

‘The Sweet Uses of London’: The Careers ‘Abroad’ of Louise Mack (1870–1935) and Arthur Maquarie (1874–1955)

Meg Tasker, University of Ballarat

In 1901, Louise Mack abandoned her life in Sydney as an unhappily married but successful journalist, novelist and poet, and headed off to ‘try her fortune’ in London. As Angela Woollacott’s (2001) and Ros Pesman’s (1996) studies of Australian women travellers, and Carl Bridge’s (2009) demographic survey of Australians in the England and Wales Census of 1901, have shown, she was one of hundreds of Australian women in England at the turn of the century. She also belonged to a category of traveller studied by Stephen Alomes (1999), Bridget Griffin-Foley (2002), John Arnold (2009), and most recently, Peter Morton (2011): migratory writers of all kinds, from ‘literary’ novelists to journalists, who regarded London as the best place to advance their writing careers.

Mack’s time away from Australia lasted seventeen years, during which she wrote many novels and a good deal of journalism, drawing on her London experiences and travels in Europe. She managed to support herself financially through writing, both in London and after her return to Australia, where she died in 1935. Another writer from Sydney already established in London when Mack arrived, albeit precariously, was the poet and journalist Arthur Maquarie. Best known in Australia for helping Henry Lawson during the latter’s two-year English sojourn, Maquarie left Australia soon after graduating from the University of Sydney. He followed a very different path from Mack and as we shall see, conformed more closely to the ‘type’ of self-exiled Australian who chose high

culture in England and Europe over the newly developing literary scene in his home country.

The careers of Louise Mack and Arthur Maquarie, among many others, offer insights into the conditions of literary life for Australian writers in London circa 1900, and an opportunity to reconsider how such writers might figure in the literary and social history of their period. The larger study in which this paper originates focuses on ‘Australians abroad’ (specifically, in London), not for the purpose of marking differences between ‘expatriate’ and ‘local’ writers, or tracing themes of alienation or exile, but to explore the intersections of British and Australian identities and voices in their work, and issues of cultural identity evident in their careers—in short, the conditions of ‘being in London,’ as distinct from ‘leaving Australia.’

The term ‘expatriate’ is not quite adequate for this purpose. Without abandoning it entirely, I want to invoke a concept of transnational colonial identity as a palimpsestic set of coexisting identities, influences, or affiliations that could shift or be accentuated differently according to circumstances. Also, the term ‘transnational’ is not used here, as so often in contemporary postcolonial studies, to invoke forces of globalisation in the theoretically post-Empire, post-nationalist western world of the twenty-first century. Rather, as applied to late nineteenth-century writers, it conveys the *simultaneity* of national, colonial and imperial affiliations.¹

Both Mack and Maquarie left the Australian colonies seeking a broader field of experience, with ambitions focused at first, at least, on London—on making their way from the fringes of civilization to its centre. However, despite some initial similarities in their aspirations and the circumstances of their departures from Sydney, they produced and inhabited very different types of careers and identities, demonstrating disparate (though not necessarily opposed) possibilities open to those who were simultaneously citizens of Australia, Britain, and the world. While it is fairly clear that they knew of

¹ Morton spends several pages discussing the problems of using the term ‘expatriate’ (2011: 44–49); Alomes notes that for most (white) Australians, expatriation meant a return to the British Isles (1999: 2). Such problems arise from the historical moment, not just from new ‘takes’ on national identity. Angela Woollacott’s *To Try Her Fortune in London*, uses the term transnational in a similar way to Hassam’s model of multiple cultural identities, asserting and exploring the multiple affiliations and professional mobility of Australian women (2001: 8–9). In ‘Negotiating the Colonial Australian Popular Archive,’ Ken Gelder comes closest to the kind of meaning I am looking for to capture the complexity of the issue, with ‘transnational colonial’ as an attribute of fiction that explicitly registers its location in an international framework (2010: 7).

each other and probably met—Maquarie in a letter to *Bulletin* editor J. F. Archibald refers to Mack's arrival and to hearing from her about gossip in Sydney (Maquarie 1901)—there is little evidence of further contact between them, or commentary by either about the other's work or circumstances.

In 1901, the year Mack left Sydney for London, Australia was declared a Commonwealth, with the former colonies becoming states in a Federation. Although the colonies had long had democratic parliaments and varying degrees of self-government, they were subject to the constitutional monarchy of Britain both before and after Federation—and since the onset of the Boer War in 1899, pro-imperial sentiment had been running high. As Craig Wilcox puts it in his romp through the 'Edwardian Excursion' of Australians flocking to London, this was not as ironic as it may seem: 'Australian federation isn't a declaration of independence but an expression of a colonial nationalism within a British Empire that many hope—and a few fear—is growing closer together' (2004: 25). The paradox of colonial nationalism being commensurate with imperialism was less striking to those who were born colonial Australian Britons than it would be to later generations; while the *Bulletin's* nationalism was radical and anti-English, the mainstream white settler culture was able to accommodate a sense of pride in the new societies being formed as offshoots of Empire. The multi-layeredness and diversity of colonial, imperial, and British forms of cultural identity and affiliation has been more readily acknowledged by cultural historians than in most twentieth-century Australian literary criticism, with the binary between radical nationalist and international cosmopolitanism dominating critical debates and surviving the challenges posed by poststructuralist and postcolonial critics (Bird, Dixon & Lee 1996: xxii–xxxvi), to remain implicit at least in much mainstream discussion of 'expatriates' versus local writers.²

In postcolonial theory, more broadly, the focus 'has moved increasingly away from binary models of resistance and identity in order to embrace more ambivalent, multilateral resistances and more transnational, syncretistic conceptions of postcolonial identity' (Ball 2004: 130). Recent studies of Australian travellers abroad, and particularly in London, have stressed the plurality of cultural identity for colonial and

² An example of educated but non-academic contemporary discussion on the subject is the semi-anonymous blog posting 'Monday Musings on Australian Literature: Some Australian Expat Novelists' (2010).

British subjects, and the effect of displacement on the construction of cultural identity (Hassam 2000: 4; Woollacott 2001: 16; Pesman 1996: 4–5). Examining individual careers with an eye to these questions of cultural identity, it becomes apparent that there was a self-conscious multivalence in the work of some colonial writers, as they addressed a readership spread across several places that could be called ‘home.’ Louise Mack does this quite explicitly; Arthur Maquarie, less so. International publishing and distribution systems for English-language literature (see Lyons & Arnold 2001), paralleling the movements of theatrical and other cultural products around the world, could also create a sense of mobility and being active in multiple locations (rather than a static sense of rootedness in one place, succeeded by another). These complexities might render a writer and her work at once ‘colonial’ and ‘transnational.’

However, place does matter, and London was the centre of many of these networks. While New York and Paris had their rival claims as metropolitan centres of western culture in the early twentieth century, it was to Paternoster Row and Fleet Street that most Australian writers looked, when they thought of literary success beyond the scope of their colonial markets and readership.

Before her departure, Louise Mack had been recognized as a rising talent in Sydney literary circles, particularly by A. G. Stephens, literary editor of the *Bulletin*, who published her poems *Dreams in Flower* as a *Bulletin* Booklet in 1901. She was permitted to join the group dubbed the ‘Boy Authors,’ where she met George Lambert and John Le Gay Brereton (Brereton 1930: 25). She contributed many poems and stories to Sydney journals, and was for three years ‘women’s columnist’ for the *Bulletin*. Her later fortunes in London would be reported in the *Bulletin* by herself and others. While well treated in Morris Miller’s *Bibliography of Australian Literature* (1940), with both her Australian and overseas writing included and described, she was largely overlooked until Patricia Clarke’s sketch in *Pen Portraits* (1988), and a 1991 biography by her niece Nancy Phelan. Accounts of her in feminist historical studies (Pesman 1996; Woollacott 2001) and in Bridget Griffen-Foley’s work on Australian journalists on Fleet Street (2002: 28–30) have helped to stimulate interest in her as a female professional and traveller, but the only close critical attention to her work since Phelan’s biography is an essay by Ken Gelder and Rachael Weaver on her place in ‘colonial pseudo-literature.’ The reasons they give for her having been relegated to this despised position

(by Alfred Buchanan in 1907) are her ‘flippancy,’ interpreted as a failure to engage with the ‘serious investment in nationhood’ required by writers and scholars of a radical national cast, and her descent from high literary ambitions to writing serial romances. Their analysis of her romance novels emphasizes the way she plays with various expressions of feeling about Australia while failing to construct any sustained or consistent understanding of Anglo-Australian cultural identity. Her novels ‘are much more concerned with *literary* articulations of national identity than with the realities of ‘colonial ideology,’ however this might be understood’ (Gelder & Weaver 2010: 86).

Mack’s passionate responses to each of the places she moved to seem to be both sincere and contingent, and each became integrated with her attachment to other places and cultures. She ‘loved the whole world,’ not just England or Australia, and shrugged off questions of loyalty or nationalism by invoking aesthetic values that transcended such categories. In doing so, she shows just that fluidity and mobility across the systems of literary production and cultural affiliation alluded to earlier, marking her not as an expatriate shaking the dust of Australia from her sandals, but as a colonial transnational writer (Gelder 2011: 7).

Mack was a writer whose cosmopolitan cultural aspirations and identity were based on taste and sentiment, rather than more formal literary practice or education. She had planned (with her mother’s encouragement) to study at Sydney University, but failed to matriculate, and after a short and miserable stint as a governess concentrated on writing (Phelan 1991: 30). In 1896, an English publisher published her first novel, *The World is Round*; she followed this promising start with another book for young readers, *Teens*, published in Sydney in 1897. From an early age, Mack had wanted to travel. Leaving behind her husband, John Creed, and no children, she took ship for London in 1901—distributing her possessions among friends and family, clearly not intending a quick return (Phelan 1991: 109). Her money didn’t last long, and after a few months living in straitened circumstances, writing *An Australian Girl in London* (1902), she moved on to more profitable work writing serial romances for the publishing company of Harmsworth, which published newspapers, serial fiction and books. In 1904, Mack moved to Florence, where she contributed to, and for a time acted as editor of, the English-language weekly paper, the *Italian Gazette*. In 1910 she returned to London and resumed writing serial romances for a rumoured £1000 a year (Phelan 1991: 148). She

also wrote regularly for periodicals, notably W.T. Stead's *Review of Reviews*, and later won both respect and fame for her reports from behind the lines during WWI in Belgium, which she wrote up as *A Woman's Experiences in the Great War* (1915) and around which she built a busy schedule of travelling and lecturing (Phelan 1991: 176). Mack's longing for a London she knew only from books, and her ecstatic responses when she actually arrived, were expressed in poems and reports back to Australia, as well as her fiction. In one of Mack's last novels, *Teens Triumphant* (1933), she draws on and gives a version of her own first few months in London, recast as the story of Lennie, an Australian girl who records her responses to London in intensely poetic and aesthetically charged novel. Quotations from this book-within-a-book show it to be Mack's own *An Australian Girl in London* (1902). There are some telling points made in the retrospective novelistic account. Lennie the serial writer, churning out 3,000 words a day and earning the princely sum of forty guineas a week, is jealous of her younger self, the Lennie who wrote her book starving in a garret (1902: 213).

Mack concludes *Teens Triumphant* by having Lennie and her Australian lover, Dennis, return to Sydney to marry, with a quotation from Whistler: 'No man should remain away too long from his own country' (1933: 287). Mack herself left England in 1918 after publishing her book *A Woman's Experiences in the Great War* (and dashing off a couple more novels) to do a lecture tour on the same subject for the Red Cross. She never returned to London, which seemed to have become associated for her with the business of writing serials rather than the art of writing novels. When she went to Italy in 1904, it had been at least in part to make a break with serial writing and concentrate on writing a new novel, *Children of the Sun* (Phelan 1991: 146). She spent ten years travelling in the Pacific islands before settling in Sydney in 1928, where she continued her career as a public speaker, and returned to writing, producing novels and a column for P. R. Stephensen's new magazine, *The Australian Women's Weekly* (Phelan 1991: 176ff).

Having left Australia with very little, and leaving behind a supportive literary network, Mack did manage to make a living as a writer. She worked hard, established new networks and contacts, and carved out a diverse, if somewhat *ad hoc*, career as a journalist, novelist, poet, columnist, war correspondent and lecturer. She travelled extensively and wrote her travels into both fiction and journalism, often juxtaposing

Australian and European points of view in ways that are interesting to contemporary literary historians working on transnational forms of literary and cultural work (e.g. Gelder & Weaver 2010).

To what extent did Mack relinquish or modify her colonial identity in order to establish this career as a woman of letters in a more cosmopolitan field? In her first years, like so many others reporting back from London, she expresses her consciousness of being a ‘Colonial.’ In 1901, for instance, in ‘A Little Letter from London,’ she declared to the readers of the *Sydney Bulletin*:

What a different London from a Londoner’s London is the London of the Colonial! London, as it seems to me, is the most beautiful city in the world. But I rarely find a Londoner who agrees with me ... To find London beautiful was an intense surprise to me. I had expected to find it crowded, and interesting, and enormous, and loud, and great, but never beautiful ... All through the autumn and the winter there are atmospheric effects hovering about us here that turn London into a poem waiting to be written. Up in skies, which writers hurriedly and cruelly describe as ‘grey,’ you will find, if you look, an indescribable tenderness of tone, subtle colourings, pale memories of dawns and sunsets, even in mid-morning ... (1901b)

It is important to note, however, that the response to London in Mack’s ‘Little Letter’ is not only colonial, or even distinctively colonial, but personal, and aesthetic, and literary. While the imagery of blood is shorthand for the whole freight of Anglo-Australian connectedness (as in Henry Parkes’s ‘crimson thread of kinship’), to this self-declared ‘colonial’ Australian writer London is a personal encounter, a site of sensory experiences, a poem waiting to be written. Contrast this with the vision of Mack’s contemporary Victor Daley in ‘When London Calls,’ published in the *Bulletin* in 1900 (shortly after Lawson’s departure for London), and frequently evoked in discussions of Australians in England:

Crowned Ogress—old, and sad, and wise—
She sits with painted face
And hard, imperious, cruel eyes
In her high place.
....
And when the Poet’s lays grow bland,
And urbanised, and prim—
She stretches forth a jewelled hand
And strangles him.

Here, the Irish-born Daley reflects both the anti-English attitudes of the *Bulletin*, and his own decision not to attempt to achieve success in London, a move he had been considering until his first volume of poems was poorly reviewed there (Tasker 2011: 114–16; Molloy 2004: 116). His nightmare figure of a cruel and ‘haggard-eyed

Imperatrix' speaks specifically of colonial resentment and resistance, grounded in London's metonymic significance as the centre of empire. As Ball notes, 'At the height of imperial power in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, London ... projected itself to the inhabitants of its pink-stained territories as the centre of the world, the fountainhead of culture, the zero-point of global time and space' (Ball 2004: 4).

'When London Calls' is a clear example of the colonies 'writing back'—identifying forces of power and exploitation underlying apparently cultural and aesthetic values and ambitions. Mack's version of London is also a re-writing of the imperial metropolis, through individual experience and perception. As Ball goes on to argue, there are less oppositional ways of writing back from the colonies to the metropolitan centre:

As ex-colonials come to dwell in London and walk its streets, they appropriate it and reterritorialize it. As writers render those experiences into autobiographical or fictional narratives, they reinscribe the metropolis against their backgrounds and identities as formerly colonized subjects. The London that once imposed its power and self-construction on them can now be reinvented by them. (Ball 2004: 9)

Mack's poetic response to London may not be the active resistance of radical nationalism, but it does appropriate the metropolis to her own aesthetic and literary purposes. In doing this, it is not far off being one of the 'sweet uses of London' that Henry Lawson recommended in a letter to the *Bulletin* after his own two year sojourn there (Lawson 1903). His advice to live cheaply, get an agent, and buckle down to work is more pragmatic, perhaps. But beneath the romantic breathiness, Louise Mack's writing to the Australian market in a fresh and poetic way about a familiar topic is equally strategic.

Mack's longing to experience European history and culture was shared by Arthur Maquarie, who, like Mack, used London as a base for further travels. Both spent time living in Florence, a cheap and cheerful alternative to London in winter, which had a community of English, American and other visitors. Like Mack, but a couple of years earlier, Maquarie published some of his poems in the *Italian Gazette*. While Maquarie came and went from Florence on a seasonal basis, Mack lived there for several years. She frequently used Italy as a setting in her novels, together with London, Paris, Rome and Sydney (for example in *The Romance of a Woman of Thirty*).

The two had similar starts to their overseas careers, as they sought to establish themselves as writers, and were virtually unsupported by family or outside help, at first at least. Their careers took very different turns, however, with Mack having to rely on commercial work to support herself, and Maquarie being in a position after his marriage to concentrate on purely literary work. The differences which developed between their cultural and political allegiances (or refusal of allegiance) and literary personae and performance are attributable to circumstances of life and travel, as well as to ideological differences such as class, gender or nationalistic fervour. The gender difference is apparent, yet it was Mack who had to work for a living and Maquarie who was able to support himself by marrying well. Mack was less hostile to the nationalism of the *Bulletin* than Maquarie, yet she, like him, renounced the poetics of the bush bards as clumsy and uncouth. And class seems to have been a measure of value which the bohemian Mack eschewed (while still valuing intellectual or aesthetic distinction), while the more traditionally oriented Maquarie strove for gentility and inclusion in elite bodies such as the Royal Society of Literature. Both, however, began life as the bookish children of clergymen, middle class and well educated, but bursting to leave Sydney as soon as possible.

Born Arthur Macquarie Mullens in Dubbo, Maquarie attended the University of Sydney, graduating in 1895 as a Bachelor of Arts. By 1898 he was in London, where he changed his name by deed poll, dropping the surname Mullens and changing the spelling of his former middle name to Maquarie. He comes across in his letters and writings as a self-consciously cultured young man with a decided preference for sonnets, lyrical verses (some of which were later set to Elgar's music) or quasi-Elizabethan dramas. His *Dance of Olives* was reviewed by the *Bulletin*, with several poems printed on the Red Page ('Verses' 1905), and several of his poems were anthologised in Louis Lavater's *The Sonnet in Australasia* (1956) and Walter Murdoch's *The Oxford Book of Australasian Verse* (1918). As a poet in Australia, he never achieved the level of recognition accorded Mack by the editors of the *Bulletin*. Maquarie's sonnets and lyric verses were often playful and facetious, self-consciously literary and stylised. The Boer war drew a different type of verse from him, with a jingoistic recruitment song 'A Family Matter. For the Patriotic Fund':

So it's tumble to your saddles,
And it's off to Kruger's land

Just to join the other lads and make a scatter.
 All the family's turning out to lend a ready helping hand,
 For there's some one got to talking rough,
 And mother calls and that's enough;
 It's now a family matter
 It's now a family matter.

....

Buckle on your cartridge belts,
 Waste no time about it,
 Force is massing on the veldts;
 We must off and rout it.
 What if fate should work its worst,
 Men can grin in falling.
 Come on, chaps and be the first;
 Here's yer mother calling.
 Here's yer mother calling. (Maquarie 1900c)

What jars in this poem is not so much the imperial sentiment—there was a lot of it about, after all—but the *faux* working-class language, the shallow sentimentalism of its invocation of family ties, and its Kipling-esque call to the lower orders to come to the aid of Mother England. It reads now as a clumsy piece of propaganda, with no political analysis or room for doubt. A more lyrical treatment of the same theme is found in another poem written a couple of years later:

I with the wide young Empire in my veins,
 With parents breathing the strong Austral sun,
 With kin inured to hardship on the plains
 Where after all defeats the prize is won—
 I, though a wanderer with a loitering lyre,
 Feel for the moment one hot touch of fire.

If my own blood be needed, I will go
 And add it to my kinsman's blood that fell
 Where in the thickest of a treacherous foe
 He plied swift steel and scorned the rage of hell.
 If I am wanted, here at once am I,
 Yielding myself as one content to die.

But if you, England, should relax your hold
 In this ill wrestle; if through failing skill,
 Or faint resolve, or putrid lust of gold,
 You leave what once you swore was God's clear will;
 Then I shall cast you off and curse your name
 And sing a free Australia—free from shame. (Maquarie 1905: 23)

The voice here is formal and literary, the imagery conventional and still invoking the ties of blood, but with a difference—it is now 'the wide young Empire' flowing in his veins. While the poet's commitment to war as a noble and idealistic enterprise is no less vehement than in the proletarian ballad, the speaker here addresses 'England' rather than alluding sentimentally to the maternal emblem of Queen and Empress. In this tougher mode, he threatens that a failure of military nerve might not only lead him to

cast off and curse England in song but also (partly in consequence of his singing) to Australia cutting loose from a shamed Empire. Significantly for a reading of Maquarie's performance of cultural identity through literature, this threatened loosening of the filial tie contradicts the Anglo-Australian poet's otherwise confidently integrated representation of himself as a Briton loyal to Australia and England, with both nations having common goals and interests in sustaining the glory of Empire.

This later, more disillusioned, poem was written long after 'A Family Matter,' which was published as a song in 1899, reflecting the initial rush of enthusiasm for the Boer war in the Australian as well as British press. The ballad was published in Britain as well as Australia, as a letter to the editor of the *London Times* indicates. Explaining that Australian troops in the Boer war were motivated by 'the idea of Imperial unity and the love they bear the mother land,' Maquarie suggests that a statue should be erected by the British in Sydney to commemorate Australian soldiers: 'Such a monument—it need be of no great pretensions—would be the greatest possible pledge of the everlasting endurance of the filial tie' (1899). The letter concludes with a mock-modest allusion to his own work:

Living as I do by my pen, I am not wealthy enough to offer any considerable subscription towards the carrying out of this project; but I will devote to it the payments due to me for my poems published in *Literature* and the *Daily Mail*. I am especially glad that 'A Fam'ly [sic] Matter,' which was quoted in *The Times*, has been brought to the notice of several million Englishmen by being taken up by so many papers both in London and the provinces: I now hope for some result. I have, etc. Arthur Maquarie. (1899)

Maquarie writes as 'a colonial' but also as a writer and a loyal citizen of Empire, claiming a place, however humble, in the British literary establishment. To some extent, Australian visitors to England frequently felt that they were more cosmopolitan, less parochial, than the home-grown Britons who had never left their county, let alone the British Isles. This sense of dual citizenship could breed confidence, as we see in Maquarie's letter to the *Times*; it could also give an Australian writer the ability to communicate with more than one readership; not to erase the differences between colonials and Londoners, but to explain and mediate them. This is a strategy adopted by Mack, at various times, in a disarmingly ingenuous gesture that appears more in the novels written for the international audience of popular fiction than in the letters she wrote back to the (nationalist and anti-English) Sydney *Bulletin*.

In *An Australian Girl in London*, for example, the autobiographical protagonist exclaims: 'I love every place I come to. The whole world fills me with rapture. I never realised its existence till I came to London. It was just the world on the Map. Nothing was *real* but Australia' (259). A little later, she identifies London as the location for a broadly cosmopolitan existence that had been out of reach:

When we [Australians] think of these places we see the globe lying between them and us. That great distance is always in our travels. When the nearness of 'The Continent' becomes clear to us we feel that to live in London is just the same as to live in France, Italy, Germany. Any place that can be reached in thirty-six hours appears to be almost on our property. When I wake in the morning and think 'I am in London,' I think also, 'and in Paris and Holland, and Germany and Switzerland.'

And so, London means everywhere to us. To leave London and go back means to leave all Europe also. Even if we never get there, we always can—as long as we are in England. But go back to Australia and the whole world vanishes, like a dream, and becomes, after a time, only a dream again. (278)

Mack's 'we' includes the reader, so long as the reader is also from the Antipodes; to an English reader, it is used confidingly, as an explanation of how 'we Australians, your cousins on the other side of the world' feel. This passage both constructs and explains an imaginative and emotional response that reaches out to include British as well as Australian readers.

Both Maquarie and Mack, then, positioned themselves in England as Australian writers with something to say about matters of interest to readers in both London and Australia. In Mack's case, she explored the experience of a colonial in London, self-consciously responding to the familiar and yet strange milieu and relating that experience in a way that invited the comprehension of British as well as Australian readers. Maquarie likewise, addressing the *Times*, takes the tone of an ambassador who is at home in both camps, and assumes common interests as well as separate identities, while asserting the validity of a colonial position. How these writers fared in their new environments is another matter—what avenues were open to them as Australian writers in London, and to what extent did they continue to carry their multiple cultural identities in their professional lives?

At this stage, Maquarie regarded himself as a poet who wrote for periodicals to support himself. As noted earlier, he was closely associated with Henry Lawson during the latter's difficult but productive two years in England. Maquarie was alerted to Lawson's arrival in London in 1900 by their mutual friend, John Le Gay Brereton, and quickly

secured a commission to write a pair of articles about Lawson's poetry and short stories for the popular magazine *Argosy* (Maquarie 1900a, 1900b; Barnes 2007). In the early 1980s, Brian Kiernan found a previously unpublished essay by Lawson about this episode, which both drew attention to Maquarie's role and gave a highly coloured interpretation of him as a writer. In "“Succeeding”: a Sequel to “Pursuing Literature,”” Lawson stresses Maquarie's poverty, and the nervousness and energy with which he pursued his literary ambitions, concluding:

Arthur is teaching English in Florence now, and writing yards of blank verse, and finishing a Spanish novel and an epic or something on the life of Corrigio or someone. He writes to say that he has struck a new line in the higher flights of poetry—something that hasn't been written since the year One—and he'll get a publisher in London next spring and a couple of hundred pounds down. He tackles London every spring but he doesn't stay over winter because he can't afford a fire and his frock coat is getting very threadbare. He flies south with the swallows. (Kiernan 1983: 368)

This is a fitting coda to the contrast Lawson has presented between Maquarie's struggles and his own achievements. However, Lawson's initial success in London fell apart in the face of personal tragedy and lack of discipline (Tasker & Sussex 2007), while Maquarie found his feet as a 'man of letters' in London and Italy, but slipped virtually unnoticed from the annals of Australian literature. Although included (as an expatriate writer) by Miller in his descriptive bibliography of Australian literature to 1935, he no longer appears in the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, and his entry in the *Oxford Companion to Australian Literature* suggests that he 'is most significant for the assistance he provided to Henry Lawson in London in 1900–1901' (Wilde *et al.* 1985: 460).

Maquarie continued to write and scrape by, alternating between London and Florence. His fortunes appear to have changed in 1903 with his marriage to an American artist who also spent her winters in Florence. Mary Lintner, a sculptor and printmaker, was the daughter of an eminent scientist and professor who held the post of New York State Entomologist, and who had died in Rome in 1898. She seems to have had at least some money from her father's estate, as Maquarie showed no signs of employment in later life, and the couple travelled extensively and lived well, settling at a permanent country residence, Hurst House in Surrey.

Maquarie's relative affluence after his marriage not only allowed him a life of personal and creative freedom, but also provided an opportunity for him to act as a patron of the

arts after his death in 1955, in a way that showed he had not completely forgotten his Australian origins. There being no children, Maquarie left the bulk of his £21,000 estate to the University of Sydney, to be used ‘in the promotion of Australian culture in poetry and sculpture by the provision of traveling scholarships and by the publication of works of qualifying authors’ (University of Sydney 1958; 1974). Forty years earlier, Maquarie had written to John Le Gay Brereton, a former friend and fellow student who had become a librarian at the University of Sydney:

My wish is to do what little may ever be in my power to connect up the Syd. Varsity with things on this side. If you have any young graduates of the right sort coming this way, do not hesitate to give him a letter to me. I will do what I can and if he writes seriously I will propose him for the Author’s Club. (Brereton papers, July 1913)

The correspondence with Brereton shows that while Maquarie regarded Australia generally as a cultural desert, he did value the connection with Sydney University. Brereton had been only one year ahead in the Bachelor of Arts, but was well known, and editor of the student magazine *Hermes* when Maquarie was a student. They corresponded over many years, exchanging copies of books, compliments, and gossip. Maquarie wrote:

I shall always remember the value of your influence for right ideals in literature long enough before you had any official position from which to exercise it. It is really very wonderful what you accomplished as an undergraduate among a weedy lot of hobbledehoyes obsessed with the grandeur of the *Bulletin*. (2 July 1913).

In 1905 the *Bulletin* had described as Maquarie as ‘a wandering Australian of whom there is vague information only. Rumour declares that he knew (and loathed) Sydney University until his departure for London ... impelled by a fierce desire to see and feel the wider world’ (‘Verses’ 1905). Writing to Brereton, Maquarie recalled and denied this, saying his feelings were far more tepid: ‘I may have regretted to someone the limited stimulus to be found there’ (Brereton papers, July 1913). Clearly, the bequest was intended to redress this limitation by enabling students like himself to leave Australia and acquire cultural experience and training without having to suffer the indignities of literary hackwork.

Maquarie continued to identify as a man of letters, but what sort of a writer was he? He appears in the 1911 census for Surrey as ‘an author,’ and in that year he published *The Days of the Magnificent: A Drama of old Florence in Blank Verse and Prose*. While

written in a pseudo-Elizabethan style, the language and tone also carry echoes of another, more modern, Italy-loving poet, Robert Browning. Another drama published two years later, *The Happy Kingdom* (set in Sardinia), was damned with faint praise by Walter De La Mare as readable and amusing but essentially imitative, ‘hold[ing] a mirror up to Shakespeare rather than to nature’ (De La Mare 1913: 422). To Brereton, who had just published a book on Elizabethan poets, Maquarie wrote: ‘the Elizabethans are being much studied now and Shakspeare [*sic*] well translated, the centre of the movement being in Florence’ (Brereton papers, Sept 1913). While this may sound quaintly old-fashioned, it shows that Maquarie saw himself as having his finger on the pulse in at least *some* literary circles, and that he was anxious to establish common literary ground between Sydney, London and Florence by invoking the realm of letters, as distinct from actual locations.

‘A Fam’ly Matter’ was an early and rare instance of overt Australianness in Maquarie’s literary career. For the most part, he apparently had no ambitions to perform or exploit his colonial subject matter, like Lawson, or write about Australians compared to the English, as Mack did, but modelled himself on English writers. He continued to produce sonnets, lyrics, and verse dramas, published in elegant little volumes (some produced on his own printing press, the Olive Press, in Florence), while maintaining a gentlemanly enough position to be elected in 1913 to the council of the Royal Society of Literature in London. Maquarie worked assiduously as Foreign Secretary and, from 1918, on the Royal Society’s ‘Committee for Promoting an Intellectual Entente Among the Allied and Friendly Countries,’ a committee which included among its number a large number of academics and a handful of writers, including Thomas Hardy and Edmund Gosse (Royal Society 1918).

Looking to recruit colonial Fellows to the Royal Society in 1913, he wrote to Brereton:

One must have absolutely straight and solid men, wholehearted and sane, and in new countries literature breaks out in such queer places. The Henry Lawsons and the Roderick Quinns are a special local product, gifted doubtless in a way, but in far too narrow a way for public service outside their books. (Brereton papers, July 1913)

Maquarie’s phrase ‘special local product’ conveys such a condescending view towards Australian writers that it is little wonder he feared the *Bulletin* getting hold of his comments: ‘I live with a dread of the Sydney *Bulletin* always in my mind. Their lash is so unfair and so merciless, and so ready to attack what they may choose to fancy

snobbism' (July 1913). Such self-consciousness is telling, as is the anxiety to distance himself (and Brereton) from the 'special local' (that is, colonial) product. Maquarie was clearly an expatriate in the sense of having left Australia without any intention of returning there to live—but after fourteen or more years away from Australia, at the time of this correspondence, was he to all intents and purposes English? Not quite—he was, after all, *Foreign* Secretary of the Royal Society, and something of an outsider, however well regarded. It was a position that allowed him to preside at lectures by visiting foreign writers or lecturers, and that he was suited for because of his experiences in both Australia and Italy. But it was also a position of difference, marking him as someone from outside the usual circles.

In London, Australian writers tended to be seen as Australians—at times encouraged to take colonial life as their subject matter, in order to exploit a niche market, and at others, warned that their Australian experience would be regarded as valueless by British newspapers, or of no interest to novel readers. It is worth noting, however, that both Maquarie and Mack spent a considerable amount of time in Italy, where their place was more loosely defined as part of the English-speaking community, along with Americans and others, with less emphasis on their particularly Australian identity. In other circumstances, such as war, they were more likely to be regarded as British, or even English. This is certainly how Mack represented herself when she was behind enemy lines in Belgium in 1914—her account for the *Daily Mail* was headed 'An Englishwoman in Antwerp' (3 Sep. 1914, cited in Phelan 1991: 156), and she wrote later in her book *A Woman's Experiences in the Great War*: 'Whether I lived or died mattered not beside the satisfaction of sitting there, an English subject, looking down on the German army with contempt and hatred' (Mack 1915). During the Boer war, however, the separate identity of the Australian troops had been noted by many, Maquarie's plea for a war memorial being an example. Two years later, Mack reported (with some exasperation) that the war effort served as a marker of difference, under the guise of 'loyalty': 'Everybody says it as soon as it's known you are Australian. Dozens, scores, hundreds of times I have had it cast at me—in London, in the country, everywhere—from anybody and everybody: "You Australians were *so* good to us in the war." That is all England thinks of us, I verily believe!' (Mack 1901b). The point is that an individual person could experience and express different positions, illustrating Hassam's argument for colonial identity as multi-layered and fitting with a transnational

(shifting, mobile) rather than a strictly hierarchical postcolonial system of cultural identity and affiliation.

Even a relatively conservative Anglophile like Maquarie retained Australia as part of his sense of self, and as part of how others perceived and located him, in literary as well as social terms. There is nothing startling about this; the whole problem of expatriation is the juggling of different places and their associated values, roles and affiliations, which go to make up a sense of cultural identity. In 1913 Maquarie wrote to Brereton, asking for an assessment of Australian literature from an Australian point of view, saying: 'it is so far to Australia in so many more ways than that of geographical mileage, that it is not at all possible to me to keep in touch with the spirit of things ... I feel that I could never have become a true son of what was by some chance my native land. There was perhaps a taint of Latin in me that has made Southern Europe more readily understandable' (Brereton papers, Sep. 1913). He did not return to Australia except for one or two short visits, although he did acknowledge that it was still part of his 'personal' identity, 'the compost of his heart.' Writing from on board a cruise yacht in 1926, he analyses his attachment to Australia and his inability to be at home there:

I want to strike out towards Sydney Harbour one day; knocking off the gilt of one thing after another leaves one longing for the old things which are the compost of our heart. The material things out there never entered into my make up. The crudeness, the childishness of the best there was to show, only made me sick with a great longing. But the tendrils of little human things did not let go; they only broke off and came with me; and now I want a good long look at the physical presence of one or two who are still left and can find memories to fill the long silence. I shouldn't stay, because I couldn't. The world has too many things in it, and there are too many left still to do. But I could get a certain amount of rest and deep-breathing and come back to the stress of life here. (Brereton papers, Jan. 1926)

The Bohemian, down-and-out writer portrayed by Henry Lawson has given way to an urbane, if wistful, man of letters, fully committed to his life 'abroad.' At the same time, however, his love of Italy reminds us that he was a citizen of the world, not just a colonial claiming his British birthright. But even Maquarie, with his apparent desire to adopt an 'English' standard and attempt to carve out a career and life far from Australia, was constrained to some extent to work around or with his Australian origins. By acting as Foreign Secretary for the Royal Society, he continued to carry and to manifest diverse cultural identities, in his own writing and in how he was seen by others.

At a time when there was no clear or inevitable choice between being British or Australian it is apparent that neither of these writers fully renounced (indeed, they could

not completely shed) either their British heritage or their colonial identity, whether working in commercial or literary milieux. Both Mack and Maquarie write confidently as citizens of the world, rather than children of empire, and to differing degrees they drew in their work upon their experiences as Australians, or rather, as Australians abroad. Living and working in London and Italy, they were not simply expatriates or exiles; their complex and often shifting roles and identities insisted on hybridity.

Despite this theoretical hybridity being inevitable to some extent, it is still possible to distinguish between the positions of the two writers. The colonial transnational writer's is differently inflected from the self-conscious expatriate's, as it allows for several layers of identity to coexist without an ideologically driven impulse to assert, renounce or choose between them. Maquarie's letters and indeed his poems often reflect a tension between his desire to integrate with European and British culture, and the persistence of ties back to Australia; this is articulated as a problem. Mack, on the other hand, approaches questions of cultural identity more obliquely, as experiences to be written about and shared, rather than as declarations of loyalty or even 'belonging.' By comparison with Maquarie, Louise Mack's greater mobility between genres, and her lack of any fixed status or position in social or institutional settings of the kind that Maquarie adhered to, correspond to a greater flexibility in her cultural affiliations, and a more fluid, simultaneously transnational and colonial writing identity.

Reference List

- Alomes, S. 1999, *When London Calls: The Expatriation of Australian Creative Artists to Britain*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Arnold, J. 2009, 'Australian Books, Publishers and Writers in England, 1900–1940,' in *Australians in Britain: The Twentieth-Century Experience*, (eds) C. Bridge, R. Crawford, & D. Dunstan. Monash University ePress, Melbourne: 10.1–10.19. Online, available: <http://books.publishing.monash.edu/apps/bookworm/view/Australians+in+Britain%3A+The+Twentieth-Century+Experience/137/xhtml/chapter10.html> [Accessed 24 November 2011].
- Ball, J. 2004, *Imagining London: Postcolonial Fiction and the Transnational Metropolis*. University of Toronto Press, Toronto, Buffalo & London.
- Barnes, J. 2007, 'Henry Lawson and the "Pinker of Literary Agents,"' *New Reckonings: Australian Literary Studies*, vol. 23, no. 2: 89–105.
- Bird, D., Dixon, R. & Lee, C. (eds) 2001, *Authority and Influence: Australian Literary Criticism 1950–2000*. University of Queensland Press, St Lucia.
- Brereton, J. Le Gay. 1930. *Knocking Around*. Angus & Robertson, Sydney.
- _____. n. d. Papers, Mitchell Library. State Library of New South Wales. MS MSS 281/11 Microfilm CY2940.
- Bridge, C. 2009, 'Australians in the England and Wales Census of 1901: A Demographic Survey,' in *Australians in Britain: The Twentieth-Century Experience*, (eds) C. Bridge, R. Crawford, & D. Dunstan. Monash University ePress, Melbourne. 4.1–4.16. Online, available: <http://books.publishing.monash.edu/apps/bookworm/view/Australians+in+Britain%3A+The+Twentieth-Century+Experience/137/xhtml/chapter04.html> [Accessed 24 November 2011].

- Clarke, P. 1988, *Pen Portraits. Women Writers and Journalists in Nineteenth Century Australia*. Allen & Unwin, North Sydney.
- Cronin, L. (ed.) 1984, *A Fantasy of Man: Henry Lawson Complete Works 1901–1922*. Lansdowne, Sydney.
- Daley, V. 1900, 'When London Calls,' *Bulletin*, 8 December: 15.
- De la Mare, W. 1913, 'Poetic Drama: The Mischoice of Theme' [Review of Arthur Maquarie's *The Happy Kingdom*], *Times Literary Supplement*, 9 October: 422.
- Gelder, K. 2011, 'Negotiating the Colonial Australian Popular Fiction Archive,' *JASAL*. Online, available: <http://www.nla.gov.au/openpublish/index.php/jasal/article/viewFile/1864/2626>. [Accessed 24 November 2011].
- _____. 2010. 'Proximate Reading: Australian Literature in Transnational Reading Frameworks,' *JASAL*. Online, available: <http://www.nla.gov.au/openpublish/index.php/jasal/article/view/1535/2082> [Accessed 24 November 2011]
- Gelder, K. & Weaver, R. 2010, 'Louise Mack and Colonial Pseudo-Literature,' *Southerly*, vol. 70, no. 2: 82–95.
- Griffen-Foley, B. 2002, "'The Crumbs are Better than a Feast Elsewhere": Australian Journalists on Fleet Street,' *Journalism History*, vol. 28, no. 1: 26–37.
- Hassam, A. 2000, *Through Australian Eyes: Colonial Perceptions of Imperial Britain*. Melbourne University Press, Melbourne.
- Kiernan, B. 1983, *The Essential Henry Lawson*. Currey O'Neil, South Yarra.
- Lawson, H. 1903, 'The Sweet Uses of London,' Letter to the *Bulletin*, 22 October: Red Page.
- _____. n.d., "'Succeeding": A Sequel to "Pursuing Literature,"' in *A Fantasy of Man: Henry Lawson Complete Works 1901–1922*, (ed.) L. Cronin. Lansdowne, Sydney: 837–41.
- Lavater, L. 1956, *The Sonnet in Australasia*. Angus & Robertson, Sydney.
- Lyons, M. & Arnold, J. (eds). 2001, *A History of the Book in Australia 1891–1945. A National Culture in a Colonised Market*. University of Queensland Press, St Lucia.
- Mack, L. 1896, *The World is Round*. Fisher Unwin, London.
- _____. 1897, *Teens: A Story of Australian Schoolgirls*. Angus & Robertson, Sydney.
- _____. 1901a, *Dreams in Flower*. *Bulletin*, Sydney.
- _____. 1901b, 'A Little Letter from London,' *Bulletin*, 7 August: Red Page.
- _____. 1902, *An Australian Girl in London*. T. Fisher Unwin, London.
- _____. 1911, *The Romance of a Woman of Thirty*. Alston Rivers, London. Online, available: <http://www.apfa.esrc.unimelb.edu.au/objects/D00000843.htm>. [Accessed 25 November 2011]
- _____. 1915, *A Woman's Experiences in the Great War*. Fisher Unwin, London. Online, available: <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/35392/35392-h/35392-h.htm>. [Accessed 7 June 2012].
- _____. 1933, *Teens Triumphant*. P. R. Stephensen & Co, Sydney.
- Maquarie, A. 1899, Letter to Editor, *Times* (London), 24 November: 8.
- _____. 1900a, 'Henry Lawson: Poet,' *Argosy*, August.
- _____. 1900b, 'Henry Lawson: Prose Author,' *Argosy*, September.
- _____. 1900c, 'A Family Matter,' For the Patriotic Fund. W.H. Paling & Co. Sydney, Newcastle & Brisbane; Music by Sir A. C. Mackenzie. Bound with Others Under the Collective Title: Patriotic and National Songs—Australian. Mitchell Library Q784.8/M4. [Maquarie's letter dates his song as 1899.]
- _____. 1901, Letter to J. F. Archibald, in Henry Lawson Miscellaneous Papers, Mitchell Library, A L 29/1–26 CY 2213.
- _____. 1905, *The Dance of Olives*. J. M. Dent & Co., London.
- _____. 1911, *The Days of the Magnificent: A Drama of Old Florence in Blank Verse and Prose*. Bickers & Son, London.
- _____. 1913, *The Happy Kingdom*. Bickers & Son, London.
- Miller, E. M. 1973 [1940], *Australian Literature from its Beginnings to 1935*. 2 volumes. Sydney University Press, Sydney.
- Molloy, F. 2004, *Victor J. Daley, a Life*. Crossing Press, Sydney.
- 'Monday Musings on Australian literature: Some Australian Expat Novelists.' 2010, *Whispering Gums*, 30 August. Online, available: <http://whisperinggums.com/2010/08/30/monday-musings-on-australian-literature-some-australian-expat-novelists/> [Accessed 11 October 2012].
- Morton, P. 2009, 'Australia's England, 1880–1950,' in *The Cambridge History of Australian Literature*. (ed.) P. Pierce. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: 255–81.
- _____. 2011, *Lusting for London: Australian Expatriate Writers at the Hub of Empire, 1870–1950*. Palgrave Macmillan, New York.

- Murdoch, W. 1918, *The Oxford Book of Australasian Verse*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Pesman, R. 1996, *Duty Free: Australian Women Abroad*. Oxford University Press, Melbourne.
- Phelan, N. 1991, *The Romantic Lives of Louse Mack*. University of Queensland Press, St. Lucia.
- Royal Society of Literature. 1918, 'The Political Aims of the British Empire in the War: A Statement Addressed to Correspondents in the United States of America, Drawn up by the Sub-Committee on Relations with America, and Adopted and Issued by the Committee for Promoting an Intellectual Entente. Humphrey Milford, London.' Online, available: <http://libcudl.colorado.edu/wwi/pdf/i73498464.pdf> [Accessed 21 June 2012].
- Tasker, M. 2011, "'When London Calls" and Fleet Street Beckons: Daley's Poem, Reg's Diary—What Happens When it All Goes "Bung"?' *Southerly*, vol. 71, no. 1: 107–26.
- Tasker, M. & Sussex, L. 2007, "'That Wild Run to London": Henry and Bertha Lawson in England,' *New reckonings: Australian Literary Studies*, vol. 23, no. 2: 168–86.
- University of Sydney. 1958, *Calendar*, 'Benefactions': 639.
- _____. 1974, *Calendar*, 'Maquarie Travelling Scholarship': 436.
- 'Verses by Arthur Maquarie.' 1905, *Bulletin*, 9 November: 2, Red Page.
- Wilcox, C. 2004, 'Edwardian Excursion,' *Meanjin*, vol. 63, no. 3: 23–32.
- Wilde, W. H., Hooton, J. & Andrews, B. (eds) 1985, *The Oxford Companion to Australian Literature*. Oxford University Press, Melbourne.
- Woollacott, A. 2001, *To Try Her Fortune in London: Australian Women, Colonialism, and Modernity*. Oxford University Press, New York.