandrum, she discovered the 'real India' yet by framing it in language of the sublime picturesque Mary makes sense of it in well-established terms of reference. This supports Mitchell's argument:

The Orient was something that was only ever rediscovered. To be grasped representationally, as the picture of something, it was inevitably only to be grasped as a re-occurrence of a picture one had seen before as a map

⁷⁶ LCP 43/44 November 21 1900 Tour Journal

⁷⁷ LCP 43/44 November 21 1900 Tour Journal



MAP 2
Route of the Viceregal tour of the Central Provinces and Rajputana, November 1902

one already carried in one's head, as the reiteration of an earlier experience.⁷⁸

By such an acknowledgement of it being the 'India of one's dreams' Mary indicates the truth of this.

For all the sights of India that Mary had encountered through her travels she never again wrote in these terms. Mary encountered what she had been expecting in her imagination of India: in a two-hour escape from the viceregal tour. The dream ended in the morning, and Mary ran from her boat, to the relief of the household who had let her slip beyond their gaze, to be dressed in her state clothes for the entry into Trivandrum, once again within the viceregal frame as both viewer and observed.⁷⁹

VI Observing and Judging within the Viceregal Frame

The relentless timetable of the tour prevented the viceregal party from staying more than forty-eight hours in one place. This generated a superficial perspective of the people and places that Mary observed, which is particularly apparent of the tour to the Central Provinces and Rajputana, autumn 1902. Map 2 indicates the route of the journey. This tour was significant in that Mary offered a sustained comparative judgement on those princely states through which she travelled. Her judgements were based on the manner in which the viceregal party was welcomed into the State, the physical presence of the host and on the material basis of the entertainment and accommodation. Mary's comparative judgements

⁷⁸ Mitchell, (1988) p.31

remind us that she was travelling within a political context; her observations are geared towards noting the relative 'development' of each state.

A key characteristic of this tour concerned Mary's practice of fitting her description of the places visited into a typology of what she termed 'enlightenment'.⁸⁰ Her system of classification reveals a number of tensions that relate to the contradictory place of the Indian Princes within the imperial ideology of the British Raj. A speech George presented to the Maharaja Ganga Singh of Bikaner indicates the form of governance that the Raj desired of the princes was 'at the same time a Liberal and a Conservative' one combining 'the merits of East and West in a single blend'.⁸¹ Mary's journal indicates the diverse ways in which the Indian princes responded and adapted to this vision of princely India – one that was locked in a traditional past, but having to adopt the Western ideals of civilisation. This inconsistency is reflected in Mary's journal as she reveals the specific elements of 'western civilisation' that were desirable for the Princes to adopt. Ideally this was to be perfectly balanced with the appropriate elements of orientalism. From Mary's perspective this was rarely achieved and the wrong type of westernisation, or extremes of orientalism provokes a strong response within her text. Mary uses a classification system based around 'enlightenment' to order the princes acceptable engagement with western civilisation.

⁷⁹ LCP 43/44 November 21 1900 Tour Journal

⁸⁰ LCP 43/194 November 22 1902 Tour Journal

⁸¹ Metcalf, (1995) p.198

Mary's descriptions of the personal appearance of the Indian Princes and their adoption of different 'westernised' elements of dress reveals the contradiction of Mary's perceptions. Mary's process of classification was not formalised, but emerged as she began to make comparison between different states. Her initial descriptions did not fall within the comparative classificatory framework she adopted by the mid-point in her tour, yet they must not be discounted as they form the initial foundations of her comparative approach.

By drawing descriptions of physical appearance, Mary was following one of the most enduring methods of portraying difference in her tour journal. Mary had a clear idea of what would interest her audience and it is noticeable that those Princes who dress in an 'oriental' manner were vividly depicted. Yet Mary's descriptions of the 'oriental' have an unforgiving sting in them, and her eye for the ridiculous is acute. Those princes who had adopted western dress are certainly not beyond critique indicating that it is precisely in these comparisons that the discrepancies of Mary's comparative framework is revealed.

Mary's acid pen is initially revealed at Datia; chaos ensued as the viceregal party was met by the Maharaja⁸² who was 'so ill that he was obliged to sit on the side of the steps of the special' [Viceroy's train] and was deposited in the carriage that was to drive the viceregal party to the camp 'more dead than alive'.⁸³ Unfortunately the carriage containing the Viceroy, the Maharaja of Datia and two

⁸² Maharaja of Datia, His Highness Maharaja Lokindar Bhawani Sing Bahadur b. August 13 1854. Lethbridge, R., *The Golden Book of India* (London: Sampson Low, Marston & Company, 1893) p.111

⁸³ LCP 43/167 October 29 1902 Tour Journal

ADCs overturned on entering the city wall and fell down an incline with carriages, horses and people landing 'on top of the half Moribund Maharaja'.⁸⁴ Saved from the 'embarrassing and unnecessary' intrusion of the immediate death of the Maharaja who had turned 'turtle green' the viceregal party retired.⁸⁵ Mary's description of the sickly Maharaja is acute, her language vivid and unforgiving. Her cutting descriptions continued in the evening banquet:

The poor Maharaja who came in after desert to propose George's health and then have his proposed, looked as though he had already died, and that speech making was therefore superfluous. However custom is stronger than approaching dissolution, and he managed to mummer a few faint sentences to which George replied in quite affecting ones thanking the gasping potentate for his hospitality ... He tottered to his chariot and this was our last sight of the decaying aristocrat.⁸⁶

Despite a lack of respect for this particular 'decaying aristocrat' later entries demonstrate awe of other princes. However once a theme had begun Mary developed it with tenacity. This is shown in the continuous descriptions of the 'half moribund Maharaja' and his son who:

[L]ooked a cretin and had on a great many emeralds stuck in a turban, which rest on a perfectly bald shaved pate. Only one wisp of hair had been allowed to grow. This was half the size of a little finger and located over the right ear, and hung greasily down on his neck. It was not a pretty coiffure.⁸⁷

On leaving Datia Mary stated that 'the one wisp of hair came to see us off'.⁸⁸ Mary's lack of direct personal contact with the son meant that all she had to use for her description in her journal was a visual description. Later as the tour developed Mary linked a visual description in some way to broader issues in

⁸⁴ LCP 43/168 October 29 1902 Tour Journal

⁸⁵ LCP 43/168 October 29 1902 Tour Journal

⁸⁶ LCP 43/169 29 October 1902 Tour Journal

⁸⁷ LCP 43/170 October 29 1902 Tour Journal



Plate 33 – The Maharao of Kotah
 Herzog and Higgns c.1902
 OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/20 (2)



Plate 34 – The Maharaja of Bundi
 Herzog and Higgns c.1902
 OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/20 (36)



Plate 35 – The Maharaja of Jodhpur
 Herzog and Higgns c.1902
 OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/20 (107)



Plate 36 – The Maharaja of Bikanir
 Herzog and Higgns c.1902
 OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/20 (130)



Plate 37 – The Maharana of Udiapur
 Herzog and Higgns c.1902
 OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/20 (57)

which she was interested, yet at the beginning cutting observations were her primary concern. That the Maharaja's son 'looked a cretin' and his head attire was given overwhelming attention to the point of 'the wisp of hair' becoming the naming strategy indicates the speed with which Mary made these cursory categorisations.

Unlike the attention paid to the visual appearance of the princes at Datia, Mary's description of the Maharao of Kotah,⁸⁹ her next host, was brief, stating simply that he met them in pink and gold. (Plate 33) However Mary remarked in connection with the state banquet that he was a 'fine young Rajput and without the follies and vices of most young chiefs'.⁹⁰ Mary's approval of the Maharao's character can also be recognised in the manner in which she described receiving the ceremonial pan and attar from him:

Before saying goodnight, the nice young Maharao walked up to each of us and popped scent on to our handkerchiefs from out of a long gold bottle, and presented us with attar and pan. This is the outward sign of an Indian's regard and esteem.⁹¹

On other occasions Mary described this ritual with distaste. That she wrote sympathetically is a sign that she was at ease with him. Later on the tour Mary compares Kotah unfavourably to other princely states, yet Mary's initial reaction was favourable. This emphasises the way in which Mary used cumulative knowledge and experiences to order the differences she encountered and to establish what was acceptable 'enlightenment' and what was not.

⁸⁸ LCP 43/170 October 29 1902 Tour Journal

⁸⁹ His Highness Maharao Umel Singh Bahadur, Maharao of Kotah b.1873 see Lethbridge, R., *The Golden Book of India* (London: Sampso Low, Marston & Company, 1900) p.148. Kotah is now named Kota.

At Bundi Mary offered her audience a dense description of the prince:⁹²

The Maharao...wore tight wrinkly trousers, with beautiful jewelled anklets over bare feet, a black alpaca coat, and two rows of pearls. He is a distinguished, dissipated man in looks, and his beard bristles out on each side of a chin parting, and gives him an air of great ferocity. His black eyebrows are joined over his nose with a streak of white paint, so this adds to his quaint appearance; and a strong odour of garlic made a distant study of this silent all of prince necessary. His manners were beautiful, and he would neither pass me nor crawl through doors before me.⁹³

Mary's description of the Maharao pays acute attention to personal appearance.

(Plate 34) From the way in which the beard parts on either side of the prince's chin to the streak of white paint joining the eyebrows, Mary's portrait of the prince indicates that she is pointing out similar features to the 'wisp of hair', the younger son of Datia's yet this portrait is sympathetically taken, even if Mary had to make a 'distant study' owing to the odour of garlic. We are told of his beautiful manners which no doubt dissipated the potential for criticism. Mary begins her comparative study at Bundi and compares the Maharaos of Bundi to Kotah:

The Maharaja himself was a blue blooded Indian in Indian dress without the incongruous jumble of riding kit, boots, pistols in belt, diamond ear rings, and a pearl necklace which had all adorned the Maharao of Kotah when he rode at our side.⁹⁴

⁹⁰ LCP 43/176 November 7 1902 Tour Journal

⁹¹ LCP 43/176 November 7 1902 Tour Journal

⁹² His Highness Maharao Raja Sir Raghubir Singh Bahadur, Maharao Raja of Bundi, b.circa 1868 See Lethbridge, (1900) p.45

⁹³ LCP 43/180 November 10 1902 Tour Journal

⁹⁴ LCP 43/181 November 10 1902 Tour Journal. Mary frequently confuses the correct titles of the Indian Princes for example in her incorrect use of term Maharaja with the Maharao of Bundi. The titles Maharaja and Maharao are not interchangeable although meanings similar Maharaja meaning great Raja or King, Maharao, Great Rao or chief. Raja can mean king or prince, Rao a King, prince or chief. The correct title of the Maharao Raja of Bundi indicates a supreme raja or king, and is thus a higher title than that of the Maharao of Kotah. See Lethbridge, (1900) pp.vii-xx

This comment emphasises the way in which Mary used cumulative knowledge and experience to order the difference she encounters. This is the first reference that Mary makes which reveals her use of a typology based around her expectations of traditional Indian attire and her disapproval of the adoption of western styles of dress by some princes. Mary distinguishes between the Maharao of Bundi being 'blue blooded' in what she regards as appropriate 'Indian dress' as opposed to the 'incongruous jumble' of attire sported by the Maharao of Kotah. The Maharao of Kotah's attire had made himself less 'blue blooded' or aristocratic than the Maharao of Bundi in Mary's eyes. Yet it is only once Mary has been to Bundi that the acceptability of the Maharao of Kotah comes into question. When Mary had first arrived in the comfortable and ordered environment of Kotah after the chaotic and distasteful experience in Datia, she had judged him favourably, particularly noting his moral character.

When Mary makes little comment about a Princes' physical appearance, he is certainly likely to be more western in his approach to dress. This is demonstrated at Jodhpur where Mary made little comment about the physical appearance of the Maharaja instead noting: 'The Maharaja lives for horses, and the stables are vast and horses everywhere.'⁹⁵ (Plate 35) Following the formal visits between the Viceroy and the head of state Mary wrote:

There were the usual visits between the Viceroy and the Maharaja, but they were robbed of much of their picturesqueness

⁹⁵ LCP 43/188 November 18 1902 Tour Journal. His Highness Raj Raheshwar Maharaj Adhiraj Sardar Singh Bahadur, Majaraja of Jodhpur b.1880. See Lethbridge (1990) p.120

as the Maharaja of Jodhpur has done away with all oriental pageantry and turned attention to stables.⁹⁶

This indicates Mary's sense of disappointment similar to her observation of the Maharao of Kotah, and reveals her preference of the oriental aesthetic.

Following Jodhpur, Mary travelled to Bikanir. After meeting the Maharaja of Bikanir Mary did not offer a pen portrait of physical appearance.⁹⁷ Instead she drew attention to elements of his character making an important departure from the comparison of physical appearance and dress, revealing Mary's deeper understanding of acceptable westernisation or enlightenment:

The Maharaja of Bikanir is tall, clever, able and full of zeal in the development of his state, has full power of administration, and is the most enlightened of all the young chiefs in India.⁹⁸

The Maharaja of Bikanir conformed to the most desirable elements of westernisation. Yet as we see from Plate 36 he is similarly attired to the Maharaja of Jodhpur, who had been dismissed. The first element of Mary's typology based on physical characteristics reveals that she did not approve of the wholesale rejection of Oriental dress, or an incongruous fusion of Western and Oriental dress. Unless as in Bikanir's case he was, in other ways, beyond reproach. While dress and physical appearance gives an indication of the way in which Mary characterised the Indian Princes, her observations regarding relative levels of adoption of western material belongings and architecture, is even more revealing.

⁹⁶ LCP 43/190 November 22 1902 Tour Journal

⁹⁷ High Highness Maharaja Raj Rajeshwar Siroman Sri Gaap Singh Bahadur Maharaja of Bikanir b. 1879. See Lethbridge, (1900) p. 40. Bikanir is now named Bikaner.

⁹⁸ LCP 43/195 [Undated c. November 22 1902] Tour Journal

One of the first stops that Mary made on the tour was at Orcha. Her description of the entrance of the Viceroy into the state focused on the presence of an English royal carriage in India, a sight she regarded as incongruous:

We arrived there and were met by a very new carriage which he had brought after the Coronation in London, when the paraphernalia of royalty had been auctioned off. Our departure from the station was somewhat delayed, as nothing would induce Edwards VII's court carriage to open; the shiny roof remained firmly locked. It was comic to see the Maharaja and his retainers, and the Viceroy and his staff, standing at a Station in Bunelkand while officers and syces wrestled with bolts and springs of an English Royal Carriage.⁹⁹

Mary draws attention to the juxtaposition of the 'English' carriage in an Indian setting. The adoption of English furnishings by the Indian princes comes under heavy attack as her journal develops, such westernised values are deemed highly inappropriate.

At Bundi Mary experienced the most intense and extreme form of what she would ascribe as an 'Oriental experience'. Whereas in other states the 'Oriental experience' came diluted with touches of westernisation, in Bundi the experience was unmediated, and as a result was more threatening. Mary's description reflects this:

The steep stairs were polished by the bare feet of thousands who had trodden them for centuries, and we mounted in our boots, and with all our idea of advance and civilisation, and we seemed strangely out of keeping with the black passages roof gardens, peacocks, and monkeys screaming from the walls, dancing girls shrieking songs as we passed along, and Brahmin priests keeping flies and dust of the Maharaja's special divinity in a strange chapel like room....From the palace we went up many hundreds of feet to the fort at the top of the mountain, and we had English

⁹⁹ LCP 43/171 October 29 1902 Tour Journal

tea on a 16th century bastion. We sipped it and watched the Indian town below illuminate itself for our edification. ...We had all enjoyed our afternoon, and felt steeped in Orientalism undiluted by English changes.¹⁰⁰

Mary found the dark passages in the palace overwhelming, her senses bombarded by the fleeting vignettes of palace life around her. For once she felt out of place. For Mary the worn smooth steps, rubbed by bare feet acted as a trigger for her sense of unease, her own shoes trampling on them acting as a dividing line between her ability to immerse herself within a frame that was unfamiliar. Shoes acted as a symbolic trigger for Mary on a number of occasions, drawing on her understanding of the symbolism of the imperial domination.¹⁰¹ Mary took relief from the intense experience she encountered in Bundi Palace through the English tea - and stressed the opposition between then drinking English tea whilst overlooking an Indian town. It would appear that the viceregal party stepped outside the familiar frames of reference within the palace, which was untouched by westernising influences. Taking relief (if with unintentional irony) in the familiar ritual of afternoon tea, at a distance from the barrage of 'orientalism undiluted by English changes' Mary could reflect positively on the experience. Yet the unease she felt wandering in the palace is palpable in her description noted by her rare moment of self-reflective thought. By adopting a viewing position high over Bundi, symbolises the re-gaining of control and order, having felt out of place within the palace. With distance Mary felt she had enjoyed the experience.

¹⁰⁰ LCP 43/180-181 November 10 1902 Tour Journal

On meeting the Maharana of 'Oodeypur',¹⁰² (Plate 37) Mary showed an initial reverence unlike any shown to an Indian prince throughout her tour describing him as an 'ascetic' who 'leads a model existence'.¹⁰³ While Mary may have been swept up in the reverential awe, this did not prevent her from making other critical comparative observations. At the state banquet held in honour of the Viceroy, held at the Maharana's palace, the incongruity of English and Indian ideals again came to the fore:

Outside the palace was absolute romance and beauty, inside English horrors were rampant; velvet chairs, mirrors galore, blue and red glass balls hanging dissipatedly from the ceiling, the cheval glasses in every corner reflecting plaster figures and musical clocks and mechanical toys. The reincarnation of Vishnu looked a deity out of his frame in the surroundings, but he seemed very proud of his gimcrack collection. ... We got through the menu ...then we went out of the horrible English room to a little marble pavilion and watched a Bhil dance.¹⁰⁴

Mary's dissatisfaction of the 'English horrors' was intense. Her language reveals her desire for 'the romance and beauty' of the traditional Indian palace. Although the intense Oriental experience she had at Bundi was disturbing, the fusion of Indian architecture and English furnishings at Udaipur were highly undesirable. Mary used the religious symbolism of the Maharana to exaggerate the opposition of Indian to English, telling her audience that he looked 'out of his frame in the surroundings'. Mary almost took relief in looking at the dance of the Bhil people, escaping out of the English room back into 'India'.

¹⁰¹ Reference to Mary's visit to the Jumma Musjid in Delhi (LCP 42/15 October 29 1899) 'We have hoofed about with nails [hob nail boots] to show the Moslem that he is conquered'

¹⁰² His Highness Maharana Dhiraj Sir Fateh Singh Bahadur, Maharana of Udaipur (or Mewar) b. 1848. See Lethbridge, (1900) p. 321. Mary's phonetic spelling of Udiapur is uncharacteristic, suggesting that she did not consult guidebooks at this time. Mary was ill at Udaipur, which may account for this lapse. The name of Udaipur remains unchanged.

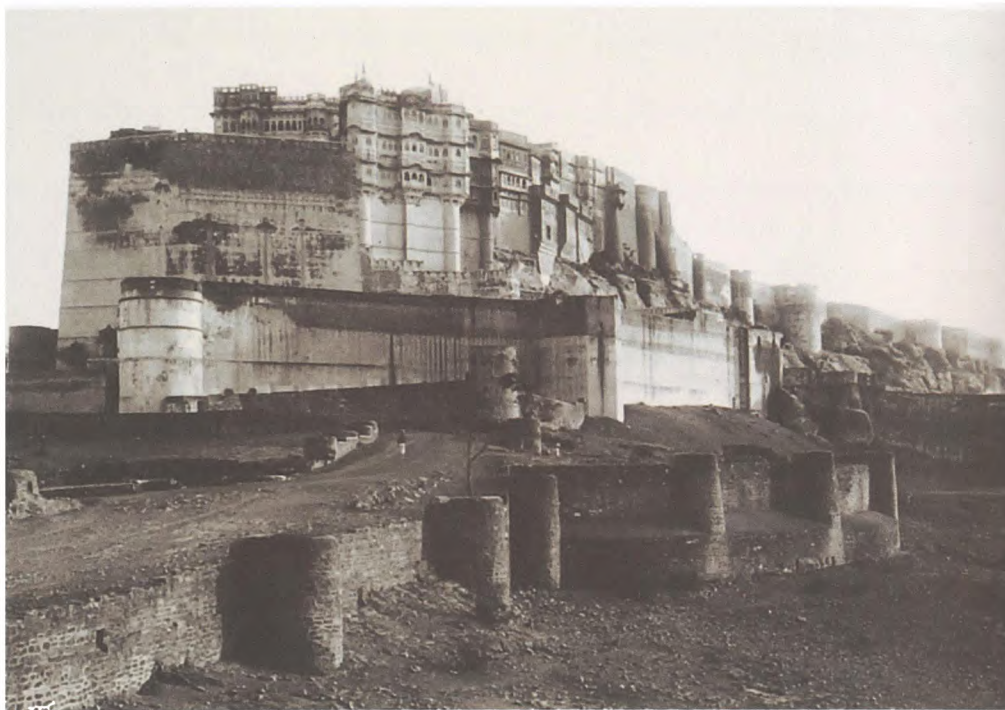


Plate 38 – The Fort, Jodphur
 Herzog and Higgins c. 22 November 1902
 OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/20 (126)



Plate 39 – 'Camp showing the Maharaja's Palace, Jodphur'
 Herzog and Higgins c. 22 November 1902
 OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/20 (115)

From the nineteenth century the Maharajas of Jodphur had built supplementary palaces in the town below the main fortress palace of Meheranrgarh. (Plate 38). Plate 39 illustrates the tented camp in which Mary stayed set in the grounds of the Maharaja's palace. Mary's visit to the 'fort' reinforced the moral judgements that she made about the Maharaja of Jodphur.

Sunday morning we drove to the Fort, where all the dignity of the Jodphur family is concentrated. It seems to frown contemptuously down on the group of hideous stables, houses, and polo grounds that mark the development or degeneration of Jodphur rulers. The men who held the Fort against the invading armies, and built the walls for defence on all the low lying hills, were a finer race than the rulers who came out of their strongholds and settled in horrid houses in the desert below and gave themselves up to stables and racing.¹⁰⁵

Mary's adopts a strategy of criticising the present Maharaja through the eyes of the past rulers, developing a romantic image of the dignified race of warriors who defended their fort against the enemy 'frowning contemptuously' down on the activities of the present generation. Mary uses the words 'development or degeneration' in her description of the Jodhpur rulers who have 'given themselves up to stables and racing'. Herein marks the inconsistency of the British Raj's approach to the Indian Princes. With the security of the Raj behind them the princes were robbed of the traditional role of defending and protecting their people. Asked to fuse the traditional with the western in the manner of their rule the result was often unpredictable. Thus the Maharaja of Jodhpur enjoyed the freedom to devote his attention to horses, a traditional past time of any Indian

¹⁰³ LCP 43/182 circa November 15 1902 Tour Journal

¹⁰⁴ LCP 43/184 circa November 15 1902 Tour Journal

¹⁰⁵ LCP 43/191 November 22 1902 Tour Journal

prince yet taken to an extreme. Mary recognised this as being a mark of development, yet his adoption was only seen as a sign of degeneration. A further sign of the Maharaja's degeneration, or perhaps deliberately subversive behaviour, for Mary was conveyed to her audience through her reporting that: 'The Maharaja did not even meet us to show us his palace in the Fort. He had gone pigsticking'.¹⁰⁶

Mary evoked her idealised image of the past in her description of the fort:

I wandered through the magnificent building, through gates, bastions, ramparts, courtyards of carved stone, and staircases of polished marble. The inside of the Palace was crammed with ghastly rubbish ...broken down furniture ... marble tables with broken legs ... It was all so incongruous in the beautifully carved rooms. Can you imagine a tipsy mirrored cupboards leaning sorrowfully against marble pillars in great unused halls of audience where Akbar might have sat in conference with a Jodhpur chief and Jehangir held a Durbar for his ally... We were rather saddened by our visit to the Fort.¹⁰⁷

Mary's entry reflects a nostalgic a sense of mourning at the loss of a past. In Jodhpur Mary saw the opposite extreme of the rejection of traditional values. At Bundi Mary was disturbed by an 'extreme' of 'Orientalism', yet in Jodhpur where 'Orientalism' as Mary recognised it had been rejected Mary also felt a sense of disturbance.

While visiting Meherangarh Fort at Jodhpur Mary was received by the Maharani of Jodhpur. The scene had already been set for the readers of the letters - the contrast between the structural beauty of the Fort and the jumbled and broken furniture left behind when the palace inhabitants moved to the plains. Although

¹⁰⁶LCP 43/191 November 22 1902 Tour Journal



Plate 40 – Imprints of women' s hands, Meheran garh Fort, Jodphur
Nicola Thomas, February 1999

Mary had frequently met the wives of Indian Princes in purdah, on this occasion Mary considered her own female subjectivity in relation to Indian women. On entering Jodphur Fort Mary passed through a gate in which had been inscribed in a most visual way the expectations of women within the society:

One gate we passed through was carved with the shaped of dozen's of women's hands, and these were the memorials of the Maharani's who performed suttee. As they went through the gate (they leave purdah and walk uncovered to the ceremony of burning) they pressed their right hand, wet with red juice of betal nut, against the grey stone archway and immediately a hand was carved below the shape of the bloody impress. It is a gruesome doorway.¹⁰⁸

This visual symbol was incredibly striking for Mary with the human hand bringing with greater emphasis her perceived horror of the sacrifice that custom demanded. (Plate 40)

While Mary had experienced many scenes of the Oriental picturesque on tour, and had encountered many different ways in which she could categorise the differences for those at home, these women and Mary's understanding of the cultural differences in their feminine roles represented the strongest order of difference and the clearest distinction between East and West that she found. Again Mary paints a pen portrait for her audience:

In one of these beautiful halls I was received by the Maharani, who had come up to the Palace from her house in the sand below, She received me in the centre of a white marble courtyard, surrounded by her women ... and attended by ennuchs She took my hand and led me into the pillared hall where a row of dingy creatoned chairs which we would not sit on in a housekeepers room were stiffly arranged ... The Maharani was more gorgeously dressed that anyone I have ever seen: her velvet and cloth of gold dress was a solid mass of embroidery, and jewels hung from her neck to her feet; anklets

¹⁰⁷ LCP 43/192 November 22 1902 Tour Journal

¹⁰⁸ LCP 43/192 November 22 1902 Tour Journal

of great weight dangled over her her insteps, and emeralds the size of eggs were in chains round her neck. She is a handsome woman and was born a Bundi princess.¹⁰⁹

Mary does not record the conversation she had with the Maharani, but drew attention to the restrictive nature of the purdah custom, and contrasted the dilapidated surroundings with the Maharani's ornate attire. Mary's sense of unease in her interaction with the Maharani is indicated in the way she describes her receiving of the attar of roses onto a 'reluctant handkerchief' (as opposed to the Maharao of Kotah). Mary left the Maharai, who vanished under 'great leather curtain held aside by eunuchs' to meet George:

George had been sitting in a beautiful marble balcony waiting for me, The contrast - he and I standing side by side looking over the walls and battlements of the Palace in friendly relations, and that painted, jewelled, female prisoner inside covered with emeralds, who has to receive her horrid little husband on the rare occasions he comes near her by placing her face on his feet - is really the contrast and dividing line between East and West.¹¹⁰

Mary's perceived position of equality with George, is categorised here on both a companionable (and possibly sexual) level in describing her 'friendly relations' Mary evokes the equality of the companionable friendship from marriage in contrast to her of the imagined abhorrence of the Maharani's relationship with the Maharaja. This is the only occasion in Mary's writing that indicates the way in which she is categorising the women she meets by judging them against her own life. Yet as commentators have noted, while western women were congratulating themselves on their superior position to that of the women in the zenana, they did not acknowledge the continued patriarchal domination of women at home.

¹⁰⁹ LCP 43/192 November 22 1902 Tour Journal

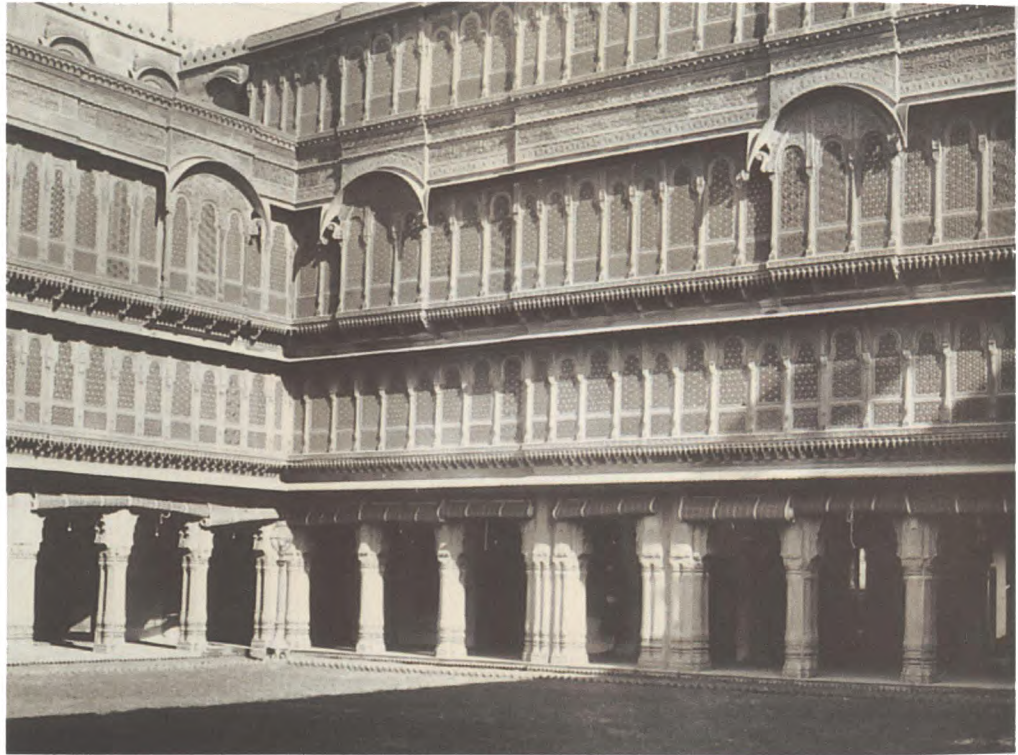


Plate 41 – 'Courtyard of the new palace Bikanir'
Herzog and Higgins c. 1902
OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/40 (139)

In direct contrast to Jodhpur the following visit to Bikanir presented Mary with the perfect mix of 'enlightened' Orientalism. After the disintegration of Jodhpur it is unsurprising that Mary should feel relieved here. Mary's first comment surrounding Bikanir offered a direct comparison between Bikanir and Jodhpur:

Sunday night we packed ourselves into our train again and set out for Bikanir. We arrived at 8, and anything more unlike Jodhpur is difficult to conceive. I can only liken it to going from an India Tattersall's to a modern estate.¹¹¹

Mary drew her comparison from the London horse market, Tattersall's, which developed in the eighteenth century.

In Kotah Mary had barely made a reference to the new palace that the Maharaja had had built by Swinton Jacob. Yet at Bikanir Mary waxed lyrical about the 'new palace' and all it stood for:

The new palace built and just finished was perfectly beautiful. It was designed by Sir Swinton Jacob from Moghul Palaces and beautifully carried out. This clever man has built all the new buildings in the State and nothing can exceed their good taste. The palace is all of minutely carved pink sandstone, with roof domes of white marble. The upper stories of the courtyard are surrounded by closely carved lattices of pink stone, behind which the tinkling feet of the Maharanis shuffled as they watched us arriving.¹¹²

The 'good taste' of the newly designed buildings within Bikanir represents the culmination of Mary's typology. (Plate 41) In Bikanir Mary found the exact balance of oriental picturesque with the desired element of enlightenment.

¹¹⁰ LCP 43/53 November 27 1899 Tour Journal

¹¹¹ LCP 43/194 November 22 1902 Tour Journal

¹¹² LCP 43/194 November 22 1902 Tour Journal

That Mary found the perfect balance between the modern and the traditional is hardly surprising. Swinton Jacobs along with other colonial architects working in the Indo-Saracenic design, were supporting similar principals of a fusion of Indian and western ideals that the Indian Princes were guided towards by the British Raj. As Mary noted Swinton Jacobs copied his design from Moghul palaces. However, this was only part of the inspiration of such architects. As Metcalf argues, such architects borrowed freely from diverse architectural forms, both Mughal and Hindu, creating an eclectic design which became labelled 'Indo-Saracenic'. The adoption of this form was not 'conceived of as an exercise in antiquarianism' but the architects chance to manipulate 'enduring elements of India's architectural heritage to shape a harmonious social order Indian's could themselves not achieve'.¹¹³ The tension in this is clear – while Indo-Saracenic design was adopted in the design of public buildings such as Schools, Law courts and railway stations, elements which indicated the imposition of modern 'efficiency' the use of the traditional design indicated that India, 'remained of necessity, a 'traditional' Oriental society'.¹¹⁴

Mary's final comment regarding the efficiency of Bikanir indicates the superficial methods by which she judged those she encountered:

We rode home in the dusk and sat in the garden of the palace until dinner, and when the electric lights appeared indoors we realised the extent of the Maharaja's energetic modernisation of his house and State.¹¹⁵

¹¹³ Metcalf, T.R., *Indian architecture and Britains's Raj* (London: Faber and Faber, 1989) p.169

¹¹⁴ Metcalf, (1989) p.159

¹¹⁵ LCP 43/196 November 22 1902 Tour Journal

While electric light seems to represent the pinnacle of achievement, Mary had previously dismissed one of her key signs of division of East and West. When visiting the new palace at Bikanir Mary simply described the ‘tinkling footsteps’ of the women behind the carved screens in the new palace. Yet this is surely one of the most pertinent of images. While at Bikanir, Mary had enjoyed the balance between ‘East and West’ in the architecture and in the organisation of the State. Yet the one element that Mary has identified as being the ‘dividing line between East and West’, that of the different position of women in society which had figured so strongly in her visit to Jodphur only a few days before, is forgotten. The incarceration of Indian Maharani’s in ‘the upper stories of the courtyard’ closed behind ‘carved lattices of pink stone’¹¹⁶ are remarked on in a positive manner, as she enjoy the sound of tinkling footsteps, rather than judging them in the same way as she judged a woman in a similar position at Jodphur.

VII Conclusion

This chapter has explored Mary's mediation of the space of the Viceroy's tour. I have argued that the tour represented a specific mode of travel, which prompted a 'way of seeing' India. This 'way of seeing' was strictly controlled and ordered, as indicated in the elaborate organisational plans made in advance and also demanded the participation and co-operation of the host states. This chapter presented Mary's tour journals noting the alterations she made which demonstrate the mediated construction of India presented to her audience. Mary's audiences received a different negotiation with India, reflecting Mary's subjective decision

¹¹⁶ LCP 43/195 November 22 1901 Tour Journal

to stress different elements of her experience. The narratives relating the 1900 Tour to Assam indicate that prioritised her 'oriental' encounters to her family audience in her tour journal, as opposed to her engagements with the European community to her wider circle in Britain. Mary's narratives indicate that Mary viewed Assam according to the desired precepts of the organisation: through the desired frame that gave weight to both British and Indian encounters. Unlike later tours Mary neither questions nor acknowledges the artifice behind this presentation. Indeed, by photographing elements of the show such as the Naga people, Mary materially cements this way of seeing; the amateur survey of racial types indicates her mastery.

The second site demonstrated that Mary began to negotiate the frame that the organisation of the Viceroy's tour placed around a visit more critically. In Burma Mary explicitly noted that the organisation of the tour prompted a particular way of seeing. Instead of trying to see outside this frame, Mary instead offers her audience a concentrated moral and historical understanding of the cultural landscape she encounters, based on factual knowledge, demonstrating her 'tutored eye'. This is a characteristic that she had developed in her journal of the 1900 Tour of Southern India. I have argued that when Mary transgressed the space of the tour, when she slips either out of sight of the public audience, or on the occasion when she becomes 'isolated' within a 'de-peopled' landscape, that she encounters India in a different manner.

I have argued that the way in which the tour was ordered encouraged Mary to adopt a viewing position, which reflected the concerns of British imperialism and thus prioritises a masculine gaze. I would argue that the viceregal way of seeing directed Mary's gaze towards adopting a masculine gaze. This is certainly supported through her adoption of the monarch-of-all-I-survey genre. Gillian Rose suggests that the female gaze sees 'landscapes in relation to their domestic spaces and their networks of interaction'.¹¹⁷ I would argue that while Mary undoubtedly negotiates the landscape drawing attention to the people she meets these were not lasting impressions. For example while Mary may have negotiated her own gendered position following her visit to the Maharani of Jodhpur, she did not hold this as a means to analyse the women within the court at Bikanir.

Mills suggests that colonial women adopted a masculine way of seeing but one which represented a 'more complex negotiation of their position within a power hierarchy instituted through colonisation'.¹¹⁸ I would argue that Mary mediated the landscape in these terms. At one level Mary was continuously protected within the landscape her viewing position was constrained by concerns for her own safety. Mary also had little agency in determining the vision of India that she saw, that she as only able to escape the frame for short lengths of time indicates that she was trapped within a structure that constrained her vision. In fact the only times when Mary changed the structure of the tour was when she was ill – hardly a positive form of agency. Mary also only really ever saw at close hand the elite echelons of Indian society and these were more often than not fleeting

¹¹⁷ Rose (

glimpses. Those Indian's who served her are generally out of sight within her diary. However while Mary may have adopted a privileged and masculine viewing position the longer-term implications of Mary's gaze did relate to feminine concerns. For example Mary's direct negotiation of women within Purdah persuaded her to formulate a nursing scheme that would enable direct access to such women.

It is interesting to note that it is only after four years of travelling in India that Mary begins to make critical comparative judgements of those she encounters on her tour. Finally the viceregal frame encourages her to adopt the tool of mastery over people and landscape: the survey. By creating her informal typological framework of 'enlightment', Mary demonstrated her superior knowledge of acceptable and unacceptable westernisation. Mary reveals that the moral characteristics embedded in the figure of the Maharaja of Bikanir are the only acceptable elements of westernisation. The adoption of western clothing and furnishings seen at Udiapur, Jodphur and Kotah are an anathema to her desire for the oriental picturesque. Yet her typology is flawed indicated by Mary's willingness to celebrate the footsteps of the women in purdah in the new palace at Bikanir. She had previously noted such woman as representing the dividing line between East and West. The inconsistencies of her typology are indicative of the mutable approach to the Indian Princes by the British Raj.

¹¹⁸ Mills, S., 'Gender and Colonial Space', *Gender Place and Culture*, 3 (1996) p.132. See Rose, (1993) pp.86-112

Chapter 7

‘Fancy thinking it *serious* sport!’: Viceregal Hunting

I Introduction

If ‘sport’ was an ‘obsession in British India’ the viceregal household was no exception.¹ The main focus of viceregal sporting activities centered on big game hunting which formed an intrinsic part of a viceregal tour. However sporting activities were also undertaken as a private leisure pursuit, whether shooting snipe on the walk from Government House, Calcutta to Barrackpore or outings around Simla. The word ‘sport’ is used specifically as it recognises that the type of hunting undertaken by the viceregal party was purely recreational, rather than the hunting for food or for the protection of settlement and agriculture.² While the viceregal hunt was recreational it was carried out within a social and political framework, which John MacKenzie argues sought to convey the mastery of the British Raj over nature, and became a symbol of the feudal relationship between the Raj and the Indian princes.³ This chapter questions the extent to which MacKenzie’s assertion of the hunt being the strongest demonstration of a feudal relationship between the Viceroy and the Princes can be sustained. Exploring the culture of hunting at the turn of the century, Mary’s narratives and associated photographs reveal that while the viceregal shooting parties sought to convey mastery over the natural world, it was an image highly dependent on the beneficence of the hosts. The widespread image of the viceroy as imperial hunter

¹ MacKenzie, J.M., *The Empire of Nature: hunting, conservation and British imperialism* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988) p.168

² MacKenzie (1988) p.170

³ MacKenzie (1988) p.168

par excellence, the epitome of imperial masculinity, was often an illusion that concealed the cooperation of those around him, including Mary, the ‘family’ and his hosts.

Mary accompanied George on the majority of hunting trips in different regions of India between 1898 - 1902. Ill health and time spent in Europe prevented Mary from attending shooting trips from 1903 onwards. In her absence, George sent lengthy descriptions of the sport. Mary cannot be classified alongside other female game hunters; she did not carry a gun, or on any occasion record her active participation in shooting.⁴ Nor does her journal focus on the practical aspects of the shoot such as the type of gun being used or offer serious discussion of the management of the hunt. In addition, Mary did not make a rigorous record of the viceregal bag, for example by recording the number, weight or length of the kill. However, she placed great emphasis on detailing the activities of the shooting party. In this way Mary offered her audience a chance to sit on the machan (shooting platform) at the zenith of imperial power over nature.

This chapter follows the different stages of the imperial hunt. Firstly I address the practical elements of the camp, those of accommodation and transport, and also the preparations for the successful hunting of game. Here I consider the extent to which the Viceroy’s hunting parties from 1898 – 1905 followed hunting traditions and symbolism of the Mughal emperors, as John MacKenzie has suggested. Like the adoption of other Mughal forms such as the Durbar, MacKenzie has argued that the British ‘consciously sought to inherit the mantle

of the Mughals' through an opulent and highly visible command of the environment.⁵

Section III tracks the second stage of the hunt: the kill. This explores the rhetoric of Mary and George's response to the kill and reveals the way in which the civilized 'imperial' kill is compared with the 'barbaric' 'native' kill. While the turn of the century may have seen the promotion of conservation and preservation, few glimpses of such concerns are to be found within the viceregal hunt. More attention was given to the difficulties of a failed beat and the annoying absence of sport. Section IV considers the memorializing of hunting achievement through trophies fashioned in photographs and from the bodies of animals themselves.

This chapter also gives attention to the gendered dimensions of viceregal hunting. In Section V we indicate that while the Viceroy was expected to show his masculinity within the jungle, it is clear that hunting became an activity in which Mary's femininity was to be protected from dangers of the jungle, wild animals and the 'natives'. The imperial hunt can thus be seen as an intensely masculine space. However, this picture is complicated when we see how Mary and George used the hunt to develop a space of great personal intimacy.

⁴ For information on female game hunters see: Robinson, J., *Wayward Women* (Oxford: Oxford Paperbacks, 1990) pp.62-78

⁵ MacKenzie, (1988) p.169

II Adopting the mantle of the Mughals

The imperial hunt in India, of which royal and viceregal hunting parties were surely the apotheosis, reflected the British practice of establishing modes of authority through the adoption and adaptation of Mughal traditions.⁶ During the Mughal period, the monarch would process through the countryside to the main shooting camp, with an entourage of his court. Hunting would take place during travel and entertainment provided by dancers and musicians. This procession enabled the power and majesty of the monarch to be displayed to the people and also enabled the monarch to arbitrate in matters at a local level and to survey the kingdom. MacKenzie draws on the Mughal chroniclers who describe the informality of the court during these hunting camps that enabled lesser members of court to catch the monarch's eye with the attendant hope of promotion. Once settled at camp the sport would start, lasting for many weeks before moving to a new camp or returning to the palace.⁷

Following the 1857 'mutiny' the 'British enthusiastically adopted, in modified and more controlled form, the great elephant-borne hunts of the northern aristocracy.'⁸ Taking place within the princely states, these hunts continued the feudal traditions, albeit in a revised form between the representatives of the British crown and the Indian princes. Hunting thus came to represent 'a historic cultural interaction which the British were able to use to build social bridges with Indians, particularly the Indian aristocracy.'⁹ Hunting was considered an intrinsic

⁶ MacKenzie, (1988) p. 169; see also Cohn, (1983) pp.165-210; Cohn, B., *Colonialism and its Forms of Knowledge: The British in India* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996)

⁷ MacKenzie, (1988) p.175

⁸ MacKenzie, (1988) p.174

⁹ MacKenzie, (1988) p.169

part of the tour, usually coming at the end of a visit to a particular state, or rounding up the end of a longer tour. Hosted by the local potentate, sporting activities could range from a single day shoot, if time pressed, to a longer hunting camp sometimes lasting for a number of weeks. The viceregal household also took a 'private' hunting camp - yet this still had an element of 'public' duty with it, and the viceregal party were often entertained in a similar manner to the 'official' hunting camps.

The political considerations of viceregal tours were often of great consequence, presenting opportunities for the Viceroy and Indian princes to negotiate current problems directly. That hunting should often follow these negotiations leads to an overly simplistic, symbolic parallel between the imperial subjugation of the Indian Princes, and the imperial mastery over nature. For example, during the viceregal tour to Hyderabad in March 1902 George forced a settlement over the contested region of Behar, resulting in its permanent lease to the British Raj from the Nizam.¹⁰ The Viceroy celebrated this settlement by a shoot in the jungle of the Warangal District of Hyderabad. Similarly in 1903 George preceded a private shooting trip in Gwalior with government business. As he wrote to Mary:

At 3.30 I had a talk with the MR [Maharaja] on Imperial Service Troops & some other [illeg.] questions of importance on which he is a little obstinate...There is the most wonderful khubber [potential sport intelligence] the MR Scindia [Maharaja of Gwalior] says. We shall get 8 for certain & with a chuckle he hints at 15.¹¹

¹⁰ See Gilmour, (1994) pp.227-228

¹¹ LCP 25/3-14 April 13 1903 George to Mary; The Maharaja of Gwalior Sindhia of Gwalior b.1877. 'Scindia' an alternative spelling of Sindhia, refers to the dynastic title of the Maharajas of Gwalior. See Lethbridge, (1900) p.ix; See Lethbridge, (1900) p.ix, 86

While the symbolic parallels between the subjugation of Indian princes and the attendant mastery over nature are easy to make, they ignore an important element of the imperial hunt, namely the way in which the Indian princes used the occasion to mark their own 'local ruling authority'.¹² Indeed, as Ryan argues, the symbolism of the hunt was 'jointly shared by English and Indian rulers'.¹³ Like other elements of the viceregal tour, the organization of the hunt was a partnership between with the local government agents and the staff of the local maharaja. The success of a hunt was critical to the prestige of a local state, and thus great emphasis was placed on achieving a good-sized viceregal bag. The viceregal hunts, hosted in a princely state, were undeniably extravagant and demonstrate that MacKenzie is correct in his assertion that after 1870, when the Raj moved into an era of 'imperial bombast' the 'more opulent forms of Mughal hunting were enthusiastically taken over'.¹⁴

The types of hunting that the viceregal party partook were eclectic in range, fusing both elite court practices and low caste hunting traditions, and included British hunting traditions and organisation.¹⁵ It was from low caste hunting practices that the terms 'shikar' (hunting) and 'shikari' (hunter) were adopted. A shikari's traditional duties were to protect settlement and agriculture from attack by wild animals. As well as the term, the British borrowed the tradition of

¹² Ryan, J.R., *Picturing Empire: Photography and the Visualization of the British Empire* (London: Reaktion Books, 1997) p.103

¹³ Ryan, (1997) p.103, see also MacKenzie, (1988) p.10. This also reflects David Cannadine's recent argument that the attention played to racial difference in an imperial context has ignored the importance of the bond of shared class status between the Viceroy and Maharajas, which is perhaps only really reflected on the hunting ground. This argument certainly helps to mitigate MacKenzie's overemphasis on the feudal relationship between Princes and the Viceroy, which Mary's narrative does not uphold. See Cannadine, D., *Ornamentalism: How the British saw their empire* (London: Penguin, 2001)

¹⁴ MacKenzie, (1988) p.170

shooting from a tree platform or 'machan' from the shikari. This adaptation notwithstanding, the viceregal hunt probably adopted more from the hunting methods of the elite. Certainly the viceregal hunts fall into the 'communal' hunt model, which used beaters who drove animals towards the hunting party with the noise of shouting, firecrackers and drums.¹⁶ Such communal hunts used hundreds if not thousands of beaters, which, as the British adopted this method, were organised and marshalled to ensure the animals were driven correctly towards the hunting party.

Mary's narratives indicate that the viceregal hunting trips between 1898 - 1905 were a fusion of courtly and low caste practices. One of the first hunting experiences that Mary had in India came during the hill march in September 1899; her description evokes something of the Mughal procession with opportunistic hunting happening on the way:

After lunch we started, all riding, for Narkanda, and tried to shoot pheasants without success, on the way...Monday 18th September 1899. We had an early lunch here [Narkanda] and started for Babhi eleven miles after. The ride through the forest was perfectly beautiful. The trees are magnificent beautiful and seem as fine and as immense as the tall pines in California. We had tea at a 7 mile point, and after had a pheasant drive as we walked along a lovely road, great cliffs above us and drops of hundreds of feet below. I kept close behind George to keep him from backing over the Khud as he tried to shoot high over his head a bird they were very rare, and we only got four as they flew past like greased lightening.¹⁷

¹⁵ MacKenzie, (1988) pp.169, 173. Members of the viceregal household, notably Lord Suffolk kept a pack of hounds at Calcutta and went 'fox' hunting

¹⁶ MacKenzie, (1988) p.173; see also Iman, S.A.S.A.A., *Brown Hunter! (The Big Five of Indian Jungle game, tiger, elephant, leopard, buffalo and gaur, with a reference as well to Himalayan big game)* (New Delhi: Allied Publishers Private, 1980)

¹⁷ LCP 42/6 September 18 1899 Tour Journal. See MacKenzie, (1988) p.175 for Mughal hunting processions.

This initial entry indicates something of Mary's eye for the ridiculous in her observations, but this description is evocative of the Mughal processions. Once in camp, the serious shooting would take place. Accommodation arrangements made for a shoot during a viceregal tour were usually in the form of temporary, tented camps. The first camp in which Mary and George were accommodated at Gwalior reflected the Mughal origins of luxurious tented camps that Mary described thus:

At 8 this morning we were ready to start for the tiger shoot, but we only got off at 9.am and drove 25 miles to a camp which the Maharaja has had pitched for us...The camp where we arrived at 10.30 is the prettiest thing I have ever seen. A quantity of lovely trees flower beds and fountains; and the tents built round three sides of a square are marvels of comfort and beauty.¹⁸

Mary recorded the impact of the camp in the evening on their return from shooting, telling her readers: '*We walked back through the jungle in the dark and found* ~~The camp was illuminated and was a perfect fairyland when we got back~~'.¹⁹ This 'fairyland' camp followed the Mughal design precedent for 'garden settings' in which to strike camp. The first Mughal emperor Babur created the first permanent garden setting in which temporary camps would be struck in the early sixteenth century at Dholpur, Central India. The permanent features of such settings included pools and water channels; at Gwalior Mary described flowerbeds in addition to the traditional water features.²⁰

By April 1902 Mary had grown used to the camp living and described the first camp for the shoot in the Warangal District of Hyderabad, Central India, as being

¹⁸ LCP 42/39 December 1 1899 Tour Journal

¹⁹ LCP 42/39 December 1 1899 Tour Journal. For explanation of Mary's edited tour journals see above pages 264-268



Plate 42 – "The Viceregal Camp at Nersinpett, Warangal District the first of two camps set up on the Viceroy's hunting trip during his visit to Hyderabad"
Deen Dayal April 1902
OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/33 (36)

‘on the usual scale’. Despite extensive preparations viceregal camps were still at the mercy of the elements, as Mary described:

About 6.30 we started to drive seven miles to our camp which is on the usual scale, but had half blown down in the night as a humorous cyclone had waited until lamp and chandeliers had been hung up in the shaminanas before bursting.²¹

Despite Mary’s claim that an ‘air of soaky dilapidation reigned supreme’ the luxury in which the tented camp was furnished is also conveyed by her description. Plate 42 illustrates this camp pitched at Nersinpett. Formed around three sides of a square this camp was proclaimed British by the flying of the Union Flag.

Mary and George were not always elaborately accommodated on shoots; indeed the difference in accommodation styles between the formal viceregal hunting party and the informal shooting trips is palpable. These differences indicate the importance of the participation of the local Maharaja's in enabling the opulent accommodation redolent of the Moghul traditions: without positive participation it was impossible for the Raj alone to enable this. This was demonstrated on a weeklong private ‘hill march’ which took place in the foothills of the Himalayas above Simla in September 1899. Either the local government agent or the local maharaja accommodated the viceregal party. The accommodation on this informal shoot was certainly less grand than on an official state visit described in other journal entries but Mary’s observations indicate the extremes which local Maharajas could go to ensure the Viceroy’s comfort. The level of comfort when

²⁰ Mitchell, G. & Martinelli, A., *The Royal Palaces of India* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1994) p.60

²¹ LCP 42/99 April 2 1902 Tour Journal

not being entertained by a Maharaja or that offered by a less subservient Maharaja is made strikingly clear.

On the first night of their hill-march the viceregal party were accommodated in a guest bungalow that had been decorated by the local 'Raja'. Mary described this in her journal:

The bungalow at Matiana was all trimmed with garlands of paper flowers and green boughs, and the floor of the veranda covered with red calico and when that failed flowered calico.... the white walls of the room decorated with green, red and yellow glazed calico cut in patterns, stuffed birds on the table and brackets supporting silver ornaments; and to complete the splendour a silver chair with a velvet rug thrown over it standing in the midst of boxes and dressing bags. All this decoration had been lent by the Raja who came to see George in Durbar as soon as he arrived.²²

A few days later Mary arrived at Narkanda and found the arrangements organised by the British manager of the State less than satisfactory. Mary noted that the usual 'ornamentation' in the form of elaborate furnishings were absent. She explained:

We got to Narkanda at 6, and were greeted with the usual crowd, arches &c, and the Manager of the States, the Rajah being mad and locked up....Narkanda lacks the ornamentation, doubtless because there is no Rajah in this state sane enough to loan his finery. The Manager presented the usual dolly, and a tent was filed with baskets of fruit, vegetables and sweets, and two or three rams were tied to stays and plunging around.²³

Without the benevolence of the local 'Rajah', it was impossible to offer luxurious furnishings. However, the following day, the camp at Baghi proved the difference that a subversive 'Rajah' could make to viceregal comfort:

²² LCP 42/4 September 16 1899 Tour Journal

It is quite cold and we rather shivered as we dined in our tent, as this bungalow is very small and quite undecorated save for an arch and a few paper flowers. I believe the Rajah of these mountains has a grievance and has sent in a petition accordingly.²⁴

This is however an unusual occurrence; in the main the viceregal party was accommodated in particular comfort in the hunting camps and, when hosted during a viceregal tour in the Princely States, the Viceroy was given all the trappings of traditional kingdom.

As has been explored in Chapter 6 transportation provided an important mechanism for re-enacting the link to a Mughal tradition. Whilst tented camps were set up to accommodate the viceregal party near the hunting ground, it is clear that many miles had to be covered each day to reach the shooting area. All forms of transport were adopted including pad and howdah elephants, horse drawn carriage, horses, railway journeys on trolleys and walking. Indian porters also sometimes carried Mary in a palanquin or doolie.

The forms of transport adopted thus varied according to the geographical terrain and type of game being hunted. Although, as MacKenzie has noted, the British adopted the great elephant hunt of the Northern Princes, the viceregal hunts were by no means limited to elephant bound hunts, which were traditionally associated with dense jungle terrain.²⁵ In fact Mary only attended one elephant bound hunt, in the Terai region, Northern India from 28th March to 6th April 1900, although she received extensive descriptions of the form of elephant bound hunts, with the

²³ LCP 42/5 September 17 1899 Tour Journal, characteristic spelling changes between Rajah and Raja. Neither incorrect

²⁴ LCP 42/6 September 18 1899 Tour Journal

different methods of beating for tigers, from George. Elephants were most often used for transport to a shooting ground. Over long distances Mary found 'pad' elephants, carrying a mattress saddle, more comfortable than the 'howdah' elephants, which carried a more substantial seat platform.²⁶ While the pad elephants may have been preferable to Mary, the howdah carried with it the symbolism of the elite and this represents one of the inconsistencies of the fusion of lower caste and courtly forms of hunting. While the pad elephants may have been preferable, a letter written by George to Mary indicates that prolonged travel, even on a pad elephant was by no means comfortable: '4 hours on the back of these cursed pads bump, bump, bump one could nearly cry with pain'.²⁷ Letters indicate that the curvature of the spine from which George suffered was greatly aggravated by the motion of pad elephants resulting in the addition of a back support strapped to the pad. Re-enacting the Mughal ideal was thus undertaken at some cost to the Viceroy's own health.²⁸

Elephants used during the viceregal hunts were borrowed from the State. Obviously on an elephant-borne hunt, a greater number would be required, both for transport and as shooting platforms and the beat. The first and only time that Mary noted the number of elephants used within a hunt occurred on the elephant borne hunt in the Terai region in April 1900. Mary described the scene of her arrival in her tour journal:

~~We changed into the narrow gauge line, and came to a place in the jungle where 75 elephants stood in a magnificent line to receive us,~~
At a station further on Captain Baker-Carr and Mr. Rebsch, the

²⁵ MacKenzie, (1988) p.169

²⁶ LCP 42/52 March 28 1900 Tour Journal

²⁷ LCP 24/49-52 March 29 1903 George to Mary.

²⁸ LCP 21/22-31 April 3 1901 George to Mary

Forest Commissioner who is managing our shoot, met us, and we had breakfast and then mounted pad elephants, that is a mattress tied on to the back of an elephants (~~these are more comfortable than Howdahs~~) and proceeded across the jungle for two miles. Then we got on our howdah elephants, George on one and I on the next with Captain Baker-Carr to guard and shoot any tiger that charged us.²⁹

Seventy-five elephants were clearly considered a considerable number, despite the fact that Mary crossed out this information in her editing of her journal. However, this was out numbered by George's elephant-borne hunt in Nepal in 1901 where two hundred elephants were put at the Viceroy's disposal. It is clear from Mary's entry that while pad elephants were used for transport, the actual shooting took place from a howdah, which offered a more practical platform, and added symbolic resonance.

When shooting from fixed positions (as opposed to elephant-borne hunts) in the dry forests of Central India, getting to the hunting ground was often the most arduous part of a day's hunting.³⁰ During the shoot in the Warangal district Hyderabad in 1902 Mary detailed the various journeys to the different shooting locations in the jungle. From the city of Hyderabad where the viceregal party had been staying it took four hours by train followed by a seven-mile horse carriage journey to arrive at the first shooting camp. From the first camp the viceregal party had to ride and then walk to the machans, which had been built in the trees. Extracts from three days of Mary's diary reveal that getting to each shooting point was gruelling, particularly in the heat, which was over 100 degrees Fahrenheit.

²⁹ LCP 42/52 March 28 1900 Tour Journal

³⁰ For the geographical region and types of hunting see MacKenzie, (1988) p.169

Monday...We sallied forth in the scorching heat and drove in a small tonga for eight miles. We then began to walk which seemed interminable and no one seemed to know where the tree was in which our machan was. The path went through a dead, glaring, naked, rocky jungle, and the heat was awful and as we plodded in it seemed that we must frizzle up entirely. We eventually got to a tree which was gaunt and leafless...Tuesday...We had another very long drive chiefly over the open country, as there were no roads to speak of, so we bumped fearfully. Again we had a walk to speak of and this time down a sandy rocky bed of a river. My feet were so scorched that it was painful....Wednesday news came of a tiger eight miles away down the line so we set out in trolleys. This was trying and slow, and the heat and glare of the rails and the iron railroad sleepers was like the breath from an open furnace door. We climbed onto elephants, as this country is bare and treeless. I think the movement of an elephant is much worse than any other and our bones were racked as we jerked along.³¹

This entry indicates that the viceregal party shot in different locations each day. This was the standard practice according to where the best sport was likely to take place. To enable the best sport for the Viceroy, extensive preparations were made, communicated to him in regular reports of expected game and conditions. There was no standard pattern for who would organise a shoot, for example, in the Terai region the Forest Commissioner, a Mr Rebsch, organised the shoot with the help of the Viceroy's ADC, Captain Baker-Carr, whereas in Hyderabad the 1902 hunt was organised by the Nizam of Hyderabad's own ADC, Afsar-ud-Dowlah. At Bikaner, Mysore and Gwalior the Maharajas accompanied the viceregal party themselves.

While Mary was quick to complain about the absence of sport in an area, (see page 335) her journals give little evidence that she understood the extensive preparation required for a successful game hunt. Hunting for tiger, and other large game, involved several weeks' preparation combining local knowledge of

³¹ LCP 42/103-104 April 7-9 1902 Tour Journal

the area and also the type of game being shot. Writing about the preparations required for a tiger hunt, a professional 'shikar outfitter' has noted:

It must not be imagined that tiger hunting is a simple affair if forcing a tiger to a gun. Driving the tiger is an art involving junglecraft, and an intimate knowledge of the ways of this animal. If done right, tigers are produced with deceptive ease...producing a tiger to a gun is a very delicate affair. A tiger must be nursed along in the direction he would more or less go naturally when disturbed. A thousand beating elephants cannot force a tiger to go the way he does not want to.³²

The first stage in preparing for a tiger hunt involved locating the game in an area often in places where a tiger would retire after eating: shaded areas at ground level, provided the best opportunities for a successful drive.³³ Prior to the hunt potential 'coverts' would be baited with a live animal such as a buffalo calf or goat, and those from which the bait was taken identified as the most fruitful shooting ground. A successful tiger shoot would cover a vast area and therefore dozens of potential coverts would be baited in search of tigers in different directions.

The second stage of a tiger hunt was to assess the 'natural line of retreat' for a tiger once disturbed from the coverts. This line of retreat represented the shooting line, and the guns would be sited on points along this line, whether on elephants, or on a machan. To ensure the guns were able to shoot in this firing area the foliage along this shooting line was cleared or thinned. 'Stopping lines' were placed on either side of this shooting line to control the movement of the tigers retreat, ensuring it stayed within the beat, driving towards the guns. Beaters would be placed along the stopping line in the trees and would 'tap' noises that

³² Iman, (1980)

deterred the tiger from 'breaking out'. Tigers would most likely break out only if felt surrounded, the amount of noise from beaters making little difference.³⁴

Once these preparations were made the hunting camp was ready. Bait would be left in the prepared coverts each night, inspected in the morning and the 'kubber' or intelligence brought back to camp. According to this, the shooting party would head towards the most likely shooting ground, often in a different covert each day. Mary's journals indicate the different modes of transport used daily that were used to get to different shooting grounds.

Once the guns were in place the beat started. This was probably the most dangerous element; should a tiger break out of the beat and retreat the beaters were in great danger. Beats were incredibly noisy occasions. Mary described the 'tom-toming' and screaming of the beaters, thousands of whom were used at a time on foot and also on elephants. To ensure the Viceroy's success, the beat was engineered in a way to guide the game to his gun, and the first shot given to the Viceroy as a matter of precedence.

Despite the great organisation to control the shoot, occasions in the jungle showed that nature could not always be controlled at will. Mary described with some amusement an incident in Hyderabad in 1902:

We had just got in the machan, George was loading, Captain Wigram and Major Afsar-ud-Dowlah and a group of servants were standing on the ground when out bounded a tiger 40 yards away. No group of men ever made such time as the group under the tree.

³³ Iman, (1980) p.1

³⁴ For detailed information on the setting up of a beat see Iman (1980)

Some climbed the ladders, other trees and Captain Wigram and Major Afsar-ud-Dowlah ran for their lives and clambered up the elephants by their tails! George quite unprepared, pulled frantically at his rifle, which was at “safety” and not cocked and by the time he [got] it to go off the tiger was 100 yards away, bellowing and bounding and scattering humanity and getting clean away. The tiger could not have been more than 50 yards while we were under our machan, and it would have been a great spectacle if he had met us as we walked though the jungle.³⁵

The preparations I have described indicate that the viceregal hunts were carefully controlled spectacles, which were not so much about the Viceroy’s mastery over nature but the knowledge and skill of those preparing the sport. The adoption of Mughal forms enabled through the complicity of the Indian princes allowed the demonstration of imperial power, yet without their support such a spectacle would have been impossible to perform.

III Mastery over nature?

The viceregal kill was the glorified ideal of the imperial act of mastery over nature. As MacKenzie has noted, big game hunting represented on a symbolic level the ‘striving and victory of civilised man over darker primeval and untamed forces still at work in the world.’³⁶ There were however a number of desirable pre-requisites to which the kill had to conform in order to ensure that this symbolic dimension could be played out. The iconography of sporting death expressed in Victorian and early Edwardian representations of hunting demonstrated their ‘desire to elevate and beautify death’.³⁷ This desire prompted an attitude that placed great emphasis on the courageous way in which an animal

³⁵ LCP 42/102 [April 4 1902] Tour Journal

³⁶ MacKenzie, (1988) p.47

³⁷ MacKenzie, (1988) p.34

died. Animals that fought against inevitable death were prized above those that were slaughtered with ease. The hunter could thus demonstrate greater prowess in killing a courageous animal, than one that submitted peacefully to his gun.³⁸

The description of the kill was a significant element both in Mary's journals and George's letters. Once at the location of the shoot Mary and George would prepare themselves for the long wait, hearing the beaters gradually driving the game towards them. Mary's reports of the successful killing of animals conveys the anticipation and excitement which accompanied the shoot:

I was sitting in a heap in the howdah when I felt our elephant begin to shake like a leaf and remarked to Captain Baker-Carr that it was clever of the elephant to manage a chill with the thermometer at 100. An elephant always trembles when he scents a tiger but I did not know it. In the same breath Captain Campbell, who was placed beyond us fired, and a tiger and another tiger came galloping across between us like two bounding cats! In a second Captain Baker-Carr had fired two barrels and both tigers had cleared the brook. George was firing at them and his elephant was roaring and the tiger growling and then everyone began to shout at once as both tigers disappeared with bullets or no bullets inside them! We moved off to luncheon in a great state of elation at seeing two tiger and sorrow at not killing them but full of hope for the afternoon.³⁹

In another shoot Mary describes the excitement as 'It was so sudden and thrilling that my eyes were falling out and my tongue tied'.⁴⁰ The heightened expectations of this noise and the expectations of the approaching game made the hunt a very exhilarating experience for Mary.

³⁸ See MacKenzie, (1988) p.11

³⁹ LCP 43/95-96 March 30 1900 Tour Journal

⁴⁰ LCP 42/29 December 1 1899 Tour Journal

Whilst Mary's descriptions of the build up to the kill were detailed she did not dwell on manner in which animals died. This is in direct contrast to George's descriptions of death, which perhaps highlights his desire to present himself as a hunter of distinction. Mary received long tracts from George describing his days hunting when she was not with him, complete with drawings outlining the way in which the hunt was organised and exact positioning of the guns and game at the point of the kill. The descriptions of the manner in which the animals died indicate George's desire for his prey to die in a courageous manner, illustrated during in a shooting trip in Nepal in spring 1901. The first tiger that the Viceroy killed was disappointing as 'he showed no pluck and was so stately in his movements that he might almost have been drugged'.⁴¹ On the fifth day of the camp, two tigers were killed. The first was deemed 'a poor performer' but the second provided a 'really exciting shoot', which George described to Mary:

For over an hour we had a magnificent spectacle. Four specially chosen elephants tramped about in the densest grass inside, in order to put up the brute and drive him into the guns...You never saw such a tiger or rather tigress. Wherever she was put up she sprang forth and went for anybody and anything near her. She sprang right onto the head of one elephant and clawed a hold on her eyebrow. I saw her right on the head within 6 inches of the Mahout. She leaped on the side of another elephant and clawed him right down. She plunged round the ring charging and trying to breakthrough. Such a trumpeting and screaming and roaring you never heard. Then every time she retired to the high grass and stood there waiting, till none of the elephants dared to go near her. A lucky shot from me knocked her clean over, but even then she died grandly, struggling and raising herself up and roaring. We had a photographer who took some splendid views of her and of the whole thing, I wish you had seen it. It was a spectacle never to forget.⁴²

⁴¹ LCP 21/13-20 March 29 1901 George to Mary

⁴² LCP 21/22-31 April 3 1901 George to Mary

This description is similar to many of George's that utilised words such as 'splendid and courageous brute' to depict the nobility of the kill. The intense drama of the kill is described in such a way that almost places the animal and hunter on an equal level; either could win, the danger in which the hunter places himself matches the potential danger to the tiger. Only through skill and 'luck' can the animal be slain.

George's admission that it might have been luck that enabled him to kill the tiger is indicative of the extent to which the Viceroy's mastery over nature was an illusion. Mary's diaries highlight a number of occasions where the Viceroy's hunting exploits were recorded selectively, where failure was erased from the record and indeed, where Mary herself was responsible for ensuring George's success as a hunter. Two incidents during the hunting camp in Hyderabad in 1902 demonstrate the fragile illusion of the Viceroy's mastery over nature.

The first example indicates how Mary's record of the day's activities in her diary were not always flattering to the image of the Viceroy:

Out came an enormous tiger, which George had three shots at and we thought him dead, when to our stupefaction he got up and walked off, and was so wounded that he only got 100 yards and was finished off by other guns.⁴³

Mary's editing of her journal on this occasion, caused her to strike out the whole of this entry, erasing the evidence of Viceroy's failure to kill the tiger.

Photographic images memorialising different kills create an illusion of the Viceroy's sporting achievements. One such image taken during the Hyderabad



Plate 43 – Their Excellencies just after shooting. Tiger shot through head at 70 yards
Deen Dayal 2-12 April 1902
OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/33 (19)

shoot of 1902 illustrates this deception most clearly reproduced as Plate 43. As noted in Chapter One (see above p. 1) this image is a potent one as Ryan has indicated, noting the ‘conventional stance of the victorious huntsmen and landowner’ adopted by George, with his ‘confident pose [symbolising] British authority over India’.⁴⁴ The ‘social hierarchy’ of British India is here ‘re-enacted as Curzon claims his tiger and the beaters and servants recede into the dark undergrowth in the background’.⁴⁵ Mary’s place and pose here might indeed be read as an indication of her incorporation into the world of nature that her husband had under his domain.⁴⁶ This image is a potent one for such interpretations, but these are fragile ideas. For example Ryan argues that such images also demonstrate the local rulers ‘authority’ demonstrating their vast resources and the legacy that the Raj appropriated. However, Mary’s diary of the Hyderabad hunt reveals another complexity in reading such images. While Mary stands defenceless in the photograph, she did celebrate this triumph: her diaries tell us that she saw the tiger first and that she silently pointed it out to George:

The afternoon heat was equally thrilling, and we sat up in another tree, and listened to an oncoming thunderstorm, while the beat was in progress, Again I saw the Tiger first as he crept stealthily out of the jungle, and with the thrill of “mowgli” I touched George and pointed to the advancing beauty. All in a second the tiger turned and galloped across a stream with a roar, and I thought him lost till crack went George’s rifle and as the tiger was fleeing the well placed bullet laid him low, and he lay on his face like a spatchcock tiger and again I got an encouraging pat. The beaters not knowing the tiger was killed, came steadily on, and when they spied the crouching form they fled shrieking, but gradually turned, and when they saw the one bullet which had killed at 70 yards they began a deafening shouting and cheering, and when George and I and the

⁴³ LCP 42/102 April 4 1902 Tour Journal

⁴⁴ Ryan, (1997) p.103

⁴⁵ Ryan, (1997) p.103

⁴⁶ As noted above, (Introduction p. 1) this image is redolent of Gainsborough. Mr and Mrs Andrews and Gillian Rose’s reading of this image is pertinent in this context. See Rose, (1993) p.91

rest of the family [viceregal household] descended from machans and elephants and came to look, they yelled with joy and excitement. George who has not been too well, seemed much cheered by his two splendid shots and we drove home very happy indeed.⁴⁷

This was the second occasion on which Mary had pointed out a tiger to George, that he had quickly dispatched 'stone dead'. Following the first kill George thanked Mary by patting her on the back, while she was '[quivering] with excitement'. As Mary noted 'should I not have seen him the tiger would have escaped'.⁴⁸

These two quotations reveal an element of George and Mary's relationship that can be explored through the space of the hunt. In this case Mary presents herself as the enabling factor through which George was able to shoot two tigers 'stone dead', a feat of sportsmanship that would have added considerably to the Viceroy's status. Mary's reward for pointing out these tigers was a 'pat on the back'. For Mary to write such a thing was unusual; she did not usually communicate George's responses to her actions in letters. However, on this occasion Mary obviously felt the need to alert her audience to the fact that, although not an active shooting participant, she played an essential role in the hunt and received a 'manly' thanks.

Several incidents occurred during the various viceregal hunting trips that indicated that the kill for 'sport' was regarded in a very different light than other 'killings'. Two examples show how Mary contrasted the killing for sport, thought

⁴⁷ LCP 42/101 April 3 1902 Tour Journal

⁴⁸ LCP 42/100 April 4 1902 Tour Journal

to be ‘civilised’, with the brutal way in which ‘natives’ kill, which was considered cruel. Thus Mary set up an opposition between the ‘sport’ kill as civilised and the ‘native’ kill as uncivilised. The first example comes from Mary’s description of hunting in September 1899.

We had a final unsuccessful attempt at a bear shoot today. ...We got back to Camp at 3, and had been in about two hours when they came to report a bear in a nullah two miles down a khud. George and I had had enough *of mythical* bears so Colonel Fenn, Captain Marker, Mr. Younghusband and Daisy set out and came on the bear after dark: it had been wounded by a beater with a spear ~~in his zeal to keep it until the guns arrived~~ and the poor beast was lying half dead from loss of blood, and was mercifully shot by Daisy at 20 yards!⁴⁹

This extract reveals the way in which Mary constructed the image of the Indian beater as an inflictor of cruelty, wounding an animal that was then ‘mercifully’ shot by Daisy. By crossing out the supposed reason for the bear being wounded, that of keeping it until the guns arrived, Mary presented the beater’s actions without their context. Clearly, after days of ‘*mythical*’ bears the hosts desire to ensure the success of Viceroy’s bag resulted in this extreme measure, designed to ensure the prestige of the state. The fact that it was Daisy and not Col. Fenn, Captain Marker or Mr. Younghusband who shot the bear suggests that this kill was not deemed acceptable masculine ‘sport’. Daisy could be trusted to put an animal out of its misery at a close ‘20 yards’.

The second example is taken from Mary’s description of another shoot the following month. Here Mary described another incident that revealed the ‘character’ of the ‘native’ and their attitudes to the kill, which illuminate Mary’s own attitudes to the ‘kill’.

We had lunch in the shade, and while ~~digesting~~ *relishing* Irish stew a kakar bounded past us pursued by yelling beaters who killed the poor little ~~deer~~ fellow with sticks *before our eyes* and then rushed with its bleeding ~~carcass~~ *body* to us. ~~Everyone~~ We shouted to them "lejao" – take it away – and we were disgusted by their brutality *not to kill it but in sport they do not differentiate between shooting and beating to death* We ~~rode~~ *had a long ride* home though the ~~pretty~~ *still* woods in the ~~growing~~ *deepening* darkness ~~to~~ *camp* and got in *to camp* at 7.00. We got 37 partridges and several poor little deer. A Native thinks you only want to kill – no matter what – and their cruelty is awful.⁵⁰

Again Mary sets up a dualism between the civilised kill through shooting and the uncivilised kill through beating to death. She was 'disgusted' at the brutality of the natives indicating that although the final outcome was the same – the death of an animal - the methods of hunting and killing were differentiated between being acceptable and not acceptable. For Mary and the viceregal party to kill for 'sport' was acceptable, but for a native to kill within this arena was deemed 'cruel'.

In the above extract Mary refers to the deer that have been shot as 'poor little deer' showing sympathy for the kill on this occasion. MacKenzie notes that 'From about the turn of the century there was an increasing concern with game preservation'.⁵¹ Mary's letters and diaries contain a few references to such concerns, the clearest being when George cancelled a shooting trip to the Gir forest to hunt lions when he learned of the decreasing number of lion pairs. George also referred with regret to his shooting of a pregnant tiger. Writing to Mary, George commented 'Poor lady she had two unborn pups inside her' and on another occasion in Nepal: 'When the poor tiger was skinned and cut up they

⁴⁹ LCP 42/10 September 23 1899. Italics and strike out indicates corrections made by Mary

⁵⁰ LCP 42/8 October 3 1899 Tour Journal

found 3 little ones inside her nearly ready to be born. Isn't it sad?'. The only time that Mary indicated any distress over hunting occurred when she witnessed the mauling and death of an Indian shakari in Hyderabad who had descended from the safety of an elephant to direct the beat.⁵² The next day Mary decided to leave the hunting camp explaining that 'the accident had sickened me for wild animals'.⁵³

While George was intent on achieving a successful bag he enjoyed conveying the impression to Mary that he had an element of sportsmanlike constraint. For example, George was particularly caustic when an ADC on one private shooting party shot randomly at anything that moved. However, while this may be the case, Mary's diaries indicate the desire for a successful shoot, and anything that upset the success of the viceregal bag was of great annoyance. When the kill was unsuccessful, Mary explained the failure, removing the blame from the Viceroy's shoulders. Mary's attitude to failed shoots, reveals more of her wider engagement with the natural world during viceregal hunts.

During the viceregal hunting camps there were numerous occasions of 'blank days' as Mary described them. After a blank beat in Hyderabad in 1902 she recorded her disappointment:

We were very sad as no animal of any sort appeared and even the sight of a wide circle of ladders on which the staff perched from one horizon to the other staff and disheartened could not cheer my sense of fun, though I shall never forget Mr Lawrence sitting half way up a dead fig tree. An immense pair of black glasses, vast rifle and an air of general misery. I am certain if anyone had a shot from

⁵¹ MacKenzie, (1988) p.171

⁵² LCP 42/105 April 9 1902 Tour Journal

⁵³ LCP 42/106 April 10 1902 Tour Journal

a ladder he must have gone head over heels after his shot. A blank beat means a sad luncheon, and we only had it at 4 o'clock we were too tired to eat and bumped home dejectedly in tongas.⁵⁴

Although Mary wrote these scenes with humour she analysed the reasons for the failure of such days.

After an early shooting trip in September 1899, during which the party went after a bear 'which proved to be the usual phantom' Mary addressed the reasons for this:

I think the miserable luck at shooting is that the preparations for the Viceroy's camps entail such hundreds of coolies and mules and a general turning upside down of the whole country. Miles of paths are cut on any hill the great Sahib may walk on, and underbrush cut down and a grand clean up made of the country. This is done in each small State we go through, and as crowds follow us everywhere every bird and beast flies before such an invading army. While we were waiting for a bear this morning 16 coolies were squatting behind us, all carrying some small article and Mr Younghusband, Captain Baker-Carr, two spear men, Nazir, George's jemandar, and Ram Das, mine, all sat round George. Fancy thinking it *serious* sport!⁵⁵

It is ironic that, as Mary often noted, it was the elaborate preparations for the hunt – the symbol of the Viceroy's control over the environment – that were largely to blame for the failure of many shoots. Mary frequently pointed to the extensive clearing of vegetation for the failure of hunts. Mary obviously felt on this occasion that the whole shooting experience was rather contrived and certainly lacking in the heart stopping excitement of big game shoots, that could be found in contemporary literature. The phrase 'fancy thinking it *serious* sport', indicates the slightly ridiculous nature of the situation; the sheer number of people present removed the sense of gamesmanship for Mary. Two images from the Hyderabad

⁵⁴ LCP 42/103 April 7 1902 Tour Journal



Plate 44 – 'Their Excellencies in the jungle (hunting scene near Nekonda, Warangal District Hyderabad)
Deen Dayal, April 1902
OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/33 (18)



Plate 45 – 'Her excellency crossing a nullah'
Deen Dayal, April 1902
OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/33 (28)

Shoot in April 1902 reveal the extensive number of people that were present in the jungle during the viceregal shoot. Plate 45 shows Mary crossing a stream, surrounded by people and elephants. A second image (Plate 44) indicates the path cut for the viceregal party in the dry forest of the Central Provinces.

The failure of sport was often blamed on poaching; following what became a disappointing shooting trip in Hyderabad Mary reported to her parents:

George came back, fagged and tired and very hot, and not enthusiastic about the sad failures of poor sport. We expected 12 tiger, but we think the country is so poached that there is very little game. We thought it the finest tiger country in India and have been disillusioned.⁵⁶

While it is clear that ground clearance was part of the preparations for a tiger hunt, it would appear that the scale of the viceregal shoot might well have had a detrimental effect on the game in an area. Following the failure of an elephant 'keddah' in Mysore, the viceregal party went on a smaller tiger shooting party.

Mary wrote of this camp:

The Maharaja and ourselves, eight of us started for a camp 26 miles from here, which has been pitched in the hope of George's getting a tiger. It is quite a small pretty camp, and not on the magnificent scale of the one we have just left: but in consequence of its modesty we may have more chance of sport, as all wild animals may not have been driven away by the confusion and noise of pitching a camp the size of a town. 2000 people were living in and about the Kakencote camp, and an immense piece of jungle had been cleared for it. And this may have accounted for the breakdown of the keddah.⁵⁷

While the failure of a beat was an annoyance, continuous blank days caused broader concerns. Viceregal hunts were given detailed newspaper coverage. An ADC acted as newspaper correspondent giving a daily account of the shoot.

⁵⁵ LCP 42/4 September 20 1899 Tour Journal

⁵⁶ LCP 42/106 April 13 1902 Tour Journal

During a successful camp this ensured that the widest possible audience was aware of the Viceroy's success and by virtue his right to represent the British Empire. On occasions when the Viceroy's bag was not so impressive, this reporting became an embarrassment. During a shooting trip to Rewa in 1903 tigers were seen but none killed. Although the hunting was exciting, failure to actually kill a tiger clearly became embarrassing when reported in the newspaper columns.

It is now 10 am and no Khubber of tiger yet. I have told Baring to tell Wiggah and Armstrong (our two newspaper correspondents) to stop the absurdly detailed accounts of our shoot in the Pioneer. Every body would be laughing at us soon. [Besides] I think I might be allowed to slip away for a fortnight's holiday without having every detail recorded in the press. People will think I have authorised it whereas the very reverse is the case.⁵⁸

Mary, reading the reports in Britain, suggested to George that they should stop, to which George replied: 'As you will have seen from a previous letter I quite agree with you that Wigga [Wigram] and Armstrong in the Pioneer made a ludicrous and rather painful combination and that under my [illeg.] orders we have now dropped to 2 lines a day'.⁵⁹ As the shoot grew more farcical and *The Pioneer* continued to cover the embarrassing lack of success, George wrote to Mary that: 'All the staff have refused to act as correspondents to it [*The Pioneer*] for the tour. The paper then tried the native clerks who also refused and I fondly hope therefore that it will get nothing.'⁶⁰ The added pressure of an audience beyond that of the immediate party was of great consideration and the need for the Viceroy to be presented in a strong position, tangible.

⁵⁷ LCP 42/130 December 4 1903 Tour Journal

⁵⁸ LCP 24/96-105 April 7 1903 George to Mary

⁵⁹ LCP 24/114-117 April 9 1903 George to Mary

⁶⁰ LCP 21/13-20 April 2 1901 George to Mary

It is clear from the correspondence between Mary and George that a failure of sport was a cause of considerable anxiety to the host. Returning to the symbolic nature of the hunt, the failure of the host Maharaja to provide adequate sport for the Viceroy damaged the standing of the state. MacKenzie explains, the imperial hunt was organised to ensure that the Viceroy's 'feats with the gun had to be unmatched in his hunting party'.⁶¹ Where sport failed, the reflections on the state and the organisation were clear.

It would appear that there was a strong competitive element between the Indian Princes to give the Viceroy the best sport. This was clearly demonstrated in 1903 when George went on an extended hunting trip to Rewa followed immediately by a visit to Gwalior. Both shoots were a comparative failure in George's eyes and his letters to Mary highlight the competitive nature between the host Maharajas:

Won't little Scindia [Maharaja of Gwalior] be delighted at Rewa's failure? They are all intensely jealous of each other these princes and he will have to show that in a rapid scurry through the out lying portions of Gwalior he can beat the crack jungles of Rewa.⁶²

The disaster at Rewa was saved on the morning of the last shoot in which George shot a leopard and a tiger. Writing to Mary, George reported how he had 'bowled over' a leopard and then encountered a tiger:

She dashed out of thick jungle and galloped off barely visible. I [illeg.] off and broke her foreleg clean in two. Then the MR [Maharaja] put in a couple of bullets and when we came up we found her lying at the brink of death. Poor lady she had 2 unborn pups inside her. Then succeeded general congratulations, photographs etc. and everybody was utterly relieved that the last scene in 10 days of relative failure had been successful.

⁶¹ MacKenzie, (1988) p.174

⁶² LCP 24/119-123 April 10 1903 George to Mary

The passing concern of the two unborn cubs was overtaken by the memorialising of the kill in a photograph creating a lasting tribute to the Viceroy's domination of the natural world. That the Maharaja had also shared in this kill indicates how the symbolic dominance over nature enacted in the hunt was a practice shared with local Indian elites, although the Viceroy gained the majority of the credit.

IV Trophies of Empire

The immediacy with which photographs were made of the kill in Rewa indicates the importance placed on capturing lasting records of hunting achievements. Indeed, by this time, as Ryan has noted, 'photography had become an indispensable part of the ritual of these sporting tours in India'.⁶³ Commemorative photographic albums of the tours contained the official photographer's record of the Viceroy's sporting achievements, another form of trophy. Mary also took her own camera on hunting trips, and a number of unattributed amateur photographs of different aspects of the viceregal hunt are found in her family photograph albums. These illustrate informal aspects of the viceregal hunt, including additional shots of the kill, inspections of the kill, and photographs of luncheon parties.

One of the most comprehensive coverage of the viceregal hunt is found in the commemorative album of the viceregal visit to Hyderabad 1902. The well-established commercial photographer, Lala Din Diyal, was appointed as official photographer for this tour. As Ryan has noted, Diyal had previously worked for former Viceroy's, including Lord Northbrook (1872- 76) and Lord Dufferin

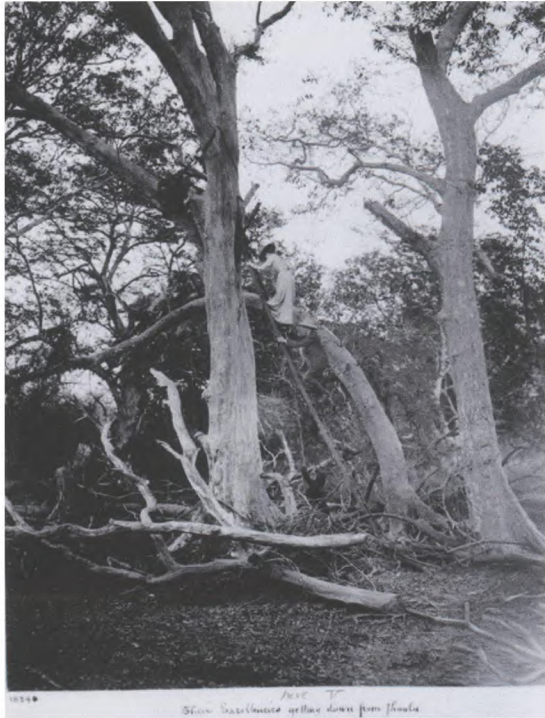


Plate 46 – 'Their Excellencies getting down from Jhoola'
Deen Dayal, April 1902
OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/33 (20)



Plate 47 – The successful kill
Deen Dayal, April 1902
OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/33 (21)

(1884-88) and had worked for the Nizam of Hyderabad since 1884.⁶⁴ Diyal took photographs of all aspects of the viceregal hunt including the camp; transportation; preparing for the kill; the Viceroy shooting; the moment of the kill; the examination and measurement of the kill and, most importantly, Viceroy standing proudly over his kill. Diyal's photographs of the Hyderabad hunting trip in 1902 offer the most comprehensive coverage of any viceregal hunt. Two photographs that are particularly noteworthy show the extent to which Diyal created a story from his photographs, developing a sequence showing the preparations for the kill and then the successful result. Plate 46 shows Mary and George descending the ladder leading to the machan, George holding on to Mary's leg, and the ladder being kept steady by the Shikari underneath. The following photograph (Plate 47) shows of the viceregal household arranged underneath the same machan and with George standing in front with the tiger at his feet. The wood underneath the machan here provides an ideal naturalistic backdrop for the household to lean against. The machan above marks the point from which the fatal shot was fired. Mary was complicit in the celebration of George's hunting prowess. As can be seen in Plate 43, Mary used her own initials, MVC, to identify herself on such images, and gave George the initial V, for Viceroy. While the album came with captions, Mary also added her own; for example to plate 43 she proudly added 'tiger shot dead at 70 yards'.

As I have noted above my reading of this image in conjunction with Mary's narratives indicates she actively constructed certain myths concerning the viceroy's hunting prowess. Others were also complicit in presenting the images

⁶³ Ryan, (1997) p103



Plate 48 – 'First tiger shot by H.E. Lord Curzon in India, Gwalior [Lashkar]'
Deen Dayal 2nd December 1899
OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/17 (33)

of the viceroy as a supreme hunter. These can be exposed through judicious comparison of textual and visual archival material. One such myth surrounded the killing of the ‘Viceroy’s first tiger’ – a much celebrated event. I would argue that this myth emphasises the way in which the symbolism of the tiger hunt was shared between the Viceroy and his Indian hosts.

As Indian rulers put their resources at the disposal of the Viceroy they also often shared the glories of the Viceroy’s success. Official photographs of the glories of the viceregal hunt thus held a shared symbolism, that of the triumph of the Viceroy, but also the authority of the host in providing access to such good sport. Ryan has illustrated this argument by drawing on an official photograph of the ‘Viceroy’s first tiger’, shot in Gwalior in 1899 (Plate 48).⁶⁵ This striking photograph depicts George, whose foot rests on the larger tiger, standing alongside the Maharaja of Gwalior, whose foot rests on a smaller tiger. Both rulers are depicted as sharing this triumph over nature within a hierarchical framework. If this image is read alongside Mary’s diaries it becomes particularly potent for the fabricated image of viceregal supremacy over nature that it portrays.

Mary recorded the events surrounding the hunting of the ‘Viceroy’s first tiger’ thus:

[T]he beat began a new, and about 5 there was crunching and a growl and a flash of yellow dashed before us and George fired and missed him: the fraction of a second, and as the tiger galloped past George shot him in the back and Captain Baker-Carr fired, and all

⁶⁴ Ryan, (1997) p.103

⁶⁵ Ryan (1997) p.103

was over and the tiger gone! It was so sudden and thrilling that my eyes were falling out and my tongue-tied. Then began an elephant beat to try and send back the tiger and just as we were despairing there was a furious growl and a rush and again the tiger rushed past. This time we could not see him for the thickness of the jungle, and we had to remount elephants and go back to camp without the tiger, but we knew he was badly wounded and we should get him tomorrow.⁶⁶

Despite Mary's suggestion that 'we should get him tomorrow' this hunt was organised as a single day shoot with the Viceroy's departure planned the following day. Mary's narrative reveals a number of disturbing elements for the Maharaja of Gwalior. Firstly, the Viceroy did not kill this tiger, but wounded him – a serious situation as an injured tiger often turned into a 'man-eater'. The terrors of the 'man-eater' are legendary and the Viceroy should not be associated with such a negative outcome from his sport. This was demonstrated during the Hyderabad hunting camp in 1902 when, following an accident in which a tiger killed the shikar accompanying George and Mary. George wanted to abandon the shoot but Mary recorded in her journal 'Major Afsar-ud-Dowlah insisted that this was unnecessary, and that if it was done people would say the Viceroy had wounded a tiger which killed a man, instead of which he had nothing whatever to do with the accident'.⁶⁷ Clearly, for the Viceroy to be connected with the wounding of any tiger had to be avoided. To rectify the situation, the Maharaja of Gwalior went out the following day to find the Viceroy's wounded tiger, which Mary described in a second diary entry:

The Maharaja, Captain Marker and Colonel Crofts had been out since 6.30 in search of the wounded tiger....We got in to Gwalior at 11.20 and I went to say goodbye to the Maharana...On my way back to my room I looked out and saw the Maharaja in a barouche drawn by four horses, and in the barouche two immense tigers. It

⁶⁶ LCP 42/29 December 1 1899 Tour Journal

⁶⁷ LCP 42/106 April 13 1902 Tour Journal

was a wonderful sight! He had gone out and got George's wounded tiger and another, popped them into a carriage and driven 20 miles in two hours and there he was triumphant and dusty with two tigers.⁶⁸

Diyal recorded this scene, showing the tigers in the carriage with Maharaja of Gwalior and Colonel Crofts (Plate 49). Following the arrival of the tigers, the official photographer got to work, creating the myth surrounding the Viceroy's first tiger that would be dispersed in the newspapers all over India and further afield. Mary noted with some amusement the composition of the photograph (Plate 48) reflecting idea of both the animal and the photographs as a trophy of the triumph:

We were all photographed as soon as the Maharaja had changed his dress, *and the tigers were included in the shots so it looked as though he had shot them arrayed in frock coat and chiffon!*⁶⁹

Through these official photographs and the captions that accompanied them, the tiger wounded by the Viceroy and later shot by the Maharaja was appropriated as a symbol of the Viceroy's mastery over nature, the 'Viceroy's first tiger'. The importance of this tiger being his 'first' cannot be over emphasised. The lengths that were gone to get this tiger, and the creation of this myth demonstrate the importance of the Viceroy having a recorded first kill. It is almost presented as George's coming of age as an imperial ruler, with the symbol of the dead tiger being a symbol of his successful authority over India.

While Mary's diaries reveal the manufacture of myth, her own photograph album is complicit in its creation. Mary made numerous photographs of George with the Marharaja in his frock coat and chiffon, restaging the official 'first tiger' image,

⁶⁸ LCP 42/30 December 2 1899 Tour Journal

⁶⁹ LCP 42/30 December 2 1899 Tour Journal



Plate 49 – 'Maharaja Scindia returning with Viceroy's First Tiger'
 Deen Dayal December 2nd 1899
 OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/75 (99)



Plate 50 – 'Where we shot the tiger at Gwalior' [Snapshot view of shooting towers]
 Photographer unknown
 OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/75 (70)

and also one of the castellated towers from which the tiger was shot (Plate 50). The latter she captioned 'where we shot the tiger at Gwalior', thus including herself in the activity of the kill. With time, George's actual failure to kill his 'first' tiger was erased and by the time that Mary created her photograph album, the myth had been cemented, sent all over India and Britain in newsprint, and had been established as fact. Only Mary's diary entry reveals the myth that highlights the intricacy of the of the relationship between the British Raj and the Indian Princes.⁷⁰

Mary regularly sent home trophies in the form of photographs to her parents, including those of hunting trips. For example, following the 1902 Hyderabad trip Mary wrote to her father: 'This week I have sent you a number of photographs of our Hyderabad shoot'. While these photographs, accompanied by the hunting record in her tour diaries, sent potent images of George and Mary exploits to America this was also done though trophies fashioned from the dead animal. From the nineteenth century, trophies of hunting pursuits in the form of preserved animal skins became common amongst the upper levels of society. MacKenzie attributes the adoption of such trophies as interior decoration to the Victorian trend of re-invoking the middle ages.⁷¹ Initially associated with the cult of hunting in Britain, trophies such as stag points adorned the walls of the highland hunting retreats and country houses of the British upper classes. As imperial hunting became more widespread mementoes of what MacKenzie describes as

⁷⁰ This is a myth, which continues to this day exemplified by David Cannadine's recent use of this image accompanied with the caption 'Lord Curzon, with the Maharaja of Gwalior in 1899, contemplating his first tiger shot in India as viceroy,' (p.xi). Newspaper articles reviewing the launch of Cannadine's book made wide uses of this image. See: Cannadine, (2001) frontispiece; Grigg, J., 'Imperial Charms', *The Times* 2, Wednesday April 25 2001 p. 14

⁷¹ MacKenzie, (1988) p.28

‘the fruits of upper class tourism...fine skins, particularly of great cats appeared on floors and walls’.⁷² Although photographs could capture the immediacy of the kill, preserved skins, heads, horns and other parts of animals’ bodies were a more tangible record and dramatic trophy that could be absorbed by all. The fashion for tiger skins was not limited to India and certainly reached the United States.⁷³ Following the 1902 hunt to Hyderabad, Mary informed her father that George had sent a skin to a taxidermist in London, which would then be sent to them as a gift. If skins were fashionable in America then one shot by the Viceroy of India surely represented the epitome of style.

V The bodily space of the hunt

The ultimate aim within an imperial hunt was an exhibition of great sportsmanship, in terms of precision accuracy, combined with a demonstration of masculine courage. Although there were a number of female big game hunters, and women often took active part in the sport, hunting was generally the preserve of men. As MacKenzie notes:

The imperial hunt was a largely male affair and extolled as such. Its rituals and its alleged character forming qualities were depicted as being ‘manly’, a masculine training for imperial and racial domination.⁷⁴

There are no records of Mary using a gun herself. In a letter to her father from the Terai in March 1900 she discussed the recent hunting trip but stated: ‘I went out everyday on elephants and saw George shoot two tigers but did not shoot myself’.⁷⁵ One of the most telling reasons why Mary did not herself shoot is

⁷² MacKenzie, (1988) p.29

⁷³ MacKenzie, (1988) p.182

⁷⁴ MacKenzie, (1988) p.22

⁷⁵ LCP 43/93 [c.April 3 1900] Tour Journal

revealed in a letter written by George, in which he demonstrates the paternalistic reaction to a request by a woman game hunter:

I think Lady C Mackenzie must be distinctly cracked that she had tried to shoot in Somaliland but had been turned out because of the war; that she was alone and proposed to shoot this autumn in Gilgit, Skardu, Ley and Tibet! I replied that I could not give her permission to do anything of the kind alone as it was not safe and I got Col. [Illeg.?Baring] to write a letter to Colin [British Resident?] explaining all about her and telling either to attach her to some party or to switch her energies into some other course.⁷⁶

This letter indicates George thought women hunters, particularly if travelling alone exposed themselves to inappropriate dangers. Mary was not an independent traveller or hunter, yet her narratives indicate that her own safety, even when amongst the viceregal party, was of great concern, especially to George. The imperial hunt was a space in which extremes of masculinity were demonstrated, which led to an exaggeration of masculine desire to protect the feminine body within the jungle. By not participating as a shooting member of the party Mary enabled those around her to act these codes of chivalry on which the masculine identity depended.

Despite this, it is important to stress that Mary's writings show her pride in her endurance within the jungle, stressed her independence rather than her weakness and sought to distance herself from the over zealous protection of those around her. An early example came on the hill march in September 1899:

We had such a delicious day and I trudged about with George *from one beat to another and as birds were plentiful he had excellent sport.* ~~The Maharaja came with us and he and I stood behind George while he shot.~~ The little Maharaja kept begging me to get in his doolie *which was carried in state behind him by 20 servants, but I preferred to walk* but I would not. He could not understand a woman who walked all day behind guns.⁷⁷

⁷⁶ LCP 25/3-14 April 13 1903 George to Mary



Plate 51 – Her Excellency in the jungle' [Nekonda, Warangal District, Hyderabad]
Deen Dayal, April 1902
OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/33 (13)

Mary was clearly proud of her endurance as a female without needing to resort to being carried. The dangers that were attendant in the hunting of big game were clearly a very important consideration for the ADCs in protecting Mary's body in the jungle. Plate 51 taken by Diyal during the April 1902 hunt in Hyderabad shows Mary being carried by Indian bearers through the jungle in a doolie. Striding directly at her side is an ADC. Escorted through the jungle by a member of the viceregal household, the vicereine's body was thus protected against both nature and 'natives'.

Mary's tour diary of a hunting trip to the Terai region of central India reveals the extent of concern regarding her safety whilst hunting.

~~Then we got on our howdah elephants George on one and I on the next, with Captain Baker Carr to guard and shoot any tiger that charged us.~~⁷⁸

Mary crossed out this revealing entry from her tour diary. While her words suggest that Baker-Carr was guarding both George and Mary, it is clear that Baker-Carr was in charge of Mary's protection throughout this shooting camp. Mary did not hide Baker-Carr's role in protecting her from the environment later in the day; riding to the next beat, she wrote that 'Captain Baker-Carr stood in front of the howdah cutting small branches away from my face'.⁷⁹ The following day Mary's diary entry reveals the tension between her desire to be independent and the notion that she was 'dangerously exposed' to the dangers of the jungle. Yet again Mary's alterations to the text reveal her desire to hide from her audience the protective role-played by the ADCs:

By luncheon everyone almost had been stung by bees but no one got a tiger and we went off again after tiffin full of hope. I alone on

⁷⁷ LCP 42/11 October 3 1899 Tour Journal

⁷⁸ LCP 42/52 March 30 1900 Tour Journal

⁷⁹ LCP 42/52 March 30 1900 Tour Journal

an elephant as I rebelled against company of any sort and am far more comfortable, even if dangerously exposed to charging tiger, on an elephant alone: but I stood close behind George, and at 5 o'clock, just when we had begun to despond a tiger bounded directly in front of my elephant! I was too petrified to photograph him and we stood gazing at one another spell bound and George fired at the same instant and away went the tiger. The usual frantic excitement ensued and ~~one of the staff bundled into my howdah in case the tiger should charge as we walked him~~ *the doomed beast* up on the elephants.⁸⁰

The method of hunting or shooting from the backs of elephants left Mary exposed to danger. Since Mary did not carry a gun her only weapon was her 'Kodak' – and she thus required further protection.⁸¹ Mary's description of her rebellion against company 'of any sort' suggests that she had had to argue her case for riding her elephant without escort. Mary's subsequent removal from her diary of her admission of staff protection shows how she consciously wanted to present this image of her being alone on the elephant.

Mary's desire to be alone in her howdah may have come as a consequence of the previous day's shooting. During the previous morning Mary had shared her howdah with Captain Baker-Carr. As Mary put it: 'I was sitting in a ~~heap~~ in the howdah'. Captain Baker-Carr was taking part in the sport and Mary may well have had to make room for him; certainly in the afternoon she shared George's howdah and described how: 'I packed myself away in a corner of George's howdah'.⁸² Sharing a howdah with an active shooting member of the party obviously required an economy of space.

⁸⁰ LCP 42/52 April 3 1900 Tour Journal

⁸¹ The image of Mary shooting with her camera is of course an early example of one of the important shifts between shooting to kill and shooting with the camera. See Ryan, (1997) pp.90-140

⁸² LCP 42/52 30 March 1900 Tour Journal

While Mary may have resented attempts to protect her in the jungle, she took steps herself to ensure George's safety while she was not with him. An incident during the Hyderabad hunting camp demonstrated to Mary the accidental dangers of hunting:

George and I had a palpitating moment, as his Native servant, Nazir who was standing on the ladder off our machan, let off a rifle by mistake, and the bullet passed within a few inches of our heads. It was a terrific feeling to hear a pop, and then see a puff whiff by in the shape of an express bullet which would have killed both of us instantly.⁸³

Following this incident Mary arranged with the ADCs to ensure that one of them, rather than a less experienced member of the hunting party, accompanied the Viceroy. During the shooting camp in Nepal 1903, Mary clearly felt that Mr. Harris the Viceroy's valet, was unsuited to the task.

As either B.Carr or Wiggah [Capt. Baker-Carr and Capt. Wigram] loads for me every day (under your instruction) Mr 'Arriss does not come out and sulks in camp all day very discontented. He fancies himself and his sporting clothes enormously.⁸⁴

By ensuring that an ADC loaded for George, Mary was clearly trying to reduce the accidental risk of the imperial hunt.

The concern that George and Mary showed for each other's safety on the hunt also highlights the ways in which hunting provided George and Mary with opportunities in which to share time and experiences together. Indeed, it is clear that the hunt was a space in the tour schedule in which Mary could enjoy the companionship of George, without the chance of being interrupted by anything

⁸³ LCP 42/100 April 3 1902 Tour Journal

⁸⁴ LCP 25/27-30 April 17 1903 George to Mary

other than that of the sport. The hunt was a space in which Mary and George were released from the public audience, which looked at them continuously on tour.

Mary's hunting diaries thus offer a chance to explore Mary's position in a more 'informal' space, yet one that was still highly regulated and ordered. While the space of the hunt is highly ordered, in terms of the accommodation, entertainment and sport, it never the less presents a more informal setting. Nearing the end of the 1900 autumn tour, which took Mary and George down the West Coast of India, Mary wrote to her parents in a postscript to her letter journal:

No wild elephants have been caught so we have had ineffectual tiger shooting instead and I have been out all day with George, we sat in a tree up which we climbed on a ladder and as no animal came by we talked all day and I was so happy [to be] near my darling in uninterrupted possession of him. Only one living thing appeared all day and he was a tree lizard. I had to ride 4 hours on an elephant but don't mind as it was the happiest day of my whole tour.⁸⁵

The words 'uninterrupted possession' indicates that Mary prized these rare moments of time with George during the tour highly. Up a tree with only a tiger to interrupt them Mary had his undivided attention, a rare commodity. A letter Mary wrote to Cecil Spring Rice indicates that they discussed political affairs during these moments:

Anyhow we had all be duck shooting and I have been amused first to see George blaze 300 partridges off and see him as happy as a sand boy, and in short intervals of silence concentrate thoughts on some administrative question of his state...I am so used to sitting for hours in a tree with George waiting for tigers and talking about land assessment that I have forever tired of frivolity and feed on the strenuous life!⁸⁶

⁸⁵ LCP 43/29 5 December 1900 Tour Journal

⁸⁶ CASR 1/30/7 December 4 1902 Mary to Cecil Spring Rice

George was by no means oblivious to the companionship that he enjoyed with Mary whilst hunting. During the 1902 Tour Mary wrote to her mother after the hunting camp in Hyderabad:

I simply wont leave George so I stick to the tour. He can't bear me to go away and when I went from the shooting camp he said "whatever shall I do without you – I don't want to go shooting without you in the tree too" life is too short for more than 2 days separation. Two people never were happier nor more wedded to doing right in our work.⁸⁷

Mary's sense of duty was clear, her official duties were limited, and she cited George as the reason for staying on a tour which must have been exceptionally trying in terms of the temperatures during April in Central India, particularly when out on shooting expeditions. Yet these indications of George's affection for Mary are sent home like the trophies that George is shooting. It seems that Mary needed to reassure herself and her family of her emotional stability. Mary periodically told her parents that 'life was too short for separation' from George, indeed it seems to have become a mantra with which she reassured herself.

VI Conclusion

This chapter has emphasised that while the viceregal shoots were designed to demonstrate George's hunting prowess, the occasions were highly controlled and ordered occasions in which little was left to chance. Ironically, preparations designed to control the delivery of the desired kill to the hunters' gun often resulted in a blank beat, which had certain ramifications. Such situations gave

⁸⁷ LCP 11/106 April 17 1902 Mary to Mother

rise to Mary's characterisation of the native kill as barbaric as opposed the civilised kill of the viceregal hunting party.

The pressure to provide sport also reveals the extent to which trophies, whether photographs or skins, were as much for the memorialisation of the Viceroy's skill as the evidence of the host's ability to offer good sport. The myths surrounding the shooting of the Viceroy's first tiger are a testament to this.

The space of the hunt written through Mary's letters and journals reveals a more intimate history of the hunt. This demonstrates the gendered construction of the hunt as a wild space in which Mary's body was protected. Mary challenged this construction, rejecting attempts by those around her to protect her body. Hunting also offered Mary rare moments for companionship with George in the middle of heavy tour schedules. As Mary's letter in December 1902 to Cecil Spring Rice demonstrates, it was when looking for tigers that Mary discussed the current political affairs with George, thus playing out one of the most characteristic roles of the incorporated political wife. Removed from the frame of the wider public audience in India, the space of the hunt can be seen to have acted as an incorporated space of empire and of home in terms of a space that allowed intimate interaction between George and Mary.

Chapter 8

Conclusion: Mary through the Delhi Durbar

This thesis has presented a life geography of Mary Curzon. I have addressed themes which emerge from the texts of Mary Curzon's life whilst she occupied the position as Vicereine of India, embedded within a framework sensitive to feminist, colonial discourse and post-colonial theory. From these texts, be they letters, photographs, dress or newspaper representations a more nuanced understanding of Mary Curzon's life within the culture of empire can be appreciated. The thematic approach has enabled a close reading of Mary's narratives which, when contextualised within scholarship in related subject fields, reveals the value of reading a life as a whole rather than taking a theme within a life and reading it as a disconnected part. Biographical work is intensive, yet recent calls for depth investigations rather than general overviews of women's lives in the empire and at home, demands that biographical work be completed. Of course Mary Curzon can in no way be seen as a norm or generally representative of women's lives in empire, yet the ideas developed in this these bear strong resonance for studies of other lives in the empire.

This thesis has homed in on the thematic detail of a life, whilst embracing the metaphor of biography as a kaleidoscope. The subtle shifting representations of the subject indicate the importance of presenting subjects in all their complexity, rather than a bared down simplicity. However in separating out the thematic details, there is a danger in reading a subjects life in its myriad

parts, forgetting that these were engagements that often collided together. In Mary's life negotiations of sickness, politics, motherhood, philanthropy, culture, landscape and social duty were contiguous and responses always framed by negotiations of race, gender, class and national identity. They were also always negotiated through the spaces of home and empire, revealing the importance of addressing the spatiality of a life.

To emphasise the importance of bringing the thematic details together as a whole, my final reading of Mary's life will take place through the lens of the 1903 Coronation Durbar held in Delhi to celebrate the coronation of King Edward VII as Emperor of India.

During the first two weeks of January 1903 the population of Delhi increased by hundreds of thousands with the convergence of the Princes of India, representatives of neighbouring countries, guests from the British Empire, America and Europe. The Coronation Durbar acted rather like a viceregal tour in reverse. Instead of the taking the viceregal theatre of power to the Princely States, Delhi became a synecdoche of India, with tented camps holding the retinues of the native states, and the main Durbar ceremony bringing all the ruling chiefs together to pay their individual homage to the Emperor in the presence of each other. The Durbar itself was the most important ceremony in a two week long celebration of the proclamation of the new Emperor. The principal activities of a tour were present from the affirmation of loyalty of ruling chiefs to balls and dinners, sporting events, demonstrations of military prowess and celebration of



[Bhut.] THEIR PET BIRD. [Nov. 1902.]

Plate 52 – 'Their Pet Bird'

Unknown artist

[Bhut] November 1902

Reproduced in: Harischandra A. Talcherkar, H.A., Lord Curzon in Indian Caricature: being a collection of cartoons reproduced in miniature (Bombay: Babajee Sakham & Co, 1903) p.46



Plate 53 – Mary Curzon in Peacock Dress, designed by Worth, embroidered in India.

Worn on the occasion of the State Ball, Coronation Durbar, Delhi 1903
Bourne and Sheperd January 1903

OIOC Curzon Collection 430/10 (2)

India's arts and crafts in an Art Exhibition. The Durbar also fused the metropole and the empire together, not only had many people travelled to India, the textualisation of the event through word, photograph and film created an imaginative geography of India at 'home' which was unprecedented. This event was heralded as a meeting of East and West, with the ancient traditions of India being continued by the British Raj. This was brought home figuratively a month before the Durbar in a caricature, drawn by an Indian artist, published in an Indian newspaper, later published to coincide with the Durbar in a book titled 'Lord Curzon in Indian Caricature'.¹ Despite the book's title and its predominant focus on George, two images represent Mary.

The first of these (Plate 52) represents Mary tending a peacock, which represents the art exhibition held during the Delhi Durbar (proclaimed on its tail feathers). Mary tends their 'pet bird' while George stands more aloof. This image reiterates the paternalistic symbolism of the patronage of the India arts and crafts tradition. That the peacock is called the 'pet' indicates the understood need for it to be tended and cared for. The Peacock can also be seen to symbolise India, and is prophetic, as only a month later Mary seems to have become the embodiment of this image. Plate 53 illustrates Mary dressed in the gown worn for the State Ball at the Coronation Durbar. As argued in Chapter 2 Mary used dress very consciously in India to assert her supremacy as Vicereine exerting a bodily display of imperial authority.

¹ Talcherkar, H.A., *Lord Curzon in Indian Caricature: being a collection of cartoons reproduced in miniature ... with an elucidatory narrative* (Bombay: Babajee Sakharam & Co, 1903)

Mary was very consciously aware of her audiences both European and Indian, she wanted to display her authority to both.

This caricature draws attention to Mary's dress, but more importantly her jewellery. The prominence of Mary's tiara, pearl choker, and strings of beads represents an exaggeration of Mary's normal ceremonial attire. When Mary planned her dress in June 1902 she asked her mother to: 'send me my fine pearls by Ian Paterson when he returns to India. I must have all the jewels I can find for next year.'² When her mother arrived in India Mary described them arriving with a 'bagfull of "dininds"' in their hands, ready for Mary to wear at the Durbar.³

It is no coincidence that Mary's most celebrated costume the 'Peacock dress' worn for the state ball held in the Red Fort in Delhi was the most elaborate synthesis of Western and Eastern design possible. Essentially a ball dress designed by Worth, the cloth was embroidered with a motif of peacock feathers in metal embroidery, the eyes of the peacock feathers highlighted with 'bright blue and green beetle wings – not real emeralds, so some claimed.'⁴ The peacock carries cross-cultural symbolism. In India the peacock has traditionally symbolised love. Within the Hindu tradition the peacock is one of the animals and birds used as a carrier of the Gods and Indra, the Hindu God of thunder, rains and war is also represented as a peacock. In Islam, the peacock is one of the few non-geometric designs to appear in temples and symbolises beauty, paradise and the soul of man. The

² LCP 11/130 June 22 1902 Mary to Father

³ LCP 16/236-249 December 15 1902 Mary to George

⁴ Coleman (1989) p.103

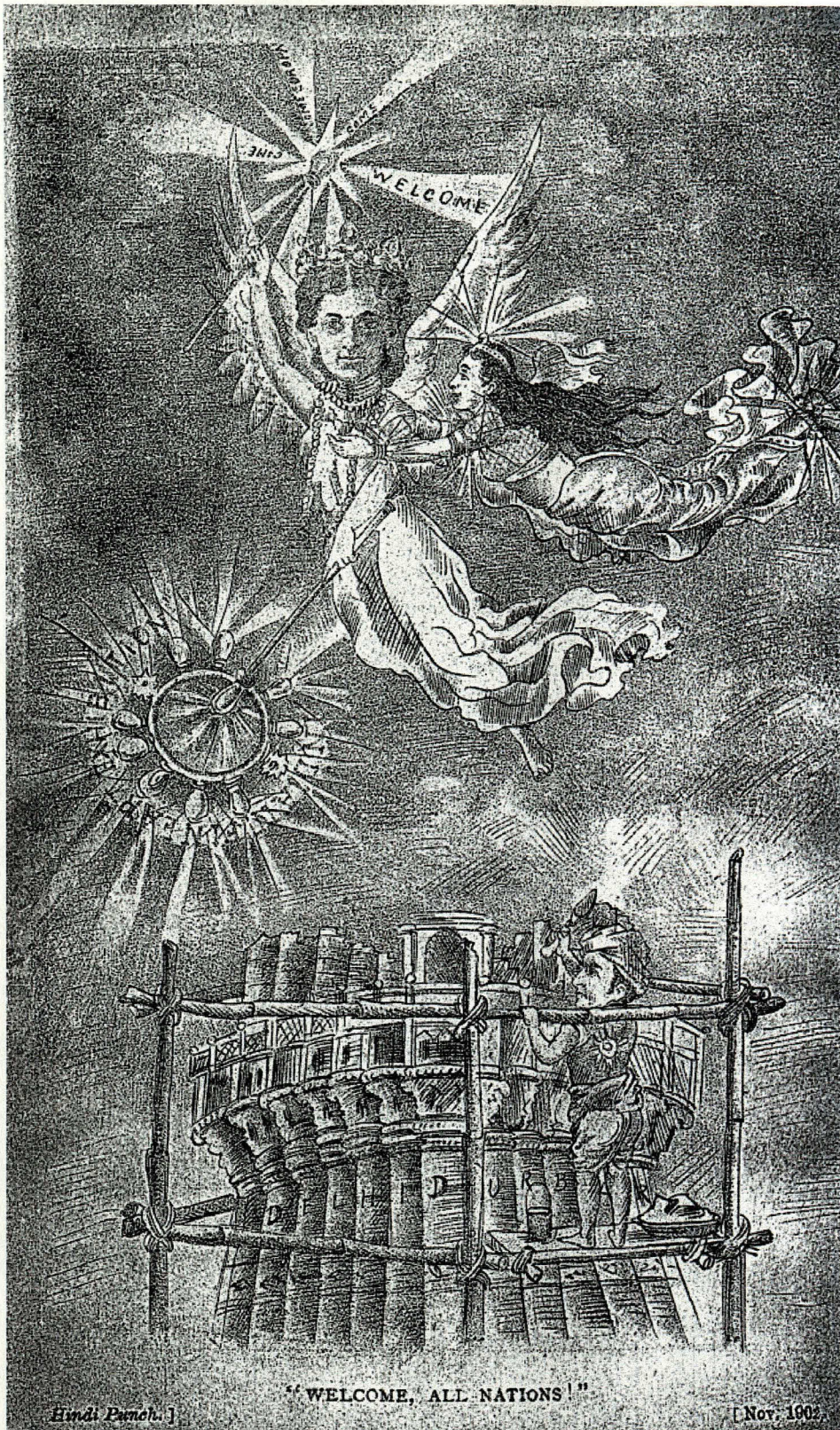


Plate 54 – Mary Curzon entrapped by the Goddess Divali

Unknown artist

Hindi Punch, November 1902

Reproduced in: Harischandra A. Talcherkar, H.A., Lord Curzon in Indian Caricature: being a collection of cartoons reproduced in miniature ... with an elucidatory narrative (Bombay: Babajee Sakham & Co, 1903) Frontispiece

peacock was used within early Christian iconography to depict Christ. Mary's gown of peacock feathers carried this symbolism with it, speaking most strongly to her Indian audience.

If Mary figuratively embodied the cultures of India, the location of the State Ball in the Diwan-I-Khas in the Red Fort, palace fortress of the Moghul Emperor Shah Jehan completed the symbolic resonance. The walls of the Diwan-I-Khas are inscribed with a Persian couplet translated as 'If there is a paradise on the face of the earth it is here, it is here it is here' and at one time the centre piece of the hall was the Peacock Throne, built from solid gold with figures of peacock standing behind. On the night of the State Ball Mary embodied all these symbolic resonances. This dress was the apotheosis of Mary's adoption of dress as a symbolic code in India. In wearing this dress Mary was guaranteeing individuality amongst all those visiting India from 'home'. Her sourcing of the dress in Europe is reflective of the continuous flows between 'home' and India, yet the individual design of the dress is indicative of her own agency in conveying the primacy of her position to her audience.

The second caricature, (Plate 54) first published in the *Hindi Punch*, the 'leading Anglo-Vernacular Comic Journal of India' appeared as the frontispiece to the book of caricatures. Here Mary is represented in a pose that parodies the Statue of Liberty emphasising her American national identity.⁵ With one torch Mary beckons the world to India with the words

⁵ The Statute of Liberty was a gift from France to America presented in 1884.

“Come Europa, come Columbia, come all Nations, Welcome!” in welcoming ‘Columbia’ she uses a generic term for the Americas. While Mary welcomes the world to the Durbar, she specifically draws attention to the arts of Hind or India, as her second torch represents the Art Exhibition. As the text accompanying the cartoon suggests Mary is ‘holding agreeable converse with Divali, the Goddess of Light, about the great Arts Exhibition in which her Ladyship is known to have taken a personal and keen interest from the outset’ thus the nations of the world are met by the ‘brightly burning Lamp of Hind’s Fine Arts’.⁶ The building of the Durbar tower which George is undertaking beneath her feet will enable Mary to wave the arts of India ‘in yet wider curves and circles, in yet higher and expansive arcs, so as to be seen by nations across the seas’. As the text suggests: ‘Divali has entrapped another fairy – this one from the far off West, to help Hind’.⁷

The title of the Statue of Liberty has powerful resonance in this instance: ‘Liberty enlightening the World’. In the context of the caricature Mary seems to be enlightening the world of India’s arts. However this caricature can be read as a satirical commentary on the patronage of the ‘arts’. This caricature works on two levels; the first presents the patronage of the Raj in helping the arts of India gain recognition the world over. Yet the undercutting satirical edge is more prominent, in this policy the Raj effectively locks India into a past that they can then maintain control over. This resonates with Mary’s own typology of enlightenment, which she

⁶ Talcherkar (1903) p.47

⁷ Talcherkar (1903) p.47

developed during the Autumn Tour of 1902 as described in Chapter 6. Thus Mary is not so much about enlightening the world, as enlightening the people of India about their own traditions. Although Divali, the Goddess of light is in converse with Mary, Mary appears to have taken her torch, thus the agency of India to support their own arts is denied. The final comment of the commentary reads: ‘and right glad she is to help Hind’ suggesting the patronising edge to Mary’s involvement.

As the caricature suggests, Mary did take an interest in the arts exhibition and her patronage of the arts was revealed during her visit to in Kashmir in 1902 as she took her own part in finding exhibits. Her findings confirmed the importance of her patronage of the arts. She stayed in a house which exemplified the importance of preserving the past, and her words reflect the judgement that the present was best left staying in a ‘fascinating little house composed of logs outside and board and Kashmire carvings inside’ Mary noted that the ‘new Kashmir work indescribably hideous everywhere.’ She told George ‘This [illeg.] Maharaja has no taste and the art here is all but dead I fear.’⁸ However, all was not lost as she was to ‘go to Jumagar on Thursday and see Kashmire work for the Delhi exhibition all day Friday.’⁹

The satirical edge of the satire is revealed in an accompanying poem:

“For though I must confess an artist can
Contrive things better than another man,
Yet when the task is done, he finds his pains
Sought but to fill his belly with his brains.

⁸ LCP 16 210-215 August 4 1902 Mary to George

⁹ LCP 16/16/ 217-220 (2) August [?] 1902 Mary to George. Mary’s spelling of ‘Kashmire’ is at odds with the contemporary spelling of Kashmir.

Is this the guerdon dues to liberal arts,
T'admire the head and then to starve the parts?"

This emphasises the silence of the subaltern voice more generally within Mary's texts. Few indicators of the challenges that the nationalist movement were beginning to throw up are seen in her papers, and voices of dissention such as *The Pioneer* newspaper are not met with questioning by Mary, rather than a desire to quieten the negative voices. The poem within the cartoon reveals the satirical edge to the text. The 'guerdon' of the liberal arts, the author complains, is that in supporting the cerebral aesthetics of creativity, the material need for sustenance is ignored. The word 'liberal' in this case is loaded, taken more widely this image can be seen as a critique on imperial rule, with the misplaced prioritisation of policies which advantage the coloniser at the expense of the colonised. The government of India's sponsorship of the Indian crafts movement is done at the expense of the real hardships and suffering of the people figuratively drawn as the starving of the parts in this poem. Mary was not unaware of the possible critique that the Durbar might be seen as an insensitive show in the light of continued hardship experienced by India's people. In September 1902 she wrote to her father: 'There is no longer any danger of famine and this is an intense relief to us as there would have been no heart for one Durbar had we has another scourge of distress.'¹⁰ Mary had experienced first hand the sight of famine in India and was well aware of the impact of the plague. However it is unlikely that the event would have been cancelled had there been a famine.

¹⁰ LCP 11/147 September [?] 1902 Mary to Father

More generally this caricature highlights the framework of 'incorporation', which has run through this thesis. This image presents the Durbar as a shared enterprise between Mary and George. As George builds the Durbar materially which is also symbolic of his building of India, Mary hovers above acting in the principal role of the vicereine as a hostess, welcoming the world to India. George is depicted dressed as a low caste physical labourer, with bare feet, wearing a dhoti and turban, with the star of India mockingly placed on his back. Mary, on the other hand is clothed in ceremonial finery, the jewels she wears exaggerated indicating their importance as a defining feature of Mary's visual appearance. George's diminutive figure, tackling the material building of the Durbar is shown at the expense of his role as a host. This is indicative of the primary responsibility that Mary had in maintaining the important social responsibilities of the Viceroy as he sidled off to work rather than shaking hands.

After the Durbar Mary congratulated George telling him the Durbar was 'a most intricate and wondrous building - every stone of which had been carved and placed by you'.¹¹ In response George wrote to Mary: 'if ever the policy of doing everything oneself down to the smallest detail was justified it was here.'¹² This supports the caricatures image of George as an isolated figure whose eye looked for the minutiae in order to achieve success in his position as Viceroy.

¹¹ LCP 17/11-16 January 16 1903 Mary to George

¹² LCP 24 3-8 January 12 1903 George to Mary

If Mary is depicted as a Fairy in this image before the Durbar, after the event while she rested at Dehra Dun she used the metaphor of a meteor to describe her feelings of anti-climax:

Dehra after Delhi is to be rather like a meteor which has fallen from the glories of Heaven to the stagnation of a dust heap! Just a fortnight ago we went off with hearts rather low at all there was before us, now it is over and there is a steady and true glow of radiant satisfaction at your magnificent triumph.¹³

In reply George paid tribute to Mary's role:

But after all I was responsible really for the ceremonial side. For the splendid triumph of the social side yours is the credit. Your beauty, your charm, your absolute unselfishness in looking after others and your sure and unfailing tact there it was that carried through the whole camp life the dinners and parties on the crest of an unbroken wave of success, while to all the public ceremonial you lent a grace and distinction the more marked from the utter [inability] of even the smartest and most beautiful of our English ladies to contest it. So that if Pappy is entitled to some praise let it be seen that Kinkie also has her share.¹⁴

This exchange is reflective of Mary's characteristic diminishing of her own social role at the expense of George's public role. George's acknowledgement of Mary's help in making the Durbar a success indicates his appreciation of the importance of her role. It can be argued that until the Durbar, Mary's role as an imperial hostess was not officially acknowledged as a role that had value indicating the undervalued appreciation of women's duties in their incorporated positions. The measure of Mary's overwhelming success as a hostess came with an acknowledgement from the Secretary of

¹³ LCP 17/3-4 January 11 1903 Mary to George

¹⁴ LCP 24 3-8 January 12 1903 George to Mary

State of India. In a letter to George, the Secretary of State summarised what he had written to Mary:

There was a universal acknowledgement of the admirable way in which she had discharged the multifarious and delicate duties of Viceroys wife and hostess ... I do not believe the Durbar could have been such continuous triumph if you had not been so fortunate in possessing as a wife one who was fully equal to every duty, and unforeseen difficulty which might arise.¹⁵

Mary sent this letter to her parents telling them:

I am sending you a copy of what George, Lord Hamilton wrote George about me as I think you will like to hear that official approval has been given to my share in the Durbar ... I was very pleased with this as my position as an American in [that] community of English people was a very difficult one and I am glad for your sakes as well as George's that it went off well.¹⁶

Mary's use of the word 'official' indicates the difficulty of negotiating the role of vicereine, a role that had no prescription, but carried the tremendous weight of expectation. That she had been given 'official approval' for a role that was usually taken for granted and publicly silenced indicates the ambiguity of her position. The vicereine carried a significant weight of responsibility within the culture of the Raj, but a weight that was rarely acknowledged, even by George. For Mary it would appear that this was even more of a strain owing to her American identity. Her American nationality was always present, and the words 'American Heiress' more often than not entered every article written about her. Had she failed in her role during the Durbar, this would undoubtedly have been drawn attention to.

¹⁵ LCP 12/91-92 attached to letter of May 13 1903. Copy of a letter from the Secretary of State Lord George Hamilton to George

¹⁶ LCP 12/89-90 May 13 1903 Mary to Parents

The silencing of women's negotiation of concerns, which they shared with their husbands owing to their incorporated status, is indicative in Mary's negotiation of imperial politics. As chapter two suggests Mary did not self reflexively consider herself as a companion to statesmen until long after she had actively taken part in political culture. Indeed Mary needed to come home to England before she was fully able to recognise her position. On her return to England in 1904 Mary was fully self aware and also realised that she was acquiring a name at home as a political wife. Talking to Lady Lansdowne Mary was told:

‘I hear you are the most helpful wife a public man ever head and a most wonderful ambassador!’ I laughed and said I shouldn’t be either unless my efforts were appreciated, as it wouldn’t be much fun to devoted one heart to an unappreciative spouse.¹⁷

This stresses the idea of incorporation in the words ‘public man’ recognising the primacy of George’s occupation in shaping Mary’s role as a wife. Being ‘helpful’ and a ‘wonderful ambassador’ for George gained Mary recognition as a political wife. Rather than stress the satisfaction that she personally gained from her work for George, or indeed stressing the wider good it did, Mary deprecates her position, reducing it to the desire to serve her husband and his appreciation of her.

Mary’s own self-awareness of her political understanding was one of the most satisfactory elements of her life in India. However her response to Lady Landsdown rings false and presents a self-deprecating public

¹⁷ LCP 17 151-152 March 2 1904 Mary to George

discourse. Although Mary found imperial politics rewarding her suggestion that she was exerting herself only to help George is questionable. As Vicereine, duties such as hostess and philanthropist were conditional. Despite Mary's complaints to her parents that the duties were slavery she was unable, unless ill to refuse to undertake them. Over time however Mary develop a stoic approach to these, particularly when being self-reflexive about her role. During the Durbar Pamela Tennant asked her how she coped with all her duties. Mary replied:

I told her that in a big life ones standpoint was not the amount of personal amusement one got out of things but how best to gratify and interest others and see far enough ahead to avoid contretemps and failures and that ones self never for a moment weighed in the larger desire to carry others pleasure to a successful issue.¹⁸

As a public discourse this is a worthy one, Mary returned to similar themes in letters to her father, often telling him what an example he had been to her. Mary's adoption of strategies, which enabled her to cope with the role more effectively such as reading and her use of dress, indicate the way she exerted agency within a prescribed role. Yet in the carrying out of this inescapable public duty that Mary had not requested, Mary's own body came under great strain, which usually undercut such stoic viewpoints.

As I have argued through this thesis, the framework of the incorporation has to be broadened to absorb elements other than public life into the framework. This is particularly important when addressing power relationships between husband and wife. In the Curzon's case this is clearly

¹⁸ LCP 17/11-16 January 16 1903 Mary to George

played out in terms of the families' finances. The stress on Mary's role as hostess during the Durbar, hides the very material input that she had in ensuring guests from 'home' enjoyed the event, through her independent financial resources. George may have had the material role of building the Durbar but rumblings from the home government about the cost of the Durbar meant George had to hide some of the expenses. Following the Durbar, these expenses were clearly allocated to other funds, as the following letter from Mary suggests, a great deal came from her own income:

Baring tells me our expenses over on Camp are awful...it runs into Laks and Laks but he says he can pull it round if you do not entertain on vast scale in Calcutta and do not make a long spring tour the expense of tours is enormous this year if you are to recoup it can only be done in this way, as you do not wish to go to the Govt for a grant. If we can recoup from this tour fund if need not cost us personally more than £5000 but this it will do! ... Of course I think it was worth every penny it will cost us and I shall always think we got full vale for whatever amt. [it] proved to be, but we must not pay more than £5.000 from our private funds I think!¹⁹

That Major Baring gives Mary a break down of the finances personally which she then shares with George and conveys advice concerning financial management indicates her financial agency. Through the suggested budgeting and use of her private finances, Mary was able to save George from need not ask the Government for an additional budget. She reassures George that it was worthwhile using private funds, but places a cap on the amount she was prepared to spend, which in today's terms runs to £250, 000. This emphasises that Mary's money enabled George to undertake many

¹⁹ LCP 17/18-25 January 17 1903 Mary to George

projects, which his own financial resources would not have allowed. From the buying of 1 Carlton House Terrace to being able to contemplate becoming Viceroy at all, George was dependant on Mary's own income, reflecting his own need for incorporation.

As I have argued in Chapter Four and Five there is a need for the framework of the incorporated wife to be opened to address the corporeal elements of women's lives, and to address the ways in which the corporeal elements are shared concerns within an incorporated marriage rather than as a the sole concern of the wife. As I have demonstrated in Chapter Two, Mary prided herself on her ability to perform her duty as Vicereine even when ill. This emphasises Mary's prioritisation of George's occupation within marriage at expense of her own health. Before the Durbar Mary used theatrical metaphors to describe the way in which she resurrected herself from her sickbed to perform her viceregal role. This reflected Mary's understanding that as Vicereine she was providing a spectacle, which required a certain front to be presented.

Ten days before she was due to arrive in Delhi, after more than a week of ill health Mary wrote an illness narrative that expressed a doubt that for once she would not be able to gather her spirit to appear in public:

Darling this is my last to you as you arrive on Sunday.
Every bit if my vitality has gone and I am hillier²⁰ than I
have ever been and simply can't get back to life somehow.

²⁰ The word 'hillier' suggests that Mary has been up and down in turns, recovering and then declining in health. Not to be confused for the viceregal housekeeper 'Hillier'.

I hope the poison has not killed my spirit! My hand weighs a ton and I cannot write or think but I do think of nothing but a miraculous cure before you come. It must come! I know it will! And I believed absolutely in my power of “coming up to time” or answering my ring as an actor does in wings of a theatre. The bell will go and I shall not appear, as India I know slowly but surely murders women, but I suppose many humble and inconsequent lives must always [comb] the foundations of all great works and great buildings and great achievements. Laugh darling bring back a magic cure for poor broken Kinkie.²¹

Mary presents her incorporated life as a sacrifice, her health being laid down for George’s work. Her anticipation that she would die in India is dramatically stated, the tragic tone of the letter given a hysterical edge by the final plea. India is marked in this narrative as a conceptual space of disease. As argued in Chapter Four despite the rise of germ theory Mary continued to draw on environmentally determined ideas of health and disease to explain her ill health. This is one of the most dramatic illness narratives that Mary wrote in India, only to be matched by the letters she wrote to George when she was desperately ill in England in 1904 and her final letter to him before her death. A letter written to her father on the same day indicated that Mary was awaiting the arrival of her Mother, whom she hoped would bring her ‘back to life’ through her Mother’s belief in Christian Science.²² Whatever ‘magic cure’ George and Mary’s mother brought, Mary did ‘rise to the bell’, before the curtain of the Coronation Durbar was raised, and took her role in the two week celebration of Edward VII’s coronation held in Delhi. Had she failed to appear, no amount of

²¹ LCP 16/251-253 December 17 1902 Mary to George

²² LCP 13b/324-325 December 19 1902 Mary to Father

intervention with journalists would have prevented the world knowing her 'bodily ills'.²³

Despite the success of the Durbar, and the satisfaction Mary gained from the occasion, it is indicative of the weight of Mary's emotional strain surrounding her reproductive health that she should return to her maternal narratives shortly after the Durbar. Telling George of the onset of menstruation ('those fellows') she noted:

Here it is bitter cold and horrid and "those fellows" kind for once have just come! So I am resting. I have no regrets about their coming this time as since Kotah [Autumn Tour 1902] we haven't implored them to cease! Kinkie was so deeply proud of Pappy and her pleasure will be complete if Pappy was half as satisfied with her. I always feel sincerely that Pappy might have married someone else who would have had 10 sons and been more beautiful, but I suppose it can't be altered now!²⁴

This passage conveys Mary's sense of personal failure in her inability to bear George a son, and the mental distressed this caused Mary's indicated by her need for reassurance from George requested in thinly veiled irony. Mary's own body was embedded in the 'incorporated' structure of viceregal life. Her reproductive cycle was discussed on tour, revealing the tour as a site where intimacies could be exchanged, and Mary's acknowledgement that it was fortunate that 'those' fellows' didn't arrive during the Durbar, indicates the inconvenience that such an intrusion would have caused; Mary would have had to retire, suffering as she did with migraines each month. However communicating the onset of menstruation to George also conveys

²³ LCP 13a/132-134 July 27 1905 Mary to Mother

²⁴ LCP 17/3-4 January 11 1903 Mary to George

that Mary's reproductive health was a shared concern, that they both looked each month for a sign of conception. However the idea that they had stopped 'imploing for it to cease' is questionable in the light of Mary's letter conveying the news.

As is noticeable in the majority of Mary's narratives, her Durbar narratives also silence the 'native' population of India. Despite Delhi becoming a synecdoche of India for the time of the Durbar, Mary's only general reflection on the Durbar in direct relation to the people of Indian concerned her friend Pearl Craigie's negotiation of the Indian Princes. Writing to George Mary told him:

Mrs Craigie went a round of the Native Camps with Armstrong and sent in her card on which Viceroy's Camp was formally written and went in and saw Kashmire, Boroda and the Maharani of Baroda, Patiala, Karputhata, [illeg.] (who begged to be excused) Sikkim, what won't English people do! Fancy a woman traipsing round calling on Indian men! Gosh!²⁵

Mary was clearly flabbergasted. The thought of direct communication between an English woman in a relatively unguarded position with Indian Princes was clearly a shock, and in Mary's eyes, incorrect. As Chapter 6 argued Mary saw India through a viceregal frame, which presented a carefully controlled mediation of India. Her superficial typology of enlightenment, which she developed to judge the Indian Princes, was reflective of the superficial contact that she had with the elite of India. Beyond occasional references her daily contact with Indian servants within the viceregal household is completely silenced. Mary may have

²⁵ LCP 17/6-9 January 12 1903 Mary to George

continuously been within a contact zone, whether in the government residencies or in the ultimate contact zone of the Durbar landscape, yet her colonial gaze, is blind to intrusions of the Indian populace.

As I argued in Chapter 7, displays of imperial sporting were dependant on the beneficence of the Indian princes who played host to the Viceroy. The magnificence of the Durbar was no exception. From elephants, to embroidered trappings, to displays of traditional armaments and items loaned for the art exhibition, the Indian princes created the show for the Raj. Locked into a situation where they were dependant on the Raj, the Indian Princes were forced to assist. Yet, the Raj depended on their assistance to maintain the spectacle. This balance of power could only tilt to the British advantage for so long.

Ultimately the 1903 Delhi Durbar has been proclaimed as the zenith of Imperial rule in India. For Mary it was an exhausting two weeks, during which her role as an incorporated wife was challenged to the utmost. The Durbar has been used as a frame to stress the contiguity of themes presented in this thesis. Most importantly this frame allows Mary's life to be reflected in the context of the culture of empire that permeated every aspect of her life.

By embracing the many textualisations of Mary's life, in the form of letters, newspapers, dress and images, this thesis has revealed the interplay between them, revealing different representations of a subject's life, which cannot be

reduced. This will always be an incomplete picture owing to silences within the historical record. Despite the breadth of the Lady Curzon Papers and associated texts, they are only a fraction of the original texts. Serendipity plays a large part in biographical writing. As different texts are found relating to the biographical subject, or eyes framed by different concerns read these papers, alternative representations of a subject will emerge.

This thesis has stressed the fluidity between 'home' and 'empire' in Mary's negotiation of her imperial subjectivity. For example I have argued that Mary's imperial subjectivity was emphasised at 'home' in 1901 as she integrated herself within imperial political culture in London despite coming home for her reproductive health. The framework of incorporation has been emphasised in spatial terms within this thesis as Mary found ways of negotiating the boundaries of her role. Not only did Mary come home in London 1901 she was able to make her 'incorporated homes' in India home like through her material acquisition of furnishings. These are subtle, but important nuances, which emphasise the value of addressing the spatiality of a life in biographical writing.

Appendix 1

Plate References

1. Their excellencies just after shooting. Tiger shot through head at 70 yards
Deen Dayal 2-12 April 1902
OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/33 (19)
2. Portrait of Mary Curzon wearing Indian Order take on occasion of Delhi Durbar
Bourne and Shepard c.1903
OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/78 (4)
3. The New Vice-Reine of India
Alice Huges
The Sketch, Wednesday August 17 1898
4. Pale blue silk Sari with a border of gold embroidery derived from a patka motif
Museum of Costume, Bath
BATMC I.09.4302
5. Mary in the residency garden at Gulmarg.
Photographer Unknown
OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/70 (95)
6. Gown of Worth c.1902
Museum of Costume, Bath
BATMC
7. Government House, Calcutta
Photographer unknown
From: Curzon, G., British Government in India: the story of the Viceroys and Government Houses (London: Cassell & Co., 1925)
8. Viceregal Lodge
Photographer Unknown
From: Nicolson, N Mary Curzon (London: Wiedenfeld and Nicolson, 1977)
9. Barrackpore
Photographer Unknown
From: Curzon, G., British Government in India: the story of the Viceroys and Government Houses (London: Cassell & Co., 1925)
10. The Retreat, Mashobra
Photographer Unknown
OIOC Earl of Elgin Collection Photo 15/1 (55)
11. 'The retreat at Mashobra'
Photographer Unknown
OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/75 (41)
12. Mary and Cynthia
Photographer Unknown

- OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/70 (84)
13. Irene and Cynthia playing with puppies at Naldera Camp
Photographer Unknown
OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/70 (73)
 14. Irene and her admirers
Photographer Unknown
OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/75 (29)
 15. Belangrania with pages, Irene and Cynthia
Feakins c. 1905
Published in unknown newspaper
 16. Belangrania with her 'court'
Feakins c. 1905
Published in unknown newspaper
 17. Double exposure of Mary with members of the family'
Unknown Photographer c. August 1902 [?]
OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/70 (91)
 18. Playing golf on the course at Gulmarg, Kashmire
Unknown Photographer
OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/70 (90)
 19. Mary and Captain Baker-Carr
Photographer Unknown
OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/70 (97)
 20. The American "Queen of India" and her husband
Photographer Unknown
Utica Globe, New York, December 3 1898
 21. 'M.C. Matiana Hill March 1899'
Photographer Unknown c. September 1899
OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/75 (47)
 22. George and Mary driving from Viceregal Lodge Simla
Photographer Unknown
National Portrait Gallery Photographic Collection
 23. Detail from: 'Their excellencies just after shooting. Tiger shot through head at 70 yards'
Deen Dayal 2-12 April 1902
OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/33 (19)
 24. Drinking Soda Water in the Jungle, temperature 104
Photographer Unknown April 1902
OIOC Curzon Collection Photo

25. Mary Curzon with Irene and Cynthia
Bourne and Shepard 28th January 1899
OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/66 (2)
26. Mary with Irene and Cynthia
Alice Hughes c. Summer 1901
Printed in Ladies Pictorial July 28 1906
27. 'Mary and the two little princesses of Travencore'
Photographer Unknown c. Autumn 1900
Printed in The Lady's Realm, November 1901
28. 'On the Road to Sanchi Tope'. 'View of the Curzons in the howdah of a state elephant'
Deen Dayal c. 1899
OIOC Photo 430/17 (22)
29. Naga Warrior, Assam
Mary Curzon, March 1900
OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/75 (94)
30. Naga Warriors, Assam
Mary Curzon, March 1900
OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/75 (95)
31. A Naga Chief
Mary Curzon, March 1900
The Empress, April 1900
32. Lady Curzon opening bazaar at Mandalay
Photographer Unknown
OIOC Reverend Charles William Hodder Collection Photo 741/3 (26)
33. The Maharao of Kotah
Herzog and Higgns c.1902
OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/20 (2)
34. The Maharaja of Bundi
Herzog and Higgns c.1902
OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/20 (36)
35. The Maharaja of Jodphur
Herzog and Higgns c.1902
OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/20 (107)
36. The Maharaja of Bikaner
Herzog and Higgns c.1902
OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/20 (130)

37. The Maharana of Udiapur
Herzog and Higgns c.1902
OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/20 (57)
38. The Fort, Jodphur
Herzog and Higgins c. 22 November 1902
OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/20 (126)
39. 'Camp showing the Maharaja's Palace, Jodphur'
Herzog and Higgins c. 22 November 1902
OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/20 (115)
40. Imprints of women' s hands, Meheranrgarh Fort, Jodphur
Nicola Thomas, February 1999
41. 'Courtyard of the new palace Bikaner'
Herzog and Higgins c. 1902
OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/40 (139)
42. 'The Viceregal Camp at Nersinpett, Warangal District the first of two camps set up on the Viceroy's hunting trip during his visit to Hyderabad'
Deen Dayal April 1902
OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/33 (36)
43. Their excellencies just after shooting. Tiger shot through head at 70 yards
Deen Dayal 2-12 April 1902
OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/33 (19)
44. 'Their Excellencies in the jungle (hunting scene near Nekonda, Warangal District Hyderabad)'
Deen Dayal, April 1902
OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/33 (18)
45. 'Her excellency crossing a nullah'
Deen Dayal, April 1902
OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/33 (28)
46. 'Their Excellencies getting down from Jhoola'
Deen Dayal, April 1902
OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/33 (20)
47. The successful kill
Deen Dayal, April 1902
OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/33 (21)
48. 'First tiger shot by H.E. Lord Curzon in India, Gwalior [Lashkar]'
Deen Dayal 2nd December 1899
OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/17 (33)
49. 'Maharaja Scindia returning with Viceroy's First Tiger'

Deen Dayal December 2nd 1899
OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/75 (99)

50. 'Where we shot the tiger at Gwalior' [Snapshot view of shooting towers]
Photographer unknown
OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/75 (70)
51. Her excellency in the jungle' [Nekonda, Warangal District, Hyderabad]
Deen Dayal, April 1902
OIOC Curzon Collection Photo 430/33 (13)
52. 'Their Pet Bird'
Unknown artist
[Bhut] November 1902
Reproduced in: Harischandra A. Talcherkar, H.A., Lord Curzon in Indian
Caricature: being a collection of cartoons reproduced in miniature (Bombay:
Babajee Sakharam & Co, 1903) p.46
53. Mary Curzon in Peacock Dress, designed by Worth, embroidered in India.
Worn on the occasion of the State Ball, Coronation Durbar, Delhi 1903
Bourne and Sheperd January 1903
OIOC Curzon Collection 430/10 (2)
54. Mary Curzon entrapped by the Goddess Divali
Unknown artist
Hindi Punch, November 1902
Reproduced in: Harischandra A. Talcherkar, H.A., Lord Curzon in Indian
Caricature: being a collection of cartoons reproduced in miniature ... with an
elucidatory narrative (Bombay: Babajee Sakharam & Co, 1903) Frontispiece

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